

readers. These explanations could first occur among peers and then, as students gain confidence with this type of analysis, more independently.

A teacher can use Part II of the CA ELD Standards as a guide for showing ELs how different text types are organized and structured (e.g., how a story is structured or where in an argument evidence is presented) or how language is used purposefully to make meaning (e.g., how sentences are combined to show relationships between ideas). For example, a science teacher might single out a particular sentence in the science textbook that is challenging for students but critical for understanding a topic. The teacher could lead a discussion where the class unpacks the academic and informationally dense sentence for its meaning using more everyday language. Figure 2.20 shows what the class discussion might generate from this sentence unpacking activity (note that the main clause is underlined).

Figure 2.20. Sentence Unpacking

Original sentence to unpack: <p>“Although many countries are addressing pollution, <u>environmental degradation continues to create devastating human health problems each year.</u>”</p>
Meanings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution is a big problem around the world. • People are creating pollution and ruining the environment. • The ruined environment leads to health problems in people. • Health problems are still happening every year. • The health problems are really, really bad. • A lot of countries are doing something about pollution. • Even though the countries are doing something about pollution, there are still big problems.
<i>What this sentence is mostly about:</i> Environmental degradation <i>What it means in our own words:</i> People are creating a lot of pollution and messing up the environment all around the world, and even though a lot of countries are trying to do things about it, a lot of people have big health problems because of it.

This type of language analysis demystifies academic language and provides a model for students to tackle the often challenging language they encounter in their