Engaging ELLs in Academic Conversations

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What are the goals today?

(CO) We will learn strategies to effectively implement academic conversations.
(LO) We will synthesize our learning about academic conversations through oral discussion and written response.

Partner A
It sounds like we will learn...

Partner B
I think I heard you say...
DEFINING ACADEMIC CONVERSATIONS

More than just “Turn and Talk”
### Importance of Social and Academic Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Language</th>
<th>Academic Language</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hi, class. Let’s get started.</td>
<td>Today we will be studying potential and kinetic energy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It wasn’t a good article.</td>
<td>In my opinion, the author did not provide enough evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What’s the matter?</td>
<td>There are three states of matter.</td>
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</table>
General Academic Language Cross-curricular

- **Nouns and verbs** that can be used in many contexts (*argument, compare*).
- **Verbs and phrases** that indicate procedures, actions, and uses of language (*classify, summarize*).
- Conjunctions and transition words (*however, although*).
- Sentence structures (*if-then statements, active/passive voice*).
- Grammatical features (*comparative & superlative adjectives*).
Subject-specific Academic Language Content Specific

- **Vocabulary** that is associated with individual subjects.
  - exponent, medieval
- **Polysemous** words that have a particular meaning in one subject and a different meaning in another.
  - solar *power* in Science
  - judicial *power* in S.S.
- **Text structures** that are more common to certain subject areas than others.
  - cause-effect in science
  - problem-solution in math
The **goal** of an academic conversation is for participants to reach a **new** understanding of a school topic by using **specific** conversational skills. Each partner must listen and speak, **elaborate**, clarify, challenge, paraphrase, and summarize what his/her partner says, and determine the **outcome** of the conversation.
Video One:
Best Practices for Academic Conversations

Record one or two pieces of new knowledge you gained.
How to Start Academic Conversations
by Jeff Zwiers and Marie Crawford

- Silently read *How to Start Academic Conversations* (Zwiers & Crawford, 2009)
- Text tag key points you want to remember.
- Reflect on what you found most important on your pocket guide.

**Text Tag Moves**

- Clarify
- Question
- What was helpful
- Made a connection

What did you find most important?
Paraphrase Passport

- Form partners
- Teacher assigns a discussion topic.
  - Share what you found most important from the article.
- Partner A will share an idea.
  "The part I found most important was..."
- Partner B will paraphrase partner A’s ideas. "I think I heard you say..."
- Switch roles.
**Paraphrase**

Partner A will share an idea.
"The part I found most important was..."

**Passport**

Partner B will paraphrase partner A's ideas.
"I think I heard you say..."
Scaffolding for Successful Implementation
Gradual Release of Responsibility

Modeled | Shared | Guided | Independent
--- | --- | --- | ---
*I Do* | *We Do* | *You Do It Together* | *You Do It Alone*

Collaborative

**Image:** A diagram showing the gradual release of responsibility with four stages: Modeled (*I Do*), Shared (*We Do*), Guided (*You Do It Together*), and Independent (*You Do It Alone*). The collaborative stage is highlighted with a star.
Resource to support Academic Conversations

- Academic Talk Language Frames from National Geographic
- Includes
  - Frames for Speaking Routines
  - Frames for Language Functions
- Grades 1-2
- Grades 3-6
Video Two:
Academic Conversations:
KDG (Classroom Communities)

What scaffolding methods were used to support students?
What scaffolding methods were used to support students?
**Water Cycle Video**

**What can you share about the water cycle?**

**Partner A** (Explaining Ideas)

I’m not sure that was clear...

What do we know so far?

What do you think about what I shared?

**Partner B** (paraphrasing)

So you’re saying that...

It sounds like you are saying that...

I think the information was...
4 Practices for Fostering Oral Language Development

- Come to the discussion prepared.
- Use appropriate body language for discussions.
- Participate by taking turns.
- Make connections to what others have said.
As the teacher observes an academic conversation between students, the teacher checks the specific criteria observed as a way to monitor progress and provide feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Criteria 1</th>
<th>Criteria 2</th>
<th>Criteria 3</th>
<th>Criteria 4</th>
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How does using this participation strategy affect students’ discussions?
Participation Protocol

1. Look at your partner.
2. Lean towards your partner.
3. Lower your voice.
4. Listen actively.
5. Use evidence and examples.
Let’s Practice!
Elaborate

- Read *An Overall Enhancement* on p. 73 of the article.
- Think about the essential question: *How do academic conversations increase student achievement?*

Shoulder Partners
- Partner A: Share one idea and tell why it is important.
  “One idea is ____. I think this is important because...”
- Partner B: “I would like to add...”
- Switch roles
My Definition

• On your pocket guide, take what you have learned today and create your own student-friendly definition that will help you introduce Academic Conversations to your students or staff. You can work alone or with a partner.
Did we meet our goals?

(CO) We will learn strategies to effectively implement academic conversations.

(LO) We will synthesize our learning about academic conversations through oral discussion and written response.

Today I learned...
References

**Developing Academic Language with the SIOP Model**
Deborah J. Short, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C., Jana J. Echevarria, California State University, Long Beach
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**Academic Conversations: Classroom Talk that Fosters Critical Thinking and Content Understandings**
Jeff Zwiers, Marie Crawford, Stenhouse Publishers, 2011