Academic Language and Sociocultural Context

Don Bouchard: The social-cultural context—and this is something I just found yesterday on, uh, uh, the WIDA website—can be, can be examined in terms of a whole bunch of different, individualized components, and you see them shown here, and for some strange reason, watch this, Register goes whoa-oooo, and genre goes whoa-oooo [icons on screen gets larger], and then we go on. So [laughter], I don't get it; I don't get it. So somebody, somebody started doing their job with the slide [inaudible from participant] that's exactly it. So, that said, here's what, here's what I'm going to show you, and, and I'm going to, actually I'm going to put this, put these probably on the doors afterwards [indicating posters he is holding] because this is important for you to keep paramount in your mind as we go through a discussion of, um, and the implications of, and the applications of the ELD Standards. These different components underline the foundation of applying the standards.

The first one is Register, and Register has to do with who is the audience, how is the language impacted, and is it formal or informal…in other words, when we're engaged in a Science, uh, lesson, we're gonna, we're gonna, we're gonna use language like scientists. We're going to talk, write, listen in,as, as scientists, so this is so very important. Now, lest you think these questions have come naturally out of thin air, I have to show you that they're all written down right here [laughter]. I will post these on the wall so that you can see them. Thank you. Ok.

The next one here is, uh, Genre and Text Type, ok? Genre and/or Text Type, and it purely means what is the subject matter? What is the sub… what is it all about? How can we connect to our students' understanding of the subject matter? And how is the language used and organized in the subject matter? And of course, as you know, the language is organized in different ways depending upon the subject matter.

Third component here is Topic, topic, which is out of order. Here we go, topic. What's the communication about? Hey, notice this has to do with the subject area. Has to do with the nature of the subtopic or category in the subject area, so consideration of this is very important.

Task or Situation and that has to do with the language that the situation demands; in other words, is it any combination of, um, listening, speaking, reading or writing?

And the last one here the Identity and Social Types and that is how is the, um, environment organized? Is it a lab situation? Is it a, um, um, a dialog or a small group discussion situation? Is it a situation in which one is interacting with a computer? One in which one is listening to a top-down lecture by the teacher? Etc, etc. So we have all these different components that are necessary pieces to consider prior to engaging in the ELD Standards.