Chapter 14
Dimensions of Success
Integrating the C3 Framework and ESL Instruction: In Elementary Social Studies Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation for considering how the four dimensions of the C3 (i.e., college, career, and civic life) framework may be used as a means to provide English language learners (ELLs) with equitable access to academic language and content instruction within the context of an elementary social studies classroom. In addition, this chapter offers insight in preparing students, especially ELLs, for the demands of civic life. The authors approach this discussion by narratively modeling a lesson plan targeting a second grade, ESL, social studies classroom. This chapter seeks to integrate research-based practices within both the social studies and ESL frameworks while illustrating the feasibility of using the C3 framework to serve the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations.

INTRODUCTION

Students’ cultural and linguistic identities have dramatically changed in K12 classrooms across the United States. Between 2013 and 2014, English language learners (ELL) reached an estimated 4.5 million students (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). According to Zong and Batalova (2015), 85 percent of ELLs enrolled in elementary classrooms (i.e., PK-5) are born in the United States. ELLs’ rich cultural and linguistic diversity brings to the classroom a plethora of resources teachers can and should use as an instructional foundation to foster equitable learning environments for...
all students. Instruction designed to effectively address the linguistic, cultural, and academic needs of students with varying levels of English language proficiency has proven to be a challenge for teachers nationwide (Díaz-Rico, 2012). In 2015, the National Association of Educational Progress identified a 37-points achievement gap for non-ELLs and ELLs at the fourth grade level (Kena et al., 2016).

BACKGROUND

To design and implement instruction tailored to meet the linguistic, cultural, and academic needs of ELLs within the context of the K-5 social studies classroom, teachers should embrace a holistic understanding of their ELLs’ background. Doing so requires an awareness of: a) ELLs’ first (i.e., L1), and target (i.e., L2) language proficiency levels, b) ELLs’ reading and writing skills across languages, and c) home literacy practices including family’s views and perceptions towards schooling. As teachers design social studies lessons, they should use this information as instructional building blocks. Due to the linguistic and informational density (Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012) featured in social studies texts, classroom resources, and materials, social studies elementary teachers should be equipped to negotiate the language and content demands all students, will be expected to understand while learning concepts within the context of their academic content. We suggest that the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2013) may serve as a means of facilitating this negotiation.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation for considering how the four dimensions of the C3 Framework may be used as a means to address the issues facing ELL students in academic literacy and long term school achievement in order to prepare them for the demands of civic life. The authors will approach this discussion by narratively modeling a lesson plan targeting a second-grade social studies classroom. We seek to integrate evidence-based best practices within both the social studies and ESL frameworks as well as to illustrate the feasibility of using the C3 framework with ELLs in elementary social studies classrooms. We will consider ways to use each of the dimensions of the C3 Framework (NCSS, 2013), as described in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. The Four Dimensions of the C3 Framework (NCSS, 2013)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dimension 1: Questioning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dimension 2: Disciplinary Literacy</td>
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<td>Dimension 3: Researching Multiple Sources</td>
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<td>Dimension 4: Communicating ideas</td>
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