



Academic Language for English Language Learners and Struggling Readers: How to Help Students Succeed Across Content Areas

Yvonne Freeman, David Freeman

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Teaching secondary students in the content areas is hard enough under the best of circumstances. When students are not well prepared academically and also lack academic literacy skills, the challenge can seem overwhelming. Fortunately, the Freemans help secondary content-area teachers provide these students with the academic support they very desperately need.

-Robert J. Marzano

Coauthor of *Building Academic Vocabulary*

Many middle school and high school students are recent immigrants or long-term English language learners who struggle with the academic language needed to read content-area textbooks and write papers for their classes. Likewise, many native speakers of English find content-area classes a challenge. Secondary teachers have little time to teach academic reading and writing skills because they must cover a great deal of content in their social studies, science, math, or language arts classes.

Academic Language for English Language Learners and Struggling Readers provides the information busy secondary teachers need to work effectively with English learners and struggling readers. It reports current research to answer key questions:

- Who are our older English language learners and struggling readers?
- What is academic language?
- How can middle and high school teachers help students develop academic language in the different content areas?

This comprehensive and readable text by Yvonne and David Freeman (authors of *Essential Linguistics*) synthesizes recent demographic data on the kinds of English language learners and struggling readers who attend middle and high schools in increasing numbers. They flesh out the statistics with stories of students from different backgrounds. Then the Freemans examine academic language at different levels: the text level, the paragraph level, the sentence level, and the word level. For each, they provide examples of academic language and specific strategies teachers can use as they teach language arts, science, math, and social studies. They also analyze content-area textbooks, pointing out the difficulties they pose for students and suggesting ways to make texts more accessible to ELLs and struggling readers.

Providing classroom examples, the Freemans explain how teachers can motivate and engage their students. They describe how teachers can teach language and content simultaneously by developing both language and content objectives. *Academic Language for English Language Learners* gives teachers the information and strategies they need to help all their students develop academic language.

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