edTPA Basics

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

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SESSION GOALS

Define academic language

Consider language demands

Discuss language supports for students

Preview where academic language comes into play in edTPA

What is …
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE?

In his book, Zwiers describes academic language as the "set of words, grammar, and organizational strategies used to describe complex ideas, higher-order thinking processes, and abstract concepts."

– Zwiers, *Building Academic Language*

Academic language refers to "word knowledge that makes it possible for students to engage with, produce, and talk about texts that are valued in school" (Flynt & Brozo, 2008, p. 500).

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

IN TEACHING 9-12 HISTORY/ SOCIAL STUDIES

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC EMPHASIS

* What is the main focus?

BIG IDEA(S)

* What's the big picture? What larger lessons can students apply to their daily lives *through* social studies?

DAY-TO-DAY OBJECTIVES

* What learning targets should students aim for?

LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

*What exactly are language functions in history/social studies?

WHY DEVELOP

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE?

Academic language development is making the language of our discipline (History/Social Studies) and our classroom <u>explicit</u>, in order to expand students' mastery over content language and improve their language choices, as they consider the purpose (or *function*) and audience of their work. (From Merino & Zozakiewicz, SCALE)

PREPARING FOR

LANGUAGE DEMANDS

Every content area is characterized by its own language demands. Teachers must plan to support learning or content through:

1. Vocabulary
2. Language functions
3. Syntax
4. Discourse

LANGUAGE DEMANDS
1. VOCABULARY

Vocabulary refers to the words, phrases, symbols, etc. that are used to communicate within or about a discipline.

These include:

- Words or phrases with specific meaning within the subject that may differ from those in everyday life (e.g., power, agency, right)

- General academic vocabulary used across disciplines (e.g., compare, analyze, evaluate), and…

- Subject specific words defined for use in the disciplines (e.g. scale – when reading maps, constitution, neutrality)

EXAMPLE # 1 (VOCABULARY)

Agency

In history, we discuss "agency" to analyze the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices. By contrast, structure is those factors of influence (such as social class, religion, gender, ethnicity, ability, customs, etc.) that determine or limit an agent and his or her decisions.

EXAMPLE #2 (VOCABULARY)

Civilization

In history – especially World History – students come to understand the basic building blocks of **civilization** (natural barriers for protection, food, water, transportation / government & laws / social structure / defined roles, etc.). The goal of course is that by studying ancient civilization they can better analyze our own civilization (society) in the U.S., and other modern civilizations around the world

LANGUAGE DEMANDS
1. VOCABULARY

A final word …

For students who speak a Latin-based language such as Spanish, **cognates** will help in teaching a number of words. For example, decision in English is *decisión* in Spanish; civilization is *civilización*; construct is *construir*; etc.

Use cognates when possible to help ELLs understand history/social studies language demands for vocabulary

LANGUAGE DEMANDS

2. LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

Language Functions are the content and language focus of learning tasks, usually represented by the **action verbs** within the learning outcomes. They represent the purposes for which the language is used.

IT'S IN THE STANDARDS!

WH.H.2.9 – *Evaluate* the achievements of ancient civilizations in terms of their enduring cultural impact

USH.H.5.1 – *Summarize* how the philosophical, ideological and/or religious views on freedom and equality contributed to the development of American political and economic systems through Reconstruction

CE.C&G.2.4 - *Compare* the Constitutions and the structures of the United States and North Carolina governments (e.g., the various NC Constitutions, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Rights, Preambles, the organization of, the powers of, responsibilities, etc.).

Because **language functions** are the content and language focus of learning tasks, they stem from the NCES objectives. If you are aligning state curriculum to your UEQ, LEQs, and Learning Targets (from your Unit Map and Lesson Plans) … you have already embedded other action verbs/language demands!

I. Functions	
Definition	**Examples** (bolded and underlined within learning objectives)

▪ Purposes for which language is used.
▪ Content and language focus of learning tasks often represented by the **active verbs within the learning outcomes.**
	▪ Learning Objectives:
	  ▪ Students will be able to **compare** the civilizations of the Incas and Aztecs.
	  ▪ Students will be able to **explain** the impact of minor political parties on elections.
	  ▪ Students will be able to **describe** two events that led to the Revolutionary War.

EXAMPLE of LANG. FUNCTIONS

AH1.H.4.4

Analyze the cultural conflicts that impacted the United States through Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., displacement of American Indians, Manifest Destiny, slavery, assimilation, nativism)

LEARNING TARGET (KNOW) – UNIT MAP

Students will be able to … *evaluate* the various competing interests of people living in Texas before the Mexican-American War

2. LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS: HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES

In History, students often need to:

Compare & Contrast - explaining or showing contrasts & similarities

Interpret - describe a timeline or sequence; maps; graphs; data tables

Evaluate - an author's purpose, message, likely audience

Analyze - main ideas, arguments, bias; causes of historical, economic, geographic, and political events

Examine - evidence an author/historian uses to support claims

Defend - argument(s) with evidence - use of sources

Synthesize - summarize or integrate information across sources

Evaluate - decisions by historical actors, debates among scholars

LANGUAGE DEMANDS

3. SYNTAX

Syntax refers to how we organize symbols, words, and phrases into structures, such as sentences, graphs, tables, or other structures that are specific to a discipline. Think about the ways we typically present a thesis argument, structure history essays, use graphs- maps-images to support claims, cite sources, etc.

IV. Syntax	
Definition	**Examples**
■ The rules for organizing words or symbols together into phrases, clauses, sentences or visual representations. ■ One of the main functions of syntax is to organize language in order to convey meaning.	■ Sentences (e.g., cause and effect): ■ Using Longitude and Latitude for location ■ Claims ■ Citations

LANGUAGE DEMANDS
3. SYNTAX

The writing of a scientific lab report is not the same as the writing of a persuasive speech or the writing of an essay comparing the Allied and Axis countries' goals and actions during World War II … *right?*

Because syntax are the rules of the language (English), you want to show how you will be emphasizing basic word order. This means that when students present their cartoon analysis, for example, you expect them to orally explain their viewpoint with coherency OR write in complete sentences.

When they create a graph – do they know how to label and organize their data?

When they generate a map – do they know how to show longitude, latitude, scale, and provide a legend for symbols (capital city, city, river, mountains, etc.)?

LANGUAGE DEMANDS
4. DISCOURSE

Discourse refers to the organizational structures of our oral and written communication in a discipline. Discourse structures can be at the sentence, paragraph, or symbolic level.

*For example, historical narratives vs. journalistic writing conventions; text supporting maps; analysis of graphic and material culture. If you took an AP course, think back to how you would make a claim (thesis statement), cite sources, explain an author's bias (or POV), etc.

**This is also where you design activities where students explain & analyze primary sources (cartoons, images, speeches, charts, etc.)

LANGUAGE DEMANDS

4. DISCOURSE

Learning target: "Students will **generate a topic sentence** that explains the best trade routes for Portuguese exploration of the Indian Ocean." Here, understanding how to detect and construct your own topic sentence helps students recognize text structure (language discourse).

Basic Text Structures
- Description (living conditions of black slaves in the U.S. South vs. Brazil)
- Cause and Effect (Treaty of Versailles > Weimar Republic & Rise of Nazism)
- Compare/Contrast (Sunni vs. Shi'ia; Spartan vs. Athenian social structures)
- Order/Sequence (events leading to the Civil War, Napoleon's march through Russia)
- Problem-Solution (the Jewish question after WWII > formation of Israel)

LANGUAGE DEMANDS: 4. DISCOURSE

Among other tasks, part of our work as history/social studies educators is to help students learn how to write topic sentences, structure their essays, and, of course, learn how to write a decisive thesis statement. We also teach students how to group primary sources and how to make these groups clear when they organize their writing. Applies to oral assignments as well.

Contrasting phrases

"On the one hand… Yet, on the other hand/ [X] supported____, while [Y] challenged___

Meta-commentary (interpreting & processing)

"To put it another way…" *or* "In other words…"

"What _____ really means is _____"

Conclusions / Thesis

"My argument, then, is that _____."

WHY FOCUS ON

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE?

For students to be successful, they must:

- Know what they are being asked to do

- Have something to say

- Have the words to say it, or

- Have the other representational structures to present it.

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE IN
edTPA

When you plan, deliver, and evaluate your teaching, you will **analyze your language demands**. Select a **key language function**, a **learning task**, and additional **language demands** required for the task.

**See Rubrics 4 and 14 in particular.

Note that language can be fundamental to other rubric components as well, such as student misunderstandings or errors.

SAMPLE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE PLANNING

World History

WH.H.8.5 - Explain how population growth, urbanization, industrialization, warfare and the global market economy have contributed to changes in the environment (e.g., deforestation, pollution, clear cutting, Ozone depletion, climate change, global warming, industrial emissions and fuel combustion, habitat destruction, etc.).

What would an appropriate learning outcome be to support this standard?

- For your learning outcome, consider what the **language function** is:
  Explain [change over time; human impact on the environment].
- Consider the **vocabulary** needed to accomplish the learning function and be successful? (**urbanization, warfare, market economy**)
- **Discourse:** How will students present their summary? What organizing structures will they use based on the product (essay, oral, chart)?
- Are there any English-language **syntax** rules that students need to properly and effectively use in order to share their summaries?

PLANNING FOR
LANGUAGE SUPPORTS

Once you identify language demands, you will want to plan for **language supports**. These may **mode**l language functions for your students, **review** or support their vocabulary use, provide opportunities to **practice** or **evaluate** syntax, or provide **structures** or **templates** for discourse.

A SAMPLE ACTIVITY

LANGUAGE

VOCABULARY

LANGUAGE FUNCTION

SYNTAX

DISCOURSE

TIPS FOR WORKING ON ACADEMIC LANGUAGE IN
edTPA

Read the edTPA rubrics carefully and highlight all instances where language is vital.

Identify all language demands as you plan, deliver, and reflect on your lesson.

Be attentive to your use of language and supports during your video clips. You can't add those examples in later!

Be specific and accurate in your use of language in your commentaries, and be certain that you use correct language and notation in your lesson materials and video clips.

Language is *always* important in teaching. Use edTPA to start developing good habits in its use.