What Your Colleagues Are Saying . . .

Drs. Margo Gottlieb and Gisela Ernst-Slavit's original series has always been my go-to resource for understanding academic language and its application to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The reconceptualization of academic language in this new edition brings educators to the most contemporary, research-informed, and evidence-based understanding of academic languaging as an active process that honors multilingualism and invites students to use their full linguistic repertoires across various contexts. The chapter-by-chapter guidance across the core content areas prompts readers to critically examine how students' rich cultural and linguistic heritages and experiences are authentically embedded in all learning opportunities while also suggesting actionable steps to support multilingual learners' self-expression and agency. A must-read for all educators!

—**Andrea Honigsfeld**, Professor and Author Consultant at Molloy University, New York

As educators, we want to embrace students' languages, cultures, lived experiences, interests, perspectives, and multiliteracies. How can we do this and simultaneously support them to master academic language across the content areas? Scholars Ernst-Slavit and Gottlieb's latest contribution brilliantly shows us how to engage all language learners, put their language assets and cultural perspectives front and center, and support them as empowered autonomous learners.

—**Debbie Zacarian**, Founder Director of Zacarian & Associates and Author

In this timely and vital new edition, Ernst-Slavit and Gottlieb reconfigure academic language for an era defined by artificial intelligence, heightened student stress, and the embrace of asset-based approaches, such as translanguaging pedagogy. The book is packed with essential updates for today's classrooms, including rich strategies for digital literacy and multimodal learning; creative approaches to movement, visual arts, and hands-on learning; practical ways to build student voice and agency; and clear connections between social-emotional learning and academic success. Few scholars have impacted multilingual education as profoundly as Ernst-Slavit and Gottlieb. The authors provide both the research foundation teachers need to understand why these approaches work and the practical tools to implement them successfully. Through carefully scaffolded instruction and meaningful engagement with content, multilingual learners can thrive with rigorous academic work from their first day in the classroom.

—**Andrea B. Hellman**, Professor of TESOL-Linguistics at Missouri State University

*Academic Languag*ing*: Engaging Multilingual Students in Content Area Learning* arrives at a pivotal moment for K–12 education, offering educators a timely and transformative approach for supporting multilingual learners. With the notion of "academic language" evolving to acknowledge the dynamic concept of "languag*ing*," this book redefines how we view and approach language in content classrooms. Academic languaging moves beyond the constraints of traditional school language, embracing students' diverse linguistic and cultural assets as integral to learning. Authors Ernst-Slavit and Gottlieb provide a practical and insightful guide for teachers, administrators, and language specialists, emphasizing the importance of creating learning environments that honor students' backgrounds and encourage agency. The book's structured strategies and content-specific chapters offer actionable methods for embedding academic language through multimodal, culturally relevant practices. As multilingualism becomes the norm, *Academic Languag*ing stands as an essential resource, advocating for education that empowers students to leverage their whole linguistic repertoire. It's a must-read for any educator committed to transforming their classroom into a space of active, meaningful learning for all students.

—Amelia Larson, Chief Academic Officer at Summit K12

Congratulations to Drs. Ernst-Slavit and Gottlieb and their new book replete with essential academic content and pragmatic applications for educators of multilingual learners to use in their everyday work. This book moves the field of multilingual education forward by addressing both the complexities of the construct "academic language" and its prior limitations and definitions, and building into the dynamic concept of "academic languag*ing*," an action-oriented approach to schooling that underscores the interactive nature of how language is used in multiple formats and modalities. Readers will find the Stop and Think features, imagery, model texts, and tables essential as they engage in their own exploration of language and languaging. I cannot wait to use this book with my students and to share this work with colleagues.

—Maria Coady, Distinguished Professor in Educational Equity at North Carolina State University

This insightful book invites all educators, monolingual or multilingual—particularly future and in-service teachers, coaches, administrators, and teacher educators—to embrace all the languages and cultural experiences multilingual students bring to school as they support their development of "academic languaging." The examples provide practical ideas for educators on "what" it is and "how" to create languaging opportunities for multilingual learners to make meaning of and access content area knowledge using their complete language systems and cultural perspectives. The authors also include thought-provoking questions embedded throughout the chapters to help readers interact with new ideas and construct meaning grounded in their contexts and experiences. This is a must-read for all educators who want to embrace a social justice stance and create a more flexible and empowering environment for multilingual students.

—Sandra Mercuri, Sandra Mercuri Educational Consultants

This book engages teachers in a deep examination of the notion of academic language, not as a fixed or static concept but as a reflection of the dynamic "languag*ing*" practices that are enacted within multilingual schools and communities. It provides rich tools and resources for a variety of classroom contexts, grade levels, and content areas, with concrete examples to help teachers adapt and modify suggested strategies for their own particular settings. Most importantly, it offers an approach to language teaching and learning that honors multilingual learners' identities and sense of agency, placing them at the center of schooling.

—**Maria Dantas-Whitney**, Professor of ESOL and Bilingual Education at Western Oregon University

In this much-needed collection for teachers and teacher educators interested in language and content integration for multilingual learners, Ernst-Slavit and Gottlieb offer ways to support and incorporate multimodalities and multiple means of expression into instruction to optimize multilingual learners' content learning. Model texts demonstrating how language features function within specific content areas serve as tools to support multilingual learners in their oral language and literacy development. Like everything that Gottlieb and Ernst-Slavit do, this is another wonderful and practical contribution to the TESOL field!

—**Luciana de Oliveira**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University

What an exciting way to approach languaging in the content areas! Gisela's and Margo's book lays the groundwork for looking at language, literacy, and core content through the actions of multilingual learners and their teachers. They show how multilingualism is at the heart of multilingual learners' identities and how multimodalities can open doors for increasing their access to content and showing evidence for learning. Through model texts, they illustrate how to make dimensions of language come to life to promote student engagement. They showcase academic languaging for building teacher and peer relationships, and for applying technology to advance learning in math, science, social studies, and language arts. This book is a must for ESL/ELD and dual language teachers, programs, and school administrators.

—**Margarita Calderón**, Professor Emerita at Johns Hopkins University

Academic Languag*ing*

First Edition

We dedicate this book to Graham, Max, Arthur, and Hunter and the next generation of students who will draw strength from academic languaging in building agency as they face growing linguistic diversification and technological advancements in this increasingly multilingual multicultural world.

Academic Languag*ing*

Engaging Multilingual Students in Content Area Learning

First Edition

Gisela Ernst-Slavit

Margo Gottlieb

Foreword by Jeff Zwiers

CORWIN

CORWIN

FOR INFORMATION

Corwin
A SAGE Company
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
(800) 233-9936
www.corwin.com

SAGE Publications Ltd.
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
Unit No 323-333, Third Floor, F-Block
International Trade Tower Nehru Place
New Delhi 110 019
India

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd.
18 Cross Street #10-10/11/12
China Square Central
Singapore 048423

Vice President and
Editorial Director: Monica Eckman
Acquisitions Editor: Megan Bedell
Content Development
Manager: Lucas Schleicher
Senior Editorial Assistant: Natalie Delpino
Production Editor: Nicole Burns-Ascue
Copy Editor: Melinda Masson
Typesetter: C&M Digitals (P) Ltd.
Proofreader: Rae-Ann Goodwin
Indexer: Integra
Graphic Designer: Scott Van Atta
Marketing Manager: Melissa Duclos

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 9781071956076

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

26 27 28 29 30 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

List of Figures, Tables, and Companion Website Contents xv

Foreword xxi

Preface xxvii

Acknowledgments xxxv

About the Authors xxxvii

Chapter 1: Moving From Academic Language to Academic Languag*ing* 1

Why Our Change in Thinking? Where We Came From and Where We're Going 3

Why Shift to Academic Languaging, and What Does It Entail? 8

What Are the Dimensions of Academic Language? 11

- Discourse Dimension 12
- Sentences Dimension 14
- Words/Phrases Dimension 15
- Symbols Dimension 18

Model Texts as an Instructional Staple 20

- Model Text 1: A Story Problem 22
- Model Text 2: Social Media Etiquette 23
- Model Text 3: Is Artificial Intelligence Biased Against Minoritized Students? 25

Chapter Summary 29

Extensions 29

- For Reflection 29
- For Action 29
- Resources 30

Chapter 2: Anchors for Teaching Multilingual Learners 32

Introduction 32

1. Valuing and Maintaining Students' Multiple Languages and Cultures 34
2. Learning From Our Students 34
3. Connecting to Students' Lives and Experiences 37
4. Becoming Aware of the Language We Use 40
5. Making Language Visible to Students 42
6. Using Linguistically and Culturally Sustaining Practices 45
7. Carving Opportunities for Translanguaging 46
8. Developing Linguistic and Cultural Consciousness Through Metalinguistic and Metacultural Awareness 50
9. Strengthening Language Development Within Content Learning 52
10. Applying Academic Languaging as a Transformative Priority 54

Chapter Summary 55

Extensions 56

- For Reflection 56
- For Action 56
- Resources 57

Chapter 3: Academic Languag*ing* for Language Arts 58

Introduction 60

Language Development, Language Arts, and Structured Literacy 60

Literacy for Multilingual Learners 61

- Structured Literacy or the Science of Reading for Multilingual Learners 64
- Literacy 65
- From Literacy to Biliteracy for Multilingual Learners 66
- From Biliteracy to Multiliteracies 68

Current Perspectives on Teaching and Learning Language Arts for Multilingual Learners 69

Implementing Language Arts Through the Lens of Multilingual Learners 70
Infusing Linguistic and Cultural Sustainability Into the Language Arts Curriculum 72
Facilitating Meaningful Discussion in the Language Arts Classroom 75
Considerations in Teaching and Learning Language Arts for Multilingual Learners 76
The Contribution of the Standards Movement to Literacy Development 76
Professional Organizations' Position Statements on Literacy and Multilingual Learners 79
The Language for Language Arts 80
Discourse 81
Sentences 81
Words/Phrases 82
Symbols 82
Using Model Texts in the Language Arts Classroom 83
Model Text 1: The Story of Chicano Park, a Historical Narrative 84
Model Text 2: An Adventure of Two Breadcrumbs, a Fictional Narrative 88
Analysis of the Model Texts According to the Dimensions of Academic Language 89
Strategies for Moving Language Arts Learning Forward With Multilingual Learners 90
Chapter Summary 91
Extensions 92
For Reflection 92
For Action 92
Resources 92
Chapter 4: Academic Languag*ing* for Mathematics 94
Introduction 96
Current Perspectives on Teaching and Learning Mathematics for Multilingual Learners 96
Eight Standards for Mathematical Practice 96

Language-Responsive Mathematics Teaching 98
Meaningful Discussions in the Mathematics Classroom 100
The Language for Mathematics 102
Discourse 104
Sentences 105
Words/Phrases 106
Symbols 109
Using Model Texts in the Mathematics Classroom 109
Model Text 1: Lower Elementary Word Problem 110
Supporting Elementary Students With Word Problems 111
Model Text 2: Grade 6 STEM Assignment—Pollution Project 113
Languaging Plays a Critical Role in STEM 114
Strategies for Moving Mathematics Learning Forward With Multilingual Learners 115
Supporting and Expecting Mathematical Competence in Your Multilingual Learners 115
Using and Linking Multiple Representations 116
Orchestrating Intentional Talk With Talk Moves 117
Collaborating With Other Educators 118
Chapter Summary 118
Extensions 119
For Reflection 119
For Action 119
Resources 122

Chapter 5: Academic Languaging for Social Studies 124

Introduction 126
Current Perspectives on Teaching and Learning Social Studies for Multilingual Learners 126
The C3 Framework 126
The Uniqueness of Social Studies Content 129
Connecting Social Studies Instruction to Student Experiences 130
The Language for Social Studies 132
Discourse 132
Sentences 135

Words/Phrases 136
Symbols 139
Using Model Texts in the Social Studies Classroom 141
Model Text 1: Grade 1 Social Studies Textbook—Family Budget 141
Supporting Grade 1 Students' Access to This Material 143
Model Text 2: Grade 5 Project—Exploring Colonial Life Through Primary Sources 144
Supporting Grade 5 Students to Complete This Project 147
Strategies for Moving Social Studies Learning Forward With Multilingual Learners 147
Relating Large-Scale Historical Events to Local Lives 147
Modeling Oral Language 150
Making Text Features Visible 152
Chapter Summary 153
Extensions 154
For Reflection 154
For Action 154
Resources 155

Chapter 6: Academic Languag*ing* for Science 156

Introduction 158
Current Perspectives on Teaching and Learning Science for Multilingual Learners 158
Attending to Science and Engineering Practices 159
Promoting Multilingual Learner Identity in Science 161
Including Students' Languages and Cultures in Science 163
Connecting the Science Curriculum to the Local Environment 166
Facilitating Meaningful Oral Discussion in the Science Classroom 168
Fostering Linguistic and Culturally Responsive Science Teaching 171
The Language for Science 172
Discourse 173
Sentences 174
Words/Phrases 175
Symbols 176

Using Model Texts in Science 177
Model Text 1: A Personalized Scientific Narrative 177
Model Text 2: A Sequential Explanation Based on a Recipe 179
Strategies for Moving Science Learning Forward With Multilingual Learners 181
Emphasize Student Interaction 181
Make Phenomena Authentic, Meaningful, and Accessible Through Multimodalities 182
Integrate the Language for Science and the Content of Science 183
Chapter Summary 184
Extensions 185
For Reflection 185
For Action 185
Resources 187

Chapter 7: Taking a Dynamic Stance: Academic Languag*ing* for Multilingual Learners and Educators 188

Prominent Trends Leading to Academic Languaging 189
Multiliteracies and Multimodalities 189
The Power of Dual Language Education 197
Student Agency 199
Revisiting the Anchors for Academic Languaging 202
Chapter Summary 207
Extensions 208
For Reflection 208
For Action 208

References **209**

Index **225**

Visit the companion website at
https://companion.corwin.com/courses/Academic-Languaging
for downloadable resources.

List of Figures, Tables, and Companion Website Contents

Chapter 1

Figure 1.1:	The Power of Words	1
Figure 1.2:	A Bilingual Welcoming Poster in an Elementary Classroom	2
Figure 1.3:	Features Contributing to Multilingual Learners' Identities	5
Figure 1.4:	The Larger Context of Academic Languaging	9
Figure 1.5:	A Social Studies Article	10
Figure 1.6:	Circle-Spoke Diagram for the Latin Root *Press*	17
Figure 1.7:	Examples of Symbols Across Content Areas	18
Table 1.1:	Inquiry-Based Learning Framing the Four Dimensions of Academic Language/Languaging	11
Table 1.2:	Examples of Genre-Based Discourses by Content Area	12
Table 1.3:	Examples of Genre-Based Discourses Across Formats	13
Table 1.4:	Examples of Grammatical Features by Content Area	15
Table 1.5:	Cognates in Five Different Languages	16
Table 1.6:	Ideas for Designing Linguistic and Culturally Sustaining Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment With Embedded Academic Languaging	27

Chapter 2

Figure 2.1:	Quilt With a House	44
Figure 2.2:	Examples of Translanguaging From Different Countries and Contexts	47
Table 2.1:	Types of Student Information and Words of Caution	35
Table 2.2:	Oksana's Funds of Knowledge Inventory	38
Table 2.3:	Forms of Community Cultural Wealth	39

Table 2.4: From Deficit- to Asset-Based Approaches 46

Table 2.5: Linguistic and Cultural Accessibility for Multilingual Learners: A Rating Scale 50

Table 2.6: A Continuum of Instructional Models Illustrating the Progressive Use and Development of Multiple Languages 57

Chapter 3

Figure 3.1: Prominent Literacy Perspectives Over the Decades 62

Figure 3.2: Configurations of Early Literacy for Multilingual Learners 63

Figure 3.3: From Structured Literacy to Multiliteracies: An Additive Model of Literacy Orientations for Multilingual Learners 65

Figure 3.4: Hasta La Bahia!! 84

Figure 3.5: Bread at the Bakery 88

Table 3.1: Comparison Among Features of Language Development, Language Arts, and Structured Literacy 60

Table 3.2: Student Engagement in Literacy: Reading, Writing, Listening/Speaking, and Thinking in the Language Arts Classroom 70

Table 3.3: How Does Your School or District Rate in Terms of Its Linguistic and Cultural Sustainability? 73

Table 3.4: Comparing Features of Language Arts Standards and Language Development Standards 77

Chapter 4

Figure 4.1: *Matemáticas* in Ida Crocamo-Farley's Dual Language Middle School Classroom 96

Figure 4.2: Engaging With the Language for Mathematics 103

Figure 4.3: Finding *x* vs. Solving for *x* 107

Figure 4.4: Model Text 1: A Story Problem 110

Figure 4.5: Model Text 2: A STEM Assignment 114

Figure 4.6: Flag of Brazil 120

Figure 4.7: My Math Autobiography 121

Table 4.1: Types of Vocabulary and Examples 108

Table 4.2: Key Words and Phrases Used in Mathematics Problems 108
Table 4.3: Example 1 of Step-by-Step Word Problem Strategies 112
Table 4.4: Example 2 of Step-by-Step Word Problem Strategies 112
Table 4.5: Mathematics Talk Moves, Examples, and Purpose 117

Chapter 5

Figure 5.1: Students in Giovanna Frederick's Classroom Preparing a Presentation on *Recursos Energéticos* 128
Figure 5.2: Key Words and Sentence Frames for Compare/Contrast and *Comparar/Contrastar* 136
Figure 5.3: Peace Symbols From Around the World 139
Figure 5.4: Model Text 1: Grade 1 Social Studies Textbook—Family Budget 142
Figure 5.5: Model Text 2: Grade 5 Project—Exploring Colonial Life Through Primary Sources 145
Table 5.1: Potentially Sensitive Topics in Social Studies for Multilingual Learners 130
Table 5.2: Challenges Presented by Social Studies Textbooks and Materials for Multilingual Learners 134
Table 5.3: The Variety of Text Types Used in Social Studies Instruction 134
Table 5.4: Number of Words by Content Area and Grade-Level Band 136
Table 5.5: Examples of Polysemous Words in Social Studies 137
Table 5.6: Negative Prefixes 138
Table 5.7: Selected U.S. Patriotic Symbols 140
Table 5.8: Model Text 2: Tasks and Text Types Involved in the Project 146
Table 5.9: Modeling Academic Languaging 151
Table 5.10: Examples of Different Kinds of Text Features Found in Social Studies Texts 152

Chapter 6

Figure 6.1: I Want to Be a Flower 177
Figure 6.2: Eating Ice Cream . . . Just Like the Astronauts! 179
Figure 6.3: Periodic Table of the Elements 186

Table 6.1: Uncovering Content and Language in the Science and Engineering Practices 160

Table 6.2: Science Identity in the Denver Public Schools' Science Evaluation Tool 162

Table 6.3: Scientific Design Principles for Multilingual Learners 165

Table 6.4: Standards-Referenced Language Expectations for Explanations and Example Topics 169

Table 6.5: Deconstructing an Argument Into Sentences Illustrative of Claims, Reasons, and Evidence 175

Table 6.6: Examples of Compound Phrases in Science 176

Table 6.7: Coupling Key Language Uses With Examples From the Science Classroom 184

Chapter 7

Figure 7.1: Seal of Biliteracy 199

Figure 7.2: Moving From Teacher-Directed to Student-Driven Teaching and Learning: The Students' Role in the Process 199

Figure 7.3: Pathways Leading to Linguistic and Cultural Sustainability 204

Table 7.1: Depicting Academic Languaging Across the Content Areas 189

Table 7.2: Applying Multimodalities Across the Content Areas as a Springboard for Academic Languaging 191

Table 7.3: Exerting Student Agency in Teaching and Learning 200

Table 7.4: Anchors for Academic Languaging in the Content Areas 206

Companion Website Contents

Please visit https://companion.corwin.com/courses/Academic-Languaging to download the following resources:

Figure 1.6: Circle-Spoke Diagram for the Latin Root *Press*

Table 1.6: Ideas for Designing Linguistic and Culturally Sustaining Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment With Embedded Academic Languaging

Table 2.5: Linguistic and Cultural Accessibility for Multilingual Learners: A Rating Scale

Table 3.3: How Does Your School or District Rate in Terms of Its Linguistic and Cultural Sustainability?

Table 4.2: Key Words and Phrases Used in Mathematics Problems

Table 5.2: Challenges Presented by Social Studies Textbooks and Materials for Multilingual Learners

Table 5.9: Modeling Academic Languaging

Table 6.7: Coupling Key Language Uses With Examples From the Science Classroom

Table 7.2: Applying Multimodalities Across the Content Areas as a Springboard for Academic Languaging

Table 7.3: Exerting Student Agency in Teaching and Learning

Table 7.4: Anchors for Academic Languaging in the Content Areas

Foreword

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, equipping multilingual learners with the skills necessary for academic and life success has never been more important. As our classrooms become increasingly diverse, there is a growing need to reimagine our lingering ways of understanding and teaching what has traditionally been called academic language.

A clear and useful definition of academic language has eluded us for decades. Sure, we have used definitions such as a set of terms, grammar rules, and discourse moves that help students engage in academic tasks in school. And for many years we have taught language as a set of linguistic terms and skills to learn, much like the long lists of standards in other disciplines. And yet, teaching academic language as a list of terms, rules, and skills, in a nutshell, has not worked well enough.

What we have needed is a comprehensive yet practical guide for moving from teaching academic language as a static collection of things and skills to empowering students to use language for academic and professional purposes. We need to shift from static to dynamic, from rigid to fluid, from piling up to building up, and from learning academic language to "academic languaging." What we have needed is in this book.

Why change our framework for thinking about academic language development? Because our students are deep and dynamic; their linguistic and cultural resources are rich and varied. Our classrooms are filled with learners who bring unique experiences and languages, and so our approach must change. Yes, our approach must change—we must reimagine the contexts and purposes for which students use language in school. We must, as the authors of this book argue, view language development as a social and collaborative process, deeply intertwined with the ways students interact with the world.

Historically, educators have taught academic language formulaically, focusing on academic vocabulary lists, grammar activities, and sentence frames, stems, and starters. Such methods tend to overlook the broader, more holistic ways in which students use language to think, express themselves, and engage with content. The approach presented in this book acknowledges where we have come from, but takes us to the next level—toward teaching practices that value students' existing linguistic

repertoires, encourage their active engagement with language, and build bridges between home and school cultures. In doing so, this approach empowers students, particularly multilingual learners, to use language creatively and critically across disciplines.

Effective use of academic language holds immense power in the realms of education and professional communication. It serves as a key to understanding complex concepts and facilitating the exchange of knowledge in a precise, effective manner. Unlike everyday conversational language, academic language is characterized by a more structured, formal, and specific nature, designed to communicate ideas clearly and unambiguously. When students and educators use academic language, they are not merely sharing information—they are engaging in a process of collaborative meaning-making, wherein ideas are constructed, refined, and elevated.

One of the fundamental strengths of academic language is its ability to articulate complex ideas succinctly. In subjects like science, mathematics, or social studies, the vocabulary, syntax, and text structures associated with academic discourse help convey intricate theories and relationships that tend not to be as clearly explained using more casual variations of language. For example, the use of precise and abstract terms such as *hypothesis*, *theorem*, or *economic disparity* allows for a shared understanding among those familiar with the subject, ensuring that the message is received as intended. This specificity minimizes ambiguity and allows for more effective discussions, arguments, and explorations of academic content.

Academic language also empowers its users to participate in scholarly conversations, both in and out of the classroom. Students become better equipped to argue effectively, analyze critically, and synthesize information across disciplines. This capability not only enhances their academic performance but also prepares them for professional environments where precise and complex communication is essential.

Students who improve in their uses of academic language(s) develop the confidence and agency to engage meaningfully with peers, educators, and experts, making their voices heard in discussions that shape knowledge and understanding. This confidence reinforces and accelerates students' uses of language to construct and communicate more complex ideas.

Finally, the ability to communicate using academic language is a matter of equity. In a world where educational and professional opportunities can vary widely, providing students with the tools to understand and employ different registers of language equips them to succeed in

academic and professional spheres. It offers every learner the chance to access challenging content and express their unique ideas clearly. When multilingual learners, for example, are taught to communicate using academic language, they are empowered to read, write, and participate in discussions that might otherwise feel overwhelming. Academic language becomes not just a means of communication but a vehicle for inclusion, opportunity, and academic advancement.

How do students achieve the proficiency, gain the accesses, and build the confidences described in the previous paragraphs? By engaging in academic languaging.

Academic languaging is an action-centered approach to using language that emphasizes the dynamic and engaged participation of multilingual learners in constructing and communicating academic ideas. It is grounded in sociocultural perspectives that see language use as purposeful and practical. From this perspective, students are viewed as active contributing members of their community, whose voices, experiences, and cultural backgrounds enrich the learning environment. This understanding empowers students with agency and autonomy, allowing them to take ownership of their learning and confidently express their ideas.

Academic languaging in the classroom encourages students to engage in academic tasks that are meaningful and pique their interest, enabling them to be motivated and invested in their learning process. An action-based mindset is central to this approach, where language is seen as doing. This means that language learning involves the whole person—the mind, the body, emotions, and all the senses. Students are encouraged to use language collaboratively, co-constructing a range of meanings and products such as written texts, multimedia presentations, and research projects that reflect their understanding, deep thinking, and creativity.

In this approach, educators embrace the contributions of students' families and communities, recognizing their rich cultural and linguistic backgrounds as valuable building blocks for the big ideas they are constructing. By integrating these lived experiences into the classroom, students can see their identities reflected and valued, which fosters a deeper sense of belonging and confidence. Academic languaging thus becomes a way of empowering students to participate fully and effectively in academic and community life, using language as a tool for meaningful action and expression.

Chapter 1 lays the groundwork by challenging traditional limited definitions of academic language. The authors introduce the concept of academic languaging as an active, flexible process that adapts to the context

and needs of the learner. By reframing academic language as something situational and purposeful, this chapter provides a fresh lens through which we can better understand and support the evolving linguistic capabilities of our students.

In Chapter 2 the focus shifts to practical strategies that serve as foundational anchors in classrooms. These teaching and learning anchors not only guide educators in planning and instruction but also ensure that multilingual learners are engaged and active participants in their educational journey. From scaffolding techniques to culturally responsive teaching practices, this chapter emphasizes the need for educators to create supportive environments where students' linguistic and cultural assets are recognized and valued.

Chapter 3 explores how to foster a deep appreciation of literature and writing while supporting students' language development. It provides techniques for teaching reading comprehension, literary analysis, and writing in ways that make complex texts more accessible to multilingual learners. By emphasizing the graceful interplay between academic language and content, the chapter demonstrates how teachers can help students build their linguistic skills while engaging meaningfully with the language arts curriculum.

Chapter 4 addresses the specific challenges that multilingual learners face in mathematics classrooms. Understanding mathematical concepts requires a strong grasp of academic vocabulary and discourse. This chapter offers strategies for breaking down language barriers in mathematics instruction, making abstract concepts clearer, and encouraging students to articulate their reasoning. By cultivating language development in mathematics lessons, teachers create inclusive classrooms where all students have the opportunity to excel.

In Chapter 5 the authors emphasize the importance of connecting historical, cultural, and social content to students' lived experiences. This chapter provides methods for helping multilingual learners make sense of historical narratives, analyze primary sources, and participate in critical discussions. By situating academic language within real-world contexts, educators make social studies content relevant and accessible, empowering students to become informed and engaged citizens.

Chapter 6 helps educators leverage the powerful intersection of language and science education. Science is a discipline rich with specialized vocabulary and complex processes, which can be daunting for multilingual learners. This chapter offers strategies for making scientific language come alive for students, using language-rich strategies such as visuals,

hands-on experiments, and collaborative learning opportunities. By promoting inquiry-based learning and emphasizing the language of scientific discourse, educators can ignite students' curiosity while supporting their language development.

Finally, Chapter 7 brings together the key concepts and strategies discussed throughout the book. It encourages educators to adopt a dynamic, growth-oriented approach to teaching multilingual learners, one that is responsive to students' needs and informed by ongoing reflection and professional development. This chapter serves as a call to action, inviting educators to continue learning, adapting, and advocating for the needs of multilingual students in an ever-changing educational landscape. And in many cases, it is a call for a major overhaul of the existing static, sterile, and unempowering curriculums and instructional practices that are not valuing many multilingual students during the precious little time they spend with us in school.

This book is a testament to the power of language and the role it plays in shaping educational outcomes. It is a reminder that language is not just a tool for communication but a vital component of learning and identity. The strategies and insights provided here are grounded in extensive research yet are deeply practical, offering a road map for educators who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of all students.

Whatever your past or current connection is to the development of academic language proficiency, this book will inspire and equip you to create classrooms where multilingual learners can thrive. It will challenge you to rethink traditional approaches to language development and embrace a more holistic, dynamic model that recognizes and celebrates the linguistic diversity of our students.

—Jeff Zwiers, EdD

Preface

Why This Book Now, and For Whom Is It Intended?

Since the 1980s, the notion of academic language has been prominent in the K–12 educational landscape. However, it has taken on divergent interpretations, especially in discussions involving the language development of multilingual learners. In large part, academic language has tended to be perceived as and associated with the following:

- Language of textbooks
- Language of grade-level materials
- Language of literacy
- Language of content area assessment
- Language of school success
- Language of power

Academic language has also been linked to the idea that in elementary and secondary classrooms each content area has precise technical language, including specialized vocabulary, phrases, and discourses. Case in point—when you refer to metamorphosis, multiple regression analysis, or protagonists in fairy tales, there is an unequivocable connection with the specific subjects of science, mathematics (statistics), and language arts, respectively. However, as we elaborate, that is just one facet of this complex construct.

It is time to recognize that students' worlds extend beyond school and to accept learning as an expression of students' entire lived experiences. Multilingual learners' homes and communities also influence their language choices, and these contexts are inclusive of academic language. Said another way, we must abandon the elitism associated with school language as the sole purveyor of complex ideas and grammar and open conceptual space for leveraging multilingual learners' home language varieties (MacSwan, 2020).

Over a decade ago, our Academic Language in Diverse Classrooms book series (Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2013a, 2013b, 2014) highlighted the role of academic language in curricula, instruction, and assessment. Developed

in the context of the newly released Common Core State Standards, the series offered evidence-based practical examples of how teachers could support academic language development across grade levels, content areas, and diverse learner groups. Now, 12 years later, in reexamining academic language, we have chosen to expand and represent it not as a static concept but as an agentive ongoing process by multilingual learners who employ their full linguistic repertoires. Hence, we take on the active form of languaging. This reconceptualized approach empowers students to take ownership of their learning and engage in language practices that are meaningful to their unique identities and strengths.

It is now the mid-2020s. The construct of academic language in relation to instruction for multilingual learners has broadened and become more sophisticated. The once almost exclusive monoglossic stance that adheres to monolingualism (English) as the only viable route to learning in the U.S. context has slowly been eroding. As an educational community, we have come to embrace the assets of our students along with their multilingual multicultural resources. We have moved to valuing the knowledge of multiple languages (a heteroglossic stance) and acknowledging bi-/multilingualism as the norm (Gottlieb & Honigsfeld, 2025; Seltzer & de los Ríos, 2021). In doing so, we accept academic language as not being exclusively associated with English; all other languages and language varieties enhance our understanding of the language patterns of our multilingual learners. Additionally, the credence of translanguaging, or the natural dynamic flow and interchange of languages, as a bona fide communication mode has added to our notion of academic languaging.

The increasing recognition of the benefits of dual language educational programs as an effective model for educating multilingual learners has contributed to its growing popularity worldwide. While this trend continues in the United States, the participation of multilingual learners varies based on state, district, and school policies. Instructional models range along a continuum from English-only instruction, whose intent is to accelerate English language development, to dual language programs, where the primary goal is to foster and maintain biliteracy and bilingualism. Regardless of the instructional model, language development is essential to, and to be integrated into, the education of multilingual learners.

Throughout the book, we offer ways to support and incorporate multimodalities—or multiple means of expression, such as kinesthetics, graphics, and visual representation in addition to oral and written text—into instruction to optimize multilingual learners' accessibility to content. For example, we view art as a medium for students to express their language and cultural heritage as well as being integral to science, technology,

engineering, and mathematics (STEAM). With today's increasing heterogeneity of multilingual learners, we encourage the integration of the arts and also suggest the interweaving of social and emotional learning within language, literacy, and content area instruction (Calderón & Montenegro, 2022).

Audiences

Given all these potential shifts in thinking, the overarching purpose for writing this book is quite straightforward—to add clarity, primarily for teachers, future teachers, coaches, administrators, and teacher educators, as to what comprises language learning through an academic languaging lens as seen through the eyes of the content areas. Our attention is on classroom teachers, content area specialists, and language specialists, often working in collaboration, who are responsible for instructing or coteaching language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in K–12 settings. We also recognize the important role of counselors, social workers, bilingual family liaisons, and even psychologists and social workers in the education and support of multilingual learners and how their specializations can add to the linguistic and cultural richness of schooling. They, too, can contribute to the central tenet of academic languaging—that is, encouraging students to make decisions and become agents of their own learning.

Our invitation for adopting academic languaging is open to all educators, from monolingual, to bilingual, to multilingual; the only requirement is that you come with a multilingual multicultural strengths-based mindset. With academic languaging, there is acceptance of all varieties of language; there is not one register with greater recognition or more correctness, nor is there one culture that is valued over another. What's most important is that you advocate for all your multilingual learners (and their families) and defend their right to maintain their languages, cultures, and identities as they develop English and become drivers of their own learning.

We encourage teachers to collaborate in grade-level or department teams, offer topics of interest for their professional learning communities, or form communities of practice to share resources and find inspiration in creating and connecting ideas. Together, educators can engage in deep discussion and come to a common understanding of how multilingual learners and their families can enrich every classroom and school. From a strengths-based perspective, the schoolwide community can then formulate and adopt policies that highlight the beauty and benefit of centering academic languaging as a core instructional practice.

So, what might you do to consolidate and highlight a student's linguistic, cultural, and experiential learning at home with that at school? How might you introduce and sustain academic languaging so that in gaining agency students also take action? How might you convince your colleagues that multilingual learners can take the initiative to engage in deep learning and share it with others?

Here are some suggested strategies to set the tone for academic languaging illustrated throughout the book:

- Frame learning within sociocultural contexts familiar to the students.
- Ensure linguistic and cultural relevance in every lesson and unit of learning.
- Encourage student-to-student interaction, including translanguaging, as an everyday classroom activity.
- Incorporate multimodalities (e.g., videos, multimedia, kinesthetics, graphics, artifacts) seamlessly into instruction and assessment to optimize student access to content.
- Invite students to make increasingly more complex language choices.
- Facilitate ways for students to express their perspectives.
- Instill curiosity and motivate students to delve into inquiry.
- Co-construct with students evidence for learning that is personally meaningful.
- Set clear high expectations and achievable goals with all students.

How This Book Is Organized

Chapters 1, 2, and 7 lay the groundwork for and summarize our approach to academic languaging, drawing on both theoretical insights and practical applications. Between these bookends are Chapters 3 through 6, each one addressing a different content area and following a structured format that exemplifies how academic languaging can be integrated into content learning using evidence-based strategies.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of how the concept of academic language has evolved over time and present a rationale for shifting from "academic language" to "academic languaging." We then explore the dimensions of academic languaging, including discourse, sentences,

words/phrases, and symbols. The chapter concludes with a discussion of model texts as an essential instructional tool for dissecting language within content.

Chapter 2 focuses on 10 anchors that provide a framework to guide our work with multilingual learners. These anchors ultimately treat academic languaging as critical, representing a continuous process that draws on multilingual learners' lived experiences, their linguistic and cultural identities, and their interactions at home and school.

Chapter 3 centers on language and literacy development, marking the first of four chapters dedicated to enacting academic languaging in content area classrooms. After an overview of three interconnected language-related fields—language development, language arts, and structured literacy—the chapter discusses how multilingual learners can be advantaged in developing biliteracy and multiliteracies.

Chapter 4 examines current perspectives on teaching and learning mathematics for multilingual learners and highlights the role of academic languaging in mathematics classrooms. It reviews the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice and their applicability to multilingual learners, suggests teaching strategies for language-responsive mathematics instruction, and offers recommendations for fostering meaningful interaction among students. Following a discussion of the dimensions of academic languaging for mathematics, the chapter analyzes two model texts: a story problem and a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) assignment that illustrate how everyday mathematics tasks can be confounded by linguistic and cultural nuances.

Chapter 5 addresses the challenges posed by the disciplines that comprise social studies for multilingual learners, as well as the diverse perspectives and personal histories these "citizens of the world" bring to the classroom. A central theme of this chapter is the importance of understanding your students and making social studies instruction relevant and meaningfully connected to their families and lives.

Chapter 6 presents academic languaging as a tool for students to take the initiative to build knowledge and take action to solve complex scientific and engineering problems, fostering personal confidence and agency. We illustrate how authenticity, in combination with linguistic and cultural relevance in a practice-oriented classroom, creates a supportive and motivating environment for students to pursue language and science learning.

Chapter 7 revisits academic languaging as a vehicle for students to make choices and take meaningful action, emphasizing their gaining of personal

confidence and agency in the process. We close by focusing on three critical areas with potential impact on multilingual learners and their future: translanguaging, dual language education, and student agency.

Features

Several features stand out in this book. First, we highlight **Model Texts** as tools to support multilingual learners in their oral language and literacy development. These texts—whether excerpts, assignments, or story problems—demonstrate how language features function within specific content areas. In analyzing these examples, teachers can identify linguistic patterns along with potential cultural and/or linguistic challenges students might face.

Chapter 1 presents and analyzes three model texts while Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 offer two model texts each followed by teaching strategies connecting language and content to help students engage in learning. Additionally, Chapter 1 and the four content area chapters (i.e., Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6) offer descriptions and examples of the dimensions of academic language—discourse, sentences, words/phrases, and symbols. As will become clear, academic languaging is not a collection of discrete items or features for students to memorize but a process in which students actively participate as they develop into competent language users and successful content area learners. Thus, academic languaging encompasses cultural knowledge, including "ways of being in the world, ways of acting, thinking, interacting, valuing, believing, speaking, and sometimes writing and reading, connected to particular identities and social roles" (Gee, 1992, p. 73).

In addition, each chapter offers activities or questions that invite readers to reflect on the material (**Stop and Think**). There is also a **Look Closer** box that suggests additional resources, links, and references.

Finally, each chapter concludes with a **Chapter Summary**, followed by a section titled **Extensions**, which includes two subsections: **For Reflection** and **For Action**. These subsections aim to foster deeper thinking (reflection) and encourage readers to apply the material independently or collaboratively with peers (action). Finally, the **Resources** section offers a list of additional references or links related to chapter topics.

Academic Languaging is poised to become an essential resource for K–12 educators working with multilingual learners, demonstrating how to embed language into key content areas—language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies—in actionable ways. We argue that all teachers

should recognize and affirm academic languaging as an active process shaped by multilingual learners' lived experiences and social interactions, not just their engagement with texts and materials. As the population of multilingual learners continues to grow, this book is an indispensable addition to every educator's library, supporting students in becoming active agents of their own learning in an increasingly digital world.

Acknowledgments

We are deeply grateful to teachers, students, and their families for welcoming us into their classrooms and communities and sharing their expertise and experiences. Their dedication, resilience, and commitment to multilingual students are at the core of our thinking on academic languaging.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our editor, Megan Bedell, for her support throughout this project and to our content development manager, Lucas Schleicher, for his thoughtful timely feedback, helpful suggestions, and meticulous attention to detail. We are also grateful to our senior project editor, Nicole Burns-Ascue, for her guidance and steady support throughout the journey of this book's production and to Melinda Masson, copy editor, whose sharp eye and commitment to precision brought clarity to our work. We also wish to express our appreciation to Natalie Delpino, senior editorial assistant and Rae-Ann Goodwin, proofreader, for their invaluable assistance in preparing the manuscript for publication. Lastly, our thanks to Melissa Duclos, senior marketing manager, for her vision and suggestions for reaching diverse audiences.

A special thanks goes to Arthur Slavit for creating key illustrations and icons featured in the book, to Steven J. Morrison for his photographs, to Melissa Sifuentes Phillips for her beautiful bilingual welcome poster in Chapter 1, and to artist Sandra Q. Miller for her bright handmade quilt in Chapter 2. Additionally, we thank Dr. David Slavit for his feedback on several aspects of the mathematics chapter and to Giovanna Frederick and Ida Crocamo-Farley for allowing us to share photos of their classrooms.

About the Authors

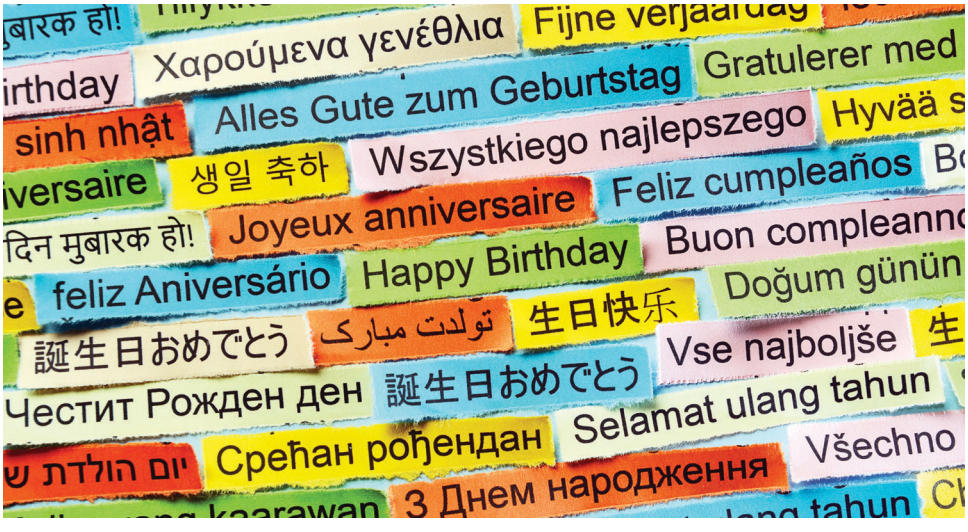
Dr. Gisela Ernst-Slavit (PhD, University of Florida) is a professor emerita at Washington State University with an active program of research that focuses on how students and teachers use languaging to construct knowledge and to create and maintain a community of learners where members' languages and cultures are acknowledged and validated. Gisela is a native from Peru who grew up languaging in Spanish, German, and English. She is the author, coauthor, or coeditor of 12 books and over 100 articles and chapters, and she frequently speaks at regional, national, and international conferences on multilingual learner education, with a particular focus on teacher preparation for multilingual youth. Gisela has been a visiting professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, has served as president of the Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages, and has held leadership roles in several professional organizations, including the American Educational Research Association, the Council of Anthropology and Education, and TESOL International Association.

Dr. Margo Gottlieb (PhD, University of Illinois Chicago) has been a bilingual teacher, coordinator, facilitator, consultant, and mentor across K–20 settings. Having worked with universities, organizations, governments, states, school districts, networks, and schools across the United States and internationally, Margo has co-constructed linguistic and culturally sustainable curriculum and reconceptualized classroom assessment, policy, and practice. As cofounder and lead developer of WIDA at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2003, Margo helped design and contributed to all the editions of WIDA's English and Spanish language development standards frameworks and their derivative products. She has been appointed to national and state advisory boards, served as a Fulbright Senior Scholar, was honored by TESOL International Association for her significant contribution to the field, and was recently inducted into the inaugural class of the Multilingual Education Hall of Fame, receiving a Multilingual Education Medal of Honor by Summit K12–NABE. Having authored, coauthored, or coedited over 100 publications, including 22 books, Margo's third edition of *Assessing Multilingual Learners: Bridges to Empowerment* (2024a) and *Collaborative Assessment for Multilingual Learners and Teachers: Pathways to Partnerships* (with A. Honigsfeld, 2025) are the latest additions to her Corwin compendium.

1 Moving From Academic Language to Academic Languag*ing*

Anyone who has visited Planet Word, a Smithsonian museum in Washington, DC, will have witnessed language in action, demonstrated in interactive boards with individuals from around the world describing differences between their languages and English, audio coupled with video vividly illustrating through Technicolor the borrowing of English words from multiple language families, and a hypothetical library doubled in size through mirrors—all made possible through innovative technology. These exhibits remind us of the power of language, such as the display in Figure 1.1, and its constant evolution through translingualism, the crisscrossing and continuous interaction among languages as they come in contact with each other and interconnect.

Figure 1.1 The Power of Words



Source: iStock.com/ivosar

Academic languaging, although associated with ongoing technological advancement, is much more—it is a human activity all about the negotiation of language(s) for specific purposes that is crafted for particular audiences and uses. In essence, in this book we concentrate on the interaction among K–12 students, viewing the construct through the lens of multilingual learners. This interest group has been most impacted by and historically criticized for their absence of expression of academic language in English, and we wish to rectify this misunderstanding. And so we initiate our discussion of academic languaging with Figure 1.2, sharing the warmth of a welcoming classroom filled with multilingual voices.

Figure 1.2 A Bilingual Welcoming Poster in an Elementary Classroom

Source: Melissa Sifuentes Phillips

Multilingual learners, a broad heterogeneous, ever-increasing, and expansive group of students, have the distinction of having been or currently being exposed to multiple languages at home, in the community, and/or at school, thus having access and opportunity to communicate in two or more languages (Hornberger, 1990). A subset of multilingual learners whose English language proficiency precludes them from full participation in classrooms where English is the medium of instruction are often labeled English learners. Per federal legislation, these students—many of whom were born and have been raised in the United States, and some of whom have been dually identified as students with exceptionalities—are eligible for participation in a range of language support services. Other student groups include newcomers to the U.S. educational system, students with interrupted formal schooling, and long-term English learners—all of whom qualify and participate in language programs. We also have

to acknowledge multilingual learners who have been identified as gifted and talented and receive highly capable services.

In large part, multilingual learners retain their multiple languages and cultures although some have been reclassified from designated language programs per their state's regulations. Additionally, there are heritage language learners, including members of Indigenous communities, with oral language proficiency or cultural connections to multiple languages whose overall English language proficiency has met or exceeded state criteria for eligibility. Indeed, multilingual learners are an eclectic heterogeneous mix of students!

All students have the power of language that needs to be nurtured and released; we consider that action academic languaging. Throughout the first two chapters we offer various conceptualizations of academic language and how they might become more student centric and converted to reflect the more personalized term *academic languaging*. Most important, though, is what academic languaging means to you and its implications for your multilingual learners. To what extent are you accepting of your students' personal assets and those from their home environment as part of your definition?

Here is the first of several icons sprinkled throughout the chapters. **Stop and Think** is specifically designed with the idea of reflection in mind. So, take some time to pause and ponder the information at hand and its implications for you, your colleagues, and your multilingual learners.

Stop and Think

What Is the Meaning of Academic Languaging to You and Your Colleagues?

Jot down your conceptualization of academic language and, if you choose, the theorists who have contributed to your thinking. Now, make note of how you might define academic languaging. After each chapter, you might wish to revisit your notes and add how you are being influenced by our writing and moving toward a more academic languaging stance.

Why Our Change in Thinking? Where We Came From and Where We're Going

As we proposed more than a decade ago and reiterate here, the teaching and learning of academic language requires *more* than linguistic knowledge—it also involves cultural knowledge about "ways of being in the world, ways of acting, thinking, interacting, valuing, believing,

speaking, and sometimes writing and reading, connected to particular identities and social roles" (Gee, 1992, p. 73). Ultimately, one important goal for learning academic language is to afford and promote thinking and communicating about issues in more abstract, technical, and deeper ways. "Having teachers and school leaders recognize and incorporate the linguistic and cultural influences of home and community into school enables students to unite their experiential and academic worlds to build their academic language use" (Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014, p. 27).

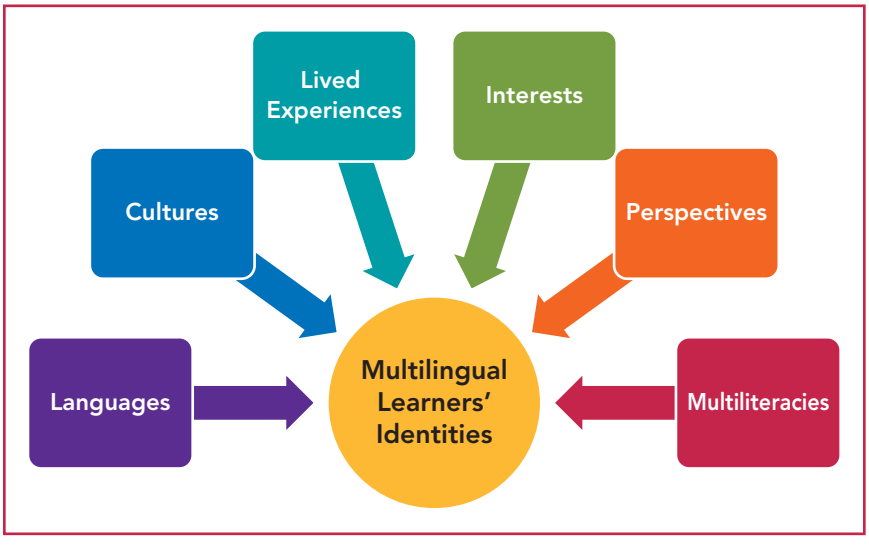
Since then, we have taken a more dynamic action-oriented stance of language that implies language use that relays a specific message, has a specific purpose, and is intended for a specific audience to effect change, thus the term *languaging*. In essence, we tend to think like linguistic anthropologists who see and use language as social action. Action-based teaching centers on promoting student agency and its relation to the development of self and identity (van Lier, 2007) to foster academic languaging.

In an action-oriented approach, language learning is a social practice that considers students as active participants in the (co)construction of knowledge where a variety of social and cultural factors influence teaching and learning. It involves students learning pragmatics (situational language use) to understand the context in which language learning occurs as part of their classroom routine. For example, students need to know when they can ask a question about a classroom presentation, under what circumstances they can use information from artificial intelligence (AI), or when can they speak without raising their hands. This stance of languaging, combining sociocultural and actionable perspectives as the bases for communication, supports language learning as a social practice where talk and interaction are central to human development and learning.

For us, academic languaging implies a more prominent role of students as contributing members of their classroom community—taking the reins, gaining agency, and exerting autonomy as they become confident and competent users of language. Taking an action-based perspective, multilingual learners help in determining, engaging, and reflecting on meaningful activities, such as research, projects, and presentations that pique their interest. Language development is fostered through student interaction in planning, exploring, discussing, and co-constructing a range of products. In this orientation, language learning is more than a cognitive process; it involves the mind, the body, emotions, and all the senses. Viewing language learning within an action-based mindset places the forms (structures) of language in the background while foregrounding language as doing.

In adopting academic languaging as a way of thinking and doing, we no longer envision language dichotomously (as social *or* academic); nor do we confine learning to school, but rather we embrace the contributions of students', families', and communities' "funds of knowledge" (González et al., 2005). Along with valuing students' languages, cultures, traditions, and experiences, we acknowledge how both educators and family members help shape the identities of multilingual learners. In essence, we privilege the resources and assets that constitute multilingual learners' self-definition, self-expression, and self-understanding—that is, their "funds of identity" that are actively used in self-definition (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Features associated with the identities of multilingual learners are highlighted in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3 Features Contributing to Multilingual Learners' Identities



Languaging for multilingual learners is also an empowerment issue across content area learning that can be upheld by inviting students to interact in the language(s) of their choice. We have specifically chosen the term *languaging* for activities that portray language use when communicating with others for distinct purposes. Dynamic languaging—"the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (Swain, 2006, p. 98)—occurs at home, in school, and around the community. Similarly, Diane Larsen-Freeman (2003) challenges the focus on grammar and rules of grammar as a dynamic process, something she calls grammaring. For multilingual learners,

meaning-making can entail the imperfect use of language, dialectal variations, and different varieties of language.

Ultimately, switching from notions of academic language to academic languaging may just be a morphological tweak; however, its implications are huge, allowing educators to notice what multilingual learners can do in more empowering ways (Proctor, 2020). We agree with Sembiante and Tran (2021) who see academic languaging as the "agentive verbal action taken by language users who wield their full linguistic repertoires in functional ways to support the dynamic communicative and literary contexts of schooling" (p. 102).

Several researchers have challenged the notion of academic language over the years, claiming that academic registers are perceived as being more complex, specialized, and sophisticated than nonacademic registers, ultimately privileging white middle-class teaching practices as the default linguistic standard against which multilingual learners are evaluated (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In principle, this raciolinguistic ideology (emanating from the intersections of race, language, and social class) challenges the ever-present white middle-class dominance in schools as schools are increasingly becoming more minoritized with financially impoverished student populations. According to Flores (2020), this racialized ideology frames low-income students as being linguistically deficient and in need of remediation due to their failure to master academic language. In lieu of using "academic language," "language architecture" is suggested as a means of analyzing the literacy demands of state academic content standards, thus enabling students to be language architects capable of manipulating language for specific purposes (Flores, 2020).

Another suggested replacement for "academic language" is the "language of ideas." This reframing of academic language focuses on students' language use when engaging in school-based content area work. It accounts for the linguistic resources that students bring to academic tasks, including their (1) conversational or social language, (2) accomplishments related to academic tasks, and (3) awareness and strategic use of a range of registers for different purposes and audiences (Bunch, 2014; Bunch & Martin, 2021).

There has not been universal acceptance of what constitutes academic language, nor do we expect that there will be agreement on academic languaging. So that you can formulate your own opinion on the discussion at hand, we have inserted an icon of a magnifying glass to signal a set of resources that offers additional references on the topic. The following list is our first one on varying views of academic language over the years.

Look Closer

Contributors to Academic Language

There is a long history in language education that revolves around academic language and how it has evolved into academic languaging. Here are some of the major theorists and researchers who have contributed to the construct, attributed, in large part, to the groundbreaking work of Jim Cummins in the early 1980s.

Bailey, A. L., & Heritage, M. (2008). *Formative assessment for literacy, grades K–6: Building reading and academic language skills across the curriculum*. Corwin.

Bunch, C. B., & Martin, D. (2021). From "academic language" to the "language of ideas": A disciplinary perspective on using language in K–12 settings. *Language and Education*, *35*(1), 1–18.

Cummins, J. (1981). Four misconceptions about language proficiency in bilingual education. *NABE Journal*, *5*(3), 31–45.

Cummins, J. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. In B. Street & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 2. Literacy* (2nd ed., pp. 71–83). Springer Science + Business Media.

Gee, J. P. (1990). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. Falmer Press.

Gibbons, P. (2009). *English learners, academic literacy, and thinking: Learning in the challenge zone*. Heinemann.

Gottlieb, M., & Castro, M. (2017). *Language power: Key uses for accessing content*. Corwin.

Gottlieb, M., & Ernst-Slavit, G. (2014). *Academic language in diverse classrooms: Definitions and contexts*. Corwin.

Scarcella, R. (2003). *Academic English: A conceptual framework* (Technical Report No. 1). University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute.

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2004). *The language of schooling: A functional linguistics perspective*. Erlbaum.

Snow, C. E., & Uccelli, P. (2009). The challenge of academic language. In D. R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of literacy* (pp. 112–133). Cambridge University Press.

Zwiers, J. (2008). *Building academic language: Essential practices for content classrooms*. Jossey-Bass.

Why Shift to Academic Languag*ing*, and What Does It Entail?

As we, a global village, are becoming increasingly affected by advancements in technology—in particular, AI—our named languages are becoming more and more in flux. The shift from *language* to *languaging* involves a subtle yet powerful distinction between views of language as a static object versus languaging as an ongoing process and action. The construct of languaging has its roots in several related and overlapping fields of study including linguistics, applied linguistics (e.g., Swain, 2006), sociolinguistics (e.g., Bloome et al., 2022), and linguistic anthropology (Becker, 1991). The term suggests that "there is no such thing as language, only continual languaging, an activity of human beings in the world" (Becker, 1991). In other words, speaking and writing are themselves language production activities that mediate remembering, attending, and other aspects of higher mental functioning. When we talk or write, our attention is focused on certain objects or ideas and not others; we create artifacts that we can refer back to, challenge, and change—processes that help us to remember and learn.

Based on the preceding conceptualization of languaging, we treat it as an agentive, verbal, or written action taken by language users who employ their full linguistic resources in functional ways to support the dynamic communicative and literary-related contexts of schooling (Proctor et al., 2020; Sembiante & Tian, 2021). This focus serves a threefold purpose. First, and as discussed earlier, a languaging perspective positions students, teachers, and community members and their language practices as inseparable, constantly shaping and reshaping language. Second, the shift from *language* as a noun to *languaging* as a verb moves our understanding of the construct away from prescriptive, fixed, and exclusive notions that have traditionally pervaded in the field to ones that are flexible and dynamic. Finally, this view of academic languaging offers a timely response to recent criticism of academic language that is seen as

- A set of static linguistic forms to be learned (e.g., Flores & Rosa, 2015)
- One that prioritizes white standard linguistic practices (e.g., Paris, 2012)
- More complex and of higher status than nonacademic registers (MacSwan, 2020)
- A tool for segregation and exclusion (e.g., Jensen et al., 2021)

In sum, the shift from a conception of language as a tacit noun to an active verb supports our premise that all educators should view

academic languaging as an ongoing process that draws from and centers the lived experiences of multilingual learners and their interactions with others and different text forms.

You will notice how Figure 1.4 represents multilingual learners' interaction with the world. School, home, and community influences underscore the grounding of multilingual learners' identity formation, agency, and empowerment. The brilliance of the stars, representing the content areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies and science, is filtered through academic languaging, enabling multilingual learners to humanize their learning experiences through multiple languages, literacies, and perspectives.

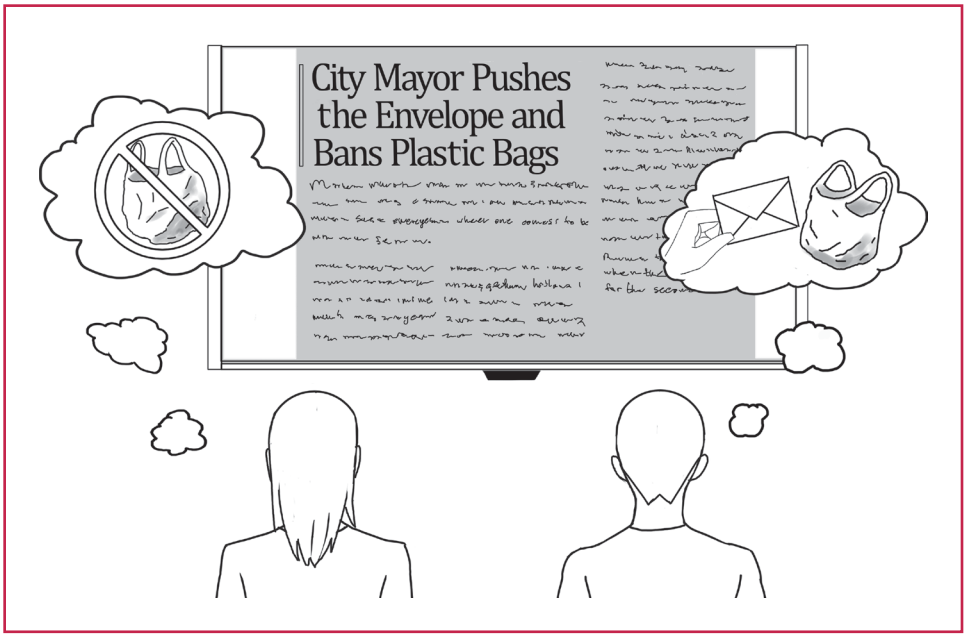
Figure 1.4 The Larger Context of Academic Languaging

Source: Arthur Slavit

A Classroom Example

At the end of her sixth-grade social studies class, Mrs. Baskin announces that tomorrow class will start with a discussion of a brief article published recently in the local newspaper titled "City Mayor Pushes the Envelope and Bans Plastic Bags" while showing a copy of the article on the screen. As the students leave the classroom, Bouzid stares at the screen, a puzzled expression on his face (see Figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5 A Social Studies Article



Source: Arthur Slavit

Stop and Think

What Would You Do?

Bouzid is one of seven multilingual students in Mrs. Baskin's classroom. Before you proceed, take a moment to reflect on how you might introduce this newspaper article to your students and explain the idiomatic expression.

As Figure 1.5 suggests, students proficient in English in this class understood the meaning of the newspaper headline and probably had a sense of what the article is about. On the other hand, for multilingual learners like Bouzid, the headline might not make sense due to the idiomatic expression "pushing the envelope." This idiomatic expression, and others like it, can be puzzling, generating misunderstanding in comprehension because its meaning is different than the sum of the meaning of its single words.

For students growing up in English-speaking homes, such idiomatic expressions form part of their language repertoire and may not need clarification. However, for multilingual learners, who often translate concepts literally, this kind of "opaque language" (Ernst-Slavit & Mason, 2011)

can cloud their understanding. This example reminds us of Bartolomé's (1998) assertion that "even well-intentioned teachers often fail to overtly teach the academic discourses necessary for school success" (p. 3).

Important to highlight is that colloquial and idiomatic expressions are used regularly in oral language discussions and in written contexts (e.g., podcasts, blogs, cartoons, or newspaper headlines). For multilingual learners, colloquialisms and idiomatic expressions are one other aspect of academic languaging to incorporate into their linguistic repertoire.

What Are the Dimensions of Academic Language?

Academic language is the basis for academic languaging. Historically, academic language has been couched within three hierarchical dimensions from discourse, the overall organization of chunks of language (oral or written text); to sentences, one or more words that denote a statement, question, command, or exclamation; to words/phrases, the smallest units of meaningful communication (e.g., A. Bailey & Butler, 2003; Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014; Scarcella, 2003). Sociocultural context, specifying the situation and interaction in which academic language is operationalized, has also been recognized as a critical element in language standards frameworks (WIDA, 2004, 2012, 2020, 2023).

As shown in Table 1.1, academic languaging is grounded in the dimensions of other language frameworks (with the addition of symbols—a multimodal feature); however, it captures an underlying motivation and purpose for language use that makes learning actionable—that is, through student-led

Table 1.1 Inquiry-Based Learning Framing the Four Dimensions of Academic Language/Languaging

Discourse	• Genres • Organization of text • Coherence of ideas
Sentences	• Questioning • Statements • Simple, compound, complex structures
Words/Phrases	• Prepositional phrases • Multiple meanings • Colloquial expressions
Symbols	• Greek letters • Numerals • Map icons

Adapted from Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014, p. 6

inquiry. Student-led inquiry revolves around student-generated authentic questions about a topic, an issue, or a phenomenon and their genuine pursuit of the answers. In essence, teachers facilitate an experience that unfolds in such a way that student learning is stimulated through discovery and problem-solving.

As you may have noticed, we have added a fourth dimension—symbols, as they are used widely for communicative purposes in and out of academic settings. We further describe each dimension of academic languaging as follows.

Discourse Dimension

Discourse refers to the broader bodies of language, their organization, coherence, and cohesion. It also refers to different communication modes as in spoken, written, and visual. Within discourse, there are genres, which are specific categories for what we read, write, speak, watch, and listen. In terms of literary genres, for example, fiction, nonfiction, and poetry are three broad categories. In addition, within each category there are a variety of different types of works. Examples of nonfiction material in science include a manual to use the 3D printer, a biographical sketch of Marie Curie, and a podcast by astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson. Likewise, a variety of discourse forms are used in language arts classrooms that range from the more conventional printed materials such as essays, journal entries, and acrostic poems to current multimodal types of genres such as podcasts, digital collages, and slideshows. For students to access content area material and to show understanding of that material, they will need to understand and use the structures, conventions, and complexities required by each discourse form. Table 1.2 presents examples of a variety of genre-based discourses typically associated with the content areas.

Table 1.2 Examples of Genre-Based Discourse by Content Area

CONTENT AREA	EXAMPLES OF GENRE-BASED DISCOURSE
Language Arts	Oral histories, autobiographies, editorials, audiobooks
Mathematics	Graphs, story problems, proofs, diagrams
Science	Research reports, tabular representations, digital applications, large data sets
Social Studies	Speeches, political cartoons, maps, historical diaries, reenactments
Art and Music	Scripts, music scores, 2D and 3D portfolios, lyric analyses
Health and Wellness	Health compendia, exercise training logs, module packets

The range of discourse options that can be used in today's classrooms is enormous (see Table 1.3 for examples of discourses throughout the content areas). Important to highlight is the heterogeneity of the students sitting in today's classrooms; while some multilingual students might be more familiar with linear and printed texts, others maybe be whizzes at interacting with a variety of multimedia and multilanguage materials.

Table 1.3 Examples of Genre-Based Discourse Across Formats

PRINT-BASED	DIGITAL	VISUAL/ MULTIMEDIA	SPOKEN
Ballads	AI searches	Charts	Asking questions
Book reports	Apple Books	Claymations	Audio recordings
Essays	Apps	Drawings	Brief recitations
Expository texts	Digital storytelling	Films	Debates
Fables/fairy tales	Emails	Graphics	Dialogues
Informational texts	Gaming	Graphic organizers	Giving directions
Myths	Podcasts	Photo collages/ murals	Monologues
Novels	QR codes	Podcasts	Reciting poetry
Opinion pieces	Rewording tools	PowerPoints	(Re)telling stories
Poems	Texts	Prezi presentations	Role plays
Song lyrics	Visual read-alouds	Sketches	Speeches
Tall tales	Web pages	Videos	
Theses	Wikis	Vocabulary pictures	
		YouTube videos	

Adapted from Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014 (ELA 6–8)

Stop and Think

What Is Discourse?

The term *discourse*, like many other words in English, has multiple meanings. Traditionally, *discourse* refers to dialogue or conversation between two parties. However, Gee (2011) introduces a broader concept, which he calls "Discourse with a big 'D'" (p. 34). This refers to socially accepted ways of using language that involve "thinking, valuing, acting, and interacting in the 'right' places, at the 'right' times, with the 'right' objects" (p. 34). Being proficient in academic languaging means knowing what to say, when to say it, and how to say and apply it within various oral and written disciplinary contexts.

Sentences Dimension

The sentence dimension includes grammatical structures, language forms, and conventions that characterize languaging in inquiry-based situations. Students encounter these patterns primarily in the different types of texts they read, the talk in and out of classrooms, school-based tasks, and assessments. For all students, including multilingual students, learning how to use grammatical structures simultaneously facilitates both language development and content area learning.

The challenge is that many features in English are not intuitive. In fact, like all languages, English is also arbitrary, and some basic structures are illogical or dissimilar to the home languages of our students and thus difficult to understand and learn—even when taught in context. Think about the following examples:

Phrasal verbs. Most proficient English speakers do not need to think about how two or more words are strung together as a verb that may have multiple meanings. Read through the following examples:

break down	*get through*
come around	*run out*
get across	*turn down*

Future tense. In English there are several different ways for expressing future-related meanings. This range of forms of expressing the future nature of an occurrence may be extremely frustrating for multilingual learners, particularly for those who speak languages that do not use verb tenses at all (e.g., several varieties of Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Yucatec Maya). To illustrate this, here are six different constructions in English that express an action that will take place in the future:

I'll study this afternoon.

I'm going (planning) to study this afternoon.

I'm studying this afternoon.

I'll be studying this afternoon.

I will have been studying this afternoon.

I was going to study this afternoon.

Clearly, learning English can be very confusing! Multilingual learners will encounter additional irregularities—for example, learning that the word *syllabus* is singular, not plural. They will also have to learn that

many words can have two opposite meanings (e.g., *clip* means both "to cut apart" and "to attach together"), that the meanings of words can change depending on which syllable is stressed (e.g., as in *address*: *ADDress* as the particulars of a place and *addRESS* as a talk or lecture), and that the words *hundred*, *thousand*, *million*, and *billion* are singular after plural numbers (e.g., winning *three million* dollars).

In addition to irregular count nouns, prepositions, and interrogatives, students will encounter complex structures (e.g., parallel clauses, passive voice, and complex noun sentences). While there are numerous grammatical structures that cross content areas and disciplines, some are used more often in particular disciplines. Table 1.4 provides selected grammatical structures and pertinent examples used in specific content areas.

Table 1.4 Examples of Grammatical Features by Content Area

CONTENT AREA	FEATURE	EXAMPLES
Language Arts	Simile	*Cool as a cucumber, white as a ghost*
	Compare and contrast	*In the same way, both, similarly, unlike, on the other hand, however*
Mathematics	Logical connectors	*But, and, if, then, if and only if*
	Compare (multiplication)	*Times as many, times as much, times more, times as large*
Science	Passive voice	*The cells were infected by the virus.* *The experiment was conducted by the researchers.*
	Complex noun phrases	*Waste product excretion mechanisms* *Carbon dioxide removal methods*
Social Studies	Sequencing	*First, second, last, finally* *Soon, meanwhile, subsequently, in the end*
	Historical present	*It is a dark and rainy day in 1939.* *Today, Lewis and Clark decided to approach the voyage in a different manner.*

Words/Phrases Dimension

Academic vocabulary includes words and phrases that cut across content areas or that can be specific to particular disciplines. General words and phrases include *in spite of*, *summary*, and *introduction*, whereas content-specific words and phrases in mathematics might include *multiplication*, *cardinal numbers*, and *square root*. Many general academic words have been identified through analysis of academic texts. For instance, Averil Coxhead (2000) developed an

academic word list (AWL) to help set vocabulary goals for language courses, guide independent study, and inform curriculum designers in selecting texts and creating learning activities. Based on a corpus of 3.5 million words from academic texts, Coxhead identified 570 word families that college students are likely to encounter, such as the word *analyze* and its related forms (e.g., *analytic*, *analytical*, *analytically*, *analysis*). Although the list is aimed at postsecondary education, many words align with word lists that are now available in grade-level curricula.

Your multilingual learners may already know a range of disciplinary language since most of the language of science and technology has Greek and Latin roots that serve as a bridge between the Romance languages and English. Students who speak Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, or Romanian (i.e., Romance languages derived from Latin) can leverage their existing linguistic knowledge and make connections to the English language. Table 1.5 includes cognates (i.e., words that are written similarly and have a similar meaning) in five different languages. Notice how similar their spelling is (although beware that their pronunciation might be very different).

Table 1.5 Cognates in Five Different Languages

ENGLISH	ESPAÑOL	PORTUGUÊS	ITALIANO	FRANÇAISE
Active carbon	Carbón activo	Carbono ativo	Carbone attivo	Carbone actif
Instant	Instante	Instant	Istantaneo	Instantané
Legal	Legal	Legal	Legale	Légale
Mental	Mental	Mental	Mentale	Mentale
Metamorphosis	Metamorfosis	Metamorfose	Metamorfosi	Métamorphose
Polymer	Polímero	Polímero	Polimero	Polymère
Version	Versión	Versão	Versione	Version

For all students, particularly multilingual learners, providing opportunities to explore Greek and Latin root-word construction in context can be a meaningful way of engaging in translinguistic transfer to learn new content area vocabulary. Figure 1.6 is an example of the kind of work students can do with their tablets or laptops as they inquire about the many words that can be derived from the Latin root *press*.

Figure 1.6 Circle-Spoke Diagram for the Latin Root *Press*

online resources This resource is available for download at https://companion.corwin.com/courses/Academic-Languaging.

Important to remember is that children acquire large vocabularies when they engage in meaningful interactions about topics that are of interest to them (Snow, 2017). Focusing solely on vocabulary—such as by teaching 5 or 10 words per week—is ineffective because vocabulary is only valuable insofar as it reflects a student's broader conceptual understanding.

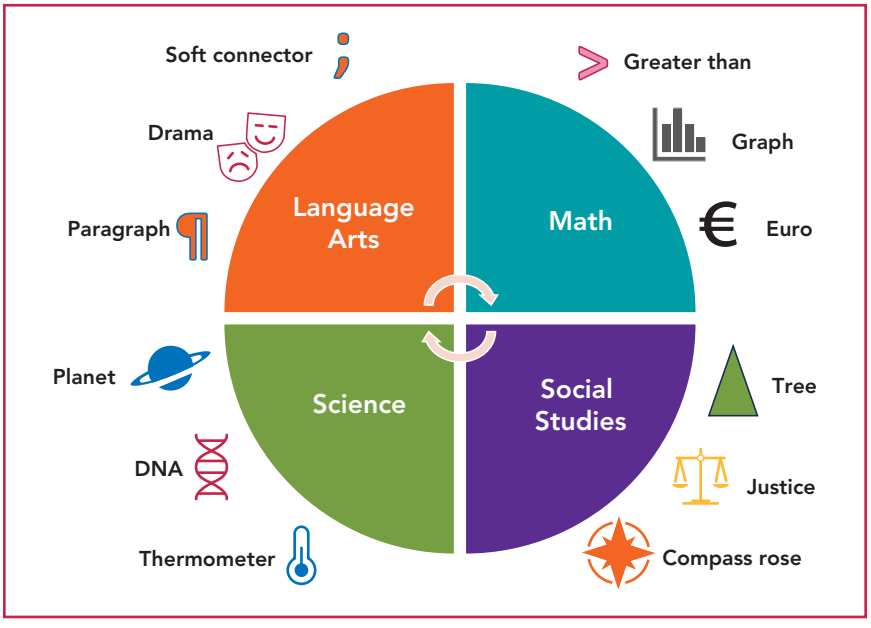
> A child's vocabulary is not important except to the extent that it signals something about conceptual or knowledge development. Indeed, the excellent academic outcomes of second-language learners with strong first language skills strongly support the notion that "knowing the words" is less important than knowing the concepts the words label. (Snow, 2017, p. 5)

Stated differently, the strong academic performance of multilingual learners with a solid foundation in their home language underscores that understanding and applying the concepts behind words is more crucial than merely knowing the words themselves.

Symbols Dimension

A symbol is something that represents something else. Similar to words and language structures, symbols can help people comprehend the world. However, if unknown, a symbol can hinder communication and understanding. A symbol can represent a noun (e.g., a tree on a map), an action (e.g., printing on a computer), or a concept (Uncle Sam). Just as we rely on symbols when driving in the city, symbols, such as the examples listed in Figure 1.7, are vital for navigating the K–12 school curriculum.

Figure 1.7 Examples of Symbols Across Content Areas



Symbols and Digital Media

Students today are digital natives, and most are prepared to navigate the constantly changing nature of technology and its related digital skills. However, because we know that multilingual learners in our schools are a heterogeneous population, we cannot assume that a student who is developing English will also be learning digital literacy. In fact, some students may rely on their smartphones or tablets for all sorts of communicative needs, entertainment, inquiry, and school work.

In digital communication, symbols in English have been adopted across the globe for social media, emails, and text messages. Likewise, emojis—those popular icons that convey thoughts and emotions in any language and across languages—are originally from Japan. Some symbols are used to communicate complete messages (e.g., thumbs-up emoji), emotions (e.g., smiley face), and tone (e.g., *haha* or IMAO—In My Arrogant Opinion). In addition, hashtags (#) and symbols (@) have become useful tools on social media platforms. Hashtags allow users to identify posts under a specific topic. For example, New Mexico has established some set hashtags for emergency communication such as #NMFire and #NMStorm. While some educators and families might feel that this new way of digital communication may reduce opportunities for students to use and practice "proper" English, current research (e.g., Crystal, 2008; McSweeney, 2017) indicates that using social media in English may, in fact, support English literacy development as a whole.

Look Closer

Technology and Multilingual Learners

For viewing:

British Council Serbia. (2013, November 29). *David Crystal—The effect of new technologies on English* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVqcoB798Is&ab_channel=BritishCouncilSerbia

Gassalasca4. (2013, May 11). *David Crystal on texting (S1E2 of It's only a theory)* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h79V_qUp91M&ab_channel=Gassalasca4

For reading:

Altavilla, J. (2020). How technology affects instruction for English learners. *Kappan*, *102*(1), 18–23.

Dalton, B. (2020). Bringing together multimodal composition and maker education in K–8 classrooms. *Language Arts*, *97*(3), 159–171.

Egbert, J., & Panday-Shukla, P. (2024). *Task engagement across disciplines: Research and practical strategies to increase student achievement*. Taylor and Francis.

McSweeney, M. A. (2017). I text English to everyone: Links between second-language texting and academic proficiency. *Languages*, *27*. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages2030007

Model Texts as an Instructional Staple

In this opening chapter, we introduce three model texts, while the content area chapters each feature two model texts. These texts are intended to inspire teachers and students alike to take action. They are pieces of culturally relevant literature or informational text that can at times be expressed in multimodal ways, such as with an app, a PowerPoint, or a podcast, so that students can read/listen to and reread/relisten to them for specific purposes. Applicable across content areas, some of the model texts in this book have been inspired by AI, others are the imaginations of the authors, and still others are excerpts from informational or narrative texts.

Traditionally, model texts provide an example of how a target text might look (Derewianka & Jones, 2023). They are designed to showcase the features and expectations of text we hope students will eventually produce. In addition, we include different kinds of model text, one that may come from a grade-level textbook or classroom materials (e.g., a story problem, an assignment, or a paragraph from a textbook). In those instances, the goal is for educators to deconstruct the text and analyze its different linguistic and cultural aspects for clarification or additional support.

Model texts serve as a catalyst for teachers to regularly analyze the texts and materials they use in classrooms and to identify the language and content challenges for students, especially multilingual learners. The goal is for teachers to become aware of how language is used in the materials we are asking students to read and in the activities we are asking students to do. The following is a brief vignette from a Grade 2 classroom that illustrates this point.

> Early in the school year, Mr. Martin and his second graders read a brief story about children doing their homework that appeared in the students' language arts textbook. After finishing the story, Mr. Martin assigned a task where students were asked to draw a picture of their favorite spot at home for doing homework and write one or two sentences explaining why they liked that space. At a first glance, both the reading and the accompanying assignment seemed harmless. However, Mr. Martin later discovered that the task had proved to be challenging for several students, including three who were experiencing homelessness, one who spent three hours after school at the public library, and a multilingual student from Afghanistan whose family had recently relocated and was living in a small room adjacent to a local church.

In this case, Mr. Martin would have benefited from knowing about the lives and circumstances of his students. And although this may not always be feasible, a careful review of the reading and the ensuing task might have helped Mr. Martin identify potential troublesome areas—both linguistic and sociocultural.

You will notice that model texts can also illustrate a means of bridging content, language, and literacy either initiated by students or inspiring students to take action. Thus, they illustrate how academic languaging can come to life through open-ended questioning or responding to controversy in writing or orally. In this book, we have carefully created or selected model texts based on the following features:

- Selecting topics of interest to students that spur action
- Ensuring that students can relate to the text in positive ways
- Enabling students to identify the purpose of the text
- Illustrating how writers/speakers express themselves
- Encouraging students to take risks as authors
- Examining grade-level textbooks and materials
- Analyzing tasks and classroom assessment

There are many classroom applications for model texts, such as the following:

- Serving as a model or prototype for oral language or literacy development
- Connecting to students' languages, cultures, perspectives, and experiences
- Determining author's purpose (e.g., visualization, making inferences, expressing opinions or points of view) and offering feedback
- Introducing a new genre to students
- Exemplifying specified language structures in context
- Combining oral and written modes in meaningful ways
- Representing an array of genres, such as music, poetry, blogs, and recipes

Most model texts reflect specific genres, different types or categories of literary or artistic work, and that their analysis begins with the discourse dimension. The following model text, a story problem, is typically used in mathematics curricula and assessment across the United States, starting in kindergarten. As you read the brief story problem, reflect on how the text is constructed, how certain language features are used, and what are the potential linguistic and cultural aspects that may confuse students, particularly multilingual learners.

Model Text 1: A Story Problem

Mrs. Hilt reads 13 books on every day that starts with the letters T and S. How many books does she read in one week?

(K5 Learning, www.k5learning.com)

Although this Grade 2 word problem is about using addition, like most story problems, it is language dependent. One overall challenge in word problem-solving is getting students to understand that the written story on the page can be translated into a mathematics story and then into an equation. As the analysis will illustrate, this very short story problem can trouble many students' understanding.

Discourse

This is a story problem, a typical type of genre (a discourse pattern) used in mathematics throughout K–12 education that is heavily represented in standardized-test items in mathematics.

Sentences

The sentence structure, especially the conditional clause "on every day that starts with the letters *T* and *S*," is complex. Second graders need to grasp how the days of the week relate to the number of books read. In addition, understanding "How many books does she read in one week?" involves interpreting the time frame (one week) and linking it to the information provided in the first sentence.

Words/Phrases

For students to solve the problem they need to (1) understand the phrase "Every day that starts with the letters *T* and *S*," (2) know the names of the days of the week, and (3) identify the first letter of the days of the week. While most second graders may know the days of the week, that might not be the case for multilingual learners who may be unfamiliar

with their English names. In addition, understanding the phrase "How many books . . ." is critical for recognizing that the problem asks for a quantity of books and that students must add to reach a total.

Symbols

In the short story problem, three symbols are used: 13, *T*, and *S*. While students will likely recognize the number 13, they must also understand that the letters *T* and *S* are abbreviations for four different days of the week—Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Sociocultural Aspects

Multilingual learners may not be familiar with the convention of a seven-day week starting on Sunday, since a few cultures count the days of the week differently (e.g., Burma). A second issue here is the amount of books Mrs. Hilt reads per day. For many, including Grade 2 students, reading 13 books per day may be unrealistic. Then again, would listening to books on tape or books in languages other than English count?

Model Text 2: Social Media Etiquette

The following model text could be considered an advice column or a blog that is designed to inform middle school students, who most likely are familiar with texting and/or emailing. We suggest that you invite students to analyze and comment as well as elaborate this excerpt, extending the text by adding their personal experiences and sharing their comments with classmates. Their reactions, captured in a journal or self-reflection tool, can become the basis for academic languaging.

Do you spend a lot of time on social media every day? Using social media can be fun, but you also should be careful. Don't let people you don't know trick you! If someone you don't know contacts you via social media, you should be on alert. If necessary, report the information to a family member or your teacher.

Here are some ideas for what you should do and not do for texting, emailing, or using popular apps on social media. See if you agree with this advice for what you should and should not do.

- *Do be careful before clicking links or downloading attachments from unknown sources.*
- *Do be aware of ads or pop-ups that sound too good to be true.*
- *Do be respectful and polite in what you say.*

- *Don't share personal information like your address or phone number with anyone you don't know.*
- *Don't cyberbully or use hurtful language—think how you would feel if you received the message.*
- *Don't use the language you use with friends with your teachers.*

You should always take the time to reread what you write. In that way, you have a second chance to make sure that information is what you want to send. Remember, your online behavior is your responsibility!

There are various ways to deconstruct model texts. Generally, our approach is to dissect the text according to the four dimensions of language starting with the largest chunk of language—discourse, followed by sentences, words/phrases, and, if present, symbols—always keeping in mind the overall theme and context. For example, after reading or reacting to this model text on social media, students may decide to

- produce a classroom or schoolwide policy or guidelines on social media etiquette;
- create a slogan or campaign about social media and display it throughout the community;
- design a mini video for the school website; or
- collect evidence of dos and don'ts from social media posts and offer feedback to classmates.

At other times, such as in Chapter 6, we analyze the text by asking a series of questions to stimulate discussion. These questions can also spark deep thinking and appeal to you and your students to take action in their classrooms, schools, or communities.

As academic language is the basis for academic languaging, we reiterate what we have said: "Discourse is the overarching dimension or umbrella which helps shape the types of sentence structures that, in turn, dictate the most appropriate words and phrases" (Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014, p. 6). In other words, the discourse dimension provides the context for learning, so we begin there. Briefly, here is how the model text on social media etiquette might be deconstructed.

Discourse

Relating advice for engaging in social media in this model text is direct and concise with a consistently clear organization. Active voice adds to the cohesion of the text and the message it relays. The register of

this piece is rather informal, appealing to students and giving credible guidance to them.

Sentences

The opening question is a stimulus for reading the remaining text, which assumes that the answer is "Of course!" It is followed by a series of bulleted sentences that form a list, reinforcing the message of what to do and not to do. It is not an argument as a position is not taken; rather, this model text elaborates both the positive and negative aspects of using social media. Note the use of imperatives or commands at the beginning of sentences.

Words/Phrases

Several phrases are interesting: The collective noun *social media*, for example, is used in conjunction with the singular verb *is*. In addition, *second chance* is used to mean "another try"; although you may never be given a "first chance," you may give something a "first try." As a phrase, "dos and don'ts" is a collocation; one would never say "don'ts and dos." "Pop-ups" have a specific meaning on smartphones or computer screens, where ads have become so prevalent; "clicking links" and "downloading" also specify actions one takes with a computer.

In this opening chapter we present three model texts. The third model text is an example of another current hot topic that middle and high schoolers (and their teachers) are grappling with—how to deal with AI.

Model Text 3: Is Artificial Intelligence Biased Against Multilingual Students?

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become part of life. It has advantages and disadvantages for students, including multilingual multicultural learners. First read the disadvantages and then the advantages to decide the position you might take.

Beware, AI can be biased against some students, so you should always approach its use with care. AI systems can unknowingly be prejudiced that can lead to misperceptions and misguided conclusions. The following argument points out the potential harm of this emerging technology.

1. *If the data used to train AI models are not understood, then AI will learn and reproduce those biases. For example, if the information indicates that students from certain backgrounds are at a deficit or disadvantage, AI might mistakenly make similar predictions.*

2. If multilingual learners are not proportionally represented in AI systems, there will be an imbalance or misrepresentation of information. This will lead to inaccurately portraying the students' experiences and perspectives. Not including the complete picture can lead to misinterpretations about different languages and cultures.

3. If schools overemphasize the value of AI, it will lead to a loss of confidence in human judgment. The overreliance on what AI produces can lead to inappropriate conclusions about students. This mistake could cause inappropriate high-stakes decisions, such as placing students in special services.

On the other hand, AI can potentially be an empowering tool for students. Rather than being viewed as potentially biased, the following argument shows how these new technologies can be beneficial for multilingual learners.

1. AI can power tutorial programs adaptive to individual learning preferences and paces. They can detect and adjust the amount of student engagement.

2. AI can promote interaction between students or between students and teachers, thus serving as a source of feedback for instruction and assessment.

3. AI can help empower multilingual communities through language translation (although with caution). Thus AI may enhance students' and families' access to information and communication.

As a student, you and your teachers should be cautious of the pros (advantages) and cons (disadvantages) of using AI. It is going to be part of your life, and you should be aware of its potential, both beneficial and harmful. The sooner you understand its power, the better!

Academic language describes complex concepts, thinking processes, and abstract ideas and relationships that can only be captured through discourse. Here is where we begin our analysis of the model text, followed by sentences and words/phrases.

Discourse

As AI is such a new field of inquiry for students (and teachers), students can self-appoint themselves as ethnographers or data collectors to gain a better sense of AI uses among their classmates and in the community. The discourse of this model text is organized around argumentation; there are claims and counterclaims for each position, each with reasons and evidence.

Sentences

At the sentence level, we see three pros and three cons to AI. Students might create a point-counterpoint for each statement. Conditional sentences that all begin with "If" express potential harm from AI while those points that state its potential benefits all begin with "AI can."

Words/Phrases

Students may not be well versed in "artificial intelligence" and how it might compare with "intelligence." In arguing, the phrase "on the other hand" triggers a transition to a contradiction as does "rather than." Also, you might consider having a discussion with your students about "bias"—what it means to them and examples from home and community. Finally, generating examples of "high-stakes decisions" should be a lively topic for students to discuss.

We close this chapter with a table, one that is illustrative of how you might envision linguistic and cultural sustainability across curriculum, instruction, and classroom assessment as a requisite for multilingual learners' engagement in academic languaging. Applying Table 1.6, you might think of ways to center multilingual learners and infuse academic languaging into curricular or interdisciplinary projects with your grade-level or department teams, always including student voice in the process.

Table 1.6 Ideas for Designing Linguistic and Culturally Sustaining Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment With Embedded Academic Languaging

CENTERING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS BY HAVING STUDENTS . . .	EXTENSION TO ACADEMIC LANGUAGING: WHAT ACTIONS CAN MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS TAKE?
1. Create individual portraits of their linguistic, cultural, and experiential histories, conceptual understandings, literacies, language use, and multimodal preferences	
2. Brainstorm or modify themes and essential questions with teachers based on student, family, and community resources	
3. Co-construct integrated learning goals with teachers that weave content, language, and multimodalities along with criteria for success	

(Continued)

(Continued)

CENTERING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS BY HAVING STUDENTS . . .	EXTENSION TO ACADEMIC LANGUAGING: WHAT ACTIONS CAN MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS TAKE?
4. Design end-of-unit products, projects, and/or performances with student and family connections	
5. Choose their language(s) for interaction and expression along with multimodal representation	
6. Self- and peer assess by analyzing, interpreting, and reporting evidence for learning against a project's criteria for success	
7. Give concrete timely feedback along the way to classmates and respond to that of teachers and peers	

Adapted from Gottlieb (2024, p. 175)

online resources This resource is available for download at https://companion.corwin.com/courses/Academic-Languaging.

Stop and Think

Linguistically and Culturally Relevant Materials for Multilingual Learners

To some extent, the instructional models in which multilingual learners participate influence the approaches, content, and languages of curricular materials. No matter the instructional design and content area, multilingual learners should have access to materials and resources in their multiple languages that reflect their cultures and interests. To what extent do you feel your instructional materials represent your multilingual learners? To what extent do your instructional materials for multilingual learners interweave content and language? What other resources or modalities might improve students' accessibility? One organization dedicated to improving the quality of instructional materials for multilingual learners in English and other languages is the English Learners Success Forum (see www.elsuccessforum.org/about).

Chapter Summary

In this first chapter, we lay the groundwork for converting notions of academic language to academic languaging through actions of multilingual learners and their teachers. Basically, we center multilingual learners' ways of acting, thinking, interacting, valuing, and believing that they gain at home, at school, and in the community. Through analysis of model texts, we illustrate how to make the dimensions of language come to life to promote student engagement. We encourage students to employ their linguistic prowess and contribute their cultural perspectives to gain agency and autonomy. In essence, we envision academic languaging as a humanizing activity where multilingual learners develop relationships with peers and teachers, apply technology to advance learning, and use language and multimodalities to build their identities and make their marks in the world.

Extensions

For Reflection

1. In this introductory chapter, we wish to dispel the myth that academic language is confined to content area literacy and learning in school as it is just as present in students' homes and communities. As an extension, we focus on academic languaging, where students are encouraged to take action based on their beliefs and convictions verified through inquiry and exploration. In reflecting, we ask, "How have your views of academic language shifted, especially for multilingual learners, based on claims, reasoning, and evidence you have witnessed? How might you define academic languaging as a viable means of pursuing student learning?"
2. Reflect on your own academic languaging throughout the day, including time spent in your home and community. How might you describe the totality of your academic languaging and the actions you have taken? How does your everyday life shape the way you use language beyond the school setting?

For Action

1. Since academic languaging is tied to taking action, this last segment of the chapter is an opportunity to extend your thinking and that of others who work with multilingual

learners. How might you move away from a historically dichotomous concept, often presented as academic language versus social language, to introduce one based on language inquiry? How might you introduce academic languaging to your professional learning community and others in your school building or district? How might you include other educators, such as counselors, specials, coaches, or paraprofessionals, in the discussion? How might you also be more accepting of multilingual learners and families as members of and contributors to educational decision making?

2. You might consider engaging in collaborative action research to evaluate your potential change in practice as you embark upon enacting more inquiry-based strategies with your students. In this chapter, we have shown how information and communication technologies have sparked transformation and innovation through AI, how multimodalities have opened doors for students by increasing their access to content and showing evidence for learning, and how multilingualism is at the heart of multilingual learners' identities. Additionally, we have laid out a set of strategies that contextualize academic languaging for classroom use. You might wish to select one or two ideas, formulate some questions, investigate their usability for you and your students, and reflect on their potential impact.

Resources

In revisiting academic language to help formulate academic languaging, the following resources might prove helpful in representing and contrasting varying views and frameworks. You might wish to revisit these broad concepts throughout the book as the basis for discussion and to ground your thinking.

- **CALP vs. BICS** (cognitive academic language proficiency [CALP]) vs. social language (basic interpersonal communication skills [BICS]):

Cummins, J. (1981). Four misconceptions about language proficiency in bilingual education. *NABE Journal*, *5*(3), 31–45.

Cummins, J. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. In B. Street & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 2. Literacy* (2nd ed., pp. 71–83). Springer Science.

- **Systemic functional linguistics**—language as a social meaning-making system:

Gibbons, P. (2009). *English learners, academic literacy, and thinking: Learning in the challenge zone*. Heinemann.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Martin, J. R. (1993). *Writing science: Literacy and discursive power*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2004). *The language of schooling: A functional linguistics perspective*. Erlbaum.

- **Sociocultural perspectives**—language as a social interactive activity:

Gee, J. P. (2004). *Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling*. Routledge.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.

- **Language as social action:**

García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2019). Translanguaging and literacies. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *55*(4), 553–571.

García, O., & Sylvan, C. E. (2011). Pedagogies and practices in multilingual classrooms. *The Modern Language Journal*, *95*(3), 385–400.

Walqui, A., & van Lier, L. (2010). *Scaffolding the academic success of adolescent English language learners: A pedagogy of promise*. WestEd.