Say Something “- Learning About How English Works”

Quote 1
Many California teachers have observed that their students who are English learners (ELs) develop everyday English quite rapidly and can communicate effectively in informal social situations, but these students sometimes struggle with tasks involving academic English, such as writing a logical argument, comprehending their science and history textbooks, or participating in an academic debate (Cummins 2008, 71–83). For K–12 settings, academic English broadly refers to the language used in school to help students develop content knowledge, skills, and abilities; it is the language students are expected to use to convey their understanding and mastery of such knowledge, skills, and abilities.

CA ELD Standards p. 160

Quote 2
Academic English is different from everyday, or informal, English. Some features of academic English span the disciplines, such as general academic vocabulary (e.g., evaluate, infer, imply), but there is also variation depending upon the discipline—in domain specific vocabulary, for example. However, academic English encompasses much more than vocabulary. It also includes ways of structuring clauses, sentences, and entire texts that convey precision, show relationships between ideas, and present thinking in coherent and cohesive ways in order to achieve specific purposes (e.g., persuading, explaining, entertaining, and describing) with different audiences in discipline specific ways.

CA ELD Standards p. 160

Quote 3
Part II offers something that has been largely absent in prior ELD standards: attention to how the English language resources available to students are, and can be, used to make meaning and achieve particular communicative purposes. Such visibility is intended to support teachers’ efforts to make transparent for their students the linguistic features of English in ways that support disciplinary literacy. This new perspective emphasizes the interrelated roles of content knowledge, communicative purposes for using English (e.g., recounting a family event, explaining a scientific phenomenon, describing a historical event, arguing for a position), and the linguistic resources writers or speakers can choose depending upon the content, purpose, and audience. Part II focuses on the social actions that accompany deep knowledge about language:

● Representing our experiences and expressing our ideas effectively
● Interacting with a variety of audiences
● Structuring our messages in intentional and purposeful ways

CA ELD Standards p. 160