ELLs in the Social Studies: Eight Strategies that Improve Instruction

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Percentage of Public School Students who are ELLs by State, 2011-2012

Common Vocabulary in the Field

- Demographic Labels
  - ELL: English language learner
  - LEP: Limited English proficient
  - ESOL: English for speakers of other languages
  - Emergent bilingual (O. Garcia)

- Program Design
  - ESL: English as a Second Language
  - HILT: High Intensity Language Training programs
  - School within a School
  - Sheltered instruction (Short)
  - Mainstream instruction

L1: Native language    L2: Second language (often referring to English)
Second Language Theories

- **Cummins (1979):** BICS v. CALP (social/conversational language distinct from academic language used in textbooks and educational settings)

- **Collier & Thomas (2002):** the amount of formal schooling in L1 is the most significant student variable affecting academic English language acquisition. If students had no schooling in their L1, it can take 7-10 years to develop English academic language proficiency. If they had 2-3 years of formal schooling, it can take 5-7 years.

- **Krashen (1987, 1988):** two independent systems of second language performance - acquisition v. learning
Understanding ELLs

- NOT all immigrants - heterogeneous and complex group
- Although the majority comes from Spanish speaking countries, there is immense intergroup difference
- Other Instructional Issues
  - Period of silence
  - Standardized test performance
- Sociocultural Issues
  - Less emphasis on college
  - Lack of access to hidden curriculum
  - Immigration tensions (*Plyler v. Doe*)
Contemporary Work

- M. Fránquiz: Biliteracy
- O. García: Translanguaging
- Instructional Frameworks
  - **SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol):** Developed by Echevarria, Vogt & Short in 1999; framework for organizing instruction for ELLs consisting of eight components: lesson preparation; building background; comprehensible input; strategies; interaction; practice and application; lesson delivery; review and assessment.
  - **CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach):** Developed by Chamot in 1994; informed by cognitive learning theory and sociocultural theory (combined cognitive-social model)
Emergent Bilinguals in the Social Studies: The Big 8

1. Accessing prior knowledge
2. Developing social studies language (syntactical acquisition)
3. Acquiring language through vocabulary
4. Constructing & scaffolding learning activities:
5. Providing content through visuals
6. Organizing content
7. Kinesthetically acquiring content knowledge
8. Creating opportunities to speak, listen, read and write
#1: Accessing Prior Knowledge

1. Students have **their own** histories/understandings of geography/topography/economic networks

2. Students have **preexisting** funds of knowledge about the U.S. and their own communities (community vs. school)

3. Students’ prior knowledge can **surprise** you

4. Students may understand certain constructs based on their experiences in **different contexts**
#1: Accessing Prior Knowledge

- Students have **preexisting** funds of knowledge about the U.S. and their own communities (community vs. school)

- Community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005)
  - Community walks/caminatas
  - Funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 2002)
#1: Accessing Prior Knowledge
#1: Accessing Prior Knowledge

- Unexpected prior knowledge
- What “American” symbols are widespread?
- Do these things surprise you?
#1: Accessing Prior Knowledge

- The First Amendment of the Bill of Rights protects:
  - Free exercise of religion
  - Freedom of speech
  - Freedom of the press
  - Freedom of assembly
  - Freedom of petition

- How might a student coming from a non-U.S. context interpret these examples differently?
#2: Developing Social Studies Language (Syntactical Acquisition)

- Explicit instruction in using tools/resources
  - Table of Contents, indices
  - Dictionaries, glossaries

- Social Studies Content Delivery
  - Lecture
  - Textbook

- Unpack/extend ideas
#2: Developing Social Studies Language (Syntactical Acquisition)

The stories that were related to them by explorers and missionaries, just back from the trek West, and were filled with images of vast, open landscapes, abundant game and pristine rivers and lakes [sic]. (American Westward Expansion 2006, para. 7)

#2: Developing Social Studies Language (Syntactical Acquisition)

PASSIVE VOICE

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LONG SERIES OF FACTS AND IDEAS WITH MULTIPLE ADJECTIVES

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UNPACK: WHY DID THEY TALK ABOUT LAND, GAME, BODIES OF WATER?

#3: Acquiring Language through Vocabulary

- Content-specific academic language (court-packing plan)

- Abstract v. Concrete
  - The kind of language we often deal in: abstract (war on poverty), symbolic (doves v. hawks, bear v. bull markets), low frequency (Little Rock Nine, New Deal)

- Wordle with the Constitution and Universal Declaration of Human Rights
THE PRESIDENT
THE WHITE HOUSE

WE THE PARENTS OF NINE NEGRO CHILDREN ENROLLED AT LITTLE ROCK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT YOUR ACTION IN SAFE GUARDING THEIR RIGHTS HAVE STRENGTHENED OUR FAITH IN DEMOCRACY STOP NOW AS NEVER BEFORE WE HAVE AN ABIDING FEELING OF BELONGING AND PURPOSEFULNESS STOP WE BELIEVE THAT FREEDOM AND EQUALITY WITH WHICH ALL MEN
#3: Acquiring Language through Vocabulary - Wordle of the Constitution
#3: Acquiring Language through Vocabulary - Wordle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
#5: Constructing & Scaffolding Learning Activities

- Providing content through visuals
  - Maps, photographs, editorial cartoons
- Organizing content
  - *Graphic organizers*: diagrams, t-charts, flow charts, timelines, webs (links on handout)
- Kinesthetically acquiring content knowledge
  - Globes, maps, realia
  - Sticky notes, index cards - post and refer back
  - DO/EXPERIENCE social studies
How would an emergent bilingual work with this text?

The Bracero Program grew out of a series of bi-lateral agreements between Mexico and the United States that allowed millions of Mexican men to come to the United States to work on, short-term, primarily agricultural labor contracts. From 1942 to 1964, 4.6 million contracts were signed, with many individuals returning several times on different contracts, making it the largest U.S. contract labor program.

From the Bracero Archive
#6: Visual Supports
#7: Graphic organizers

**WHAT:** Agricultural Labor Agreements (Farmwork contracts)

**MEXICO ->**

**WHEN:** 1942-1964

**WHO:** Millions of Mexican men

**WHERE:** Farms across the U.S. from California to Maryland

**WHY:** Need for more farm workers

**< - U.S.A.**
#8: Kinesthetic Content Knowledge
Review - Emergent Bilinguals in the Social Studies: The Big 8

1. Accessing prior knowledge
2. Developing social studies language (syntactical acquisition)
3. Acquiring language through vocabulary
4. Constructing & scaffolding learning activities:
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6. Organizing content
7. Kinesthetically acquiring content knowledge
8. Creating opportunities to speak, listen, read and write
Creating Opportunities to Speak, Listen, Read, and Write

- Think about the Big 8

- ELPS: English Language Proficiency Standards

- C3: What are we asking students to do?
Speaking

• Speak using words and short phrases consisting of recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material

• Speak using a bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions

• Knowledge of English grammar necessary to connect ideas and speak in sentences

• Express simple, original messages, speak using sentences, and participate in short conversations and classroom interactions

• Exhibit an emerging awareness of English grammar and speak using mostly simple sentence structures and simple tenses

• Have a grasp of basic grammar features, including a basic ability to narrate and describe in present, past, and future tense
Listening

- Understand simple conversations and simple discussions
- Identify and distinguish individual words and phrases
- Understand simple or routine directions
- Seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend
- Understand longer, more elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and some unfamiliar topics
- Understand most main points, most important details, and some implicit information
- Require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning
Reading

- Read and understand recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar English they have learned; vocabulary

- Comprehend predominantly isolated familiar words and phrases; comprehend some sentences in highly routine contexts or recently practiced, highly familiar text;

- Have a growing understanding of basic, routinely used English language structures

- Understand simple sentences in short, connected texts, but are dependent on visual cues, topic familiarity, prior knowledge, pretaught topic-related vocabulary, story predictability, and teacher/peer assistance to sustain comprehension

- Demonstrate an emerging ability to understand words and phrases beyond their literal meaning
Writing

- Use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction.

- Develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing such as focus and coherence, conventions, organization, voice, and development of ideas in English.

- Use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction.
Debrief & Closing

- Remember the diverse array of knowledge and needs that emergent bilinguals have
- What are some specific strategies/instructional approaches that social studies teachers should do for their emergent bilingual students?
- While the practices we discussed are intended to meet the specific linguistic and cognitive needs of emergent bilinguals, they can simultaneously provide support to various learning styles and students with special needs.
- Next steps???
Presentation available online at naseemrdz.com under Publications & Presentations
References


