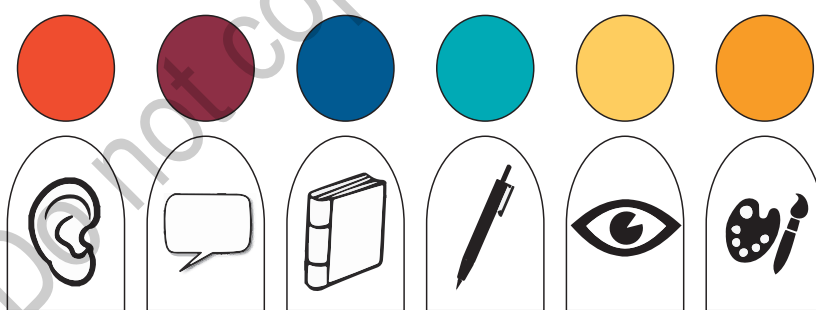


CHAPTER 2

The Six Language Domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Viewing, and Visually Representing)



To achieve advanced literacies for all, especially in school settings characterized by linguistic diversity, leaders must work to create a cohesive literacy environment.

(Lesaux, 2016, p. 28)

OVERVIEW

In this chapter, we explore how to use digital learning resources (DLRs) to support and advance the acquisition of language and multiliteracies for ELs while also allowing ELs access to academic content in a whole new way. Every English teacher can identify the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but did you know that there are actually six language domains to include in our instruction? As early as 1996, viewing and visually representing were officially recognized as forms of literacy, and today the need to include viewing and visually representing in our teaching and language learning standards is more important than ever before (NCTE, 1996, WIDA 2020).

Digital learning resources can help to reduce language boundaries and promote literacy skills via all six language domains: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and visually representing. When used strategically, digital learning resources provide ELs with a multimodal experience while introducing new concepts and ideas. Presenting content in multiple ways helps ELs to retain information and reinforces vocabulary development, comprehension, and background knowledge.

This approach can also be helpful for “ever ELs” or former ELs (students who have been identified as English learners at any point during their enrollment in the school system) who typically no longer receive targeted services, although they may still need additional literacy and language support to reach proficiency in English. Hattie and Yates (2014) suggest that learning is a deliberate process—slow in pace; it does not often occur without sufficient time, focus, support, monitoring, and practice: “Impressions of quick learning are deceptive for many reasons. Unless the material is strongly meaningful, relevant and timely, it is subject to rapid and substantial forgetting ... To become skilled in a new area takes about 50 to 100 hours of practice” (p. 113).

When considering the language domains, digital learning resources allow for interactivity, and increased interest and engagement than more traditional formats. They also provide the repetition and reinforcement that all ELs need to gain academic language proficiency. Further, digital media can offer the much-needed, continued engagement with language that will yield higher levels of competence in English for ever ELs or former ELs.



DIGITAL-AGE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

English learners develop basic communication skills during day-to-day interactions with peers and teachers, but how do we support the development of the cognitive communicative skills needed to be successful in in-person, remote, or hybrid academic settings? Language used in a school setting (for example, a social studies text versus a science text) may challenge ELs as they learn core academic content. In addition, ELs may encounter difficulties when attempting to communicate their ideas using precise academic discourse. Digital media presentations could support the acquisition of content specific vocabulary and academic language since the use of digital media provides a low-anxiety environment that incorporates all six domains of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and visually representing. When students experience language development through digital media, they have multiple access points to content, they can express their ideas, and they interpret and represent concepts using multiple modalities while making connections to spoken and written language. (See Table 2.1 for examples how digital media may support the development of receptive and expressive skills.)

TABLE 2.1 • Using Digital Media With ELs

USING DIGITAL MEDIA FOR RECEPTIVE SKILLS
Listening. Digital media offers English learners the opportunity to listen to authentic language with the ability to control the rate and to pause and repeat the listening activity. ELs can listen to language lessons, story read-alouds, news reports, interviews, and a wide variety of podcasts at any grade level and in multiple languages to experience the target language in context. Platforms like Wonderopolis, News-o-matic, and Podbean provide various listening opportunities for students.
Reading. English learners can use electronic texts and e-books to interpret and relate information to their own personal experiences. Online digital resources such as Newsela, TumbleBooks, and Common Lit provide information to ELs at a reading level that's right for them.
Viewing. Viewing requires skills similar to reading comprehension for English Learners. Viewing can include everything from images to video presentations. Instructional videos, images and resources found in platforms such as Discovery Education, Khan Academy, TedED, and YouTube provide multiple modalities for ELs to gain understanding of concepts.
USING DIGITAL MEDIA FOR EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
Speaking. English learners can express thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively using various forms of digital media to communicate orally. Students can record their own podcasts, provide audio feedback to peers and narrate digital stories by making use of tools like GarageBand, Anchor, Kaizena, and Ed.VoiceThread.

(Continued)

TABLE 2.1 ● (Continued)

Writing. English learners can communicate through print by using digital learning resources in everyday writing tasks. Students can be authors of e-books, class websites, and blogs. Students can practice writing skills in a more supportive and low-anxiety environment in mediated social networking chats with peers. Platforms such as Storybird, Weebly, Edublogs, and Twitter facilitate writing and collaboration.

Visually Representing. This form of communication requires English Learners to collect and organize information, decide on the best way to convey it to others, and produce a visual product to accomplish this communication, often incorporating print and sound (including speech) with the visual images. Tools such as Screencastify, ThingLink, Educreations, and Powtoon facilitate communication through the use of visual imagery.

REMOTE AND HYBRID LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

To reinforce the explicit connection between content and language acquisition for ELs in the digital-age classroom, the WIDA ELD Standards Framework (2020) emphasizes the importance of multimodality. Using multimodal resources creates a flexible learning environment that promotes student engagement and expression. Remote and hybrid learning environments provide us with such flexibility while also promoting self-directed learning. When we design instruction for ELs in both remote and hybrid learning environments, we must be mindful to break activities into concrete steps using digital resources that incorporate the six language domains we have described in this chapter.

Whether delivering instruction in a hybrid or remote model, you can assign differentiated asynchronous learning tasks to respond to individual student needs and provide targeted reinforcement of concepts during synchronous instructional time. Since digital media supports differentiated instructional practices that increase receptive and expressive skills, it gives both you and your students more opportunities for reflection and feedback. English proficiency should not be considered a prerequisite for participation in content learning. Digital resources provide scaffolds and tools to overcome language barriers while making content comprehensible.

When designing learning activities for remote and hybrid instruction refer to the framework provided by Hobbs (2011), which identifies multiliteracy skills required for students in the digital age:

1. **ACCESS.** Finding and sharing appropriate and relevant information and using media texts and technology tools well.

2. **ANALYZE.** Using critical thinking to analyze message purpose, target audience, quality, veracity, credibility, point of view, and potential effects or consequences of messages.
3. **CREATE.** Composing or generating content using creativity and confidence in self-expression, with awareness of purpose, audience, and composition techniques.
4. **REFLECT.** Considering the impact of media messages and technology tools upon our thinking and actions in daily life and applying social responsibility and ethical principles to our own identity, communication behavior, and conduct.
5. **ACT.** Working individually and collaboratively to share knowledge and solve problems in the family, the workplace, and the community, and participating as a member of a community at local, regional, national, and international levels. (p. 12)

This instructional model aligns seamlessly with the International Society for Technology in Education Standards for Students ISTE 1a-d (2017)

1. Empowered Learner

Students leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving, and demonstrating competency in their learning goals, informed by the learning sciences.



UNDERSTANDING ELs

The gateway to academic engagement is academic language. Among others, Schleppegrell (2012) observed, “Academic language is functional for getting things done at school, varying as it is used in different subject areas and for different purposes, but requiring that children use language in new ways to learn and to display knowledge about what they have learned in ways that will be valued” (p. 410). Academic language is frequently conceptualized as having three dimensions: a word dimension, a sentence dimension, and a text dimension (WIDA, 2020). These dimensions, earlier referred to as levels, are not to be seen as isolated learning targets; rather, they are reminders of the important features of English that ELs need exposure to and ample opportunity to practice and master. See Table 2.2 for a summary of the three academic language dimensions’ distinct features, challenges (also seen as *opportunities*) ELs face as they work on mastering them, and key instructional practices for classroom use.

TABLE 2.2 ● Academic Language Dimensions, Features, Challenges, and Essential Instructional Practices

DIMENSION	ACADEMIC LANGUAGE FEATURES	CHALLENGES FOR ELs	ESSENTIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES
Word (Vocabulary or Phrases)	Generic academic terms	Volume of vocabulary needed	Exposure to vast vocabulary through interactions with language-rich texts
	Discipline-specific academic terms	Nuances of word meanings	An interactive environment in which verbal exchanges are encouraged not silenced
	Figurative and idiomatic expressions	Phrases and collocations	Word learning strategies
	Words with multiple meanings		
	Roots and affixes		
Sentence	Sentence structure	Complex sentences with low-frequency words	Sentence dissection
	Sentence length		Scaffolded sentence frames
	Grammatical structures		
	Pronouns	Advanced grammatical features (passive voice, participles)	
	Context Clues		
	Proverbs		
Text or Discourse	Text organization	Reading and lexile levels	Genre study
	Text craft and structure	Complexity of ideas	Read-alouds
			Shared reading
			Scaffolded independent reading
	Text density	Background knowledge needed for comprehension	Inquiry groups
	Clarity and coherence	Styles and structures unique to each genre or text type	Text analysis
Text types and genres	Text annotation		

Source: Adapted from Pritchard and O’Hara, 2016; Honigsfeld and Dove, 2021; WIDA, 2020.

Using complex academic language in and outside the classroom goes beyond teaching words, practicing sentence structures, and reading and responding to increasingly complex texts. It involves students' learning to process and internalize new skills and information while also engaging in emerging language use to communicate. For language to develop in a systemic way, ELs must be listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and visually representing authentically in their new language every day. Researchers and practitioners whose work is informed by sociocultural theory also believe that language acquisition and literacy learning happen when "knowledge and understanding are co-constructed through interaction, and through the practice of scaffolding, whereby the learner's understandings and attempts to express these in words are supported and assisted through dialogue" (Cullen et al., 2013, p. 426).

Consider the following listening and speaking strategies to encourage a more complex academic dialogue for ELs:

- Employ scaffolded "talk moves." Give your students appropriate sentence stems for various common language functions. Help them learn to ask for clarification when they do not understand something (Would you explain what ____ means?); paraphrase someone else's idea (What I heard you say is ____); extend what a classmate said (In addition to what ____ said,); or agree or disagree with others (I agree with ____ /I respectfully disagree with ____).
- Provide productive wait time that includes a quick write or quick draw. Students gather their thoughts, jot down some ideas, and enter the academic conversation feeling better prepared.
- Elicit longer answers from ELs who are at a more advanced language proficiency level. Invite students to elaborate on their short answers by encouraging them to give some examples, add more details, describe a person or object they mentioned, or explain their thinking further.
- Use flexible grouping configurations that include whole-group teacher-led discussion sessions, small-group interactions, cooperative learning groups, triads, and pairs.

Key research-based reading strategies that support ELs include the following:

- Conduct frequent formative assessments of ELs' reading development, such as how well they demonstrate letter-sound correspondence; letter recognition; word-, sentence-, and text-level reading comprehension; and fluency. Based

on data, support ELs in the areas most needed and monitor their progress over time.

- Focus on Tier One and Tier Two vocabulary to address the meaning of everyday conversational phrases, idioms, and expressions that may cause confusion, as well as high-frequency, Tier Three academic words.
- Ask carefully constructed questions before, during, and after reading to support ELs' reading comprehension. Ask for literal responses that require students to recall factual information or readily available details. Probe them to offer their interpretations of what was read as well as engage in critical reflection, analysis, and application of the new information read.
- Read aloud to students and model comprehension strategies you use through thinking aloud or comprehending aloud (Zwiers, 2014). Allow students to gain insight into your reading comprehension process. When they hear what you did when you came across a certain word, how you interpreted the actions of a certain character, or how you made sense of a new piece of information in a nonfiction selection, they will see these examples as models of literacy actions they can emulate.
- Consider how to support ELs while they engage in the three levels of meaning making and comprehension as outlined by Willingham (2017): “we extract ideas from sentences, we connect the ideas across sentences, and we build a general idea of what a text is about” (p. 126).

For ELs to develop writing skills, we need to make writing a daily occurrence. Dorfman and Cappelli (2017) also advocate for the study of exemplary written work such as mentor texts through which ELs can better understand what constitutes accomplished writing. Wolsey and his colleagues (2010) claim that “all students are to act and believe that literacy is valued and valuable” (p. 10). Students can achieve this goal only if they experience the collective sense of importance literacy holds for them individually and for the entire school community collectively. When you and your colleagues collaborate to plan academic language learning and literacy development activities that meaningfully connect with each other, ELs can make better sense of the patterns in language and literacy.

Key writing strategies we suggest include the following:

- Invite recently arrived ELs with high levels of literacy skills in their home language to write in that language. They can add illustrations or English-language labels that support their

writing. As English proficiency grows, ask them to collaborate and create a wiki glossary of key ideas, an outline or bulleted list, or a brief summary in a classroom English blog.

- Provide writing scaffolds such as word boxes, sentence stems, paragraph frames, or essay outlines as needed.
- Use bilingual peer bridges, teaching assistants, and print and electronic dictionaries. Use resources like Google slides to create bilingual glossaries to connect literacy in the home language with that of the new language.
- Introduce and maintain a variety of daily writing tasks such as digital Quick Write prompts that will activate students' prior knowledge and engage ELs in brief forms of response writing in response to a topic or text.
- Adapt the writing process to the needs of ELs by spending more time on prewriting, drafting, and editing; structuring writing tasks into shorter, more manageable subtasks; and using shared online documents to post written and/or audio feedback to guide students through each step with questions and prompts, step-by-step directions, and modeling, as well as samples and exemplars.
- Support writing with visuals, digital mind-mapping, diagrams, word banks, glossaries, lists of words, outlines, or templates as needed.

Similarly, when students engage in viewing or visually representing their understanding, they have authentic opportunities to interact with complex ideas (e.g., watch a lecture on TED-Ed), develop new skills (watch someone model an artistic technique), experience extracurricular learning or extensions and enrichments to the core curriculum (go on a virtual field trip to a Smithsonian Museum, take a virtual tour of a gallery), participate in discipline-specific academic practices (complete a virtual frog dissection).

Key strategies that support viewing or visually representing new learning include the following:

- Select multilingual digital materials
- Turn on subtitles in English or the home language when available
- Use translation/interpretation apps
- Chunk viewing tasks to ensure time for meaning making via a stop-and-process protocol
- Embed comprehension checks and teacher notes into viewing assignments



MAKE-IT-YOUR-OWN LESSON SEEDS

The following brief overview provides a lesson topic with “seed” ideas that we invite you to “grow” into a full lesson plan for your classroom. The template may be adapted for use as a HyperDoc for student use.

STUDENT ADVOCACY GRADES 3–5

In the following lesson seed, students will employ their working knowledge and understanding of the concepts of citizenship, power, authority, and governance. Students will then use technology to locate the U.S. Capitol and other national buildings on Google Earth. Students will participate in a virtual reality field trip to the White House, and take verbal or pictorial notes during their experiential learning. Virtual field trips provide online access to many locations that your class may not get a chance to visit on their own. Students can explore many locations and discover extraordinary places just by using online virtual trip resources. They also eliminate logistical barriers such as time and money that traditional field trips require and provide more equitable access to a variety of learning experiences. After the field trip, students may work in groups to identify a problem in their community that might be resolved through legislation and use Twitter to advocate for the legislation.







STUDENT GOALS

- I can describe the functions of state governments and define *capital* as the location of state and national government and *capitol* as the building in which government is located.
- I can identify the nation’s capital on a map and name the major national buildings and sites in Washington, D.C.
- I can use Google Earth to locate the U.S. Capitol and other national buildings. I can participate in a virtual reality tour of the White House



ACTIVATE

Students review the formation of the United States with an emphasis on citizenship, government, and economics. Students read or view information about how a bill becomes a law.

	<p style="text-align: center;">CREATE</p> <p>Students identify a problem in their community that might be resolved through legislation. Create a public service announcement (PSA) about a key issue and post it in Flipgrid.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">EVALUATE & ANALYZE</p> <p>Students review all Flipgrid posts, compare notes, and select one topic to use to propose a new law for the community.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">COLLABORATE & APPLY</p> <p>In groups, students write a proposal for the new law. Create a hashtag (#) for the proposal to connect group members on Twitter and Tweet ideas about the community issue and the proposed legislation, include pictures, videos, and links about the community based on your research.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">DEMONSTRATE</p> <p>Students present their proposed legislation during a virtual or in-person mock assembly.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">REFLECT, ASSESS, & REMEMBER</p> <p>Students use a peer-review rubric to assess the proposed legislation with an emphasis on citizenship, government, and economics.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">EXPAND</p> <p>Use Google Earth to search places and navigate street views of Washington, D.C. Participate in a virtual reality tour of the White House using the Google Arts and Culture app. https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/the-white-house. Add hyperlinks to more activities and online resources to expand and differentiate the learning experience based on student needs.</p>



CONSIDER THIS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

Language and literacy develop when students participate in authentic opportunities to interact with complex learning materials and express themselves in a variety of ways. Previously, we advocated for a SWIRL-ing classroom, one in which students speak, write, interact, read, and listen while constructing new

knowledge, practicing emerging skills, and making meaning collaboratively. Let's go a few steps further and make sure multimodal, multiliteracy experiences are provided not only during designed ELD classes or courses but across all core content areas as well as the special subject areas for ELs. One way to achieve this is collaboration.

RESPONDING TO SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL NEEDS-BUILDING RESILIENCE

Have you ever heard a fellow educator state that working with ELs is just good teaching? We have! Hopkins and her colleagues (2019) offer us an explanation for this commonly heard misconception, and we invite you to share this response with your colleagues: it is a "misconception that overlooks the nature of language development and its relationship to content learning, and obscures attention to ELs' sociocultural and social-emotional experiences" (p. 2301). Developing oracy and literacy and engaging in multilingual, multimodal, digitally supported learning experiences may carry special challenges and rewards. Commit to providing ELs with joyful learning opportunities to participate in all domains (speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and visually interpreting) with growing confidence. While doing so, ELs may also develop tolerance for ambiguity, risk-taking skills, and perseverance to overcome perceived or actual obstacles. One way to achieve that is to balance student participation in these domains at the independent versus instructional levels.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogy is closely related to critical literacy, which "positions teachers and learners as co-constructors of knowledge" (Bacon, 2017, p. 425) and focuses on *reading the word and the world* (Freire & Macedo, 1987). As such, it helps students critically analyze texts in all genres as well produce new understandings about the complex cultural and social experiences including social inequities in one's local and global community. We have adapted Bacon's (2017) framework on critical literacy in English language teaching (ELT) to expand it to culturally responsive and sustaining critical digital literacy by acknowledging that ELs experience language and literacy development in the six domains across three potentially overlapping processes

1. *Incidental language and literacy learning:* ELs participate in self-directed or peer-supported language and literacy practices that lead to authentic discoveries about the world with all its historical and contemporary complexities and inequities.
2. *Explicit language and literacy learning:* ELs participate in teacher-directed or teacher-facilitated instruction that focuses on critical analysis of historical, social, and cultural concepts, conditions, and issues.
3. *Integrated language and literacy learning:* ELs participate in teacher-directed and authentic learning opportunities that are purposefully infused; content, language, literacy, and critical thinking are integrated with intention and consistency to ensure development in all areas.

RESOURCES OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

When we recognize that English learners and their families already engage in a range of oracy and literacy practices in multiple languages, including storytelling, reading environmental print, watching television shows, playing video games, reading and viewing for enjoyment, we also recognize that resources that are available in the home (computers with internet access, books, newspapers, magazines) and the community (libraries, after-school programs and clubs) may serve as rich sources of materials for exploration. At the same time, it is critical to address inequities in resources and provide much needed print- and technology-based tools to families who cannot afford them. Further, parents must have information in the language accessible to them regarding what their children are expected to learn in school and how they can support such learning at home.

Which of these ideas resonate with you and could be considered in your context?



DIGITAL-AGE EXPLORER'S CORNER

BUILDING LANGUAGE CAPACITY FOR ELs

KATIE DIGREGORIO, WEST HEMPSTEAD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Language is not a barrier; engagement is achievable for all learners. The goal of instructional technology is to allow students to make a meaningful connection with the content. At the West

Hempstead Union Free School District, we use instructional technology to provide differentiated, individualized, and highly engaging lessons. The ENL (English as a New Language) teachers apply various instructional technology tools to meet students where they are in language acquisition and allow them to acquire the content knowledge to be successful. The purpose of the instructional technology for our EL students is to enable them to build language capacity in both the academic and social constructs and navigate the digital world beyond the classroom environment.

Our teachers also use various instructional technology tools to curate their reading and writing in the workshop model. For example, in elementary classrooms, students publish their written works using Book Creator and then record themselves reading aloud. Additionally, the teachers use Seesaw in the primary grades to have students practice phonics and sight words to build foundational literacy. The instructional technology elevated the work products from the readers' and writers' workshop, which allowed the EL students to build grade-level academic literacy. At the elementary level, the ENL teachers use these tools to facilitate language development and not simply deliver the instruction. The technology tools selected are purposeful and appropriate for the readers' and writers' workshop goals.

At the middle level, the teachers use Thinglink, Book Creator, and the HyperDoc model of instruction to build background knowledge and individualize instruction. The students can participate in the lessons no matter their language acquisition level and are producing work that reflects this intentional use of instructional technology. The students work in groups using Google Meet breakout rooms and programs such as Padlet and Nearpod. They can collaborate, critically think, and communicate with fellow ELs and their English proficient peers. At the high school level, a significant focus of our district is on project-based learning. The district provides professional development from the Buck Institute (PBLworks.org). In the 2020–2021 school year, in place of traditional mid-year assessments, the high school ELs—with the Buck Institute student choice and agency framework—created projects that showed their understanding of complex scientific phenomena and mathematical concepts. The students used “mock Tik-Tok templates” from *Ditch that Textbook* (Miller, 2019), Google Forms to collect data, and the Kami app to graph the data. Students at varying levels of language proficiency were able to showcase their understanding of Regents level material at a pace and space that met their needs. The passing rate for the ELs who participated in PBL was 80%.

Chapter Summary

- The six language domains are listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and visually representing.
- Digital media supports both receptive and expressive academic language skills for ELs.
- ELs experience language and literacy development in the six domains across three potentially overlapping processes: incidental, explicit, and integrated language and literacy learning.
- When we design instruction for ELs for in-person, remote and hybrid learning environments we must be mindful to break activities into concrete steps using digital resources that incorporate the six language domains.



PLN Questions

1. How can digital learning resources support real and authentic language for in-person, remote, and hybrid instructional models?
2. Are you currently using digital learning resources? If so, how?
3. How can you use instructional videos to support all six language domains?
4. In what ways can you provide a more supportive and low-anxiety environment for ELs to express and support their receptive and expressive skills?
5. Describe how students can use digital media to demonstrate what they have learned.
6. Describe types of professional development that can transform pedagogy to enhance digital-age learning experiences for ELs?