

Social Studies Textbooks for Pre-Service Elementary Teachers: Implications for Literacy and ELL Instruction

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***Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to examine elementary social studies methods texts, specifically focusing on literacy content (reading comprehension strategies, vocabulary strategies, and literacy activities) for the general education population and English Language Learners (ELLs). Eight elementary social studies methods texts were examined. Analysis of the texts found that while a limited number of reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies and activities were found in each text, half of the texts did not detail how to use the strategies in the classroom or how to differentiate instruction for ELL's. Thus, collaboration between social studies educators, literacy educators and ESOL educators is needed in order to fully prepare our pre-service teachers to teach across content areas.*

***Keywords:** Literacy, English Language Learners, Strategies*

Introduction

As emerging literacy focused teacher educators begin their apprenticeship into the professoriate, understanding the current context of teacher education in the other content areas is essential to their success as well as their students' success as classroom teachers. Many times doctoral students are asked to begin preparing prospective teachers with very little support or preparation for teaching adult learners the tools which they have used themselves as elementary or secondary teachers. Additionally, typically little professional development is offered to prepare them to understand how literacy instruction, specifically content area reading, is addressed in the other methods courses or how they might help their students make connections between literacy instruction and other methods instruction. Indeed, their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) often serves as their primary preparation for their methods course instruction. Given the complexity of preparing novice teachers for powerful literacy instruction that crosses disciplines in a way that enhances prospective teacher reading and writing instruction,

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these novice teacher educators also need an understanding of the content areas as well as the unique P-12 populations for which they are preparing prospective teachers to teach (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005).

High quality teacher education programs provide robust literacy instruction as well as instruction in content area reading that supports both struggling readers and English Language Learner (ELL) instruction. The National Center for Educational Statistics (2005) notes “it is estimated that 69% of fourth grade students cannot read at proficient levels with 36% of the fourth grade population unable to read at or above basic levels of understanding” (Wanzek, Wexler, Vaughn, & Ciullo, 2010, p. 890). As a student reaches middle school, texts become much more complex; students are no longer predominately reading narrative, fiction texts instead the focus turns to reading and comprehending content-area expository texts (Allington, 2002; Grigg, Daane, Jin, & Campbell, 2003). Thus, teacher education programs need to teach students strategies to help them comprehend expository texts.

Various researchers have identified the positive relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary (National Reading Panel, 2000; Proctor, Carlo, August, & Snow, 2005; Spencer & Guillaume, 2006). However, equally important in content area reading and other method instruction is the fact that many English Language Learners’ English vocabulary is not developed enough to comprehend difficult texts such as content area textbooks (August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005). Thus, as noted by Wallace (2007), the “greatest challenge inhibiting the ability of English language learners (ELLs) to read at the appropriate grade level is perhaps a lack of sufficient vocabulary development” (p. 189). Therefore, methods instructors across the content areas and ultimately their students benefit by possessing an arsenal of reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies they can use with ELL students in order to make difficult textbooks comprehensible.

English Language Learners (ELLs) “represent the fastest growing group throughout all levels of schooling in the United States” (Erben, 2009, p. 7). In Florida alone, school districts have between 10 and 50 percent of their students classified as ELLs (Erben, 2009). As a result, prospective teachers must learn how to instruct students whose native language is not English. Their learning in the content areas presents

particular challenges. For example, in social studies ELL students may face additional challenges in learning content such as a lack of familiarity with historical terms, processes, and content-specific vocabulary, concepts that do not exist in all cultures, and the complexity of social studies texts (Cruz & Thornton, 2009). Social studies terminology is very content-specific, which can cause problems with students, especially ELLs, who are unfamiliar with the definitions of many social studies terms. Because of these potential struggles, prospective elementary teachers must be prepared to use culturally sensitive pedagogy. Additionally, social studies teachers must learn how to use various reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies to reach ELL students.

The purpose of this study was to explore how social studies methods textbooks help prospective teachers develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to support struggling readers within a content area as well as enhance ELL learning. To these ends, I engaged in a content analysis of elementary social studies methods to provide literacy and ELL instructors an overview of the different topics, reading comprehension strategies, vocabulary strategies, and literacy activities elementary education majors are introduced to in social studies methods courses. Specifically, the study investigates vocabulary and reading comprehension strategies as well as literacy activities the textbook authors included and explores how these literacy areas were specifically geared towards English Language Learners.

Methods

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study include: (1) What literacy strategies (reading comprehension and vocabulary) are included in each textbook? (2) What literacy activities are included in each textbook? And (3) What literacy strategies are specific to the ELL population?

Sampling Method

I initially included twelve elementary social studies methods textbooks in my analysis. The books were selected because they were included on the syllabi of various educational leaders in Social Studies Education (SSE). I used the National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS) Council University Faculty Assembly (CUFA) program worksheet from the 2010 meeting in Denver, CO to locate syllabi and textbooks (see

Table A). The program worksheet contained names of many prominent Social Studies Education faculties in the country. I reviewed the program worksheet and identified the names of individuals who taught Elementary Social Studies Methods courses and emailed each of them. In my email, I explained that as a doctoral student at the University of South Florida I was conducting a content analysis of Elementary Social Studies Methods texts this summer in order to better inform prospective teacher elementary literacy instruction. I received ten syllabi from across the United States. Once I received all the syllabi, I identified which textbooks were used and acquired each of them for analysis. I also conducted my own Internet search for elementary social studies methods courses which led me to request three additional textbooks. The textbooks are noted in Table B.

Data Analysis

Content analysis (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Krippendorff, 2004) allowed me to examine the occurrence of emergent implicit or explicit terms within a text or texts. The steps included a pre-reading, which helped me to identify the concepts to code for, distinguishing among concepts, removing irrelevant information, coding the texts, making sense of the codes in light of the research questions. While explicit terms obviously were easy to identify, the coding for implicit or missing terms and deciding their level of importance required me to make judgments as the researcher.

Specifically, my analysis was conducted at two levels following the McCrory, Siedel, & Stylianides (in revision) analysis design. The first phase provided a descriptive analysis as I examined each textbook and made an inventory of what was covered in each text using the table of contents. I counted the page numbers for each chapter and wrote down the topics covered in each chapter. Then, I created an outline comparing each text and its table of contents—the topics covered as a chapter or subsection and a table examining the number of total pages in the book, the edition, and the average number of pages per chapter. After creating an outline of each of the twelve textbooks, I categorized them into two subsets: (1) resource books (e.g. guides to Internet websites for social studies teachers or curriculum guides) and (2) traditional methods textbooks (e.g. books that specifically taught students how to teach each area of the social studies including history, geography, civics/government, economics, and psychology). As a result, my textbook analysis reduced my data sources from twelve to eight methods texts (see

Appendix). In the second phase of my analysis, I used the lenses of literacy and English language learners (ELLs) to specifically identify reading and writing literacy strategies as well as specific strategies to use with ELLs. Analysis resulted in a list of comprehension and vocabulary strategies found in the texts as well as strategies designated specifically for ELL students. Open coding quickly identified a set of themes including chapters on literacy, chapters that contained literacy strategies, chapters on ELLs, and sections within chapters that addressed literacy as well as ELLs.

I examined each of my eight traditional methods textbooks in depth, created an outline of each of the textbooks and mapped out the content in each. Then, I went through and highlighted, using different colors of highlighter to represent my different areas of inquiry, the chapters on literacy, other chapters that contained literacy strategies, my chapters on ELLs, and other chapters where ELLs were mentioned if the text did not have a separate chapter on ELLs. For example, I used a green highlighter to signify chapters on literacy, an orange highlighter for ELLs, a blue highlighter for chapters on topics such as assessment and planning that contains literacy strategies, and a pink highlighter for literacy activities. Once that was completed, I identified where the gaps existed in each text—primarily, the lack of vocabulary and reading comprehension strategies listed and detailed in each textbook.

In order to assess what was in each textbook, I created a table where I listed each reading comprehension strategy, vocabulary strategy, literacy activity, and where the strategies were found (e.g. throughout the book or in a specific chapter). This descriptive analysis also identified substantive absences of these topics in some texts. As a final stage of analysis, I drew on my own knowledge of literacy and ELL to identify where the gaps existed in contents of these instructional materials if the textbook's goal was to support struggling readers in content area instruction or ELL learners.

Findings and Illustrations

Overall, the findings for this study indicated the lack of vocabulary and reading comprehension strategies listed and detailed in each textbook. For example, only five of the eight books examined contained a chapter on literacy in social studies. Some of the strategies presented appeared in many of the texts, however the number of strategies for reading comprehension and vocabulary were few. The following four sections of the

content analysis examine the inclusion, or lack thereof, of reading comprehension strategies, vocabulary strategies, literacy activities, and specific strategies and activities for English Language Learners included in each elementary social studies methods textbook. At the conclusion of each section, I identify the strengths and weaknesses of literacy related instruction within social studies methods instruction and where weaknesses are identified, I offer appropriate literacy related strategies and activities to strengthen instruction for general education and ELL students. I provide these illustrations of literacy and ELL best practices using the American Revolution as the instructional topic. These examples are offered to model the types of literacy-focused instruction that could strengthen the preparation of prospective teachers who are being prepared to strengthen content area reading for struggling readers and ELLs.

RQ 1: What literacy strategies (reading comprehension and vocabulary) are included in each textbook?

Reading Comprehension Strategies

Diaz-Rico & Weed (2006) note English Language Learners might have a lack of reading comprehension, which hinders a student's progress in learning the material. If a student does not understand and is unable to make connections to the reading, he or she cannot fully comprehend what he/she is reading in class. Because comprehensibility is such a crucial part of learning, teachers need to take the issue of a lack of comprehensibility seriously. Comprehension is one of the major challenges in understanding social studies and other content area texts. According to Brown (2007a), "it is difficult for ELLs to have a conceptual understanding of events and their impact on or consequences in contemporary society" (p. 185) if they are not from that particular country. Textbooks also serve as a disservice to English Language Learners (ELLs) because textbook authors assume that all readers share same cultural experiences, and background knowledge to comprehend the text (Brown 2007b).

A variety of reading comprehension strategies were outlined in each textbook. The majority of the strategies mentioned (58%) were graphic organizers (e.g. concept maps, web, sequential graphic organizer, semantic maps, and KWL). Duplass' (2011) text included different types of reading instruction in his comprehension strategies section including: read alouds (Trelease, 1982), independent reading (Anderson, Fielding,

& Wilson, 1988), reading in groups, student-teacher shared reading, choral reading (Hasbrouck, 2006), dramatic reading and round robin reading, which research has deemed an ineffective reading strategy (Opitz, Rasinski, & Bird, 1998). What he deemed as strategies are not so much strategies but different ways to facilitate reading the text in the classroom. For example, one of his reading strategies was reading as homework, which according to Duplass develops independent reading skills. He also offered a teacher tip called a “Picture Walk”, a pre-reading strategy where the teacher “walks” the students through the reading by looking at the pictures, text boxes, charts, etc. Ellis (2010) highlighted the think aloud (Davey, 1983) strategy as “one of the best ways to prevent the “in one ear and out the other” syndrome that seems to haunt children’s learning of social studies” (p. 209). Maxim (2010), whose text is written from a constructivist viewpoint, highlighted various graphic organizers as well as the think-pair-share (Lymna, 1981) and the think-pair-square comprehension strategies. The think-pair-square is a variation of the think-pair-share where students share their thoughts with a partner then share in a group of four (e.g. a square) (Maxim, 2010).

Parker (2012) encouraged the use of list-group-label (Taba, 1967), previewing the text, and the skim text and summarize strategy. He provided a detailed example of how a teacher and students would preview the social studies text before reading. Previews, according to Parker, should accomplish three things:

- (1) help the reader get an advanced idea of the selection
 - (2) help the reader understand how the materials is going to be organized
 - (3) help the reader understand how pictures relate to the subject matter to be read
- (p. 377).

Welton (2005) and Zarrillo (2008) discussed many of the same strategies including the KWL (Olge, 1986), PreP (Langer, 1981), semantic mapping (Heimlich & Pittelman, 1986), and Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) (Raphael, 1982) /Questioning the Author (QtA) (Beck, McKeown, Hamilton, & Kucan, 1997). Welton provided a sample summary/review chart on a variety of topics covered in multiple social studies units. He also included an example of a semantic map about the country of Canada that could be used in a geography lesson. Zarrillo included a sample graphic organizer on “Connecticut” and the different geographic regions of the state in his text.

While the reading comprehension strategies are limited, a variety of comprehension strategies focused on the seven core comprehension strategies (Pearson, Roehler, Dole, & Duffy, 1992; Zimmerman & Keene, 2007) were presented in the texts. For example, to *activate prior knowledge*, strategies offered by the authors include previewing the text, the KWL and PreP. Strategies that promote *questioning, inferencing, and clarification* include the think aloud and Questioning the Author. A ‘picture walk’, which is highlighted by Duplass (2011) as a pre-reading strategy can be used by students to *determine importance*. Semantic mapping can be utilized by students to create mental images or *visualizations* of material. Additionally, a think-pair-share can be used to help student *synthesize* information they have just read in a text.

Even though the textbooks present reading comprehension strategies that address all the core areas of reading comprehension, the texts lacked examples of using more than one strategy during a lesson, and every text did not offer suggestions that aligned with the seven core reading comprehension strategies. In this first example, I offer a lesson to illustrate how teachers can incorporate various reading comprehension strategies into their social studies classes.

Illustration

Imagine you have entered a fifth grade elementary classroom. Ms. Smith walks to the front of the class and introduces the next unit in social studies—the American Revolution. “Now class,” she says. “To introduce the new unit, I am going to read aloud a book called *John, Paul, George, and Ben* by Lane Smith. Prior to reading the book aloud, we are going to *activate our prior knowledge* (pre-reading strategy and core reading comprehension strategy) about the American Revolution.” Prior to recording the students’ responses down on the chart paper, Ms. Smith modeled the strategy for the students. “I remember that the American Revolution took place in the thirteen colonies,” she said. Then she turned to the class, “What do you already know about the American Revolution,” she asked.

“It was a war between the British and the Americans,” said Lucy. “We won our independence,” remarked Kevin. “We became a country after we won the war,” said Jake. “It happened a long time ago,” said Kelly.

Ms. Smith recorded the responses on the chart paper and remarked, “We have some great background knowledge class. Now while I read the book aloud, I want you think about any *connections* (during reading strategy, visualization, and inferencing) you have with the story. These can be text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world, or text-to-media. Can anyone explain what a text-to-self connection is?” Johnny said, “It’s when you compare a character in the book to yourself.”

“What about a text-to-text connection?” asked Ms. Smith. Kaley raised her hand. “It’s when you compare the book to another book.”

“And what about text-to-world and text-to-media?” she asked. Mark raised his hand. “A text-to-world connection is where you make a connection with something that is happening in the world right now,” he said. “A text-to-media connection is where you connect the book to a movie, tv show, or video game.”

“Record your connections on your large sticky notes in front of you. Once we finish reading, we can share our connections,” said Ms. Smith. She began to read the story. Quickly, she identified a text-to-self connection that she shared with the class. “Like John I struggled with my handwriting. My teachers always told me that my penmanship was too messy. I got S’s in penmanship each marking period. So even though John’s teacher thought he had nice handwriting, and my teacher thought mine was too messy, I still connected to this section of the book because, like John, my teacher was frustrated with my penmanship,” she said.

While Ms. Smith continued to read the book aloud, the students recorded down their questions and connections on the sticky notes. After she finished reading the book, the students shared their connections. “When Ben was told to shut his yap, it made me think of the time my sister told me to stop talking so much,” said Johnny. “When George cut down the cherry tree he looked nervous because he thought his dad was going to be upset with him,” said Kaley. “That picture reminded me of when I broke one of my mom’s china plates a few weeks ago. I thought she was going to be mad at me too.” Jill raised her hand. “I saw a show called *Liberty Kids* and this book reminded me of kids in that show,” she said.

After the students shared their connections, Ms. Smith introduced a *history frame* (post-reading strategy, determining importance and synthesis). Similar to a story map, a history frame asks the following questions:

1. When did the event take place?
2. Who was involved?
3. What was the problem or goal that set the event in motion?
4. What were the key events?
5. How was it resolved?
6. What's the universal truth, the reason this matters? (readingquest.org, 2006, n.p.).

Each student received a history frame and divided up into groups. One group focused on George Washington, one on Paul Revere, one on Ben Franklin, one on John Hancock, and one on Thomas Jefferson; the groups filled in the history frame for their particular part of the story and shared them with the rest of the class.

As illustrated above, Ms. Smith used three different reading comprehension strategies with her students to introduce them to the next unit of study—the American Revolution. These strategies included: These strategies are consistent with the research that suggests that “explicit or formal instruction of [reading comprehension] strategies is believed to lead to improvement in text understanding and information use” (National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000, 4-5); additionally providing students with multiple strategies during a reading class or content-area class, enables the teacher and students to interact naturalistically while reading the text (NRP, 2000). Thus, using reading comprehension strategies throughout the course of reading a text selection as opposed to simply having the students read a selection of text and not employ the use of strategies, leads to increased retention and understanding of the text and improvement in comprehensibility of text.

Vocabulary Strategies

Myers and Savage (2005) note that social studies is an “information-laden subject, with much of the required content in textbooks” (Duplass, 2011, p. 18). In particular, there is bias in vocabulary depending on who writes the textbook, a unique problem in social studies (Duplass, 2011). Thus, learning and understanding the meaning of social

studies vocabulary words is crucial to comprehending the content. Duplass (2011) provided the example: the “Ramadan War and the Yom Kippur War are the same war and are typically used in either pro-Arab or pro-Israeli text” (p. 224-225).

Additionally, Parker (2001) identified eight types of vocabulary terms that students encounter in social studies. They include: technical terms, figurative terms, words with multiple meanings, locality-specific terms, alike words, acronyms, quantitative terms, and names. As students move into the intermediate grades in elementary school, they are expected to maneuver through increasingly sophisticated reading in textbooks and other informational texts. In social studies “students encounter many unfamiliar special and technical terms unique to that area” (Harmon & Hedrick, 2000, p. 155). However, exposure to those unique words might be infrequent because they rarely show up in the text. To make things even more complicated, “many content area words are labels for concepts that cannot be adequately portrayed in any one definition” (Harmon & Hedrick, 2000, p. 156). For example, the term *dove* can refer to “any of numerous pigeons”, or “an opponent of war” depending on the context (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2011). Thus, vocabulary instruction is crucial in the social studies classroom.

Out of the eight books included in my analysis, only four books included vocabulary strategies (Duplass; Parker; Welton; & Zarrillo). None of the texts provided a plethora of vocabulary strategies, which is surprising considering social studies, as noted by researchers, contains many technical terms that are only applicable to social studies content (Harmon & Hedrick, 2000; Harmon, Hedrick, & Wood, 2005).

Duplass (2011) dedicated an entire topic (5 pages) to what he refers to as “the crucial role of social studies vocabulary” (p. 223). He provided vocabulary techniques to help students understand complex terminology. These techniques include context clues such as comparison and contrast clues, synonyms, verbal clues, and definitions as well as visual clues (e.g. picture clues) and experience clues, familiar expression clues, summary clues, and mood clues. Examples are also included in the text such as historical expressions (e.g. pork barrel, dirt poor, kangaroo court, and upper crust) (p. 225-6). He listed additional best practices for teaching vocabulary including:

1. teach the concept before presenting the unknown word

2. requiring a vocabulary notebook
3. using repetition in the classroom
4. encouraging students to determine the meaning of new words by inferring the meaning from the context, using a dictionary or so other measure
5. creating and displaying a word web, matrix or list or use a crossword puzzle assignment to preview new vocabulary as an alternative to listing words and definitions (p. 227).

Parker (2012) briefly mentioned two strategies in his text—word walls (Cunningham, 1999) and word games. He was not specific in what he meant by a word game. Welton’s (2005) text was also scant in vocabulary strategies. He listed two vocabulary strategies—pre-teaching terms to students prior to reading and word maps (Baumann, & Kameenui, 1991). He provided an example word map on the term “dynasty” in his text. Zarrillo (2008) suggested three vocabulary strategies in his text: contextual redefinition (Lenski, Wham, & Johns, 1999), semantic maps (Heimlich & Pittelman, 1986), and the best option approach or context-structure-sound reference (Grey, 1946). He provided an example of the contextual redefinition strategy for the words “bribe” and “vigilante”. The students individually came up with definitions for each before they saw the words in context. Then, they compared the definition they came up with to those around them; each group had to come up with a consensus for each word. The teacher used the words in context and each child wrote a third definition. Finally, a comparison was made between the student-made definitions and the ones in the social studies text (Zarrillo, 2008).

Even though social studies is a very information heavy content area, few vocabulary strategies are included in the texts. There is an emphasis on using the vocabulary in context; Parker (2012) suggested that teachers use word walls in their classroom, and Zarrillo (2008) detailed strategies that encourage teaching vocabulary in context as opposed to turning to the glossary. Duplass (2011) encouraged the use of context clues. However, more often than not, vocabulary strategies, like the ones detailed below, are not included in the texts.

Illustration:

Imagine you are now peaking back into that same fifth grade social studies classroom. Ms. Smith's class is still focused on the American Revolution. Today, they are reading *Paul Revere's Ride*, a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Prior to reading the poem, Ms. Smith conducted a *vocabulary preview* (pre-reading strategy) with her students. She listed the words in the text that may be important for the students to understand during reading (e.g. words that are unique to the 1700s) and defined each vocabulary word, using it in its proper context, for her students before reading. She handed out the students' *personal dictionaries* (during reading strategy) and copies of the text, and reminded them to record down any words that pique their interest as she read the story aloud. A personal dictionary can be constructed from construction paper and notebook paper, can be a spiral notebook, or it can be a section of a class binder. It contains a page for each letter of the alphabet; both the capital letter and lowercase letter are written at the top of the page. The students used a personal dictionary to record any words that pop off the page, words that piqued their interest. It is important to recognize that a definition is not provided by the teacher or dictionary; instead, the word is used in a context appropriate sentence and recorded down by the student on the appropriate page in the dictionary.

As noted by McKeown, Beck, Omanson, and Perfetti (1983), vocabulary instruction has a strong correlation to comprehension of text. If a student does not understand the vocabulary, comprehension of the text will not occur. Pre-instruction of key vocabulary words in a selection of text also has shown to increase vocabulary acquisition of students (Brett, Rothlein, & Hurley, 1996). Research has also shown that using vocabulary in the appropriate context, as opposed to having the students look up words in the dictionary (the drill and practice approach) provides the student with a rich and valuable vocabulary experience (NRP, 2000). Thus, teachers who effectively teach vocabulary to their students introduce their students to key terminology to help them make meaning of the text in front of them. The students are introduced to the new words in their *natural context*, as opposed to the glossary section of the textbook, making an important connection between the new word and its contextual meaning. Thus, the students are continuously refining their understanding of the content area (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2006).

RQ 2: What literacy activities are included in each textbook?

Seven of the eight books also included literacy activities in the chapter on social studies and literacy or in chapters on specific social studies content. Whereas a reading comprehension or vocabulary strategy is employed *before, during* or *after* the reading, so the student can make meaning of the text, a literacy activity is *an extension* to the lesson that is completed once the student has read the assigned reading in the text, storybook, online etc. These activities include post-reading activities as well as writing activities. Brophy and Allen (2007) did not include a description of literacy activities in their textbook, however, it must be noted that they did not include a chapter on literacy and social studies and their strategies were located in the chapter on assessment. Duplass (2011) offered a variety of strategies including post-reading and writing strategies such as simulations, projects, ABC reports, biographies, classroom newspapers, response journal, reading-writing center, and take-turns paper. Likewise, Ellis (2010), Maxim (2010), Welton (2005) and Zarillo (2008) all included letter writing and journal or diary writing as a continuation of a social studies lesson. Because Seefeldt et al.'s (2010) text is geared toward preschool and primary age students, the writing activities for preschool include drawing, teacher dictation, and for primary age students writing their own history book, about their own experiences, and newsletter writing.

Not all of the textbooks in my analysis contained a literacy chapter. Since they all did not include a chapter on literacy, I went through each book, page by page, to see where the author or authors interwove literacy strategies into the text. I concluded that two things: (1) if the author or authors included a chapter specifically addressing literacy in the social studies classroom, they did not include strategies in the sections on specific social studies content (e.g. geography, civics, history, economics, etc; and, (2) if there was not a chapter specifically on literacy, the few strategies mentioned in the text were embedded in chapters addressing topics such as assessment and planning. Additionally, in regards to ELL instruction, the majority of the textbooks, if they addressed ELLs at all, included general reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies as opposed to highlighting strategies that are specifically appropriate for ELLs. Four of the textbooks do not have a chapter that includes strategies for ELL students. The other four textbooks

offer a few suggestions on how to meet the instructional needs of English language learners.

Many of the texts included reading and writing extension activities, acknowledging that literacy includes both reading and writing. However, the authors did not provide any details on how to modify the activities for ELL students. Additionally, the authors do not provide many examples of what a completed activity looks like; they should have included pictures of student work as well as templates for some of the activities mentioned in their text. The following scenario provides an example of a writing extension activity—dialogue journaling.

Illustration

Ms. Smiths' students finished reading *Paul Revere's Ride* and transitioned into a literacy activity—an extension of the story. Ms. Smith decided to have her students engage in a writing extension activity—a *dialogue journal* exercise. Ms. Smith modeled a proper journal entry before handing out the spiral notebooks. “Remember class,” she said. “You always write out the date in the top right corner of the page and include a salutation and a complimentary close. Who can provide the class with an example of a salutation and complimentary close?”

Daniel raised his hand. “A salutation is like ‘Dear Susan’ and a complimentary close is like ‘Sincerely’ or ‘Your friend,’” he said.

“That’s right,” said Ms. Smith. She pointed to the salutation and complimentary close on the example journal entry posted on the white board. Once the journals were handed out to the students, they broke off into pairs and started writing. Because they had just read about the midnight ride of Paul Revere, the journal entries revolved around the Paul’s ride. Students assumed roles (e.g. Paul Revere, the British redcoats, the townspeople, the Sons of Liberty, etc.) and drew their role out of a hat that was passed around the room.

Garmon (2001) notes that one of the benefits of dialogue journaling is that they seem to enhance student learning of content as well as promote student self-reflection and self-understanding of material. Dialogue journaling also is a way to identify students’ abilities and weaknesses with writing (ELL and general education population) (Iles, 2001). Teachers can then tailor the designated writing instruction time to fit the needs of

the students. Additionally, the activity incorporates many cognitive learning strategies into one activity (e.g. repetition—beginning and ending the entries the same way; formally practicing writing, and recognizing and using patterns in writing—repetition, learning the parts of a letter) (Voit, 2009). Using an activity such as a dialogue journal, as opposed to having the students complete a worksheet on the reading as an extension activity allows the students to flex their creativity, practice formal writing and how to carry on a conversation, as well as reflect and process the reading on a deeper level.

RQ 3: What literacy strategies are specific to the ELL population?

After examining each textbook for strategies and activities for the general education student, my focus narrowed specifically to literacy instruction and English Language Learners (ELLs). Brophy and Allen (2007), Duplass (2011), Ellis' (2010) and Seefeldt's (2010) textbooks did not provide any suggestions on how to make social studies content more manageable for ELL students. Duplass (2011) did not directly address English language learners' instruction in the classroom. None of his strategies were specific to ELL students. He suggested that teachers should differentiate instruction for ELLs and use trade books and passages of contemporary stories to support literacy goals of ELL students. Maxim (2010) offered three suggestions on how to teach ELLs in the classroom: (1) use environmental print where words are printed in both English and the students native-language, read culturally responsive literature in the classroom and (3) utilize language buddies—an ELL student is paired up with a native speaking classmate who speaks English fluently.

Parker (2012) noted that using pictures are the best way to aid comprehension for all students but especially for ELLs. He posed eight sample questions that could be used with ELL students to enhance their comprehension of the picture or illustration:

1. What is being shown in the picture?
2. What kind of picture is it? A photo? A painting? Illustration?
3. When was the picture made?
4. Does the picture illustrate something we discussed in class?
5. What causes or effects can be detected in the picture?
6. What does the picture show that illustrates the roles of men, women, and children in that society?

7. What can you say about the geography of the area shown by the picture?
8. What conversation might be going on between the persons in the picture? (p. 370).

Parker also suggested that the teacher needs to link new terms to familiar ones, have a word wall, have students say and sing the new terms, and learn the key terms in the ELL's native language in order to go the extra mile in vocabulary instruction. He noted that previewing the text prior to reading is a comprehension strategy that is helpful for ELL students.

Welton (2005) started out his chapter on literacy and social studies with a vignette on a class of students (including many ELLs) brainstorming ideas about community helpers. The class came up with a "Beans" poem about 'People.' By the time the activity concluded, the class had participated in an activity that enhanced their oral fluency as well as expanded their knowledge about people/jobs in the community (Welton, 2005). Zarrillo (2008) provided a section on English Language Learners (ELLs) and ways to effectively instruct them in social studies classrooms. For example, Zarrillo noted that effective vocabulary instruction involves teaching all words that might confuse ELL students, not just the identified vocabulary words in the section of the text; in regards to comprehension, the teacher should use a variety of teaching strategies, modify his/her speech, and have instruction take place in a low-anxiety environment (Zarrillo, 2008). He detailed two theoretical frameworks that should frame social studies teaching with ELLs-Krashen's Second Language Acquisition (1982) and Cummins' Dimensions of Language Proficiency (1979). He also listed a variety of social studies activities that fit into the four categories of Cummins' Dimensions of Language:

1. Category One: Activities are cognitively undemanding, completed with contextual support (e.g. pantomime)
2. Category Two: Activities are cognitively undemanding, completed with little, if any, contextual support (e.g. independent reading)
3. Category Three: Activities are cognitively demanding, completed with contextual support (e.g. cooperative groups)

4. Category Four: Activities are cognitively demanding, completed with little, if any, contextual support (e.g. creating an encyclopedia on a topic) (p. 33-34).

Zarrillo (2008) noted that the majority of the social studies lessons utilizing the textbook fall into category four, which are the most difficult for ELLs to successfully complete if their English proficiency is not adequately developed.

Some of the texts provided information on English Language Learners, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory, and suggestions on how to modify instruction for ELL students. There was a greater focus on multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching as opposed to differentiating instruction for ELL students. The texts also lacked student work samples, graphic organizer and strategy templates that can be used with ELL students. The following illustration describes a social studies lesson that includes differentiated instruction to meet the needs of ELL students.

Illustration

Imagine that we have once again stepped into Ms. Smith's fifth grade elementary classroom. The students are still studying the American Revolution in social studies class however, instead of having a homogenous class, Ms. Smith now has a new student—an English Language Learner who recently moved to the United States from Spain. In order to meet the needs of her new student, Ms. Smith slightly modified the strategies she was currently using with her students to introduce the American Revolution unit.

Her pre-reading strategy was *activating prior knowledge* and she recorded the students' brainstorming on the chart paper on the wall. For her during reading strategy, *connections*, she provided the students with a set of prompts that they could use in making their connections (*This reminds me of....; Does anyone remember another time in history.....;This is what happened in my country.....; and I remember when.....*). While reading the story, the students recorded their *connections* on their large sticky notes. Elena, the ELL student, shared her connection. "Ben had all these crazy sayings. *This reminds me of my grandfather, who lives in Madrid. He used to say all these crazy sayings to my family like Ben.*" The post-reading strategy was creating a *history frame*. Because Elena was new, Ms. Smith partnered her up with one of the best students in the

class so Elena could have a partner help answer her questions while completing the history frame.

The vocabulary strategies were also tweaked as well. For her pre-reading strategy, Ms. Smith conducted a *vocabulary preview* for Paul Revere's Ride. She provided the word in the appropriate context and also had *pictures* of the words that she displayed on the white board. She then handed out the personal dictionaries to the students and had them record down words that piqued their interest. In addition to the *personal dictionaries*, Ms. Smith handed out *additional copies of the text* to the students so they could follow along while she read the story. This enabled Elena to correctly spell any words that piqued her interest as well as copy a sentence with the vocabulary word in the appropriate context.

The literacy activity was *dialogue journaling* as in the previous example. Ms. Smith partnered Elena up with one of the patient, helpful students in class. Both Elena and her partner, Kaley, worked together on the journal entries. Ms. Smith also provided Elena with an example of a completed dialogue journal entry in her notebook so she could refer back to the format.

As noted by researchers (Solomon and Rhodes, 1995; Florida State Department of Education, 2003), literacy instruction needs to be integrated effectively throughout the school day, not just during the designated language arts period in order to bridge the achievement gap between white students and students of color. Additionally, "literacy instruction is the core of the ELL issues, because literacy encompasses the basic language competencies, and reading and writing are fundamental skills to one's school success" (Thompson, 2004, p. 7). Incorporating a literacy activity into the social studies lesson, as an extension of what the students just learned, reinforces the importance of language to the students; additional language practice helps ELL students become more comfortable as they transition from their native language to English.

Discussion

It appears that each textbook author differed in how he or she presented reading comprehension strategies, vocabulary strategies, and literacy activities. For example, Duplass (2011) focused on reading instruction as opposed to reading comprehension strategies. The strategies he provided are not what literacy researchers and teachers

would define as strategies but methods of teaching reading (e.g. read aloud, independent silent reading, choral reading). Additionally, although he noted that round robin reading is the least effective approach to reading instruction, he still offered it as a suggestion in his reading strategies table. Other authors (e.g. Seefeldt et al., Ellis) focused on one or two strategies whereas others (e.g. Welton, Zarrillo) highlighted a variety of strategies to be used in the classroom. Vocabulary strategies were also lacking in each textbook; some of the texts listed strategies but were lacking specific details in describing the particulars for each strategy. There was also a lack of student work samples and examples of strategy templates in each textbook. Why did the authors not incorporate more student work samples and strategy templates in their texts?

As I perused through the books, this lack of connection between social studies and literacy was a red flag for me. Half of the textbooks did not address vocabulary instruction at all—no strategies were presented. Yet, social studies content is filled with dense information (Myers & Savage, 2005) and technical terminology (Harmon, Hedrick, & Wood, 2005). Therefore, why do these textbooks overlook the importance of vocabulary instruction in the social studies classroom? The social studies field uses such specific terminology—many of the words are content-specific and as noted by Harmon, Hedrick, and Fox (2000) “as students reach the upper-elementary and middle grades, vocabulary demands in social studies increase rapidly” (p. 254). One of the main foci of social studies methods text should be teaching our pre-service teachers what vocabulary strategies they should use to teach their students social studies terminology. We need teachers who know how to teach literacy strategies in content area classes.

Another concern that came to mind was the apparent lack of collaboration between social studies educators and literacy educators in the creation of each text. Why was there no collaboration there? Each “About the Author” section (if there was one) introduced a social studies education professor, elementary education professor or a professor of education. If literacy is so crucial to social studies and making meaning of content area texts, why were all the texts reviewed in this content analysis solely authored by social studies education or elementary education faculty? Previous research has shown that in higher education collaboration among faculty for the purpose of publication is rare or even discouraged (Bohen & Stiles, 1998; Ede & Lunsford, 1990; McNenny &

Roen, 1992; Sullivan, 1994; Vosen, 2010); however, that notion should change because literacy instruction (reading and writing) should occur in all content areas (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007). Additionally, in order to reach a key subset of the population, collaboration between ESOL faculty and content area faculty is a must as well. Wouldn't that be a benefit to everyone—the literacy faculty, the elementary or social studies faculty, the ESOL faculty, the pre-service teachers and then elementary students?

I am interested to know as well what assumptions the authors of the texts have about what the pre-service teacher knows about literacy. Do they assume that the pre-service teachers have a vast knowledge of literacy strategies and incorporating them into content areas so they do not focus on literacy as much in their texts? Moreover, what about the lack of preparation the pre-service teacher's textbooks provide for the increasingly intense and complex social studies text with which their students will come into contact?

All of the texts also include information on the National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS) standards or themes however none of them mention the Common Core Standards. Currently, forty-three of the fifty States have adopted the Common Core Standards, which are expected to go into effect at the start of the 2014-2015 school year (Common Core Standards, 2011). Text complexity is going to be more important than ever. In the last year, the federal government awarded two grants to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (BAC) to “develop a new generation of tests based on the standards developed by the Common Core Standards Initiative” (Nagel, 2010, n.p.). Are we preparing our pre-service teachers for what they will be getting into when they graduate?

Conclusions

After completing this content analysis the overarching lesson that I have learned is simply this: Social Studies, ESOL and Literacy instructors would benefit greatly by collaboratively creating methods textbooks for pre-service teachers. And in this era of high-stakes testing, emphasis on reading, and feeling of marginalization by social studies teachers (Cuthrell & Yates, 2007), it is crucial to integrate social studies content in language arts classrooms if it is not being covered as a separate content area. The

National Council for the Social Studies' (NCSS) Principles for Learning states that being literate is the heart of learning and students should learn reading and writing strategies in the classroom (NCSS, 2011).

As noted by Field, Bauml, and Ledbetter (2011), "instructional time for social studies has been reduced nationwide, particularly in elementary grades" (p. 22). Additionally, Kent and Simpson (2008) found "there has been a steady reduction in the amount of time teachers spend teaching social studies since the revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2000. This decline is most profoundly noticed at the elementary level, as teachers are forced to spend much of their instructional time teaching literacy skills and strategies" (p. 143). Because of this reduction of instruction time, it is even more imperative that social studies educators teach their pre-service teachers to incorporate social studies into their language arts curriculum as many teachers are already doing. This method enables students to make connections across content-areas---a benefit to curriculum integration (Johnson and Janisch, 1998). According to Johnson and Janisch (1998), tying literacy and social studies together gives teachers an effective way to organize their literacy instruction.

Based on this study, future efforts to create a powerful social studies methods textbook that addresses literacy related and ELL demands would contain the following items: literacy strategies (both reading comprehension vocabulary), teaching cases applicable to the social studies content and reading struggles, lesson plans incorporating literacy strategies into each lesson, and chapters on how to teach each specific content area in social studies (e.g. economics, history, government, sociology, psychology, etc). Each chapter would contain strategies that can be used in that particular content area as well as examples of completed student work (e.g. KWL, semantic map, etc). The chapters would also highlight research-based strategies that are most beneficial for English Language Learner (ELL) students in a social studies classroom. In addition, each chapter would contain teaching cases where students can discuss, reflection, and offer recommendations to teachers about situations in class. One teaching case in each chapter would involve an ELL. Ultimately, literacy strategies would be throughout the text including in the chapters on assessment and planning. The two content-areas would meld into one. True integration of content areas would occur—in this case, literacy content into

social studies. This integration would facilitate student access to the social studies curriculum while at the same time providing a natural way of integrating social studies into daily literacy instruction.

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Appendix

Table A: Syllabi

| University | Course |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Duquesne University | GELP 552: Teaching Elementary School Social Studies |
| Arizona State University | EED 324: Social Studies Methods for the Elementary Classroom |
| Texas Christian University | EDEC 31233: Elementary Social Studies Methods |
| University of South Florida | SSE 4313: Teaching Elementary (K-6) Social Studies |
| Coastal Carolina University | EDSC 549: Principles and Methods of Teaching Social Studies |
| University of Virginia | EDIS 5340: Teaching Elementary Social Studies |
| University of Central Florida | SSE 6115: Methods in Elementary School Social Science |
| University of Mary Washington | EDUC 386: Elementary Social Studies |
| DePaul University | T & L 419: Curriculum and Strategies Social Studies |
| University of New Mexico | EDUC 321: Teaching of Social Studies in the Elementary School |

Table B: Textbooks Used in Study

| Author(s) and Year | Name of Textbook and Edition | Publishing Company |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Brophy, J., & Alleman, J. (2007) | <i>Powerful social studies for elementary students</i> (2 nd ed.) | Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace. |
| Duplass, J.A. (2011) | <i>Teaching elementary social studies: strategies, standards, and internet resources</i> (3 rd ed.) | Belmont, CA: Wadsworth |
| Ellis, A.K. (2010) | <i>Teaching and learning elementary social studies</i> (9 th ed.) | Boston: Pearson |
| Maxim, G.W. (2010). | <i>Dynamic social studies for constructivist classrooms</i> (9 th ed.) | Boston: Allyn & Bacon |
| Parker, W. (2012) | <i>Social studies in elementary education</i> (14 th ed.) | Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall |
| Seefeldt, C., Castle, S., & Falcone, R.C. (2010). | <i>Social studies for the preschool/primary child</i> (8 th ed.) | Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall |
| Welton, D. A. (2005) | <i>Children and their world: strategies for teaching social studies</i> (8 th ed.) | Wadsworth Publishing |
| Zarrillo, J.J. (2008) | <i>Teaching elementary social studies: principles and applications</i> (3 rd ed.) | Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall |