

LISELL

Lesson Starters

Use of General-Purpose Academic Vocabulary



Teacher Background

LISELL Academic Language Practice 1

Use of General-Purpose Academic Vocabulary

The teaching of *general-purpose academic vocabulary* is often overlooked in school, because both teachers and textbook authors make the largely incorrect assumption that students are already familiar with this vocabulary. These general-purpose academic words are common in written academic text but rare in students' oral, conversational language. In the LISELL project we see this as a "linguistic blind spot" that can be addressed through thoughtful vocabulary development strategies.

Snow, Lawrence and White (2009) have identified problems with students' comprehension of general-purpose academic vocabulary as a major hurdle in science learning for ELL students. For example, science textbooks, dictionary definitions, state content standards and standardized test items are full of this general-purpose academic vocabulary, making it nearly impossible for many students to fully comprehend the meanings of these texts. Thus, it is beneficial for all students, but especially important for ELL students, to learn to use the most common general-purpose academic vocabulary in meaningful contexts. This vocabulary support can and should take place in all content area classes, including science class.

Building on existing research on vocabulary instruction (Graves, 2006, White & Kim, 2009), the LISELL project emphasizes several strategies to support general-purpose academic vocabulary development, including:

1. Selecting words strategically in collaboration with ESOL and content area teachers;
2. Limiting the number of words to increase exposure to those that are most important;
3. Creating accessible student-friendly definitions;
4. Using the words in engaging, meaningful, and multiple contexts connected to science learning; and
5. Giving students ample opportunity to work together to use the words, and to seek the words out across multiple contexts and different content areas.

In the LISELL project, we have developed a list of 90 general-purpose academic vocabulary words with associated student-friendly definitions and meaningful sentences incorporating the target vocabulary. We have created a set of illustrated vocabulary cards (for daily use) as well as word lists organized in sets of five (for weekly use, included here) for teachers to utilize in lesson starters focused on general-purpose academic vocabulary. The vocabulary cards and word lists are designed for use in individual science classrooms and/or across content area classrooms and school-wide.

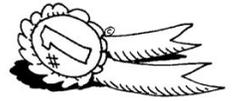
Previous (*Anterior*)

(adj) happening, or occurring, before something else



Primary (*Primario*)

(adj) the most important; earliest



Secondary (*Secundario*)

(adj) coming after the one that is first or primary



Initial (*Inicial*)

(adj) existing or occurring at the beginning (v) to sign
with the letters of your name



Final (*Final*)

(adj) happening at or being at the end of something



Features (*Rasgos*)

(n) parts or qualities of something; parts of the face



Elements (*Elementos*)

(n) parts of any whole; the atmospheric condition of weather



Item (*Artículo*)

(n) a separate, particular thing among a group or list of things



Aspects (*Aspectos*)

(n) elements or parts; manners in which things are considered



Attribute (*Atributo*)

(n) an important characteristic of something/someone
(v) to assign a behavior or characteristic of someone



Compare (*Comparar*)

(v) to look at how two or more things are similar or different



Contrast (*Contraste*)

(n) the state of being different from something else
(v) to look at how two or more things are different



Similar (*Semejante*)

(adj) resembling without being identical



Consider (*Considerar*)

(v) to think carefully about something



Distinguish (*Distinguir*)

(v) to tell the difference



Examine (*Examinar*)

(v) to look at carefully and critically; to break it down



Observe (*Observar*)

(v) to look carefully at something



Analysis (*Análisis*)

(n) a careful study of the parts



Process (*Proceso*)

(n) a series of steps to an end



Select (*Seleccionar*)

(v) to choose



Vital (***Vital***)



(adj) absolutely necessary; full of energy

Dominant (***Dominante***)

(adj) most important, powerful



Minor (***Menor***)

(adj) less important, smaller



Major (***Importante***)

(adj) important, significant



Significant (***Importante***)

(adj) important, meaningful



Justify (*Justificar*)

(v) to defend or support



Support (*Apoyar*)

(v) to provide evidence; to hold up



Indicate (*Indicar*)

(v) to show or point out; to state or express briefly



Clarify (*Aclarar*)

(v) to make an idea clear



Confirm (*Confirmar*)

(v) to establish the truth; verify, support



Participate *(Participar)*

(v) to take part in



Attempt *(Intentar)*

(v) to make an effort to try something
(n) the act of making an effort to try something



Influence *(Influencia)*

(n) having the power to change or control something
(v) changing or controlling something



Involve *(Involucrar)*

(v) to include; to bring into a situation



Predict *(Predecir)*

(v) to say or guess what might happen next



Variable (*Variable*)

(n) things that change or vary; in math, an unknown number represented by a letter



Factor (*Factor*)

(n) something that influences something that happens; in math, one of two or more numbers multiplied together



Percent (*Por ciento*)

(n) each part, or unit, of one hundred



Function (*Función*)

(n) the purpose for which an object or person is used
(v) to run or operate



Formula (*Formula*)

(n) a routine of words or symbols used in a procedure



Area (*Area*)



(n) a place or region; the amount of surface within a certain space

Section (*Sección*)

(n) a part of a whole
(v) to divide into different parts



Role (*Papel*)

(n) a part played by a person or thing



Region (*Región*)

(n) a large space or area



Component (*Componente*)

(n) a part of something



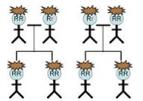
Revise (*Revisar*)

(v) To change or make better



Trait (*Rasgo*)

(n) a quality that makes a person or animal different from another



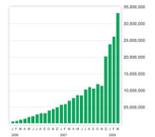
Evidence (*Evidencia*)

(n) something to give proof; something that supports a claim



Data (*Datos*)

(n) facts, figures or other information that can be used in different ways



Valid (*Válido*)

(adj) happening at or being at the end of something



Focus (*Foco*)

(o) the area of greatest attention or activity
(v) to adjust, to make clear, to pay attention to



Trace (*Rastrear*)

(v) to follow from one point or place to another



Identify (*Identificar*)

(v) to figure out or show who/what something is; to understand how someone else feels



Determine (*Determinar*)

(v) to decide



Locate (*Localizar*)

(v) to find the position or place of



Evaluate (*Evaluar*)

(v) to study carefully; to judge the value of something



Assess (*Jugzar*)

(v) to judge, evaluate or test



Interpret (*Interpretar*)

(v) to explain the meaning of something



Respond (*Responder*)

(v) to answer or reply



Assume (*Asumir*)

(v) to suppose (or guess) to be a fact; to take on a job



Include (Incluir)

(v) to have or contain as part of; to put in a group



Eliminate (Eliminar)

(v) to remove



Supply (Suministro)

(o) to provide;
(n) something that available to use



Exclude (Excluir)

(v) to leave out; to keep something or someone out



Result (Resultado)

(o) to happen because of something
(n) a consequence



Theory (*Teoría*)

(n) a reasonable and widely held explanation for why something happens



Strategy (*Estrategia*)

(n) a plan, method, or series of actions meant to perform a goal



Procedure (*Procedimiento*)

(n) a series of steps that must be taken to do something



Concept (*Concepto*)

(n) a general thought or idea



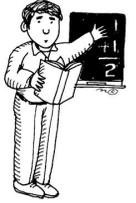
Principle (*Principio*)

(n) a basic law or truth on which action or behavior is based



Demonstrate

(Demonstrar)



(v) to show or teach

Illustrate

(Ilustrar)

(v) to describe in words; to draw



Display

(Visualizar)

(v) to show or exhibit



Establish

(Establecer)

(v) to prove or show to be true



Provide

(Proporcionar)

(v) to make available



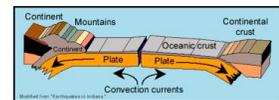
Sequence (*Secuencia*)

(n) a pattern or process in which one thing follows another



Shift (*Cambiar, Cambio*)

(vi) to change one's position; to change something
(n) a change in position



Organize (*Organizar*)

(v) to put together in a certain order



Transfer (*Transferir*)

(v) to move or carry from one person or place to another



Distribute (*Distribuir*)

(v) the act of spreading out or passing around



Convert (*Convertir*)

(v) to change into another form or state



Substitute (*Sustituto*)

(n) a person or thing that takes the place of another
(v) to put or use in place of another



Revise (*Revisar*)

(v) to change or make better



Modify (*Modificar*)

(v) to change in some way



Adapt (*Adaptar*)

(v) to change for a particular use; to become used to



Outcome *(Resultado)*

(n) the result of something



Conclude *(Concluir)*

(v) to bring something to an end; to make a decision about something



Effect *(Efectuar, Efecto)*

(o) something produced from a cause
(v) to cause to happen



Impact *(Impacto)*

(n) the coming together of something with force; a strong or powerful influence



Affect *(Afectar)*

(v) to cause a change in or influence



Obtain (*Obtener*)

(v) to get or gain



Depend (*Depender*)

(v) to trust or rely



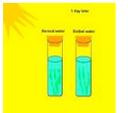
Issue (*Asunto*)

(v) to make, give out, or publish
(n) a point or subject being talked about



Control (*Controlar*)

(v) to use power to manage; to hold back
(n) power to manage something



Apply (*Aplicar*)

(v) to put to use



Community (*Comunidad*)

(n) a particular area where a group of people, plants or animals live



Diversity (*Diversidad*)

(n) a variety; different kinds



Individual (*Individuo*)

(adj) single, separate; referring to a single person

(n) a single human being; a person

Cooperate (*Cooperar*)

(v) to work with others; to work together



Cultural (*Cultural*)

(adj) pertaining to culture (beliefs, actions and customs of a group of people)



Interact (*Interactuar*)

(v) to respond to one another in a social situation; to have an effect on



Appropriate (*Adecuado*)

(adj) right for the purpose

(v) to set aside for a particular purpose



Average (*Promedio*)

(n) the number gotten by adding two or more quantities and dividing by the same number (v) to find the average of

(adj) usual or typical kind



Expert (*Experto*)

(adj) having a great deal of skill or knowledge

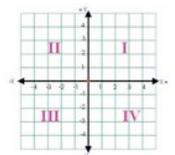
(n) someone who knows a great deal about something



Coordinate (*Coordinar*)

(v) to arrange to work well together

(n) a pair of numbers that identifies a point on a grid



Potential (*Potencial*)

(adj) able to come into being; possible
(v) a certain skill that may be developed



State (*Estado*)

(v) to say
(n) the condition of a person or thing



Occur (*Ocurrir*)

(v) to take place; happen. To appear



Conduct (*Conducta*)

(v) to behave or manage; to carry or allow passage
(n) the way one acts; behavior



Maintain (*Mantener*)

(n) the act of keeping in existence; continuing or taking care of



Record (*Grabar*)

(v) to put into writing; to copy by a mechanical device for later hearing
(n) a written account



Research (*Investigación*)

(v) to study something carefully; to study again
(n) the careful study of something



Method (*Método*)

(n) a way of doing something; a system or order in one's actions



Design (*Diseño*)

(v) to plan for a certain goal
(n) a plan or outline showing how



Survey (*Encuesta*)

(v) to collect information about something
(n) a collection of information about something



Represent (*Grabar*)

(v) to be a symbol of something; to be one person who speaks or acts for many people



Source (*Fuente*)

(n) the start or cause of something



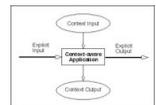
Resource (*Recurso*)

(n) a source of help or support; money or things available for use that contribute to a country's wealth



Context (*Contexto*)

(n) the language surrounding a certain word; a situation



Define (*Definir*)

(v) to explain the meaning of; to determine the limits of



Estimate (*Estimación*)

(v) to make a careful guess
(n) a careful guess



Equation (*Ecuación*)

(n) a statement in math or science that use an equal sign to show equality



Accurate (*Preciso*)

(adj) free of mistakes or errors; careful and precise.



Approximate (*Aproximado*)

(adj) almost exact
(v) to come close to



Specific (*Específico*)

(adj) certain and exact; special or unique to something



Remain (*Permanecer*)

(v) to continue being; to stay behind



Decrease (*Disminución*)

(v) to become less or smaller



Increase (*Aumento*)

(v) to become more; larger



Expand (*Expandir*)

(v) to make larger or wider



Develop (*Desarrollar*)

(v) to bring out the potential of; to bring into being



Content (*Contenido*)

(adj) satisfied

(n) whatever is held or contained in something



Capacity (*Capacidad*)

(n) the amount that can be held in a particular space



Store (*Almacenar*)

(v) to gather and keep for future use

(n) a supply kept for future use



Transport (*Transporte*)

(n) to carry from one place to another



Available (*Disponible*)

(adj) able to be used or possible to get

