

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING CIVICS TO  
IMMIGRANT STUDENTS IN A NEW GATEWAY STATE

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## **ABSTRACT**

JEREMY HILBURN: High school teachers' perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new gateway state

(Under the direction of Dr. Xue Lan Rong)

This qualitative study examines Civics teachers' perceptions of working with immigrant students in a new gateway state. By analyzing collective case studies of six teachers in central North Carolina, from different types of schools and with different professional backgrounds, this study is positioned to make recommendations for social studies teacher educators and Civics teachers with respect to teaching Civics to immigrant students in areas with a relatively small but growing number of immigrant students. Employing the additive acculturation model as a theoretical frame, and supported by a civic education framework, this study explores the multiple contexts of teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new gateway state, including teachers' overall perceptions of immigrant students and teachers' perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students.

The major finding in this study is that six self-selected, reflective practitioners with differing personal and professional backgrounds who have taught in different types of schools all had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students, strove to support immigrant students academically and socially, and encouraged students to maintain their heritage culture despite being obstructed from doing so by a series of contextual factors and professional limitations, each of which was influenced by teaching in a new gateway state. Six sub-findings, which point to both reasons for concern and reasons for optimism for

teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new gateway state, support the central argument. From these findings, I suggest a broadening of the additive acculturation framework, and present four approaches to teaching Civics to immigrant students.

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## **Chapter 1**

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines questions applicable to Civics teachers and teacher educators in “new immigrant gateway states” by analyzing collective case studies (Merriam, 1988) of Civics teachers’ perceptions of working with immigrant students in central North Carolina. It explores multiple contexts of teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new gateway state, including teachers’ overall perceptions of immigrant students and teachers’ perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students.

My interest in this topic comes out of my own public school teaching experience. Despite the rapid increase of immigrant student population in all parts of North Carolina, it seemed to me that the teachers in my school were woefully prepared to teach immigrant students. Immigrant students who struggled academically seemed to get left behind. Immigrant students who were academically strong were not given any supports by teachers, though often these students were socially isolated in the school and classroom. More specifically, social studies teachers have an additional layer of complexity for educating immigrant students. Though there is little consensus across the field, citizenship education is a very large component of social studies (NCSS, 1994). It seemed to me that citizenship education in United States schools might mean something different for U.S.-born citizens and new US citizens or non-US citizens. The question, “What does citizenship education look

like for U.S. citizens compared to new citizens or non-citizens?” will be my “career question.” I envision the work I do on this dissertation to begin to answer this question.

As a collective case study (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 2000), this study prioritizes the voices of six Civics teachers in central North Carolina, drawing on ethnographic data gathered from interviews and a focus group. The study also considers the “new gateway state” (Passel & Suro, 2005; Rong & Preissle, 2009) phenomenon for teachers of immigrant students. By exploring how these teachers perceive and teach their immigrant students, this study is positioned to offer recommendations for social studies teachers and teacher educators in new gateway states.

As a means of analyzing the teachers’ perceptions of and strategies for working with immigrant students, I adopt Margaret Gibson’s (1995) additive acculturation framework. This framework has been expanded by Angela Valenzuela (1999, 2002, 2005) and others. Additive acculturation is a flexible theory that has been applied to Punjabi Sikh immigrants in California communities. In the late 1970s and early 1980’s, these Sikh immigrants had no well-established Sikh community from which to draw support. The condition of many immigrant communities in North Carolina is similar to the Sikh immigrant community researched by Gibson.

This study addresses a lack of research on teaching social studies to immigrant students in new gateway states. The results from this study will fill notable research gaps in the following topics: teacher perceptions of working with immigrant students, identifying the needs of immigrant students beyond linguistic considerations, teacher education with respect

to educating immigrant students, Civics pedagogy for immigrant students, as well as expanding the growing literature on teaching immigrant students in new gateway states.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by two research questions:

1. What are Civics teachers' perceptions towards working with immigrant students in a new gateway state?
2. What are teachers' perceptions of teaching Civics relevant to immigration and immigrant students?

### **Exploring Key Terms**

Within these research questions, and in the context of the study, a number of terms require definition. Those terms are defined in the following text.

Immigrant – voluntarily moved from one society to another and intends to stay in a host country on a long term basis (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p. 3). This study will focus on teacher perceptions of first generation and 1.5 generation immigrants. First generation immigrants were born in another country and arrived in the host country after age five. 1.5 generation immigrants were born in another country and arrived in the host country before age five (Rong & Preissle, 2009).

New gateway state – state which had a small immigrant population before the 1990s and has tripled or quadrupled its immigrant populations since 1990 (Passel & Suro, 2005)

Additive acculturation – The “process of culture change and adaptation that occurs when individuals with different cultures come into contact, the end result need not be the rejection of old traits or their replacement. Acculturation may be an additive process or one in which old and new traits are blended.” (Gibson, 1995, p. 90).

### **Significance of the Study**

Although there is a proliferation of research on English Language Learners (ELLs), there is limited research on immigrant students apart from linguistic considerations. ELLs and immigrant students are mistakenly conflated (Goodwin, 2002). Many immigrant students do not require ELL services, while others have been exited from language services while they still could benefit from services (Sox, 2009). In addition, this conflated categorization seems to deny immigrant students services in school other than English as a Second Language (ESL) services. There exists ample literature on teachers and teacher education with respect to ELLs. However, there is scant literature on teachers and teacher education for immigrant students apart from linguistic considerations – Goodwin (2002) and Sox (2009) are notable exceptions. Laurie Olson refers to the “continuing blindness to the needs of immigrant students” (1997, p. 250), while Phelan, et.al (1998) suggest that teacher education programs prepare teachers to do little more than teach middle-class, English-speaking students. Furthermore, there is scarcely any research on this topic with any specificity towards the social studies content area. Perhaps one reason why there is little research on immigrant students apart from linguistic considerations is due to the 1982 *Plyer vs. Doe* case. In this decision, the Supreme Court ruled that public schools are prohibited from denying immigrant students access to education. As a result, schools may not inquire into the citizenship status of students – meaning that there is no way for schools, and thus

researchers, to identify immigrant students through school records. Scholars who wish to conduct research on immigrant students must therefore rely on students to self-identify as immigrant students or to work exclusively with students enrolled in ELL programs.

Of special significance to this study is the fact that North Carolina, along with many other Bible-belt states such as Georgia and inter-mountain states such as Nebraska, is a new gateway state. There are limitations for immigrant students in new gateway states. Immigrants in traditional gateway states use existing ethnic communities to provide social and economic capital (Waters, 1994). New gateway states often lack such established ethnic communities (Rong & Preissle, 2009). Traditional gateway states have better funded and longer running programs to serve immigrant students such as English Language Learner (ELL) programs (Rong & Preissle, 2009). Furthermore, the Pew Hispanic Center (2005) stated that the new gateway states market themselves to businesses as low-wage, industry-friendly locales leading to a trend in immigration whereby new arrivals tend to lack a high school diploma, be poor, not speak English very well or not at all, and are more likely to be undocumented than immigrants in traditional gateway states. This dynamic has been underexplored in the literature. Thus this study has the opportunity to provide needed recommendations to social studies teachers and teacher educators in new gateway states.

Immigrant students are not a homogenous group. Nor do all new gateway states share similar opportunities and challenges. This study is not meant to globalize the experiences of Civics teachers. Rather, exploring the perceptions and strategies of a group of Civics teachers in a new immigrant gateway may lend insight into the ways in which teacher perceptions and educational practices might meet the needs and embrace the strengths of immigrant students in Civics classrooms.



## **Outline of the Dissertation**

The first chapter of the dissertation will provide a background for and outline the questions that will guide the research study. Specifically, these questions address social studies teacher's perceptions towards and strategies for working with immigrant students. This chapter will also include an introduction to the context of the study, define key terms, and outline the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 will present the relevant background literature and further explore the theoretical framework that will guide the study. Chapter 3 will describe the methodology of the study. Chapters 4 and 5 will present the findings that emerged from the data. Chapter 6 will conclude the dissertation by summarizing the findings to the research questions, discussing the relevance of the findings, and re-examining the theoretical framework in light of the data. Finally, I will discuss the implications of the findings for social studies teachers and teacher educators, as well as for future research.

## **Chapter 2**

### LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter will explore the background literature to provide a scholarly context for the study, as well as advance the theoretical frameworks. The literature presented below addresses influential scholarship on many of the key areas addressed in this study. First, the literature review will conceptualize immigration to the United States. Specifically, this portion of the literature review will historically position immigration to North Carolina and explore the ways in which immigrants have been incorporated into American society. Next, the literature review will shift to social studies purposes and pedagogy with respect to immigrant students. Since this dissertation will address social studies as well as civic education pedagogy, it is necessary to review the literature for existing social studies pedagogy recommendations. Finally, the literature review will address teacher education with respect to immigrant students. Teacher education literature is important because the recommendations provided in the dissertation will be directed towards teacher education programs. The literature in these areas, reviewed together, will provide background to the research study and point to significant gaps in the scholarly literature. Two theoretical frameworks support this study: the additive acculturation model drawn from Margaret Gibson's (1995) theorizing and supported by Angela Valenzuela's (1999) work and a democratic civic education framework, drawn from Billig & Root's (2008) prerequisites of competent civic education and Joe Kinchloe's (2005) scholarship on critical civic education.

## **Conceptualizing immigration to the United States**

Martin and Midgely (2003, 2006) conceptualize American immigration into three broad categories. The first categorical group, founders, laid the framework of the society that later became the United States. This group settled on the Eastern seaboard of North America. The second category is involuntary Americans, who became a part of the United States without their consent. This group includes slaves taken from Africa, and the incorporation of people as America's border expanded, such as the French and American Indians as a result of the Louisiana Purchase, the Hawaiians with the annexation of Hawaii, Mexicans as a result of the Mexican-American War, and others. The last category is immigrants.

Martin & Midgely (2003, 2006) argue there have been four major waves of immigration. After each of the first three waves, there was a steep decline in the number of immigrants, until the next wave began. The first wave took place before 1820, when the United States began keeping statistics about immigrants, and included mostly British and Northern European immigrants. The second wave, 1820-1860, was driven by Irish and German immigrants. The third wave, 1880-1914, saw vast numbers of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. The United States is still experiencing the fourth wave of immigration

Fourth wave immigration is particularly significant for North Carolina and thus will receive the greatest amount of attention in this literature review. There are multiple characteristics of 4<sup>th</sup> wave immigration which make this wave distinct from previous immigrant waves (Passel & Suro, 2005). First, there is a higher percentage of “additional

immigration.” Specifically, these newcomers do not fit the traditional definition of immigrants as a large portion of newcomers are refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented immigrants. A second characteristic is a shift in heritage origins away from Europe and towards Asian and Latino immigrants, with minor increases in African and Caribbean immigrants. Third, this immigrant wave is extremely diverse in terms of countries of origin, economic status before and after arrival, and language (Passel & Suro, 2005). Fourth, many 4<sup>th</sup> wave immigrants come to the United States with many skills that enable them to function well in the United States economic system. These immigrants can speak English well, have college degrees, and are given high prestige work visas specifically because of their skill-sets (Rong & Preissle, 2009). Fifth, many fourth wave immigrants, empowered by advances in communication and travel, maintain stronger connections with their heritage countries. In fact, many immigrants make frequent sojourns to their heritage country in order to maintain social networks. Many immigrants plan to return to their heritage country permanently, while other immigrants move from country to country based on employment opportunities (Brittain, 2002; Rong & Preissle, 2009).

Many of the characteristics which set the fourth wave apart from previous waves are due to the 1965 Immigration Act. Whereas previous federal regulations regarding immigration privileged specific heritage countries through the national origins quota system, the 1965 Act privileged immigrants’ skills and family relationships with U.S. citizens. A cap of 170,000 immigrants per heritage nation also allowed for a greater diversity of sending nations (U.S. Immigration Legislation, 2011). Federal and state policy regarding immigration will be addressed further in Chapter 4 of the dissertation.

The final characteristic that separates the fourth wave from prior waves is the “new gateway state” factor (Passel & Suro, 2005). Traditional immigrant gateway states such as California, New York, and Texas have historically been the preferred settlement locales for immigrants. These states have experience in educating immigrant students and have infrastructure in place to aid newcomers. New immigrant gateways, on the other hand, have historically received few immigrants since the colonization of the United States. New immigrant gateway states, such as North Carolina, Georgia, and Nebraska, had small immigrant populations before the 1990s and have tripled or quadrupled their immigrant populations in the last 15 years (Passel & Suro, 2005). North Carolina and other new gateway states have “limited experience and infrastructure for settling newcomer families” (Fix & Passel, 2003, p. 8). North Carolina’s position as a new gateway state will be explored further in later chapters of the dissertation.

The United States has had a long running debate about the ways in which to incorporate immigrants into American society. Glenn (2003) called the United States, “a nation always comprised both of newcomers and those who worry about the impact of newcomers on the existing society.” Two major arguments have dominated the debate: assimilationists and pluralists. Assimilationists, often referred to as integrationists, advocate that immigrants eliminate their ethnic affiliation and embrace American national identity. In doing so, assimilationists argue that immigrants will experience upward social mobility and American society will be preserved. Pluralists, on the other hand, argue that immigrants should maintain their ethnic identities. Martin & Midgely (2003, 2006) argue that neither of these arguments represents the realities of immigrants in the United States. The assimilationists “melting pot” theory does not account for ethnic memory, while pluralists

fail to acknowledge that culture is not fixed and that many immigrants wish to marry and socialize out of their ethnic communities. Other models have attempted to more accurately represent immigrants' socialization experience. Newman (1973), for example, argued for a modified cultural pluralism model, which suggests that immigrant groups can and do maintain unique cultural features, but that immigrant groups and the dominant group also influence one another and develop common characteristics. Modified cultural pluralism is best illustrated as  $A + B + C = A_1 + B_1 + C_1$ , where A represents the dominant American group, B and C represent immigrant groups, and  $_1$  represents the characteristics of common culture that all groups share (Newman, 1973). Fuchs (1991) describes similar sentiments through the metaphor of a kaleidoscope, in which the entire image is altered as multiple colors in the kaleidoscope change over time. This study adopts the modified cultural pluralism framework as it represents a more accurate view of the contemporary immigrant experiences (Martin & Midgely, 2006). Furthermore, Newman's work is consistent with the additive acculturation model, the theoretical framework of the study.

It is perhaps important to recognize immigrant student academic achievement at this point in the literature review. Although academic achievement is not the focus of the dissertation, the divergent outcomes presented in the literature illuminates that much more research needs to be conducted on the education of immigrant students. The literature on immigrant academic achievement is contentious and conflicting. Many studies argue that immigrants are academically out-performing non-immigrants (McDonnell & Hill, 1993; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995; Kao & Tienda, 2005). Other studies suggest that immigrant students are performing poorly (Natasha, 2005; Han, 2006; Harklau, 2006), although the first seem to outweigh the latter in terms of sheer volume of studies. One area of

agreement is that first-generation immigrants have significantly higher drop-out rates (Waggoner, 1999; US Bureau of the Census, 2003). In summary, there is no consensus in the field about the outcomes of immigrant academic achievement. The positive picture of high academic performance by many immigrant students is tempered with high immigrant student drop-out rates.

This study connects the concepts of Martin & Midgely's (2003, 2006) waves of immigrants, the distinctive characteristics of the fourth wave, Passel & Suro's (2005) new gateway state phenomenon, and the modified cultural pluralism philosophy. Taken together, this background information helps conceptualize immigration to North Carolina.

### **Social studies' purposes for immigrant students**

There is much disagreement over the purposes of social studies (Woyshner, 2006). This section will trace the evolution of the purposes of social studies with respect to educating immigrant students. The one constant factor is the centrality of citizenship in social studies. Despite the many social studies "camps" (Evans, 2004) trying to control the direction and purpose of the field, it is clear that camps "cannot gain leverage in the social studies if they do not appease the mandatory requirement and mission of the social studies in building informed and active citizens" (Maguth, 2009, p. 40). The idea of citizenship education is certainly relevant and important to immigrant students. Walter Parker (1996) states that social studies scholars and outsiders "have charged that citizenship education is at once so vague and all-encompassing that it can mean anything to anybody" (p. 18), while others have asked how the concept of patriotism fits into citizenship education and even questioned what patriotism means (Westheimer, 2007).

In response to the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of American immigration, which occurred around 1900 and represented mostly Southern and Eastern Europeans, the purpose of the social studies generally reflected “Americanization” (Mirel, 2010; Jeynes, 2007, Evans, 2004). Americanization ironically came to fruition around the same time as the formal creation of social studies. Several factors contributed to the Americanization movement in education: WWI, large numbers of immigrant students, and concerns over ethnic strife in Europe. The primary stated goals of the Americanization movement were literacy, learning democratic values, and learning habits of health and hygiene (Jeynes, 2007). Other scholars, such as Ellwood Cubberly, were much more direct about the assimilative aspect of Americanization - to divest immigrant students of their heritage culture and force students to “fit into the mythical Anglo-Saxon Protestant conception of the ‘good citizen’” (Banks, 2001, p. 6). Despite the best intentions of 1916 committee to develop social studies which focused on critical thinking, the purpose of school courses around 1916 was the “glory of Western civilization and its latest triumph, the growth of the American nation” (Evans, 2004, p. 44). This purpose is certainly not congruent with the additive acculturation model. Tyack (1967) asserts, however, that in spite of the Americanization movement “the common school changed the immigrant, but the immigrant altered the school, too” (p. 231). Americanization itself was an indication that immigrant students influenced what was taught in social studies and the very purposes of school.

Social studies during the 1920’s and 1930’s seemed to be a reaction to the conservative Americanization movement and to the Depression. This interwar period saw new approaches to social studies such as the rise of social reconstructionism, championed by George Counts (1932). Although there is little literature on how these liberal policies related



specifically to immigrant students, it is clear that a progressively-oriented Problems of Democracy course grew in popularity and the issues-centered, transformative camps were in the ascendency in social studies academic literature (Woyshner, 2006). Issues-centered instruction is more consistent with the additive model than subject-centered approaches. One 1930's survey, however, found that less than 12% of classroom teachers felt that they should lead student discussions on reforming social issues (Tyack, et.al., 1985).

The WWII period through the 1950's was, in turn, a conservative response to the liberal social studies efforts, patriotism surrounding the war, and the Cold War period. During WWII, the purpose of social studies was most clearly articulated in the NCSS report, *The Social Studies Mobilize for War*, which promoted loyalty to the nation, a willingness to face combat, and preparation to assist in the war effort (Evans, 2004). The conservative movement continued through the 1950s, which resulted in a move away from issues-centered to discipline-centered social studies. The purpose of the era seemed to be promoting democracy and portraying communism as a threat to democracy. Though there seems to be little follow-through in terms of teacher practice, Evans (2004) argues that the issues-centered camp made great strides during this era in developing theory to support their camp. NCSS defended the issues-centered approach with a 1955 resolution calling for support of teachers to discuss controversial issues in their social studies classes. There is little literature that addresses how the purposes of social studies evolved for immigrant students specifically during WWII and the 1950s, but one can infer from the tenor of the camp debates that social studies purposes reflected a reiteration of the assimilatory, Americanization movement. This era was a far cry from guiding principles of the additive acculturation model.

The 1960s and 1970s saw several important historic events and several changes in the direction of social studies (Woyshner, 2006). The “New Social Studies” was a series of projects in the 1960s, many of which were government sponsored, which attempted to reorient social studies away from factual learning to a focus on the structure of the disciplines, stimulating student interest in the disciplines, and the use of discovery learning. In short, students were to be disciplinary scholars in training. The New Social Studies movement did not last. It suffered from a series of problems, but the most damaging was that it did not focus at all on current events or social issues. Considering that this era witnessed the civil rights movement, the war in Vietnam, and heightened civic awareness of college students, the New Social Studies gave way to the “newer social studies.” The newer social studies focused on contemporary social issues, with the purpose of developing active citizens. It was most closely associated with the social reconstructionist camp. According to Evans (2004), “Unfortunately, this burst of energy was short lived. . . The war in Vietnam ended. Optimism was replaced by cynicism with Watergate . . . and the specter of nuclear holocaust. All denied the possibility of social improvement” (p. 139). In terms of social studies purposes and immigrant students, the lasting legacy of this period was the multicultural education movement which ultimately opened the door for culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy; the purpose of which was the academic improvement of minority students.

The 1980s witnessed conservatives take control politically and in the social studies. The nation’s conservative movement coupled with media attacks against education, notably the *A Nation at Risk* (1983) report, which famously claimed a “rising tide of mediocrity in our schools which threatens our very future as a nation,” led to a back-to-basics movement

and more emphasis on history than the social sciences (Saxe, 2003). The back-to-basics movement opened the door for the contemporary standards movement. NCSS responded to the standards movement by developing its own standards in 1994 along disciplinary lines. Despite calls in academic literature for a reorientation of social studies to an issues-centered, social improvement purpose, these calls remain “largely out of step with mainstream trends” (Evans, 2004, p. 171). Most social studies instruction in practice is focused on delivering content information to students in the social efficiency, discipline-centered vein without regard for the cultural differences of immigrant students. The social efficiency camp, as it disregards students’ heritage, is contrary to the additive acculturation model.

To the degree that it is possible to speak broadly about this divisive topic, it seems that the purpose of social studies with respect to educating immigrant students has moved from one of explicit assimilation to one that is more accommodating of immigrant students, but whose purpose has splintered in multiple directions, with little specifically towards immigrant students. The original purposes of social studies were directed primarily at immigrant students and their Americanization. Later iterations of the purpose of social studies have focused more on serving mainstream students, while neglecting the special position that social studies should serve for immigrant students.

### **Social studies pedagogy for immigrant students**

Social studies pedagogy has evolved with respect to teaching immigrant students by default. Though there is little in the way of research explicitly directed towards immigrant students, there have been several pedagogical movements to improve pedagogy for ethnic, linguistic, and racial minorities. Fourth wave immigrant students are often students of color

and often speak languages other than English, so other pedagogical moves encompass many immigrant students by default. The major pedagogical changes are moves towards differentiation, linguistic adaptations, and culturally responsive and culturally relevant teaching (Cruz & Thornton, 2009; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Tomlinson, 2000). Although these pedagogical evolutions have been occurring in many schools, the evolution is by no means universal as many teachers still rely on traditional pedagogy.

Differentiation has become a major area of emphasis for all levels of public education. Differentiation is the “systemic approach to planning curriculum and instruction for academically diverse students” (Tomlinson, 2005, p. 6). Differentiation is particularly applicable in the social studies for the education of immigrant students. Carol Anne Tomlinson, one of the most influential differentiation scholars, justifies her advocacy of differentiation on these grounds: “Students in today’s schools are become more academically diverse. . . . there are more students for whom English is not their first language” (2008, p. 1). Furthermore, culture-related preferences make up one-third of each student’s academic differentiation profile (Tomlinson, 2008).

Perhaps the most significant social studies pedagogical responses to the teaching of immigrant and minority students are culturally responsive and culturally relevant teaching. These pedagogical movements were initially developed for minority students, but considering the context of 4<sup>th</sup> wave immigrant students, who tend to be racial minorities, these models are applicable to immigrant students. Culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000) fits well within the additive acculturation model. The major tenets of culturally responsive teaching are these: academic achievement among ethnic groups are too consistent to be attributed to individual success or failure; disconnect between home and school cultures

is an important factor in academic (under)achievement; and greater academic achievement will follow if schools draw upon the cultural and linguistic strengths of its students. One of the goals of culturally responsive pedagogy is “developing sociocivic skills for effective membership in multicultural communities” (Gay, 2000, p. 20), which could and should be addressed in social studies classes. Gay calls culturally responsive teaching both routine and radical: routine because it does for minorities what traditional pedagogy does for white students; radical because it makes culture explicit in pedagogy (p. 24-25). Rather than immigrant students adjusting their culture to the dominant culture represented in schools, schools encourage students to maintain heritage cultural competence while succeeding academically. In terms of practical recommendations, Gay and others (Cruz & Thornton, 2009) suggest using ethnic literature and histories to perform academic skills. For example, teaching students the skills of primary document analysis can just as easily be taught using ethnic materials as they can from Euro-centric materials.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995, 2009) advocates for culturally relevant pedagogy. Ladson-Billings model is similar to Gay’s culturally responsive teaching but has a few key additions. The first is that teachers must “help students to recognize, understand, and critique current social inequalities” (p. 476). In addition to academic success and cultural competence, students are to be equipped with the ability to cast a critical eye upon the society in which they live. The other key addition of Ladson-Billings’s model is the action component of critique - students must take action within their communities to reduce inequality for others. Finally, culturally relevant pedagogy is “committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment” (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, p. 160). This social action component with an emphasis on community improvement is certainly appropriate

considering the social improvement roots of social studies and its congruence with the additive acculturation model.

Despite these moves towards the pedagogy advocated in the additive acculturation framework, there are still a great many limitations in the social studies pedagogy for immigrant students. Teachers still largely embrace the “American exceptionalism” method of instruction (Gaudelli, 2003), which, by its very nature, does not respect or value the heritage countries of immigrant students. Furthermore, social studies methods courses rarely prepare teachers for how to teach immigrant students (Coady, et.al., 2003). According to Valenzeula (1999, 2002, 2005), most teachers are subtractive, not additive, in practice. Finally, social studies literature positions language as the only need facing immigrant students. This can be problematic because many immigrant students do not require ELL services. For example, students from English-speaking Jamaica are most likely not classified as ELL learners. Because these immigrant students would not be classified as ELLs, social studies teachers might assume that they would not need to adapt their instruction for these immigrant students.

How has social studies pedagogy evolved with respect to teaching immigrant students? The answer is that social studies pedagogy has evolved very little with any specificity towards immigrant students - there is scant literature in this area. However, there have been major changes in social studies pedagogy for minority and ELL students. Considering the majority of 4<sup>th</sup> wave immigrants are racial minorities and speak heritage languages other than English, these pedagogical evolutions present, by default, improved pedagogy for immigrant students from the additive acculturation perspective. In light of the additive acculturation model, the lack of pedagogical specificity with respect to immigrant

students is a serious shortcoming in the field of social studies. Social studies scholarship has conflated immigrant students with ELL students as if addressing the language issue is all that is required when teaching social studies to immigrant students. The few studies that do specifically address pedagogy for immigrant students are general curriculum rather than specific to social studies (Faltis & Coulter, 2008). In this review of the literature, it appears that between social studies curriculum, pedagogy, and purposes, pedagogy is the area in which social studies has paid the least regard to the academic needs of immigrant students. Thus this study has the potential to make contributions to fill this gap in the literature.

### **Democratic civic education for immigrant students**

Sociologist, historian, and civil rights leader W.E.B. Dubois famously asked, “Am I an American or am I a Negro? Can I be both? Or is it my duty to cease to be a Negro as soon as possible and become an American?” (1897/2008, p. 146). His queries have been and certainly still are applicable to immigrant families upon and after arrival in the United States. These questions have also been pondered by civic education scholars. How should American democratic civic education programs teach what it means to be an American to immigrant students? Should civic education programs emphasize a unified American story, by privileging a national “unum,” or prioritize multiple narratives and the diversity of American society, “pluribus” (VanSledright, 2010)?

Abowitz & Harnish (2006) posit that two approaches to democratic citizenship education have emerged in an attempt to answer this question: civic republicanism, which prioritizes civic duty, knowledge of American history and democratic processes, and patriotism; and liberal citizenship education, which views American history and society

critically and prioritizes social diversity, such as the contributions of immigrant groups. Civic education scholars critique the civic republicanism approach. Ben Porath (2003), for example, postulates that the civic republicanism approach can lead to “belligerent citizenship” (p. 245), in which minority and immigrant groups feel alienated and resist feelings of pride in the nation. Terrie Epstein (2000, 2009), in studies with minority youth, finds that minority and immigrant groups do not feel that a single, unified national narrative speaks to them, which leads to negative attitudes towards school and society. Amy Gutmann (2004) suggests that the civic republicanism approach does little to prepare students to live in a diverse society and proposes civic educators do more to make all student groups, including immigrant students, civic equals. Despite these warnings from civic education scholars and a rapidly growing immigrant student population, US schools persist in clinging to civic republicanism as the primary approach to democratic citizenship education (Journell, 2011).

So what is the state of democratic civic engagement amongst immigrants and democratic civic education for immigrant students in the United States? Although scholars (Torney-Purta, Barker, & Wilkenfeld, 2006) critique the paucity of research on immigrant civic engagement, extant literature reveals generally low civic engagement amongst immigrants in the United States. Naturalized citizens in some immigrant groups are less likely to vote than native-born Americans (Bass & Casper, 1999; Callahan, Muller, & Shiller, 2008) and less likely to participate in civic activities (Verba, Scholzman, & Brady, 1995). Second and third generation Asian and Hispanic immigrants are also less likely to vote than White and Black citizens (US Bureau of the Census, 2002). However, for more active forms of citizenship such as political rallies and volunteering for political campaigns, Hispanic



immigrants are just as likely to participate as native-born Americans (Baretto & Munoz, 2003).

The literature on democratic citizenship education for immigrant students presents less than ideal outcomes. For example, Hispanic immigrant adolescents have less trust in government and see voting as less important than their African-American and Caucasian peers (Lopez, 2003). Furthermore, Hispanic immigrant students have lower civic knowledge and lower positive perceptions of the United States than native-born students, including native-born Hispanics (Torney-Purta, et al., 2006).

Perhaps most troubling, immigrant students are given fewer opportunities for civic engagement through school-based civic activities than native-born students (Torney-Purta, 2006; Reimers, 2005). Anand Marri (2009) refers to a “civic opportunity gap,” in which native-born, white, affluent students receive more classroom-based civic learning opportunities than minority or immigrant students, which contributes to higher democratic civic knowledge and civic engagement amongst privileged students. Meira Levison (2010) warns of “a profound civic empowerment gap between poor, minority, and immigrant youth and adults on the one hand, and middle-class or wealthy, white and native-born youth and adults on the other,” in which the civic empowerment gap serves to “diminish the democratic character and quality of the United States” (p. 26). This civic opportunity/empowerment gap between immigrant and native-born students is certainly problematic and is recently gaining more attention in the literature. In fact, editors of the book *Educating democratic citizens in troubled times* (2008), Janet Bixby and Judith Pace, cite the disenfranchisement of marginalized groups, for immigrants in particular, as one of the four most troubling conditions in contemporary democratic civic education.

Despite these troubling conditions of democratic civic education for immigrant students, civic scholars envision more robust civic education programs which value and overtly embrace immigrant students. Joe Kinchloe (2005), for example, asserts for critical democratic civics; in which Civics teachers facilitate student alliances across demographic groups in order to engage in the political process. Kinchloe sees contemporary civics education not as a struggle between citizens or between political groups, but between organized economic interests. As such, immigrant students are invited to bring their talents, lived experiences, and cultural diversity into the public sphere (Civics classrooms and beyond) to articulate a better society for all. His proposed “New Political/Economic Bill of Rights,” (p. 738-739) includes a bill to maintain one’s culture, free from political or economic discrimination.

Walter Parker (2008) provides another vision for democratic civic education which serves immigrant students. Parker calls for Civics courses to prepare students for enlightened political engagement. According to Parker, the most effective means of preparing citizens for America’s diverse society is by focusing on two key factors: embracing diversity and identifying and solving shared problems. To achieve this goal, he calls on Civic educators to implement three interventions. These interventions are to increase the variety and frequency of interaction of students who are different from one another, orchestrate these interactions to foster competent dialogue, and implement seminars and deliberations. Diversity enhances deliberation because, as he puts this, “each participant’s knowledge of perspectives and identities is enlarged” (p. 75). Furthermore, fostering discussions from diverse viewpoints is more likely to lead to questioning the status quo. Parker states, “Multiple perspectives increase the likelihood that dominant norms and practices will be subjected to observation

and critique” (p. 76). In this vision of democratic civic education, immigrant students’ diversity and heritage cultures are invited into the classroom and valued as making significant contributions to helping solve shared problems. In short, students are encouraged to ask, “What can we learn from one another in order to solve our common problems?” Rather than a civic assimilative approach which attempts to divest immigrant students of their unique life experiences and culture in order to develop political unity, Parker’s enlightened political engagement encourages immigrant students to maintain their cultural identity in order to most effectively contribute to society. Immigrant students’ life experiences and heritage cultures are viewed as a source of personal and societal strength.

### **Immigrant students and social studies: Gender and “soft skills”**

Several factors contribute to immigrant students’ social studies experience. This section will highlight two of these factors relevant to this study: gender and “soft skills.”

Although gender has been an understudied aspect of immigration and education until fairly recently (Passar, 2003), immigration scholars are now focusing on gender as a key factor in immigrant students’ acculturation in the United States. The research on immigrant girls’ acculturation and academic performance tells a story of overcoming obstacles. Obstacles to immigrant students’ acculturation and academic performance include immigrant girls’ receiving mixed messages about the importance of school (Canedy, 2001; Gibson, 1998), deeply rooted traditional notions that girls’ education is not as important as boys’ education (Kwong, 2000; Qin, 2006), girls’ families refusing to support higher education (Sarroub, 2001; Wolf, 1997), and girls’ overwhelming responsibilities at home leading to lower school performance (Lee, 2001b). Despite these many obstacles, immigrant girls’ are

outperforming immigrant boys. Immigrant girls have higher grades (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Olsen, 1997; Hutchinson, 1997) and more positive attitudes about school (Gibson, 1993; Qin, 2006).

Immigrant girls' academic success and acculturation are intimately linked. Qin (2006) cites "a gender role shift after migration" (p. 10), in which parents from traditional communities gradually adopt gender egalitarian views after resettling in the United States, as key to immigrant girls' success. Other scholars note that immigrant parents are more likely to regiment girls' free time after school which likely contributes to girls' academic success (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Zhou & Bankston, 2001). Perhaps most significantly, studies show that immigrant girls are more likely than boys to adopt "additive" or "hyphenated" identities, which indicate their attempt to develop bicultural competencies in the heritage community in the United States (Gibson, 1998; Olsen, 1997; Rumbaut, 1996; Qin, 2006). In other words, girls are more likely to view the compatibility and advantages of striving for gender equality in American schools while maintaining cultural ties to family and immigrant community.

Another factor which contributes to immigrant students experience in social studies is the array of traits and behaviors immigrant students bring to the classroom. Sociologists refer to these behavioral traits as "soft skills," and include personal graces, enthusiasm, optimism, and others. Scholars (Massey, et al., 2007; Zhou & Bankston, 2001) aver that several of these skills contribute to immigrant students' school performance. These soft skills are largely a result of immigrant's cultural emphasis on education, hard work, and respect for authority. Scholars note additional immigrant student soft skills such as authenticity, appreciation of teachers, thoughtfulness, caring about education, dedication to learning, and

honoring and respecting authority and elders (Lee, 2001a; Hutchinson, 1997; Rumbaut, 1995; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Kao & Tienda, 2005; Zhou & Bankston, 1998).

Although the literature on immigrant student soft skills is generally positive, some scholars warrant that certain soft skills are detrimental to school performance, particularly the soft skill of respecting authority. For example, Stacy Lee (2001a) finds that rather than confront a teacher when they do not understand course content, many immigrant students skip class. Thorssenson (2008) postulates that Montagnard immigrant students are often “good kids” who behave, respect the teacher, are nice to their peers, and sit quietly, but “bad students” who do not request extra help out of deference to the teacher, even if they do not understand the material. As a result, they receive poor grades. In Civics courses which should include deliberation (Parker, 2008) and a critique of the status quo (Kinchloe, 2005), being overly deferential to authority can be a detrimental soft skill.

In sum, multiple factors contribute to immigrant students’ social studies experience. Two factors, gender and soft skills, are relevant to this study. The findings from this study are positioned to offer contributions to the literature on teaching immigrant students with respect to gender and soft skills.

### **Teacher education and immigrant students**

In 2002, Lin Goodwin raised a challenge to teacher education programs when she published *Teacher preparation and the education of immigrant children*. Goodwin maintains that immigration has led to drastically different student demographics in American schools, and that teacher education has not adequately responded to this change. She highlights key issues that teacher education programs need to address, including recommendations for

teacher educators. Goodwin's main point is that although teacher education literature includes an abundance of resources about ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity, "specific attention to immigrant children appears to be lacking" (p. 159), which she refers to as "the notable silence" (p. 160). Of the issues she raises, the most notable is perhaps the issue of cultural disorientation. Specifically, many immigrants' identities are perceived in established United States racial categories. For example, an immigrant from Jamaica might perceive herself as Jamaican, but would be pressured by peers and educators to identify herself as black or African-American. Laurie Olson (1996) describes this process as moving "from nation to race."

Goodwin posits three recommendations for teacher educators. The first is differentiating instruction. Under this banner, she suggests that Moll's (1991) "funds of knowledge" and Ladson-Billings' (1994) culturally responsive pedagogy offer great promise for immigrant students. She also suggests that teacher education program should prepare teachers for students who enter school at different points in the year (a common occurrence for immigrant students) and to introduce students to the "interactional and participatory norms in US classrooms" (p. 167). Goodwin's second recommendation is to prepare pre-service teachers in second-language learning. Under this category, she offers that pre-service teachers should be prepared in the following five areas: language acquisition theories, instructional strategies to scaffold ELLs, developing cooperative and community-based learning, how to access resources and materials for ELLs, and being conscientious of the stereotypes surrounding second language learners, such as the deficit perspective. Her final recommendation is to encourage pre-service teachers to work more closely with families and communities. She acknowledges that working with families should already be a part of

teacher education programs, but that working with immigrant families takes on particular importance because familial relationships are often central to immigrant students' identities and because of language reasons. This is namely that students are often translators for families, and because schools are understaffed with bi-lingual teachers, bi-lingual parents are indispensable communicators to immigrant communities.

Although Goodwin's piece is very helpful, there are limitations in the article. The major limitation is that she disregards one of the major critiques she levels against the field of teacher education. Specifically, she says that there is, unfortunately, a "noticeable conceptual overlap in the literature between immigrant children and LEP children" (p. 160). I agree with her on this point. Yet in her paper, two of her three suggestions relate to issues of language.

The next article of focus is by Amanda Sox (2009), who researches Latino immigrant students in southern schools. She pays particular attention to the states of North Carolina and Georgia. Sox's article challenges teacher education programs in southern states to improve the ways in which they prepare pre-service teachers to teach growing numbers of Latino students in southern schools. Sox identifies three themes in the (mis)education of immigrant students and the implications of each of these themes for teacher preparation. The first theme is policies related to immigrant students in southern states. She argues that existing policies are harmful to immigrant students. She presents two extreme examples in Georgia. In the first, teachers are told to enforce Georgia's English-only policy even in students' social time! Another harmful policy is Georgia's two-year ELL policy, which states that immigrant students can only receive two years of ELL services, after which time students are either mainstreamed to regular classes or tracked in special education programs. In response to

these policies, she advises teacher education programs to include policy components in their coursework.

Sox's other major theme relates specifically to teacher education. Her argument is that teacher education programs are doing a poor job of preparing teachers to work with immigrant students. For example, she cites Ballantyne's 2008 study in which he compared teacher licensure standards at the state level on the topic of ELL preparation. Ballantyne found that some states had no mention of ELL students in their standards. North Carolina only referenced ELL students as an "example of diversity, but did not address specifics in their diversity standards" (p. 316). Furthermore, no southern states required courses specifically dedicated to the needs of ELL mainstreamed content area teachers. In her final theme, Sox states that pre-service teachers need to develop knowledge in four areas in order to be prepared to work with immigrant students: linguistics, second language acquisition theories, cultural and linguistic diversity, and pedagogy for bilingual students. Rather than making recommendations to improve teacher education programs, Sox suggests that teachers should either gain her recommended knowledge through self-study, or should be conducted as in-service training sponsored by school districts. In this section she oddly makes no recommendations for teacher education programs.

There are limitations in Sox's paper. Like Goodwin, she merges the needs of immigrant students and ELL students in two of her three themes. While Goodwin notes this problem, Sox did not do so. I appreciate that Sox was much more specific in her suggestions than Goodwin. Naming specific policies that teacher educators should raise with their pre-service teachers is particularly helpful. However, I would have appreciated even more specific suggestions. Finally, it seems problematic that Sox would include teacher education



as one of her themes, yet not make specific suggestions for preservice teacher education programs under this theme. Suggesting that in-service teachers use self-study to solve the problems she identifies leaves much to be desired in my view.

A recent study by Cho & Reich (2008) makes recommendations for inservice social studies teachers who teach ELL students. The researchers surveyed teachers in central Virginia, which, like North Carolina, has a rapidly rising immigrant student population. Cho & Reich's survey results show that social studies teachers desire more and better bilingual instructional materials and professional development specific to immigrant students. When asked what type of professional development the social studies teachers would need or desire to teach ELLs, the majority of teachers indicated cultural understanding and ESL instructional strategies as the most important areas.

Cho & Reich (2008) offer helpful teaching strategies for social studies teachers, such as using graphic organizers and introducing vocabulary at the beginning of lessons. Unfortunately, their recommendations for inservice teacher education are limited and vague. As their primary recommendations for inservice social studies teachers working with ELLs, the authors offer "thinking like a linguist," and "thinking like an outsider" (p. 239). Although I applaud Cho & Reich for offering suggestions to improve inservice teacher education for social studies teachers, the type of recommendations are not specific enough to be helpful. Thus one of the goals of this dissertation is to make stronger recommendations for social studies teacher education programs.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The primary theoretical lens employed in this study is the additive acculturation model developed by Margaret Gibson (1995). The remainder of this section will describe the additive acculturation model, its antecedents, and how it has evolved over time for its developer. The section will also discuss how the additive acculturation model is employed to inform the research design, data collection, data analysis, and findings and explore how other authors have used the additive acculturation model. Since one of the limitations of the model is that it does not account for civic engagement amongst immigrant students, the model is supported by a democratic civic education framework developed by merging Billig & Root's (2008) and Kinchloe's (2005) scholarship. The final chapter of the dissertation will elaborate on the ways in which this study confirms, complicates, and broadens the theoretical framework. Furthermore, the conclusion will include a revision of the additive acculturation model which includes civic engagement.

The additive acculturation model (Gibson, 1995) suggests that schools and teachers provide equal opportunities to immigrants and acculturate students through a bicultural process that values their heritage culture and American culture. The additive model promotes home-school relations and encourages students to maintain their ethnic communities while, at the same time, learning and adopting aspects of American culture. Teachers who follow the additive model recognize the value in heritage culture and incorporate heritage cultures into the classroom. Furthermore, teachers frame their instruction in ways that are meaningful and relevant to immigrant students. Teachers who follow the additive model teach inclusively, by recognizing the high motivations for learning among immigrant students and incorporating the knowledge and life experiences of immigrant children into the classroom.

Gibson highlights a few key differences between assimilation and acculturation. She describes assimilation as a process in which individuals of one society are absorbed into another. She denotes a negative connotation with the term assimilation. Acculturation, on the other hand, is a process of cultural “change and adaptation that occurs when individuals with different cultures come into contact. The end result need not be the rejection of old traits or their replacement. Acculturation may be an additive process or one in which old and new traits are blended” (Gibson, 1995, p. 90).

Gibson holds that American schools have many things to offer immigrant students such as helping them master the dominant language and culture, aiding students’ entry into the host society, and preparing students to participate in the American workforce. She suggests that the parents of immigrant students desire and encourage acculturation to a point, but do not want assimilation. Specifically, she highlights parental fears of becoming too Americanized.

Gibson argues that when schools do not practice the additive model, they may “undermine just those qualities that enable minority children to excel in school” (p. 92). Schools and educators that implicitly or explicitly remove, marginalize, or demean immigrant students’ heritage culture practice subtractive acculturation. The subtractive practice is based on a deficit model which associates immigrant children with multiple handicaps in schooling, such as lack of English proficiency, lower potential to do well academically, and not understanding the social and educational institutions in United States. Subtractive practice in education emphasizes English-only instruction, rapid Americanization, and a monocultural approach to assimilation. It recommends a corrective curriculum that devalues belief structures and cultural traditions outside the mainstream.

Other scholars have reinterpreted Gibson's subtractive acculturation and taken the theory in slightly different directions. Most prominently, Angela Valenzuela (1999, 2002, 2005) describes subtractive schooling, which is similar to Gibson's subtractive acculturation. Valenzuela's work focuses not on Indian immigrants like Gibson, but instead with Latina/o immigrant students in Texas. Valenzuela is much more critical of schools and educators than Gibson, and suggests that schools, by their very design, are intended to be subtractive to immigrant students. In fact, she postulates that only by openly defying federal and state policies are schools and teachers able to be anything but subtractive in their practice. Whereas Gibson's work focuses on teacher practice and local policy, Valenzuela focuses on the structure of schools and state and federal policy. Valenzuela argues that in order for educators to overcome subtractive school practices, they must exhibit caring, tolerance, and understanding of immigrant students and must educate themselves on the heritage cultures and personal backgrounds of immigrant students. Both scholars advocate for teachers to respect immigrant students' heritage culture, to encourage students to value their heritage culture, and to encourage bilingualism.

### **Additive acculturation antecedents**

Gibson (1995) developed the additive acculturation model by building on Walter Lambert's (1975) concept of additive and subtractive bilingualism. Lambert conducted research on immersion language education in Canada, specifically the Canadian attempt to ensure bilingualism in the country. Lambert's later work concentrated on applying the additive bilingualism model developed in Canada to the education of immigrant students in the United States.

Lambert first acknowledges the primacy of language - that language “defines the core of ethnic identity” (Taylor & Simard, 1975). He advises that additive bilingualism implies that immigrant students, “with no fear of ethnic erosion, can add one or more languages to their accumulating skills” (Lambert & Taylor, 1990, p. 19). He also suggests that parents in Canada, both dominant language speakers and heritage language speakers, have been eager to enroll their students in programs which develop authentic bilingualism.

Subtractive bilingualism, on the other hand, nominally promotes using multiple languages, although one language is given higher prestige than another. The more prestigious language ultimately dominates the less prestigious language. Often, speakers who transition from a less prestigious language to a more prestigious language lose their ability to communicate with their family. Furthermore, the speakers often do not gain a full grasp of the high prestige language. In the cases of the United States and Canada, Lambert (1975) identifies English as the high prestige language because of its dominance in government, the workforce, and the media. Lambert also identifies five problems with subtractive bilingualism, which is the type of bilingualism practiced in ESL-type programs: heritage language students are placed in academically disadvantaged positions, immigrant students lose a central feature of their identities, immigrant students lose the ability to communicate with their families, students’ cultures are symbolically disrespected, and last, the nation loses valuable resources in terms of bilingual citizens (Lambert & Taylor, 1990). Specifically, “the hyphenated American child, like a French-Canadian, embarks on a subtractive bilingual route as soon as he/she enters a school where a high prestige, socially powerful, dominant language such as English is introduced as the exclusive language of instruction” (Lambert & Taylor, 1990, p. 19).

There are obvious parallels between Lambert's work with bilingualism and Gibson's work with immigrant students. Gibson expands Lambert's theory to include cultural aspects other than language. She proposes that immigrant students are more academically successful in the United States when they do not subtract, or have subtracted, their heritage culture. When immigrant students over-assimilate into American society, they tend to rebel against their parents' authority and often adopt anti-school attitudes common in American-youth. Although many teachers in Gibson's study support additive acculturation at a philosophical level, at the practical level, most practice subtractive acculturation.

### **The additive acculturation model over time**

Gibson first used the term additive acculturation model in 1995 in a book chapter titled, "Additive acculturation as a strategy for school improvement." However, by examining her earlier work, it is evident that many of the core features of the theory were developed as early as 1987 in a work in *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, titled "The school performance of immigrant minorities: A comparative view." In this work, she focuses on Punjabi immigrant students in rural California. The immigrants had no established immigrant communities to aid their transition to the United States, worked in back-breaking agricultural labor for long hours, were often minimally educated in India before moving to the United States, and rarely had a strong grasp of written English. In addition, the receiving community was resistant to the immigrants and the schools had little experience in teaching immigrant students. In short, the immigrant students faced a great deal of challenges, yet many were academically successful. The purpose of her study was to determine what made these immigrant students academically successful despite their many obstacles.

In the 1987 article, Gibson found that schools did little to assist elementary aged immigrant students in terms of language, while middle or high school aged immigrant students were placed in LEP (Limited English Proficient) classes, even though many were capable of taking high level English-only classes. Furthermore, schools did a poor job of protecting immigrant students from being bullied by white majority students. While teachers admired the immigrant students for their hard work and good behavior, they questioned the lack of participation in school-sponsored activities and what they perceived as parental disengagement from the school. So, in addition to structural vulnerabilities such as social class, language barriers, and lack of supportive community, immigrant students faced educational obstacles within schools.

Gibson's answer to why Punjabi immigrant students were academically successful in this environment is that they, and their parents, practiced a strategy of what she Gibson terms *accommodation and acculturation without assimilation*. Accommodation and acculturation without assimilation is the precursor to additive acculturation. The tenets of accommodation and acculturation without assimilation include accepting the academic but not the social offerings of American schools, honoring American teachers but maintaining limited contact with American youth, and learning English and maintaining their heritage language, among others. One Punjabi parent put it best when she stated, "Dress to please the people, but eat to please yourself" (Gibson, 1987, p. 271). Gibson uses this quote to elaborate the ways in which immigrant parents and students were willing to enter publicly into American life, but privately to focus on the immigrant community. She concludes the article by stating that the Punjabi immigrants in this community are successful because they see "acculturation in a

multidimensional fashion where by new skills and values are incorporated into the old culture, transforming but not replacing it” (p. 274).

In 1988, Gibson published a book titled, *Accommodation without assimilation*. She spends a large portion of the second chapter elaborating on her theme and providing examples. Accommodation, for example, is expressed by Punjabi immigrants when they allow their children to attend schools in which boys and girls attend the same classes, though they generally disagree with the co-educational approach. She also takes greater care to emphasize that the accommodation without assimilation strategy is employed to different degrees by different Punjabi families. A few families, in fact, advocate full assimilation, though most subscribe to the strategy outlined by Gibson. She also notes that the immigrant parents most closely advocate accommodation, while immigrant students most closely advocate acculturation.

Since 1995 and Gibson’s first use of the additive acculturation model, Gibson has made some modifications to the model. For example, in 2002, in *The new Latino Diaspora and educational policy*, she expands the focus of the model by prioritizing the academic benefits for immigrant students, in addition to the preservation of and respect for students’ heritage culture. The 2002 piece cites qualitative and quantitative studies which support the academic benefits of adhering to the additive acculturation model. As evidence, she presents a large scale longitudinal study by Rumbaut (1997) which finds that bilingual immigrant students have higher grades than immigrants and white peers who speak only English, and a Steinberg (2001) study which substantiates that immigrant students who complete bilingual programs score higher on the NY Regents examination.



Gibson's more recent work has evolved into international comparative studies. Specifically, this collaborative work compares immigration in California to immigration in Spain, the second largest immigrant receiving country in the world, behind only the United States. In her 2009 piece, *The education of immigrant youth: Lessons from the U.S. and Spain*, Gibson does not specifically note the additive acculturation model. Perhaps she is hesitant to apply a model developed in the United States context, internationally. Interestingly, many of the recommendations of the article contain the major tenets of the additive acculturation model she wrote previously. For instance, she asks which practices lead immigrant students to "engage with native peers, to feel welcome in mainstream places on campus, and to feel academically challenged" (p. 255)? One deviation from her past work is her emphasis on social engagement. In the previous work, Gibson asserts that immigrant students should not feel pressured to socialize in school sponsored activities, yet her 2009 piece emphasizes inclusion and engagement as key suggestions.

### **Limitations of the theoretical framework**

Despite the many strengths of the additive acculturation model, there are some limitations to the model. In terms of suggestions for teachers, education leaders, and policy-makers, the additive acculturation model clearly addresses purposes of education, but only tangentially addresses curriculum or teacher pedagogy. According to the tenets of the model, the purpose of schooling is to provide immigrant students the dominant language and skills, while preserving heritage culture, so that students may succeed academically and in their post-schooling lives. In terms of curriculum, Gibson's recommendations are to provide heritage language maintenance courses and instruct students that "cultural diversity is the

bedrock of this nation and that multiculturalism is the normal human experience” (1995, p. 101).

The additive acculturation model is not specific about pedagogy. Rather, it addresses teacher dispositions such as understanding students’ heritage cultures and home lives, promoting positive home-school relationships, and appreciating diversity. Based on Gibson’s multiculturalism statements, she intimates but does not specifically advocate for multicultural education pedagogy. The model could certainly be strengthened by more specific recommendations for teacher pedagogy with respect to teaching immigrant students. One of the goals of this dissertation then, is to attempt to strengthen the model by identifying specific teacher instructional strategies that are beneficial to immigrant students in the area of social studies.

Finally, a significant limitation of the additive acculturation model is that it does not account for civic engagement. Gibson never states that a goal of additive acculturation is immigrant student engagement in a polity. Considering the civic opportunity/empowerment gap between immigrant students and native born students (Marri, 2009; Levison, 2010), this is clearly problematic and needs to be addressed. As this study specifically addresses the teachers’ perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students, a framework for conceptualizing civic education is needed. In order to overcome this weakness in the additive acculturation model, the dissertation also draws on theoretical work regarding democratic civic education which follows in the next section. The concluding chapter of this study includes a revised additive acculturation model that accounts for democratic civic education.

Table 1

*Additive acculturation tenets*

| Additive acculturation tenets   | Examples from this study  |
|---|---|
| 1. Teachers encourage students to maintain heritage culture while selectively adopting some aspects of American culture         | Research project on immigrant contributions to expanding civil liberties in the United States   |
| 2. Teachers' instruction is relevant and meaningful to immigrant students   | Analyzing the relationship between recent immigration legislation and Constitutional amendments |
| 3. Teachers incorporate immigrant students' knowledge, life experiences, and heritage cultures in the classroom                 | Comparative government study between United States and heritage countries                       |
| 4. Teachers promote home-school relations   | Supporting school-wide cultural festivals   |
| 5. Teachers exhibit empathy, tolerance, and caring for immigrant students and knowledge of immigrant students' heritage culture | Reading articles about Karen refugees   |

**Democratic civic education**

As the additive acculturation model does not incorporate civic education, I turn to other civic education scholars to complement the model. I take a stance in favor of enlightened political engagement (Parker, 2008). Adopting the position of progressive educators past and present (Dewey, 1916; Kinchloe, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995), I am more positively inclined to teachers who teach from the critical tradition. I believe the purpose of social studies should be the improvement of the society and the lives of its citizens (Parker, 2008). This can only happen if students are willing to be involved in civic

participation and question and critique the status quo. While it is certainly important for students to have knowledge of democratic systems, the skills to thrive in a democratic system, and to hold democratic values and attitudes, it is most important for students to use the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to take action to improve society. As Kenneth Teitelbaum (2010) stated when comparing civic education to literacy education, “To be literate is to read, not just to know how to read – likewise, civic literacy in our country is not just focused on learning about political structures and associations but becoming/being active citizens” (p. 308).

Because one of the dissertation research questions explores the ways in which teachers think about and teach Civics, I needed a conceptual framework which would allow me to compare and contrast teacher perceptions and strategies specifically for the subject of Civics. In order to compare and contrast with sufficient specificity, I needed a framework which is more delineated than Parker’s enlightened political engagement (2008). Although Parker’s framework of enlightened political engagement is a helpful conceptual tool, Parker’s framework includes only two dimensions: democratic enlightenment and democratic engagement. Therefore, in order to delineate the differences between Civics teachers’ perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students in greater detail, I rely on Root & Billig’s (2008, p. 107) four prerequisites of competent democratic citizenship: 1. knowledge, 2. skills, 3. values and attitudes, 4. civic involvement in the present and/or intentions to become civically involved in the future.

To this list of prerequisites, I add a fifth - Kinchloe’s (2005) notion of critical democratic civics. In *Getting beyond the facts: Teaching social studies/social sciences in the twenty-first century* (2001), Joe Kinchloe calls for a “critical democratic civics grounded in a

concern with the health of democracy in the contemporary U.S.” (p. 710). Kinchloe puts forward the notion that although electoral politics has changed a great deal over the last 30 years, American Civics classes are indistinguishable from similar classes in the 1950’s. His major concern is that because political candidates now require more money to obtain and stay in office, and because of the increased power of corporate elites who provide this money, there has been a “dramatic breakdown in democracy over the last decades of the twentieth century, [although the] form and veneer of democratic government has stayed the same” (p. 716). The only way for average people to have their voices heard by government, and to maintain a participatory democracy, is through encouraging a more active, critical role for citizens. Kinchloe recommends that Civics classes are where future critical citizens should be cultivated. Kinchloe alternatively calls this form of Civics education, alternative Civics, critical Civics, and critical democratic Civics. This dissertation will use the term critical civic involvement to describe the type of Civics education advocated by Kinchloe.

This fifth prerequisite relates to civic involvement, however, this form of civic involvement includes a critical aspect. As an example to illustrate the distinction, a service learning project would count as Root & Billig’s (2008, p. 107) prerequisite 4. civic involvement. However, an assignment which required students to submit editorials to the newspaper on a controversial local issue would count as Kinchloe’s (2005) 5. critical civic involvement. From this point forward, I will refer to the merger of Root & Billig’s (2008) four prerequisites of competent democratic citizenship and Kinchloe’s (2005) critical democratic citizenship as the prerequisites of citizenship education. I use the five prerequisites in order to compare and contrast the ways in which teachers’ perceive and teach

Civics to immigrant students. The following chart explicates the list of prerequisites and provides examples:

Table 2

*Civic Education Prerequisites*

| Prerequisites of democratic citizenship education                | Definition  | Examples   |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Knowledge   | Understanding democratic principles, institutions, and social issues        | The United States is a federal, representative democracy with shared powers between three branches of government       |
| 2. Skills  | Ability to participate in the democratic system                             | Analyze alternative positions on an issue, detect bias, engage in deliberation   |
| 3. Values and attitudes  | Beliefs and dispositions which empower citizens to participate in democracy | Tolerance, agency, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, diversity, representative government, individual civil liberties |
| 4. Civic involvement and intentions to become civically involved | Participating in democratic processes or intending to do so in the future   | Volunteering, voting, following the news, taking a stand on an issue   |
| 5. Critical civic involvement                                    | Participating in critical, non-systemic democratic processes                | Protesting, boycotting, civil disobedience, raising awareness of an issue, identifying root causes of social problems  |

I view the 5 prerequisites on an active, critical spectrum – knowledge level is the lowest active level, skill is the next most active; with critical civic involvement being the most active and critical form of citizenship education. I view teachers who teach on the active, engaged end of the spectrum – prerequisites four and five, civic involvement and critical

citizenship, respectively - as the Civics educators who adhere more closely to the most promising aspects of Civics instruction, enlightened political engagement (Parker, 2008).

## **Chapter 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This dissertation draws on principles of qualitative inquiry using interpretive collective case study methods (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2000). This chapter will define collective case studies and qualitative methods and describe their characteristics, as well as providing a rationale for why those methods are appropriate for this study. The chapter will also explain participant selection, data collection procedures, and describe analytic procedures. Furthermore, I will recognize the limitations of this study. Finally, since “the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis in qualitative research” (Merriam, 1988, p. 19), this chapter will conclude with a presentation of my positionality with regard to this study.

#### **Qualitative inquiry**

According to Creswell (2008), qualitative research is “best suited for research problems in which you do not know the variables and need to explore” (p. 53). In order to learn more about the problem, Creswell advises researchers “seek to learn from the participants” (p. 56). The research question in this study is complex, is under-studied in the literature (Goodwin, 2002) and calls for exploration. Thus, qualitative research is the most appropriate paradigm from which to approach the problem.



Researchers must consider the philosophical assumptions of their research paradigm. The most important distinction of qualitative research from the more traditional, quantitative research is, quite significantly, the view of the world. Qualitative research assumes that there are multiple, valid realities. The world is a “function of personal interaction and perception” (Merriam, 1988, p. 17), rather than an objective world independent of and uninfluenced by individuals. The different worldview leads to major distinctions between the qualitative and quantitative research methods. In short, a researcher’s worldview affects his or her research methodology in a multitude of ways. The following section will focus on some of the characteristics of qualitative research, based on the qualitative worldview.

For example, qualitative research is “exploratory, inductive, and emphasizes processes” (Merriam, 1998, p. 17). The goals of qualitative researchers include discovery, hypothesis generation, description, and understanding. Qualitative researchers work with small numbers of research participants and attempt to understand the participants more completely than traditional forms of research. Qualitative research studies formulate hypotheses at the end, rather than the outset, of their studies. The role of researcher in qualitative research is also of primary importance. In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary research instrument. Qualitative researchers present themselves in the research and recognize their own bias and dispositions. As the researcher in this study, I adhere to qualitative worldview, and, as such, employ qualitative research methodologies. In particular, I employ an interpretative, collective case study design.

### **Case study research**

There are multiple methods from which to qualitatively study a research problem. Collective case studies offer the most appropriate methodology for answering the research questions raised in this study. Sharan Merriam is a qualitative methodologist who has written extensively on collective case studies, and this section will rely heavily on her expertise. Merriam defines case studies as “an examination of a specific phenomenon . . . in a bounded system” (1988, p. 9). Case studies are not a particular methodology as much as it is an approach which calls for “interpretation in context” (Cronbach, 1975, p. 123). By focusing on single or multiple cases that might illuminate a phenomenon, the case study approach seeks to “uncover the interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon” (Merriam, 1988, p. 10). Guba and Lincoln (1981) support these definitions when they state that case studies “reveal the properties of the class to which the instance of being studied belongs” (p. 371).

According to Paul Foreman (1948), who wrote an early and influential piece on when to use case studies, the case study is a very effective design when a problem under study calls for further conceptualization, or when the line of inquiry demands “emphasis on the pattern of interpretation given by subjects” (p. 417). Given the lack of conceptualization on teaching social studies to immigrant students in a new gateway state, a collective case study design seems appropriate for this study. Furthermore, Merriam (1998) indicates that case study research in education “seeks to understand specific issues and problems in practice” (p. 23). Her statement reaffirms collective case studies as an appropriate research design for this type of study.

Drawing on case study research in education scholarship, Merriam identifies four essential properties of case studies. The first property is that they are particularistic. The case

is important for what it reveals about the phenomenon and what it might represent. Merriam claims that this property makes case studies an “especially good design for practical problems” (1988, p. 11). Case studies are also descriptive. By descriptive, case studies are meant to incorporate what Geertz (1973) calls “thick description.” Case studies are also heuristic, meaning they illuminate the readers’ understanding of the topic. Robert Stake, an oft-cited case study methodologist, says of this property, “Previously unknown relationships and variables can be expected to emerge from case studies leading to a rethinking of the phenomenon. . . Insights into how things get to be the way they are can be expected” (1981, p. 47). Finally, case studies are inductive, which means that they require inductive reasoning. In case studies, discovery and a more complete understanding of an under-researched problem are more important goals than verifying previous findings in the literature.

The case study approach is used in many different fields: history, sociology, anthropology and so on. Because there are many types of case study approaches, it is important to clarify that this study will be an ethnographic case study. As Merriam notes, “Sociocultural analysis is the unit of study. Concern with the cultural context is what sets this type of study apart from other qualitative research” (p. 23). Goetz & LeCompte (1984) agree that education research has a long history of employing ethnographic case studies.

Based on the goals of the study and the nature of the final report, there are three types of case studies reports, descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative. Descriptive studies provide a detailed account of the case or cases. Evaluative case studies include description but also judgment. This research study is interpretive. That is, it will include description but also be used to “develop conceptual categories [and to] illustrate, support, or challenge theoretical

assumptions” (Merriam, p. 28). Interpretive case studies, sometimes referred to as analytical case studies, are differentiated from descriptive studies by “their complexity, depth, and theoretical orientation” (Shaw, 1978).

Finally, Stake (2000) identifies three types of case studies according to the subject(s) studied, intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. An intrinsic study offers greater understanding of that particular case because the case is identified as being outside the norm. Instrumental cases are chosen not because the cases themselves are distinct or unusual, but when the cases can be studied to better understand an issue. When a researcher studies multiple instrumental case studies of a single issue, then the study is called a collective case study. Collective case studies are sometimes identified as multiple instrumental case studies (Creswell, 2008). Collective case studies allow the researcher to “investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition” (p. 437). In short, intrinsic cases are unusual cases, instrumental cases shed light on an issue, and collective case studies are used when multiple cases are studied to provide insight into a single issue. This study is a collective case study because it examines six instrumental cases – Civics teachers who teach immigrant students in a new gateway state.

### **Strengths and limitations of collective case study design**

All research designs contain strengths and weaknesses, and case study research is no exception. One of the major strengths of collective case study design is that the design allows the researcher to explore multiple variables in complex social systems. Case studies are “anchored in real life situations” and, “result in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998, p. 32). The rich data collected through collective case studies

can, in turn, be used to construct tentative hypotheses which can guide further research in the area under study. Collective studies play an important role in advancing the knowledge base of complex, applied fields such as education (Merriam, 1998), particularly when little is known about the area under study.

There are also limitations to the collective case study research design. Most notably, as Guba and Lincoln (1981) note, case studies are “but a part – a slice of life” (p. 377), yet can often mislead readers into drawing globalized conclusions about the area of study. Researchers must be very clear about the conclusions that can be drawn from this type of study. Unlike quantitative studies, qualitative studies, and collective case study designs in particular, do not claim to generalize. Keeping this in mind, case study researchers should be clear that generalizability is the responsibility of the readers of case study research, not the researchers.

### **Design of this study**

#### **Pre-study and participant selection**

As this section explains the design of the dissertation, I will switch to first person voice. Because this study emphasizes teacher perceptions and strategies, it is important to provide a rationale for why I selected these specific participants. It is particularly important for me to note that North Carolina’s immigrant population is in no way homogeneous. Large numbers of highly skilled immigrants move to North Carolina for employment in the technology sector of Research Triangle Park, for example. Other less-highly skilled immigrants move to North Carolina for employment in the service, agricultural, and construction sectors (Gill, 2010). Thus immigrant students whose families work in high-

skilled sectors most often attend urban or suburban school districts, while immigrants who work in agriculture most often send their children to rural school districts. In this study, I desired to address the broad range of immigrant students in North Carolina and so decided to work with teachers in central North Carolina, an area which contains rural, suburban, and urban schools.

I sought to learn from the broad range of social studies teachers who have worked with a heterogeneous nature of the immigrant population in North Carolina but was limited by time and budget. To achieve this goal, I conducted a pre-study to gather information to explore the additive acculturation theory, formulate research questions, and also to identify potential research participants. The pre-study was a survey questionnaire designed using the additive acculturation model (Gibson, 1995) as a theoretical framework. I conveniently selected central North Carolina as the target region. I then purposefully sampled 225 middle and high school social studies teachers in 5 counties in central North Carolina with high immigrant populations (Migration Policy Institute, 2011; American Communities Survey, 2009). Three of these counties are rural, one is suburban, and one is urban.

Through the survey, I obtained data from 99 teachers (44% response rate). Using the survey data, I then ordered the teachers from 1-99 on how well the teachers' responses adhered to the additive acculturation model. I call the teachers at the top 25% the most progressive teachers. The final question on the survey asked if the teachers would like to participate in a larger research project regarding social studies teachers and immigrant students. Twelve of the 99 teachers who completed the survey taught at least one Civics course and agreed to participate in a future research study. I solicited all 12 of these teachers to participate in the dissertation and six agreed. These six teachers served as participants in

the dissertation. Five of the six participants were in the top quartile of the additive ranking. One participant, David, was in the bottom quartile. Thus, according to the survey data, five of the six teachers in this dissertation were progressive educators.

### **Data Collection**

Collective case studies do not require a specific methodology; multiple methods are available to the researcher (Merriam, 1988). For this study, interviews and focus groups seemed to be the most beneficial methodology. Qualitative researchers “seek to understand how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them” (Glesne, 2006). Keeping Glesne’s description of the role of qualitative researchers firmly in mind, I privilege teacher voices, and allow them to share the ways in which they construct their understanding of teaching immigrant students. In order to most effectively privilege teacher voices and understand teacher perceptions, I choose to collect data through interviews and a focus group.

### **Interviews**

Interviews are the primary method of collecting data in this study. I believe it is important to privilege what teachers themselves say about their perceptions of and strategies for working with immigrant students. I agree with Creswell who states that interviews “permit participants to describe detailed personal information” and give the researcher “better control over the type of information received, because the interview can ask specific questions to elicit this information (p. 226). Perhaps Patton (1980) puts it most succinctly, by stating that the interview is the best way to “find out what is in and on someone else’s mind” (p. 196).

I conducted one-on-one interviews with each teacher in the study three times (18 total interviews) for 45-60 minutes each. I employed semi-structured interviews, in which the first interview was the most structured of the three interviews. As Merriam notes, “one of the goals of the unstructured interviews is, in fact, learning enough about a situation to formulate questions for subsequent interviews” (1998, p. 74). Thus the first interview included the same questions (Creswell, 2008) for all participants, but subsequent interviews were specific to each participant. I wrote a majority of the subsequent interview questions based on the data analysis from previous interviews. *See Appendix A for Interview Protocols.*

### **Focus group meeting**

A secondary method of data collection was a focus group. Focus groups offered the opportunity for participants to share ideas with one another and use each others’ comments to initiate and drive discussion. Since focus groups were more logistically challenging for teachers than interviews, I held only one focus group. *See appendix A for focus group protocols.*

I used focus groups to promote what Kamberelis & Dimitriadis (2005) call “horizontal interaction” (p. 898) amongst the research participants. That is to say, rather than the dialogue moving from researcher to participant and back again, participants speak to one another. Through this interaction, focus groups allow participants to hear similar and varied experiences, which can both validate and challenge each other’s narratives. The focus group has the potential to offer rich data on the ways in which teachers justify their dispositions and strategies to their peers.



I recognize two main limitations with using focus groups as a data collection method. The first is the possibility that some people will be shut out of the conversation. Since the group could potentially include six participants, it is possible that less assertive participants, and participants more likely to give in to peer pressure, would not enter the discussion. It is the researcher's responsibility to follow up with participants and ensure that no voices are silenced, in order to moderate this limitation. However, in the focus group I facilitated, each participant freely discussed his or her views. The second limitation with focus groups is that participant opinions are made public to the other participants. Since participants' comments are not confidential through this data collection method, it is possible that participants will be less likely to share potentially controversial information, which could make the data less rich and meaningful. I attempted to mediate this limitation by following Morgan's (1997) advice of establishing at the beginning of the focus group that disagreements are perfectly acceptable and by reminding participants that the purpose of the focus group is to observe the interactions that take place during the meeting.

### **Data Analysis**

I used Glaser & Strauss's (1967) constant comparative analysis. This type of analysis takes place in parallel with data collection. That is, data is collected and immediately analyzed to explore how the data compares to previously collected data. Constant comparative analysis consists of four stages. In the first stage, data is compared and tentatively coded. In this stage, I did not apply theoretical framework to the data. Instead, I coded the data exclusively without purposefully incorporating theory. I coded four interviews line-by-line. After line-by-line coding four interviews, I worked with Paul Mihos in the Odum Research Institute and Dr. Xue Lan Rong to improve the quality of my codes.

Initially my codes were too descriptive. A second draft of coding was too interpretive. By the third draft, I developed codes which were more conceptual than descriptive, but not too interpretive that it would be difficult to interpret at a later stage of data analysis.

In the second stage, the comparison analysis includes analysis within cases and across cases. Furthermore, data is organized according to codes. Codes are continuously evaluated to determine how effectively they address the data and the theory. In this stage, I developed a codebook with the 20 most significant codes. The codebook included the code name, a definition of each code, and an example from the data. Two examples from the code book include these: 1. *Patriotism* – expressed positive feelings towards the US and/or the heritage country, Ex. – “They drew pictures of the American Revolution . . . all of the faces in the picture were smiling because they were so proud; 2. *Challenges* – obstacles to academic success for immigrant students or the teacher, Ex. – “Undocumented students feel like they can’t go to college because they can’t get aid.” I applied the 20 codes to all of the data and began to determine the relationships between the codes within and across interviews. *See appendix D for complete codebook.*

The third stage consists of reducing the number of codes into more highly conceptual categories. Additionally, the researcher begins to develop hypotheses about the data. Newly collected data is checked to see how it fits with the categories and hypothesis. I reached this third stage of constant comparative analysis after I had interviewed each participant two times. After analyzing data from the first twelve interviews, I developed more highly conceptual categories such as the following: teachers perceived Civics as the most important course for immigrant students, teachers recognized significant hurdles for immigrant student academic success beyond linguistic challenges, and teachers prioritized teaching about rights,

but took different approaches to talking about rights specifically for immigrants. Data from participants' third interviews and focus group was checked against these categories to determine how well the data supported or refuted the categories. After all of the data was collected, I developed a central argument to answer the dissertation questions, supported by six findings.

The fourth stage is an exploration and reexamination of the theory from categorized data. In this study, I used the findings to confirm, complicate, and broaden the theoretical framework, additive acculturation. Furthermore, I identified several contributions to the literature on teacher perceptions and teaching immigrant students in a new gateway state.

### **Data reporting**

According to Merriam (1988), one of the major challenges of reporting case study research is finding the most effective balance of describing the data and analyzing the data. A secondary, related problem is integrating description and analysis so that the findings remain both interesting and adequately supported by data. Merriam suggests that case study researchers follow Erikson's (1986) method of data reporting which includes three components: particular description, general description, and interpretive commentary. Raw data, such as quotes, are reported as particular description. Patterns identified in the data, such as how representative the finding is across participants, are reported as general description. The higher levels of abstraction which connect the data to the theoretical framework and relevant literature are reported as interpretive commentary. Interpreted commentary serves as the bridge between the details being reported and the abstract arguments being made by the researcher.

Merriam (1988) warns case study researchers, “no set guidelines on how to achieve the right balance between the particular and the general, between description and analysis, the case study investigator usually learns how to balance the two through trial and error” (p. 201). In this case study, one of the great challenges was finding this balance. In each finding, I included and balanced each of Erikson’s three components: particular description, general description and interpretive commentary.

### **Positionality Statement**

Qualitative methodologists such as Glesne (2006) and Creswell (2008) recommend that qualitative researchers should clarify their own researcher bias. Because a researcher is the primary research instrument, qualitative studies should include a declaration of the researcher’s position with respect to the study. Creswell (2008) argues that this disclosure improves the validity of the study. George Noblit (personal communication, March 2009) also calls for qualitative researchers to declare their position with respect to the research topic and research participants, in what he terms “positionality statements.” Goodall (2000) and Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein (1997) indicate that each researcher becomes an authorial character through the writing process. They recognize three character “positionings” in qualitative research: fixed, subjective, and textual. Researchers reveal their positionings to clarify what the researcher is “likely to think about, value, and be prone to believe and do” (Goodall, 2000, p. 132). This portion of the paper will reveal my three positionings.

Fixed positions refer to personal facts which influence how a researcher might analyze data. Fixed positions are often demographic features which will not change during the course of the study and which are often unexamined. I am white and a United States

citizen. I have lived most of my life in North Carolina, where I was raised in a working class home. As a white, privileged, American citizen, it is important to note I have no known family history with respect to immigration. When I asked my parents and grandparents how my family came to live in the United States, they had no answer and did not seem to care. This really bothered me growing up and I saw a clear generational gap in the family since there were few immigrants in North Carolina during my parents' and grandparents' childhood. It seems incredibly sad that my family does not know and does not care where we came from. So I have an interest in young people, particularly immigrants, in remembering their roots and clinging to, at a minimum, the knowledge of how they came to be where they are.

With regards to my subjective positioning and for the purposes of this study, it is important to note that I have chosen to live in North Carolina, an emerging gateway state, chosen to teach in North Carolina, and also chosen to leave the teaching profession to enter graduate school. As a teacher and citizen of North Carolina, I have a personal investment in the future of the state. That is to say, because of the new gateway state factor, if my state wants to be successful moving forward, North Carolinians desperately need to ensure a high quality education of immigrant students. As a teacher, it seemed to me that immigrant students were not receiving the services they required. For example, a Chinese student attended the school in which I taught spoke very little English. The ESL instructor could only speak Spanish and was unable to communicate with this student. Unfortunately, this student was relegated to individual seat work, which included mostly completing worksheets on the English language, in all of his classes, including social studies. Educators can certainly do a better job than the example provided here.

My experience as a social studies teacher is also an important subjective positioning for this study in many ways. The most important of these is that I did not know how to teach immigrant students. Putting language issues aside, I never knew how much I could ask immigrant students about their experiences, even though I recognized that each student's life experiences is a valuable learning opportunity, both for that student and the entire class. I vacillated between feeling that I was putting immigrant students "on the spot" for asking them questions, and feeling that I unfairly ignored their life experiences because I was afraid to make them uncomfortable. I also was not sure how much to alter the curriculum for the students in my classes. For example, one year I had a student from Argentina who was proud of her heritage and would frequently discuss the differences between Argentina and her new home in North Carolina. Because this student was so proud of her home country, I expanded the content coverage of Argentina by a few days and encouraged this student to make a presentation. I feel that this was an appropriate pedagogical decision, although I must recognize that I taught many immigrant students from different parts of the world and did not alter the curriculum in the same way. I might have been a better teacher if I had been offered some pedagogical strategies specific to the immigrant students I taught. This dissertation is an attempt to begin to do so for other social studies teachers.

In terms of social studies, I identify strongly with the critical tradition. Two social studies scholars have shaped my views of social studies in particular: Joe Kinchloe's work on critical civic engagement, and Walter Parker's views on enlightened democratic engagement. I have explored these views in Chapter 2, so I will not repeat them here. However, my reading of their work does influence my personal definition of social studies. Since social studies is such a contested and controversial field without a unifying definition (Barth &

Shermis, 1970; Woyshner, 2006), I believe it is important for a researcher in this field to disclose his or her personal definition of social studies. The national organization of social studies practitioners and scholars, NCSS, defines social studies as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence.” I argue that NCSS’s definition does not go far enough to capture the critical civic tradition upon which the United States was founded, or continue the tradition of the origins of social studies - solving social problems (Watras, 2002). Thus, my personal definition of social studies is as follows: social studies is integrated interdisciplinary study to promote civic engagement.

In terms of my positionality towards teaching immigrant students, I also take a position of advocacy on behalf of immigrant students – in teaching practice and public policy. For example, I am a strong supporter of the DREAM Act, which would grant in-state tuition to academically qualified immigrant students, even if they or their parents are undocumented. I am also opposed to discriminatory laws such as the Arizona immigration law (S.B. 1070) and the Alabama immigration law (H.B. 56). I am particularly opposed to a provision in the Alabama immigration law which requires schools to determine students’ immigration status before allowing students to enroll and to report students or parents who are not in the United States legally to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). I take the position that educators should fight these laws, as they harm immigrant students’ educational opportunities and put teachers in the role of immigration enforcement agents.

Finally, I must recognize that I am no longer a social studies teacher. Although I will certainly feel camaraderie with the research participants, I am no longer in their “club.” They will perceive me as an outsider. More importantly, I must also perceive of myself as both an outsider and a teacher. That is to say, when I analyze the data, I must take advantage

of my perspectives from a social studies teacher and as a qualitative researcher. These dual frames of reference have the opportunity to improve my analysis.

According to Chiser-Strater & Sunstein (1997), final character positioning is called the textual position. A writer's textual position is revealed by how the author uses language to represent the collected data. The first two positions should be revealed overtly. The textual position is revealed by the author's writing style. In the dissertation, I will use first person pronouns to describe my research experience. I will do so in order to be clear about my own role in the research process. However, since a primary goal of this dissertation is to privilege teacher voices, I represent the data without using the first person in order to symbolically place teachers as the "speakers" for the data. Therefore, I employ first person character positioning while describing my research design and in the concluding chapter during analysis, while prioritizing teacher voices in the Findings chapters.

## **Participants**

This section will detail contextual information about the research participants. In the first portion of this section, I will provide some demographic and professional information about the participants. In the second, I will write portraiture of each participant, including information regarding the major influences in each teacher's perceptions of teaching immigrant students and teaching Civics. In the third, I provide information about the participants' teaching contexts.

### **Demographic and professional information**

Each participant teaches 10<sup>th</sup> grade Civics & Economics in central North Carolina, along with at least one other history course. The North Carolina Civics & Economics course



is structured to spend half of class time on United States government and political systems and one-half of class time on the United States economic system. Civics & Economics is one of five high school courses which has an End-of-Course (EOC) high-stakes test, which counts towards 25% of students' course grade. Civics & Economics is a required course for all students and students must pass the course in order to graduate from high school. This dissertation focuses exclusively on the Civics portion of the Civics & Economics course. As such, the course will henceforth be referred to as "Civics."

There are six participants<sup>1</sup> in the study. All participants are white and have less than 10 years of teaching experience. There are three females and three males. Three of the participants, all male, have professional experience outside of education before entering the teaching profession. Three participants teach in suburban schools, two in urban schools, and one in a rural school. Two teachers are bilingual.

Table 3

*Participants' Background Data*

| Participant | Gender | Race  | Type of school | Years experience | Profession before teaching                            | Bilingual       | Traveled/ studied abroad |
|-------------|--------|-------|----------------|------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Beth        | Female | White | Suburban       | 6                |   | No              | No                       |
| David       | Male   | White | Urban          | 8                | YMCA youth director/ currently a part-time magistrate | No              | No                       |
| Greg        | Male   | White | Urban          | 2                | Community organizer                                   | Yes, Spanish    | Yes                      |
| Luke        | Male   | White | Suburban       | 2                | Attorney  | Limited Spanish | Yes                      |

<sup>1</sup> I use pseudonyms in order to protect the confidentiality of participants.

|          |        |       |          |   |  |                 |   |
|----------|--------|-------|----------|---|--|-----------------|---|
| Madeline | Female | White | Suburban | 3 |  | Yes,<br>Spanish | Yes   |
| Robin    | Female | White | Rural    | 4 |  | No              | No, but<br>traveled<br>extensively<br>in the US |

### Participant portrayures

**Beth.** Beth is passionate about politics. She grew up in a home where political discussions around the dinner table were common. She ruefully explained that her Mother’s side of the family was “solid Democrats” who would volunteer at the polls and campaign on behalf of candidates; while her father’s side of the family was “solid Republicans” who would do the same. She cited her 9<sup>th</sup> grade government teacher and a summer girls’ leadership camp as instrumental in solidifying her interest in government and politics. One of her close relatives is an elected representative, and Beth has aspirations to run for political office once her children are older. She majored in political science and teaches Civics because she loves the content. She volunteers to work on political campaigns and is still active in politics. One of her major teaching goals is to empower female students to participate in the political process.

Beth identified two seminal factors in developing her perceptions of teaching immigrant students. The first was working closely with an ESL teacher in a sheltered Civics class. This ESL teacher was writing her dissertation on teaching immigrant students and the two had multiple conversations about current research and strategies specific to immigrant students. Through this sheltered class, Beth became close to her immigrant students, particularly refugee students. She learned about the challenges they faced in Southeast Asia

as well as the challenges they face in the United States. Beth has also taken a leadership role in developing an “ESL-team” for her school, in which recently exited students from the ESL program will be clustered with specific core subject area teachers in order to provide a “bridge” from ESL services to mainstream classes without services.

**David.** David’s major goal in teaching Civics is developing student decision-makers. David is also active in local government as he serves as a part-time magistrate. Although he prefers the history content area which he finds more interesting, he perceives himself to be an effective Civics teacher because he is able to bring in his magistrate experiences to help teach the criminal justice system. In his teaching, David promotes a balanced and teacher-neutral approach. He does not encourage his students to practice active citizenship or even to vote. He shares the information with the students and encourages them to make their own decisions about the degree to which they wish to participate in the democratic system.

When speaking about teaching immigrant students, David focuses on integration, inclusion, and tolerance. He is frustrated at the tension between Latino immigrants and non-immigrant students in his current and former schools. He supports sheltered ELL classes for immigrant students and looks forward to teaching his first sheltered course next year. David’s positions in support of tolerance and integration are evidenced by his personal decisions – he enrolls his child in dual-language program in order to “teach tolerance,” and he also chooses to drive some distance from his rural home to teach in a diverse, urban high school with African-American, Caucasian, Latino, and Middle Eastern students. Although David was quantitatively not a progressive teacher based on the survey data, qualitatively he exhibited a great deal of empathy and caring for immigrant students. He also made efforts to bring immigrants’ knowledge and life experiences into the classroom.

**Greg.** Like Beth, Greg is very interested in politics. However, he takes a much more critical approach to Civics and government. He proudly states that his parents met at a protest at the Pentagon in the 1970s. Greg grew up in an activist household, and has continued to civically support causes he cares about; Greg was even arrested in anti-Iraq war protests while in college. His first job after college graduation was working for ACORN as a community organizer, where he worked for six years. As an organizer, he ultimately came to the conclusion that while could motivate communities to act around a cause, “Winning depended on turning people out who agreed with us and proving we had more support. It wasn’t doing a whole lot to change overall attitudes.” He realized that he could do more to change people’s overall attitudes as a Civics teacher. He sees his most important job as a Civics teacher is to empower students to see themselves as change agents.

Greg also has a strong perspective on teaching immigrant students. He spent time in Mexico, interviewing Mexican farmers about the impact of NAFTA, and acknowledges his intellectual and political interested in Central and South America. He has developed a “comprehensive view of how American policy jibes with the realities of immigration” including the relationship between American foreign policy, trade policy, and immigration. His wife is an immigration attorney. Greg is the participant most critical of American immigration policies.

**Luke.** Luke’s Civics teaching goal is to develop critical students who can identify and solve society’s problems today to “improve the lives of all of us going forward.” Luke comes from a family of educators but was a corporate attorney for several years before entering the teaching profession. Luke contrasts himself with most other preservice teachers in his teacher education program who saw teaching as a step-up into the middle class. Luke

demonstrated social mobility by becoming a corporate attorney but “climbed to the next level, took a look around in the attic and don’t really like what’s there.” In his job as a corporate attorney, a part of which entailed restructuring failing companies and “witnessing that CEOs care more about their golden parachutes than their employees,” Luke decided to become a teacher in order to educate people about focusing on shared, social problems rather than private, economic gain. His mantra is “one classroom at a time,” and he views his teaching as his “own Occupy movement.”

Luke views his perceptions of teaching immigrant students as being heavily influenced by growing up as part of the white minority in Miami, Florida. Luke regards Miami as “an idealized version of post-white-majority America; where you have this multiracial community that people like and want to go to and folks can get along pretty well.” Being a minority in the Miami sub-culture helps him to somewhat understand what it is like to be an immigrant. He cites having to learn salsa and meringue in order to get a date, and struggling to learn Spanish so he could communicate with people in the community.

**Madeline.** Madeline describes herself as the little kid who would sit her dolls in rows and teach them. She has wanted to teach her entire life. She initially wanted to teach history, but does enjoy politics, and now would choose to teach Civics over any other course. Her main goals in teaching Civics are to help students understand that their decisions matter for themselves and for others, and that they can make a difference. Another goal is to promote the vibrancy of democracy. Madeline is very concerned with voter apathy. In order to teach her students that they and their actions matter, she requires a reflective and critical community service project each year.

Central to Madeline’s views of immigration are multiple travel experiences to South America, coursework about South America, and being fluent in Spanish. She believes the American immigration system is broken, and that the US has a “bipolar relationship with immigration” in which the United States advocates immigration one decade and condemns immigration and immigrants the next. She particularly enjoys teaching immigrant students because she believes she can have a greater impact with immigrant students than with non-immigrant students who usually enter her classroom more knowledgeable about the US democratic system.

**Robin.** Robin has always been fascinated with how government decisions “trickle down to influence everything we do.” She recalls being amazed as a young girl about how people decide where to build roads and how to direct traffic and how those decisions influence where people work and live, and how they get from place to place. Her goal as a Civics teacher is to give students the skills they need to stay informed, make decisions, and understand how leaders’ decisions affect them on a day-to-day basis. She also values the critical tradition in the United States, in which people who challenged the status quo improved society.

Central to Robin’s perspective of immigrant students is her view of the role of gender in US politics. She views the women’s movement as a great model to demonstrate how a group can progress from being disenfranchised to taking leadership positions by demanding equality. She also credits wide travel within the United States as helping her to understand “that you can take different things from different cultures . . . because you can learn from someone who is different.”

## Contexts of teaching immigrant students

Before beginning to answer the research questions, it will be helpful to the reader to provide a context for the participants in this study. The following chart displays the teachers' school setting, the teachers' estimation of the percentage of immigrant students in the schools, and a description of the immigrant students in the teachers' classrooms using the teachers' own words.

Table 4

### *Participants' Teaching Context*

| Teacher  | School setting | Estimated % of immigrant students in the school | Excerpts from response to, "Tell me about immigrant students you currently teach or have taught in the past."  |
|----------|----------------|---|--|
| Beth     | Suburban       | 11-20%  | "Last year I had a really great experience, I got to teach an ESL collaborative class . . . which had 19 immigrant students. And 5 ESL students in other classes, and former ESL students were enrolled in my classes"<br>"A lot of kids from Burma and Thailand, the Dominican Republic, kids from Mexico - all in there together."   |
| David    | Urban          | 21-40%  | "Primarily from Mexico."<br>"There are some Asian students but I haven't had very many. The interesting thing about that, in the honors classes, you are very likely to see more diversity of that group in honors. Where in a standard class you see less diversity and more Latinos.<br>J: You're saying more Asian students in Honors and Latino students in standard?<br>D: And Middle Eastern."   |
| Greg     | Urban          | 6-10%   | "I teach a 20 year old immigrant. She doesn't want or need to be in the same class as 16 year olds."<br>"Of my 87 students, all are African-American except for one white student and 8 Latino immigrants."  |
| Luke     | Suburban       | 11-20%  | "Last year I had, effectively, 2 ELL classes. A mixture of Burmese refugees, Hispanics, South Asian students not just India but Pakistan, Sri Lanka, you name it, it existed in this classroom. . . This year the immigrant students are generally more well-off. They are non-citizens but coming from places like Sweden, Morocco. Sons and daughters of doctors, lawyers, professors. They tend to have the additional resources that students last year didn't have to help them do better." |
| Madeline | Suburban       | 11-20%  | "We have an uncharacteristically large group of Burmese immigrants. And this is the bump year, so when a lot of them came in   |

|       |       |        |  |
|-------|-------|--------|--|
|       |       |        | the fourth grade and now they are all sophomores. Nearly all of the other immigrants are Latino. But in my largest class of immigrants it was mostly Burmese.”<br>“I’m teaching all honors level or higher courses this year, so there are not a lot of dark faces. Maybe 6 Latino immigrants this year. Two of them have told me they are immigrants. The others I’m not sure.” |
| Robin | Rural | 11-20% | “I teach a large Latino population. I’d say 30% of students are Latino. About half are first generation, half are second generation.”<br>[From] “Mexico, with a growing El Salvadorian population, Puerto Rico.”   |

## Limitations

Given the time and resource constraints of any research study, the dissertation will have limitations. For example, I am relying on teachers’ knowledge of their own students to determine who they “count” as an immigrant student. It is possible that teachers will refer to second generation or even third generation immigrants, though the focus of this study is teachers’ dispositions towards and strategies for working with first generation and 1.5 generation immigrant students.

Another limitation is that this study is not targeting a specific immigrant student demographic. Much of the literature regarding immigrant students makes distinctions between heritage countries or regions. For example, Waters (1994) focuses on black, Caribbean immigrants, while other scholars focus only on Latina/o or Asian immigrants. Another distinction could be made regarding class. Many immigrant students are from high-skilled immigrant families, while many other immigrant students are from less highly-skilled immigrant families, who work in the agricultural or construction sectors. Research on these specific groups would most likely result in distinct findings between the distinct groups. I choose to not make distinctions between class or heritage country because the focus is not on immigrant students, but the teachers who teach Civics to immigrant students. Furthermore, I



am purposefully not targeting a specific immigrant demographic, as I think it will make for a more interesting and more complex study.

Another methodological limitation is the self-selected nature of the participants. The teachers who elected to participate in this study clearly had some interest in teaching immigrant students or they would not have completed the survey or participated in the dissertation. A random sampling of Civics teachers in central North Carolina would likely include teachers who were less personally invested in the topic of teaching immigrant students. Furthermore, based on the pre-study survey data, five of the six participants ranked in the top 25% of the most progressive/additive participants. Therefore, the findings from this study are more likely skewed towards teachers who have more additive, positive, and progressive viewpoints than would be obtained from a random sample of Civics teachers in central North Carolina.

## **Chapter 4**

### **FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

This chapter focuses on the first research question put forth by this study. Before answering this specific question, however, this chapter will begin by presenting the central argument of the dissertation. The central argument of this dissertation is that six self-selected, reflective practitioners who had different personal and professional backgrounds and taught in different types of schools, all had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students and strove to support immigrant students academically and socially and encouraged students to maintain their heritage culture, yet were obstructed from doing so by a series of contextual factors and professional limitations. Each of the contextual factors was influenced by teaching in a new gateway state. In other words, participants enjoyed teaching immigrant students and strove to help them but were not always effective at doing so for a series of reasons. The following concept map visually represents the central argument and key findings identified in the dissertation.

In this study with six self-selected Civics teachers in central North Carolina with different personal and professional backgrounds who have taught in different types of schools, in which I used the additive acculturation model as a theoretical framework, supported by a civic education framework, my central argument is . . .



Figure 1. Concept map of dissertation findings

This chapter will now turn to answering the first research question. Findings in this study will be analyzed according to the five tenets of additive acculturation (Gibson, 1995, Valenzuela, 1999) which are listed below:

1. Teachers encourage students to maintain heritage culture while selectively adopting some aspects of American culture
2. Teachers' instruction is relevant and meaningful to immigrant students
3. Teachers incorporate immigrant students' knowledge, life experiences, and heritage cultures in the classroom
4. Teachers promote home-school relations
5. Teachers exhibit empathy, tolerance, and caring for immigrant students and knowledge of immigrant students' heritage culture

The research question answered in this chapter is as follows: What are teachers' perceptions of teaching immigrant students in a new gateway state? Employing data extracted from 18 interviews with six participants and a one-hour focus group with 3 participants, there are three major findings to this research question:

1. Teachers had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students because of the soft skills immigrant students bring to class and because they aid the learning of non-immigrant students.
2. Teachers recognized a series of six challenges facing immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain and wanted to help immigrant students overcome these challenges, although teachers were not fully knowledgeable about the complexities of these challenges or always prepared to help immigrant students meet these challenges.

3. Teachers had little confidence in their knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students, yet were advocates for immigrant students on policies with which they were knowledgeable.

**Teachers have overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students** – *“I love it, generally. . . and if you’re talking about an impact you can make, you have a much stronger impact there, too.” Madeline*

The initial answer to the question “What are teachers’ perceptions of immigrant students in a new gateway state?” is that teachers held a net positive perception of immigrant students. While simultaneously acknowledging the challenges with teaching immigrant students, teachers were invariably pleased to have immigrant students in their classes. I organize this finding into two categories: teachers positively perceived immigrant students for the qualities they bring to the classroom and because having immigrant students in the classroom enriched learning for non-immigrant students.

**Immigrant students’ “soft skills” aid academic performance** – *“Feeling strongly about a purpose in their life.” Madeline*

Teachers perceived that immigrant students bring a strong set of “soft skills” to the classroom. “Soft skills” is a sociological term which refers to a person’s array of traits and behaviors such as personal graces, enthusiasm, optimism, and others. These soft skills aided immigrant students in being academically successful (Massey, et al., 2007; Zhou & Bankston, 2008). Additionally, these soft skills led teachers to enjoy teaching immigrant students. These soft skills are largely a result of immigrant’s cultural emphasis on education, hard work, and respect for authority. Although the teachers did not use the term, “soft skills,” their descriptions of the academic performance of immigrant students revealed they perceived immigrant students were successful largely because of an array of helpful traits, behaviors, and dispositions. Some of the skills I’ve placed under the soft skills category

include these: authenticity, appreciation of teachers, thoughtfulness, hard work, caring about their education, dedicated to learning Civics, and honoring and respecting authority. This finding reinforces much of the scholarship on teaching immigrant students, (Lee, 2001; Hutchinson, 1997; Rumbaut, 1995; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Kao & Tienda, 2005; Zhou & Bankston, 1998) that identifies immigrant students' hard work, respect for authority, and commitment to education as key factors in immigrant students' academic achievement. I organized teachers' perceptions of immigrant students' soft skills under three categories: hardworking with a thirst for knowledge, valuing education and appreciating teachers, and respecting authority.

**Hardworking with a thirst for knowledge.** Participants described immigrant students as very hard workers, intellectually curious, and thoughtful. These characteristics helped immigrant students succeed academically, but also led to a consensus among participants that immigrant students were an enjoyable group of students to teach.

They have more of a thirst to understand how things work. They seem more dedicated to Civics because they don't always understand the way things work. Robin

In general the immigrant students are really hard working. I have non-immigrant students who are hardworking, but aren't necessarily thoughtful with personal decisions they make. With immigrant students, when you ask them a personal question, you can get some thoughtful and meaningful responses. Madeline

The Latino students are much harder working. The Latino students, the skills might have been an issue, especially if it is lingering writing issues in academic English, but never an issue of, "Did you do your homework?" Madeline

**Value education and appreciate teachers.** Participants perceived that immigrant students valued education and appreciated teacher efforts more than non-immigrant students. The participants wanted their students to appreciate teachers' efforts and immigrant students were the most likely group to express this appreciation.

I think they care a lot. I think they understand the privilege education is. They seem to appreciate you so much more. Madeline

The immigrant students are more appreciative of the content being delivered to them, and any kind of individual attention. Generally pretty good attitudes, towards school in general or teachers. David

The last day [of school] last year, most classes they thought, “The year’s over, we’re not listening to you.” But the sheltered [ELL] class hung on my every word. . . . They said, “Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, we want to thank you so much. You created an environment where we felt safe and comfortable being able to grow and push ourselves. We wish we could have you again.” Luke

My non-immigrant students seemed less authentic I guess. And I know sometimes a language barrier can be endearing, and you can read more into it. But, when half of the class was immigrant and the other half was native born, it really stood out to me, as feeling strongly about a purpose in their life, whereas the non-immigrant students felt they were jumping through hoops, whether it was assignments or school in general. Madeline

**Respect authority.** Teachers perceived that immigrant students and families respect authority. Teachers were very appreciative that immigrant students were “good kids” (Thorstenson, 2008) who were well behaved and respectful of the teachers’ authority. Respecting authority helped students academically and led to teachers’ positive perceptions.

There is very much a sense of honor and respect; reverence to an authority figure. They are quick to understand what authority is, and in some cases not to buck that. So that sort of helps them through the system. . . . I’ve also noticed a lot of family support. I had a student who was making an A in my class, who missed only one day. Her mother wanted to hear from the authority figures. All four of her teachers were saying, “She’s an excellent student, always does her work.” But the mother kept going back to, “Is she respecting you?” Robin

[In] many of these cultures, there is a much greater respect - for learning, education, the teacher - than there is in our culture which is an anti-intellectual culture. Luke

Each of the categories of soft skills – hard work and thirst for knowledge, valuing education, and respecting authority – contributed to immigrant student academic success and to participants’ positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students. Participants attributed these soft skills to immigrant students’ heritage culture. In only two examples, gender and

authority, did teachers perceive heritage culture may hinder immigrant students' academic achievement. Gender and authority will be addressed in research question two.

From their professional and personal contact with immigrant students, participants recognized the positive impacts of immigrant students' heritage culture on their schooling, valued the views brought into the class, and attributed these views to cultural differences. All participants aligned with two of the tenets of the additive acculturation framework – to recognize the high motivation for learning in immigrant cultures and to encourage immigrant students to maintain these aspects of heritage culture. At the same time, through comparison and contrast between immigrant students and non-immigrant students, teachers demonstrated reflective thinking on American culture and schooling and how these compare to immigrant heritage culture and schooling.

**Immigrant students enhance the learning of non-immigrant students** – *“It opens the conversation both in terms of who speaks and what is spoken about.” Luke*

The second reason teachers had an overall positive perception of teaching immigrant students was because all participants perceived that having immigrant students in Civics classes enhanced the learning of non-immigrant students. Immigrant students' enriched the opportunities for non-immigrant students in the following ways: enhanced dialogue with multiple perspectives and diverse opinions, more critical discussions of rationales for American policies, adding comparative and international perspectives to discussions, helping to teach democratic values and attitudes, and developing empathy among students by learning from immigrant students' life stories.

First, teachers perceived that the multiple perspectives shared by immigrant students created more open, expansive dialogue than would have taken place without immigrant



students in the class. This finding supports Parker's (2008) argument in support of the advantages of diversity in fostering deliberation, and in turn, more enlightened citizens, in civic education programs.

Utilize them, just like you would utilize anyone else in the classroom, as a resource; another way to come at the topic. "It sounds normal for you to say this, what does a person say who hasn't lived here a long time? How does this compare to where you came from?" [Non-immigrant] students often say, "That's interesting, I've never thought of it that way." Use the collective knowledge of the classroom - in particular the knowledge of country, a history, a group of people - that the majority population might not be aware of to enrich and enliven the classroom. Luke

[It's a benefit] to give our class a different perspective. It is an opportunity to introduce different views. And I don't want to make it seem an outsider-looking-in perspective, but it does give a perspective for we who have been American citizens and haven't lived elsewhere, just don't have. Robin

A diverse class is a better class, because you have better perspectives. If you can from immigrant students, glean different perspectives. . . .For example looking back at the laws they made, I'll be interested to see how the immigrant students' laws look different than non-immigrants. So going through and comparing those, and asking students "Why did you choose this? Why is this important to you?" will be beneficial for everyone when we go back and do that. David

This finding highlights North Carolina as a "new gateway state" which has only recently been a significant recipient state for immigrant students. The traditional diversity paradigm in North Carolina has been a Black/White binary, with some areas of the state including significant numbers of Native Americans, that make up 1.3% of the state's population (US Census Bureau, 2010). Increasing numbers of immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, and Asia have altered this racial pattern and brought significantly more diversity into North Carolina schools. The teachers in this study perceived the increased diversity was a boon for non-immigrant students, who can be more open minded because they were exposed to more diverse perspectives. These diverse perspectives aided student understanding of Civics for all students.

As the interview data below demonstrates, one teacher noted that immigrant students often demanded to know the rationale for government actions. These students wanted to know why certain laws were instituted. While most non-immigrant students were content to learn the law at face value, immigrant students were more often willing to question the rationales. The type of discussions that resulted from the rationale questions benefitted all students.

[Immigrant students] ask questions non-immigrants don't think about. Like, "Why is that against the law?" "Why is this a law?" "Why can't someone in power do something?" "What are the ideas behind this?" Robin

Sounds like they're after the rationale. Jeremy

The rationale, yeah! Robin

How do non-immigrant students react to these type of questions? Jeremy

They are very supportive. They understand that there might be a barrier in understanding American government. They've really picked up on that. It's funny because they may, sort of, pay attention more than if the question was asked by a non-immigrant student. I've noticed very, very positive relationship there. They don't tend to criticize, or they don't try to demean them or anything like that. They sort of embrace it, I suppose. Robin

Do you think these type of questions help the non-immigrant students at all? Jeremy

Absolutely. Anytime you can explain government in more detail, or explain issues, rationales, in greater detail, it helps everybody, regardless of what their immigrant status is. Robin

Questioning rationales leads to more critical and engaged citizenship according to Kinchloe (2005), who argues that questioning the status quo is the essential quality for citizens living in a democracy.

Teachers in this study also valued the type of comparisons that immigrant students were able to make between their heritage country and the United States. Since many of the immigrant students were first-generation or 1.5 generation immigrants, they remembered

many aspects of their heritage country which they were able to share with their classmates. International and intercultural comparisons provided non-immigrant students more examples from which to expand their understanding of Civics topics. Teachers perceived that the comparative discussions were often eye-opening experiences for non-immigrant students. Additionally, the comparisons allowed students to reflect on their own political experiences and think more deeply about their preconceived notions of aspects of American government.

[Teaching immigrant students] allows the class to open up. [Student from Sweden says] “In Sweden we have a much greater social safety net than the US does.” To be able to have these comparisons, instead of having “the other,” or demonizing the crazy, liberal, socialist Europe. To have someone who lived there [in Sweden] who said “Now wait a minute. Do I look like a pinko, commie, crazy?” She was probably more patriotic than others. She defended America’s response to 9/11 more than most of the students in the classroom. So others thought, “Well maybe we should rethink this.” Other benefits? It opens the curriculum. It opens the conversation both in terms of who speaks and what is spoken about. It’s hard to put a value on it, but it just opens up the classroom. Luke

Just the experiences they bring in from their countries can make the whole classes understanding of this government. . . .what’s the word . . . enrich it. For students who have always lived here this is all they know. Immigrant students have a completely different experience so they can compare and contrast. They can point out good things and maybe not so good things in American government. . . . When they can share that, it gets the other students to think about things they haven’t thought of before. Beth

By exposing them to different cultures; to appreciate the differences and see the similarities at the same time. A lot of times the non-immigrant students do appreciate the practices or traditions, the reverence they find in some of these immigrant cultures. Robin

They have some prior knowledge of their prior home country’s judicial system. Because that might be a helpful point of comparison. If something was, “This is how things worked in Ecuador,” and you know it already, how can we compare it to the system in the US? Madeline

Teachers also perceived that having immigrant students in the classroom enhanced the teachers’ ability to teach democratic values and attitudes by making comparisons with government policies from immigrant students’ heritage countries. As Root & Billig (2008)

note as the third prerequisite of competent democratic citizenship, students should be taught democratic values and attitudes, such as an appreciation for participatory democracy, free speech, and rights afforded in a democracy.

You have different perspectives that non-immigrant students can take for granted their rights. When they see someone who is surprised to find out that police need a warrant [pause] It's a wake-up call that, "This is something I take for granted, and maybe shouldn't." Madeline

A lot of times they [non-immigrant students] just don't even understand what these [refugee] students have been through before they came here. It helps them understand how special American democracy is. And how the things they take for granted are really meaningful to immigrant students. When you can have those kinds of discussions in class, that can open their eyes to the larger world . . . You know in some countries you can't say these things and the government will come after you or your family and you have to worry about everything you say. I think it makes some of the other students stop and think too. Beth

Not everyone is white and southern. That helps in terms of considering not only diverse in race, but in terms of religion. So when we discuss freedom of religion, some students don't understand the problem with someone saying "under God" in the pledge of allegiance. Other students will say, "Wait a minute. You're advocating monotheism. In my religion we have many gods." So it gets them to think about - how do those who didn't start here - how do they fit into the weave and fabric of America? Are there places where those threads can still be tightened? The integration could be better. Or do they see themselves as a loose thread. Luke

A final benefit for non-immigrant students' learning was empathy. Barton & Levstik (2004) maintain that teaching empathy for others can be a powerful method of promoting tolerance in a democracy. Teachers perceived that having immigrant students in the same classes as non-immigrant students helped the non-immigrant students empathize with the consequences of government policy. In particular, non-immigrant students were more likely to empathize with the consequences of the anti-immigration laws passed in Arizona and Alabama, and with national political conversations surrounding immigration and undocumented immigrants. While teachers perceived many non-immigrant students to be fiercely anti-immigration, having immigrant students in the classes helped students to

empathize with why immigrants come to the United States and why negative dialogues were unconstructive and harmful in policy discussions regarding immigration.

I think non-immigrant students often have perceptions - things they hear on the news, from their parents - about immigrants. People have perceptions that people who are here illegally or a perception that people coming to take jobs. If you can open up dialogue, then having a real individual who they can talk to, and they can relate to a little bit can break down some of those, but that doesn't always seem to happen. Greg

I think that if you can draw out the experiences, especially students who struggled to come to the United States looking for a better life, there are great lessons to learn from that. . . . If you can get more stories out there then people can realize, "Wow, this was a tough decision for somebody to uproot, to come to a brand new country where they are the minority, and they have different challenges with language and other things." It's a true uphill battle. David

To talk about the cases the targeting of immigrants in Arizona and Alabama . . . Kids who would sit silently and not talk at all, suddenly are lighting up these message boards about ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] and how unfair the government is. And to have that perspective aired has worked nicely . . . people speak who otherwise [do] not. To have some beautiful prose talking about personal experiences some of them have had with federal government and immigration officials really can open up the eyes and change the opinion of others who it was clear had not done a great deal of thinking about it, just sort of the "They're not Americans." It helped to have that message relayed from other students than from the teachers. I've found that when another student says it, it gets a lot more attention than when I say it. Luke

In their discussions of the academic strengths of immigrant students and the type of knowledge immigrant students bring to the classroom, teachers demonstrated adherence to several aspects of Gibson's (1995) additive acculturation model. Teachers made concerted efforts to learn about immigrant students' heritages and life experiences, and to prompt students to share that knowledge with the rest of the class. Teachers perceived immigrant students' contributions benefited learning opportunities for non-immigrant students in the following areas: enhanced dialogue with multiple perspectives and diverse opinions, more critical discussions of rationales for American policies, adding comparative and international perspectives to discussions, helping to teach democratic values and attitudes, and learning

empathy to promote tolerance. All participants had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students. Furthermore, by valuing the soft skills immigrant students bring to the class and by using the special knowledge and life experiences of immigrant students, the teachers affirmed the value of immigrant students' heritage and placed students on a path to maintain their heritage culture and selectively add positive attributes of American society, while simultaneously promoting learning for non-immigrant students. In this process, teachers demonstrated reflective practice and learners develop critical thinking skills, democratic ideals, and empathy.

**Challenges facing immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain** – *“Students have always been taught and have tended to believe that if you work hard and play by the rules that they’ll be able to make it. And evidence shows that that is not necessarily the case.”*  
Greg

Participants perceived many challenges facing immigrant students and the education of immigrant students. Although the vast majority of scholarship on teaching social studies to immigrant students is limited to the linguistic domain (Cruz & Thornton, 2009; Goodwin, 2002), most of the challenges perceived by participants were beyond the scope of linguistic concerns.<sup>2</sup> Participants identified six challenges beyond the linguistic domain: a limiting formal curriculum, legal status of immigrants leading to academic challenges, the new gateway state factor, special challenges associated with refugee students, struggle to negotiate national and cultural affiliations amongst immigrant students, and the impacts of an anti-immigration climate.

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<sup>2</sup> When speaking about the linguistic domain, teachers alternatively referred to English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Learner (ELL), and Limited English Proficient (LEP). When providing a direct quotation, I use the same term as the participant. However, in my analysis, I use the term ELL in order to be consistent with the literature.

**Formal curriculum a major limitation** – *“The book is a woefully inadequate.”*  
Luke

Participants perceived that the Civics curriculum was often an obstacle to teaching immigrant students. Participants focused on the formal rather than then enacted curriculum (Cornbleth, 1985), by drawing examples from the standard issued textbook and the North Carolina standard course of study (SCOS). All participants noted the lack of representation of immigrant history and heritages in the Civics curriculum, while several participants perceived that immigrant groups’ contributions to the United States have been marginalized.

We could do a better job in the social studies by focusing on the achievements of people who hail from different cultures. We talk some about Cesar Chavez, but there isn’t a whole lot more than that. There is none at all in Civics curriculum aside from policies. And there are opportunities to bring it in - current events, Sotomayor - but they are neglected in the curriculum. Greg

I think giving, and this is more at the state level, but allowing more space in the curriculum. If that were to happen it would make it easier for teachers to do that in the classroom. . . . Making [cultural contributions] more of a continuous narrative throughout the course instead of saying, “Today is Tuesday after MLK day, so we talk about African-Americans.” When I say space, I mean allowing more flexibility . . . allow some investigation to allow students to pull from their own cultural background. Madeline

I’m here to expose you to things you might not see elsewhere. I think students respond to that and react to that. But it means spending a lot of time going beyond, because textbooks don’t speak to immigrant students. They don’t speak to the diversity of the classroom. They present a narrow cookie cutter, apple pie. So you have to be comfortable in yourself and comfortable in the material to say, “We’re going outside the textbook.” And most of my Civics classes, we’ll read some sections from the book, but I’ll tell them the book is a woefully inadequate. Luke

[I have to] tell them about past programs, like the Bracero programs, which encouraged people to come across [the US-Mexico border], then all of a sudden just shut it off. It’s a more complex story than they originally had learned in the text or knew about from the news. Madeline

These teachers noted the challenge of making the material relevant to immigrant students when immigrants were excluded from the formal curriculum. Teachers found it

difficult to teach in an additive fashion when there was little content relevant to immigrant students in standard courses of study and textbooks. There is limited research on the connection between the Civics formal curriculum and immigrant students. However, this finding is supported by social studies researchers who analyzed history standards and textbooks. Journell (2009), in an analysis of curriculum standards in North Carolina and eight other states, found that curriculum standards are stranded in a 19<sup>th</sup> century immigration narrative which has not accounted for contemporary immigration growth. Hilburn & Fitchett (2012), in an analysis of 100 years of North Carolina History textbooks, assert that the definition of immigration and immigrants has often been contradictory or inaccurate. Furthermore, immigrant contributions are limited to labor; immigrants' social, intellectual, and political contributions are marginalized. One dimensional, immigrant-as-labor portrayals can have the consequence of limiting civic engagement for immigrant students. Furthermore, token inclusion of figures like Cesar Chavez or complete neglect of immigrant cultures marginalizes immigrant students and contributes to a lack of national identity (Salinas, 2006).

Participants expressed a desire to introduce material outside of the formal curriculum in order to make Civics more relevant to immigrant students. However, one of the obstacles to doing so was high stakes tests. Because the Civics End of Course (EOC) state exam is based on the standard course of study, and because the standard course of study neglects immigrant students, the EOC presented a major challenge to incorporating immigrant culture in an additive fashion.

The EOC makes you take such a break-neck pace all year that it's difficult to take the time to do something very authentic in terms of cultural backgrounds. There are a lot of resistance movements to say, westward expansion; but the way the curriculum is structured, I don't have time to go into depth on those. Even if I think this is great



cultural background, a great part of the story, it's not something we can go in depth on . . . now we are just hitting highpoints. Madeline

I feel like I had a great comparative government project idea but because of the EOC, with trying to get the knowledge for that, I felt like I had to sacrifice on that project. Beth

So the testing pressure has forced you to sacrifice? Jeremy

A little bit. I try not to be too bound to the test but the reality is they have to take it at the end of the year and I want them to be as prepared as possible. Beth

Scholars (Parker, 2008; Valenzuela, 2005; Rong, 2006) propose that high stakes accountability tests, such as North Carolina's End-of-Course Civics test, are based on a decontextualization model which does not account for diversity. These tests pressure teachers to teach a one-size-fits-all curriculum which limits the inclusion of material which could be meaningful and relevant to non-majority immigrant students. Clearly these tests are a major obstacle to teaching in an additive fashion.

Two teachers, Luke and Greg, not only challenged the limited nature of the formal curriculum and high stakes tests, but also questioned Civics content and the manner of its delivery to students. These teachers challenged the validity of the Civics curriculum.

It's a larger beef that I have with our educational model is that, as Paolo [Freire] says, we're banking these random facts rather than focusing on how to make the everyday lives of individuals better. And then, I think you have to get people wanting to engage in the system first and feeling like they can do something about it, before you can then talk to them about "Here's how we actually affect change based on this process." Luke

The story of Horatio Alger is beaten into kids regardless of if it's true. . . . To say that everyone will succeed as long as they work hard is hard to say to an immigrant student's face. Greg

The evidence provided by these teachers suggested that the NC SCOS and NC Civics textbooks were not additive but subtractive in their content. Teaching in an additive fashion was left to teachers' volition and ability. As Luke noted, in order for teachers to include

content relevant to immigrant students, “You have to be comfortable in yourself and comfortable in the material.” Using curriculum materials beyond the textbook is a valued and long advocated teaching strategy in the social studies (NCSS, 2008). Teachers should use their content and pedagogical expertise to incorporate content relevant to immigrant students’ heritages and cultures. Simply put, teachers should include material that is specifically relevant to immigrant students (Gibson, 1995). However, many teachers felt constrained to limit their teaching to the SCOS in order to prepare students for the EOC exam.

**The harmful impact of legal status on academic performance** – *“Their choices are circumscribed by things outside of their control.” Greg*

Participants perceived that immigrants experienced a series of legal challenges not faced by other students. In fact, teachers perceived that students’ undocumented or obscured legal status harmed students’ academic achievement. Many undocumented students<sup>3</sup> saw limited opportunities for attending higher education. As a result, many of these already vulnerable students took an apathetic view towards academic achievement.

Students talking about applying for citizenship, or going through the immigration process or dealing with INS or dealing with ICE. We discuss what it means. “Would your parents send you to school if they know your status would be recorded as a legal document? What does it mean to focus in high school if you won’t get funding for college?” Luke

I think it’s different though with some of my Hispanic immigrants [as opposed to refugee immigrants]. Some of them are undocumented and they might not feel as invested because they don’t feel like the country is going to support them. And I’ve heard a lot of [immigrant students] talk about the DREAM Act, and how it doesn’t really matter how well they do because they can’t go to college anyway. Beth

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<sup>3</sup> Participants never asked students about their legal status. However, participants were occasionally made aware of some students’ legal status through one or more of the following means: students disclosed the information in classroom discussions (particularly during discussions of immigration policy), students disclosed the information to participants in one-on-one conversations outside of class time, or participants overheard students’ conversations.

I'm not 100% sure of any students' status, but my guess is [two immigrant students who are struggling academically] are not documented and don't see the point. One who has skipped a lot was at school to socialize primarily, but maybe that is a cover for the argument, "There is no point in this since I can't go to college." The other is heartbreaking because she would write me notes saying, "I really want to do well, I'm going to try harder." . . . Certainly the motivation of not going to college is part of it, too. Madeline

Greg was the most vocal participant about the challenges facing immigrant students with undocumented or obscure legal status. When asked about the greatest challenge facing immigrant students, he was quick to answer,

I think the biggest challenge is a lack of hope for the future. Particularly for students who don't have legal immigration status. One of my brightest kids is an undocumented Latino and super-smart but he's never there because what is going to school going to get him really? He is honest about it. He knows he should be in school. He also has other priorities and doesn't see a possibility of going to college that is affordable so what's he going to do? I think that is a huge motivation factor. Greg

Immigrant [legal] status is important. It influences their desire to do well in school. Another student I teach is undocumented. . . . Both his parents lost their jobs. He thinks, "What's the point?" [of coming to school] Greg

Greg furthermore made the point that student perceptions were probably justified. For undocumented students, the cost of attending college and inability to get financial aid makes it nearly impossible to attend a college of higher education.

Immigrants who are here who are undocumented are usually in a very precarious economic position, where they are not earning high salaries. The likelihood of them affording out-of-state tuition is extremely low to nil. For a student in that position - who can't get loans, can't get federal financial aid because of the way the laws are structured - they are not going to be able to afford to go to a college. . . . So their choices are circumscribed by things outside of their control. Greg

Even for undocumented students who were committed to academic excellence despite curtailed access to higher education, the challenges associated with many students' legal status presented major obstacles to academic success. The main challenges discerned by

teachers were school attendance and familial separation. The quotes below also pointed to high stress and anxiety for immigrant students.

You have students who are dealing with federal immigration issues, or caring for family members, or have parents who can't find work because of visa issues and concerns. . . There are students who are put into that situation with lack of resources or lack of an attentive family member - they tend to struggle. Luke

They might be in a more precarious position than my other students because of their immigration status. Because of you know, maybe having a parent here and another parent somewhere else. Greg

It's very frustrating for them [immigrant students]; there is constant concern for raids and deportation. Greg

When asked about a profound memory in his experience teaching immigrant students, Greg shared the following:

I have a student who is currently in deportation proceedings because of a minor larceny he committed at a Wal-mart, where he attempted to steal a condom. So that led to deportation proceedings. I wrote a letter on his behalf. He has been to the Mexican consulate, he has missed class by going to proceedings in Charlotte. It's not the memory I want to stand out, but that one does stand out. Greg

This powerful story shed light on the special challenges faced by undocumented immigrant students. Greg's student not only missed school, but may be removed from school and the country altogether because of this incident.

The student highlighted in this story is not alone. Two-thirds of undocumented students reside in eight states, one of which is North Carolina (Passel, 2005). Scholars (Gatyan, et al., 2007) substantiate that undocumented students face severe obstacles to academic achievement such as dislocation, familial separation, stress, and poverty without social safety net support. Five participants in this study perceived that undocumented immigrant students face special challenges to academic success in North Carolina schools.

That five of six participants recognized this challenge without a prompting question from the interviewer speaks to the primacy of this challenge.

Missing from teachers stories were the challenges associated with “mixed-status” families (Rong, Thorstenson, & Hilburn, 2011), in which the students are legal citizens, but one or both parents or one or more siblings are undocumented. There are approximately twice as many students from “mixed-status” families as undocumented students in US schools. Although students from mixed-status families are not first or 1.5 generation immigrants, they are equally vulnerable to stress, dislocation, and familial separation since their family members may be confronted by Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS). Teachers did not share stories about mixed-status families or mention other legal obscurities, such as seasonal work permits. This notable silence reveals that while teachers were concerned about the legal status of immigrant students, they were perhaps not completely informed about the complexities of the legal status of immigrant students. This finding also demonstrates the empathy expressed by participants, who demonstrated deep concern about how the undocumented problems affect students’ schooling. Participants genuinely cared about undocumented students. This finding speaks to Valenzuela’s notion of caring and is an area of study which demands further research and action on the part of Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators.

**New gateway state factor** – *“It’s not so hard to ignore 5% of a class.”* Greg  
North Carolina’s status as a new gateway state held implications for teachers and their students in this study. Fix & Passel claim that new gateway states have “limited experience and infrastructure for settling newcomer families” (2003, p. 8). Participants in this study also noted challenges with rising numbers of immigrant students in places where

few immigrants settled before. Greg indicated the challenges for teachers and immigrant students when teaching a small but growing Latino population in an urban, predominantly African-American school.

This is a working class, black school. There is little diversity here. Of my 87 students, all are African-American except one white student and 8 Latino immigrants. So Latinos get lost in the shuffle. There are not enough to form a constituency to demand services. . . . Sometimes I think the students can get lost even in the shuffle of a class. I guess this is related to teachers not fully servicing Hispanic kids, but if we were more diverse? [pause] Let's say we had 30% Hispanic kids, and 65% African-American kids; well you couldn't very well ignore 30% of your class. It's not so hard to ignore 5% of a class. So the demographics don't force teachers always to be accountable to those students. It's hard for a teacher to decide to spend X number of extra hours on one kid. It's just hard. Greg

On the other end of the spectrum in a rural school, Robin commended her school for recognizing and taking action based upon the growing immigrant student population in her rural area. Although she recognized that her rural area became an immigrant gateway later than other parts of North Carolina, she believed her school was making efforts to "catch-up" with the rest of the state in terms of the services provided to immigrant students.

Even though the school system I'm in may be a more rural area, it is still I think doing a great job of recognizing the growing immigrant population. They believe [immigration] is on the rise. I don't think we had a big immigrant population 10 years ago like other parts of the state, but they are doing a good job trying to catch up to try and find resources and to use those resources. Robin

Her opinion of rural schools was not shared by David. David taught for six years in a rural school and two years in an urban school. He perceived the urban school was doing a much better job of incorporating and serving immigrant students in the school community, particularly with ESL services and working inclusively with immigrant students. He attributed the stronger support at the urban school primarily to greater numbers of immigrant students, relative to the rural school.

Certainly more supportive in here [urban school]. Where I was before [rural school] there was no real support at all. We had one person who worked with ESL students and they would take the students once every couple of weeks. And it wasn't a case of coming into the classroom, it was a case of taking them out of the classroom [shakes head disapprovingly]. There were no classes or anything. They've done a lot here to accommodate immigrant students. David

What are the reasons for the difference? Jeremy

Certainly the numbers, more immigrant students. There is a lot more diversity in general here, immigrant students from different populations. . . . But there was almost no support there. Here there are staff members that that is what they are devoted to. We get support from ESL teachers, and there is a team teaching environment here. Definitely a lot more support here. David

As the data above indicates, the teachers attributed larger number of immigrants with better services and more attention. If this is indeed the case where larger numbers equals greater services, then immigrants in NC will continue to face uphill struggles to receive attention and services until they are in great enough numbers to demand services.

As a caveat to this sub-finding, the number of immigrant students in elementary schools is significantly higher than the number in high schools. For example, statistics from the Wake County schools website in 2011 identified 10.8% of elementary students are enrolled in Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs, while only 4.7% of high school students are enrolled in a similar program (Wake County Schools, 2011). Thus, the immigrant students currently in elementary schools will soon reach high school age, which would logically influence the type of services immigrant students receive.

Although participants recognized the relationship between greater numbers of immigrant students and school support, scholars identify a series of other causes of concern for immigrant students in new gateway states. For example, Rong & Preissle, (2009) warrant that teachers in new gateway states in the South, like North Carolina, have difficulty adapting

to the more complex racial patterns created by immigration. Teachers who have traditionally focused on Black and White binary racial issues are now teaching increasing numbers of Asian and Latino students. Teachers who had attempted to make social studies content relevant to all students have had to adapt their instruction to move beyond the Black/White racial dichotomy. Teachers have little preparation in teacher education programs to adapt to this rapidly changing racial dynamic (Goodwin, 2002).

There are still other challenges to teaching immigrant students in new gateway states which were not addressed by participants. Waters (1994) theorizes that immigrants in traditional gateway states use existing ethnic communities to provide social and economic capital, but immigrants in new gateway states cannot draw on similar resources. As the Pew Hispanic Center (2005) proposes, compared to traditional gateway states, new gateway states tend to draw immigrants with fewer marketable skills such as a high school diploma, legal documents, or English language proficiency. Immigrant parents who are undocumented, in a precarious economic situation, or lacking in English proficiency are more likely to remain silent about the educational needs of their children than immigrant or native-born parents with social and economic capital. Furthermore, immigrants in new gateway states lack political power due to the aforementioned reasons and because immigrants in new gateway states do not have an established political base. Other causes for concern in new gateway states include limited education funding for programs specific to immigrant students (Terrazas & Fix, 2008), limited teacher and teacher educator experience and expertise in working with immigrant students (Sox, 2009), and curtailed policy support at the local and state levels (Fix & Passel, 2003). In other words, new gateway states present a series of challenges for teaching immigrant students, yet participants in this study did not perceive the



majority of these challenges. Rather, participants identified only the number of immigrant students as the key factor in determining services and attention for immigrant students.

**The special case of refugee students - “*They are ghost citizens.*” Beth**

Because a church group sponsored refugees to move into their city, three participants - Beth, Luke, and Madeline - taught refugee students. One of the most striking findings from this study was that these three participants perceived refugee students quite differently than other immigrant students.

First of all, teachers perceived that refugee students’ traumatic experiences negatively influenced their school performance. Refugees experienced violence, discrimination, oppression, and interrupted schooling in their heritage country.

Based on their art therapy where a lot comes out that can’t be expressed in ways we can understand, what they remember and what sticks with them is largely negative. It is a lot of violence against their people. Being held in camps. That’s what they remember of their government the last time they were there they were being held in, separated in camps because of who they were. They left. And from what I can tell, their reactions to American government are largely positive. But for that reason, the things we were talking about - voting, going to school - they didn’t have much, if any of that. Madeline

I know a couple of the guys had to fight. They were in war situations. Others were just in refugee camps. And again it is only a few of them willing to share this experience. Most of them don’t talk about it very much. Beth

The boys were forced child soldiers? Jeremy

I don’t know if they were forced. Maybe. It’s unclear. One student has a big scar on his face where he was cut. Just thinking about the things he has been through. So when I’m teaching I don’t get hung up on the little things. Civics things are important but there are more important things for those students. Beth

I find what makes them different is the level of education they had before coming here. I think that has the biggest impact on them because they grew up in refugee camps, and didn’t have much formal education. So really just figuring how to be in school all day, just figuring out how school works, much less the content, is much more of a struggle for them. Whereas if you had kids coming from Mexico City

where they went to school, the transition is much easier, and they only have to focus on the language barrier and the content. Beth

As a result, teachers perceived it was particularly challenging to teach democratic notions to refugee students because their former governments were so totalitarian.

When I think of ideals of democracy, something like “consent of the governed” can also be challenging for our refugee population . . . because of their governments they were under were so oppressive, the idea of the government getting its power from the people, kind of giving permission as the idea of the consent of the governed. . . . the Burmese immigrant students have a tough time thinking about what that would look like. Madeline

Does that affect their grasping of the concepts of government - their lack of school before, or the language barrier, or the fact that they haven’t been officially governed? Jeremy

I think all of those things contribute to it. I don’t think the language barrier is as much an issue now - they’ve kind of moved past that. I think it’s the negative experiences they had before, or lack of experience they had before . . . They are moving past and making great steps forward, but it is hard for them. Beth

Despite all of the aforementioned challenges, teachers perceived that refugee students have embraced a patriotic notion of being American, and strongly desired to become American citizens, more so than other immigrant students.

They feel very powerfully American; in a way that you wouldn’t necessarily expect. When I’d ask, “What are your aspirations?” a lot of them talked about joining the military, because they felt this is the country that they want to support that strongly. . . [the refugees] who are new to the country and feel like there is such great opportunity; there is so much to do here. Madeline

A lot of them are ghost citizens. They were born in refugee camps in Thailand. The Thai government doesn’t recognize them as citizens. They can’t go back to Burma. They would be killed. So they are ghost citizens that are floating around. I think becoming an American citizen is important to a lot of them because they want to have an official status and feel like they belong somewhere. Beth

Furthermore, two teachers noted that refugee students adopted notions of enlightened democratic citizenship because of their experiences as refugees. Madeline was particularly

eloquent when discussing her perception that refugee students hold great potential as actively engaged citizens in their community.

I think I did see really authentic concepts of being a good citizen from them [even though] they aren't citizens, they are refugees. . . . When you look at the democratic ideal of fostering community, of helping others, they feel innately, they feel they've been given a gift, very fortunate that they've escaped their situation, and they want to give back. So a lot of times they'll talk about wanting to become a translator to work with other Burmese students. . . . So identifying with the country, but in terms of the ideal, of wanting people to say, "I'll improve my country, community or state," I think they feel strongly about that. Madeline

Letting [refugee students] know about our participatory government system was enough to let them know it [civic participation] matters. Because a lot of the systems they came from, they didn't. They wouldn't have mattered, even in a voting sense. Madeline

A lot of them want to learn English well, and then help other refugee populations. Or maybe even go back to Burma to help people or to help new students. . . . So I think there is less a concern about financial well-being. There was never a discussion of "I want to make a lot of money." It feels to me a very sincere, "I really want to do something meaningful." Madeline

This finding presents challenges to the additive acculturation model in terms of teaching Civics. In the model, teachers are encouraged to make the course meaningful to the students by drawing on their lived experiences and by making comparisons to the immigrant students' heritage. However, teachers perceived that refugee students have little desire to share or even talk about their experiences or negative views of their heritage government. The two teachers highlighted in this section, Beth and Madeline, stated they agree with the additive model. Many aspects of their teaching reflected use of the additive model, by attempting to learn from immigrant students' experiences and by expressing value of their culture. However, at least in terms of teaching Civics content, the teachers perceived that students advocated for a subtractive model; whereby the students replaced notions of

governance from their heritage country with the democratic notions they see in the United States.

This finding also runs counter to much research on the education of refugee students. Other studies (Lee, 2005) indicate that refugee students often adapt an oppositional stance towards education and the host society. J. Lynn McBrien (2005), in a review of refugee education literature, identifies refugee students as, “the most vulnerable [group] for school failure” (p. 332). Teachers in this study described refugee students as persevering, thoughtful, caring, well-behaved, and a pleasure to teach. Furthermore, refugee students were most likely to identify positively with the United States when compared to other immigrant students. These teachers went “above and beyond” to work with refugee students, after they came to understand the traumas and difficulties the students faced. This confirms other refugee research literature (Hones, 2002) which asserts teachers become more committed and compassionate about teaching refugee students once they became knowledgeable about the refugees’ backgrounds. Beth and Madeline also taught additively by expressing empathy and demonstrating caring for refugee students.

This finding also speaks to Parker’s (2008) enlightened democratic engagement. Madeline perceived great potential for refugee students as active and engaged participants who were thoughtful and appreciative of the chance to be civically involved. Although Madeline focused on the less critical aspects of civic engagement than those advocated by Kinchloe (2005) – volunteering, doing something meaningful, helping others in the community – these civic actions are also important in a democracy. Teachers and teacher educators can harness the potential of refugee students by involving the students in advocacy projects and community service.

**Struggle to negotiate national and cultural affiliations amongst immigrant students - “We have to try to not make them feel that they are this split person” Beth**

As stated earlier, teachers perceived immigrant students’ heritage culture enhanced students’ academic performance. Beyond the academic realm, however, teachers perceived the difficult position of immigrant students who were searching for a national and cultural affiliation. Some teachers noted immigrant student affiliation with the heritage country; others mentioned affiliation to the United States. However, this finding focuses on teacher perceptions of immigrant students’ struggle to identify to which nation and culture to affiliate themselves. This finding supports the extant literature on immigrant students’ struggles to negotiate national and cultural affiliations (Rong & Preissle, 2009; McBrien, 2005).

Teachers were supportive of students who displayed patriotism, either for the heritage country or for the United States. Robin shared an experience in which she asked students to draw a representation of either loyalist or revolutionary American reactions after the United States was granted independence from Great Britain. She recalled one of her immigrant student’s positive feelings when thinking about the United States.

It’s neat to see how they portray America during Independence. I had [an immigrant student] draw a picture of the American version of everyone standing around and they were all smiling and everyone had such cheerful looks and smiles. Even though it wasn’t historically accurate, it was what he saw as being American. Robin

David remarked that his immigrant students, mostly Latino, expressed national and cultural pride in their heritage countries.

There is a lot [of national affiliation] back to their heritage country. Certainly for a lot of immigrant students they have more pride in the country they are from, than non-immigrant students have for the country they live in. Even though probably a lot of those cases the immigrant student wouldn’t want to go back, they have a ton of pride. David

How does that come through? Jeremy

Flags. They draw flags on their things, notebooks. Interestingly, when we did a project on selecting a state to research congressional districts, immigrant students almost universally picked border states, or states with large immigrant populations - Texas, New Mexico, Arizona - those were the first they asked for. I think it comes back to pride in their culture and familiarity with language and feeling comfortable being around people like them. David

On the other hand, David perceived a struggle in how immigrant students affiliate themselves.

You also said they probably wouldn't go back [to their heritage country]. Do you think this is a dual allegiance? Jeremy

I guess I don't know that for a fact. But for a lot [nods head, then pauses]. I see this in the magistrate job, too, I see families fighting to keep their families here. David

David was not alone in perceiving this struggle. Multiple participants noted the struggle facing immigrant students in determining their national and cultural affiliation.

I try to be aware of this, and I think a lot of teachers try to be aware of this, but students feel like they have to have two personalities sometimes, I think they have to have what is acceptable for them at school and then they go home and their reality is very different from here. I think we have to try to not make them feel that they are this split person. Beth

There is some national pride with Latino students, "I'm Columbian, I'm Mexican," and they like to talk about that. But for the most part, they identify more as American. Madeline

[National and cultural affiliation] depends on where students come from - a mix for the Latina students. Karen<sup>4</sup> students they tend to, although they still hold onto their culture, they embrace being an American a little bit more. We had a [school-wide] performance of Karen culture. They sang in their language and wore traditional clothes. I thought it was an expression of, "We're really happy to be here, but also proud of where we came from." Beth

I've noticed a lot of my immigrant students still value their culture a lot. And struggle with, "Do we want to become American? How do we label ourselves? How do we

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<sup>4</sup> Karen is an ethnic group from Burma. Within this group there is cultural and linguistic diversity. The military regime in Burma persecutes the Karen and 140,000 Karen live in refugee camps in Thailand. 50,000 Karen refugees are resettled in other countries including the United States.

represent both cultures?” So that’s a big struggle for a lot of them. How do you identify? For the first generation immigrants, “Are we considered more Nicaraguan than someone whose parents came there [from Nicaragua], got married here and was born in the US? What do we consider ourselves?” So that’s a big struggle. Robin

Can you give me an example? Jeremy

We were talking about assassination of JFK and what happened to his wife. I told them she remarried a guy named Onassis later on, and when I said the name, they asked if he was from the United States. They asked, “How Greek was he?” I said, “What do you mean?” and they said, “Is he really Greek? Did he live there?” So they sort of tried to judge, “How Greek are you? Are you more validated because you are born in that country? Are you less removed from it because you weren’t?” And when I pressed them more, they said, “If he was born there, then he is very, very Greek.” That is their scale. Robin

Madeline interpreted that some immigrant students purposefully disassociated themselves from the history of their people in the United States in order to demonstrate national affiliation with the United States.

Something that I get fired up about, like the Mexican-American War - I always have this idea that they will be mortified, especially if I have any Latina students from Mexico, that they’ll be especially mortified by it, and usually that is not the case. I don’t know why. I don’t know, with the immigrant students, if it is because they are trying so hard to be very American, so maybe they don’t want to connect as much with anything that has happened in the past - like “I’m American, I’m not Mexican, so why should that affect me more than it does other students?” Madeline

Gibson (1987, 1995) also highlights the challenge facing immigrant students and families in terms of national and cultural affiliation. In order to effectively negotiate this challenge, the immigrant students and families in her study practiced an additive acculturation without assimilation, in which immigrant students were encouraged by their families to “Dress to please others, but eat to please yourself” (1987, p. 271). Several teachers in this study, notably Robin, Beth, and Luke, also made efforts to help students reconcile the contested nature of national and cultural affiliation, through additive acculturation. These efforts will be discussed in further detail in research question two.

**Anti-immigration climate and immigrant students - “Immigrants are under attack in this country.” Greg**

Several teachers perceived an anti-immigration climate in the United States, in North Carolina, and in their schools. Teachers perceived that this environment has harmed immigrant students. Greg was most eloquent in discussing the negativity directed towards immigrants in the media, political discourse, and policy enforcement.

In terms of ICE raids, 287g programs<sup>5</sup>, the impacts that those have on families, the laws in Arizona, really sort of lead me to believe, to feel that immigrants are under attack in this country in a way that African-Americans were under attack during Jim Crow. It’s not that explicit or overt as that, but sometimes it is when you have groups like the Minutemen, politicians feeling that they can bash immigrants as much as they want with impunity. Greg

Teachers perceived the anti-immigration climate has had negative repercussions for immigrant students. Robin, who teaches in a rural school, stated that the only drawback to teaching immigrant students was the topic of immigration has become so contested and virulent, that it was difficult to have conversations.

Are there any drawbacks to teaching immigrant students? Jeremy

[long pause] I think sometimes when we are discussing immigration issues, that maybe both sides, both immigrants and non-immigrant students, are very worried about stepping on each other’s toes, and may not be forward about discussing the issues. That is a minor drawback. Gosh. I can’t think of any others. Robin

The two teachers in urban schools, David and Greg, were frustrated by the tension between immigrant and non-immigrant students when discussing the topic of immigration. David also perceived tensions in his former, rural school.

Just last week I put them into these fictional political parties . . . One of the questions I asked was about immigration. They had to do a scale - on one end, completely open borders; the other side, absolutely no immigration whatsoever. And I was shocked

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<sup>5</sup> The 287g program allows local law enforcement to enter into an agreement with ICE, which delegates immigration law enforcement to local jurisdictions. (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2011).



because normally we discuss this you get a lot of people kind of in the middle. But my classes were very strongly anti-immigration. I'm surprised by that. I'm a little bit saddened by it to be honest. David

If we are talking about the topic of immigration, students will, because of what they have heard, might have a negative connotation. So they immediately think immigration and that it is a bad thing. David

Particularly with immigration, I try to be really, really careful. I haven't noticed it much here, but at [rural school], if you bring up the word immigration, people start talking about [sarcastic voice] "Yeah the Mexicans, and this that and the other." And you just really want to make sure you don't create an Us vs. Them mentality. David

And you'd have students say that with immigrant students sitting in the same class? Jeremy

Oh yeah. David

Greg and David specifically observed tensions between Latino immigrant students and African-American students in their urban schools.

Because there are so few immigrant students at this school, I do compensate by bringing in stuff that would grab their attention more so than my other students. I guess I'm being more conscious about the things I do with my immigrant students . . . I have been accused by African-American students of showing favoritism to the immigrant students. Greg

Historically there has been a divide between African-American students and Latino students. David

The three teachers in suburban schools were more positive about how immigrant students have been received by non-immigrant students. This was particularly true for students working together on in-class assignments. The following exchange between Beth and Madeline, both suburban school teachers, took place during the focus group.

Can you talk about your school climate for immigrant students? Jeremy

I haven't seen much of, "I don't want to work with that person." Beth

Yeah, I haven't seen that either. Madeline

They work really well together inside the classroom. Beth

I never had any tension in the class that I can think of. No racial or ethnic discrimination, aside from an inappropriate comment. I think there is mutual respect but also some self-segregation. There are clubs and athletics where it can be tri-racial, with Karen, White and African-American students. It is ultimately good relationships, aside from some self-segregation. Madeline

Luke also spoke positively about the friendship bonds between immigrant and non-immigrant students and how he leveraged those bonds to develop effective in-class working groups.

[On a recent assignment] there was a student who said to a Burmese student, "Here, come with me. I will help you do that." Two of my other students said, "Hey, come on," to a first generation Hispanic student, "We're gonna help you out." It's using the leverage of the bonds and relationships that they have formed. To say, "Hey I know you, we're good. I know this might be difficult but we've done this before." It makes it a lot easier. Luke

Beth shared one negative encounter against Latino immigrant students in her classroom. However, on a positive note, this student was confronted by other students in the class about the insensitive remarks. Beth believed the issue was resolved after this conversation between two students.

I had a student at the beginning of the year who was calling every Hispanic student, Juan. So I addressed that with her privately. She did it one other time and her classmates got her for it and she hasn't done it since then. She is an African-American student and an African-American girl sitting beside her asked her, "How would you like it if everyone called you Shaniqua? You're doing the same thing. You can't do that." And she's been much better and made a point to learn everyone's names after that. So classmates calling her out was better than me having another conversation with her. Beth

Although teachers in suburban schools were generally complimentary about non-immigrant students working well with immigrant students, teachers did perceive anti-immigration sentiments amongst some non-immigrant students which would occasionally surface. Madeline shared the following event during a classroom discussion on immigration.

Students rarely say things offensive, but maybe it is there. In one class I have a group of guys who are kind of macho, men-are-great type guys. In a discussion on rape in the courts, he insinuated something inappropriate about rape not counting if both parties are intoxicated and we went back and forth. It was an example of, he won't come out and say it all of the time but if pushed he will. So in our debate on immigration it got very heated, and I had to put the brakes on a few times. "If you want to say Latinos are taking jobs, show me a statistic that says that, because I don't know that they are out there." I ended the debate when the boy said he wouldn't want to swim in the same pool as immigrants. He and I had a tough conversation after class. During the debate, when things got heated, his inhibitions went down and that's when his feelings really came out. He obviously crossed a line. Madeline

Greg, who teaches in an urban school, also discussed an incident which revealed the overt and covert aspects of the anti-immigration climate.

I recently broke up an argument in the lunch line between a Latina girl and an African-American girl. They got into a verbal fight and one of the insults the African-American girl said was she called her an "immigrant." Now that's a pretty benign insult, but the student obviously thought it was an insult, along with other names like "bitch," with them going back and forth. So I think it is underneath the surface. They know it is not politic to say stuff like that. But it is in there. The number of kids who are willing to say things like, "They are taking our jobs, they need to go home," is smaller than the number who think that. Greg

Greg also noted a tension between documented and undocumented immigrant students.

Sometimes my students who have documentation and whose parents have documentation are sometimes the most anti-undocumented immigrants because they have this [pause] they are stuck on this thing, "My family did it right. I did it right. Other people can do it right, too." That is a dynamic sometimes; and I have one of those students now. It adds a dimension. Some of the other non-immigrant students feed into that, when they hear a Latino immigrant saying it, it lends legitimacy to the [anti-immigrant] position. Greg

Gibson's (1995) work highlighted the challenges of Punjabi immigrants in California, in which immigrant students had no established immigrant community to draw from and faced discrimination from the non-immigrant community. Excepting Robin, participants spoke about the anti-immigration climate in the United States and the resulting harmful impacts on immigrants. Teachers in urban schools perceived greater tensions between immigrant and non-immigrant students than teachers in suburban schools, possibly a side

effect of the anti-immigration climate which was potentially intensified in high poverty areas due to competition for limited resources between inner-city minorities and newcomers.

However, the relationship between immigrant and non-immigrant students perceived by participants in this study was certainly more positive than the almost universally negative reception presented by Gibson (1995) and Valenzuela (1999) in their studies of immigrant students and their reception in schools. The three teachers in suburban schools, Luke, Madeline, and Beth, painted generally positive pictures of immigrant students and non-immigrant students working together towards positive ends. Several of the participants also articulated their strategies regarding how to ease the conflict between immigrant students and other students by providing cultural awareness lessons, facilitating working relationships between immigrant and non-immigrant students, and stopping bullies.

The findings associated with challenges beyond the linguistic domain reaffirms the calls made by Goodwin (2002) and Sox (2009) to address the needs of immigrant students beyond simply providing ELL services. Solutions to these systemic, non-linguistic challenges – limiting formal curriculum, academic effects of obscure legal status, new gateway state, refugee students, struggles to affiliate culturally and nationally, and an anti-immigration climate – may seem beyond the scope of Civics teachers. However, each of these challenges provides educative opportunities for exploration and critique for teachers and their students (Kinchloe, 2005). Teachers can adhere to the tenets of the additive model in their own classrooms, inform students about the challenges, and have students practice critical civic engagement by confronting the challenges highlighted here.

**Making efforts help immigrant students while possessing limited knowledge and confidence of policies specific to immigrant students – “To be honest, I’m not sure how they pick who ends up in the ESL class.” David**

The third finding to the research question is that most of the teachers in this study had little confidence in their knowledge about educational policies specific to immigrant students. However, in areas where participants were familiar with policies, they were able to critique, improve, support, and even advocate for policies specific to immigrant students. Five of the teachers openly acknowledged that they had limited knowledge of policies. Of all the areas related to teaching immigrant students, the topic of policies was the area where participants were the least confident and least informed.

In order to visually represent this finding, the chart below demonstrates teachers' awareness of policies specific to immigrant students. The chart is organized from the teachers' most often cited policies to the policies cited the least often.

Table 5

*Participants' Knowledge of Policies Specific to Immigrant Students*

| Policies relevant to immigrant students or comments about policies   | Teachers who were aware of this policy or commented about a policy/lack of policy |      |           |       |      |       |
|--|---|------|-----------|-------|------|-------|
|  | Luke  | Beth | Made-line | Robin | Greg | David |
| Acknowledged limited awareness of policies - "Don't know," "Not sure"  | X   |      | X         | X     | X    | X     |
| Supported "sheltered" or "clustered" classes for immigrant students  | X   | X    |           | X     | X    | X     |
| Teachers are not allowed to ask immigration status   | X   | X    | X         | X     |      |       |
| Entitled to ESL/ELL services   | X   | X    | X         |       |      | X     |
| Right to an education, regardless of legal status  | X   |      | X         | X     | X    |       |
| Support for immigrant students has more to do with school and individual teacher efforts than with school/state/federal policies | X   |      |           | X     |      | X     |
| Complaints about lack of policy support for immigrant students   | X   | X    |           |       | X    |       |
| Support DREAM Act  | X   | X    |           |       | X    |       |

|   |   |   |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| Reduced/eliminated services for immigrant students due to budget cuts               | X | X |   |  |   |  |
| Testing modifications   |   |   | X |  | X |  |
| Awareness of other states' policies specific to immigrant students (AZ and AL laws) | X |   |   |  | X |  |
| Entitled to translators during parent conferences                                   | X |   |   |  | X |  |
| Free and reduced lunch for students in poverty                                      | X |   |   |  |   |  |

As the chart above demonstrates, participants readily acknowledged their limited knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students.<sup>6</sup> Surprisingly, only four of six teachers cited the most visible policy for immigrant students, ESL/ELL programs. Luke's response to the interview question about policies was illustrative. Luke was supremely confident and thoughtful in answering all of the interview questions, with this one exception. He provided qualifications several times at the beginning and end of his answer, and also paused several times while searching for an answer.

There are, as I understand [pause] I don't know if they are acting [pause] I would want to do research, I'm not 100% sure [pause] but there are rules in place here tied to having ELL instructors get the help students need during the day. Or organizing study sessions outside of class. Although I think that is more the initiative of ELL instructors here and using funds of the PTSA rather than having dedicated funds to do that. Where and when you can get textbooks in another language. I know there are rules about parent conferences with translators. But [pause] you know outside of that there are rules that fall; more generally issues about class issues - federal programs - about free and reduced lunch. . . . Outside of that, it seems like what resources the school is willing to devote and individual teacher or ELL willing to chip in above and beyond. There doesn't seem to be a systematic approach for how to deal with or

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<sup>6</sup> As a caveat and perhaps partial explanation to this finding, I did not ask teachers about specific policies. Rather, I asked teachers, "What school, state, or federal policies are you aware of and how do those policies affect the way you teach?" It is reasonable to assume teachers might have had more detailed responses if I had presented specific existing or proposed policies and asked teachers to comment on the specific policies. Furthermore, if a teacher did not cite a policy, I did not take it to mean that the teacher was opposed to the policy, but rather did not introduce the policy of his or her own volition. For example, based on my conversations with these teachers, who were invariably supportive of immigrant students, I believe each teacher would be in support of the DREAM Act. However, only three teachers cited the DREAM Act when asked about policies specific to immigrant students.

handle immigrant students in this county. That's my perception without having done any research or understanding local school board rules. So I could be woefully wrong in my interpretation. That's based on my perception without any extra looking into it. I like to think we're better than other schools. Luke

Teachers focused on policies beyond the linguistic domain. Participants cited three policies which were specific to the linguistic domain (ELL enrollment, translators for parents during parent teacher conferences, testing modifications). However, more policies cited by teachers were related to policies beyond the linguistic domain: legal issues (DREAM Act, asking immigrant students' legal status, right to an education, knowledge of AZ and AL laws), cultural issues (enrolling immigrant students in the same class, supporting cultural extracurricular programs), and SES issues (free and reduced lunch). This finding is a challenge to the literature which conflates the needs of ELLs with the needs of immigrant students (Goodwin, 2002).

Although teachers did not feel confident in their knowledge of policies, several participants evaluated the effectiveness of policies. In particular, three teachers asserted the effectiveness of school-level policies specific to immigrant students when compared to state or federal policies. Beth, for example, stated how the school faculty developed extracurricular clubs specifically for immigrant students. Beth, Madeline, and Greg appreciated their schools' policy to sponsor one event per year which highlighted different cultures in their respective schools, although Greg noted low attendance at the event.

Our district does a lot to help immigrant students. We have the ESL program and lots of clubs for immigrant students. Latino Student Association. There is a group that plays Tacraw, which is big with Karen, Burmese and Thai students. It's like volleyball you play with your feet. So they play that on the lawn. And when we have *Tiger-fest*, which is the big field day, you can sign up to play Tacraw. There is a new group – Latino males from [local university] come in to mentor Latino male students here. And I'm forgetting others. Beth

Schools could always do a better job of supporting cultural traditions of immigrants in the community. [This school] did a Hispanic heritage night, where they had different foods from different regions; they had a presentation on different Latin American countries and Spain. Greg

As schools, you can work as a community group for different cultures that are in the student body. Every year we have a night called *CultureFest*. It's a dinner and different performances by cultural groups in the school. . . . Last year they did a festival around water, based on a Burmese tradition. . . It gives different groups a platform and within the school creates community and allows parents and students from different groups to work on something together. But it comes from the student groups themselves. So we're not telling the Burmese students what they should bring to *CultureFest*. It's a decision that they make . . . It's a good way for the school to say, "We care about your cultural background and we want to share it with the rest of the student body." Madeline

Madeline was complimentary of the faculty of her school who collectively demanded events like *Culturefest* and implemented other school-level policies to incorporate immigrant students. For example, the school's yearbook advisor implemented a new policy which called for the yearbook staff to reflect the diversity of the school, including immigrant students. Madeline argued,

It is a pretty ardent push from the faculty to make sure that *Culturefest* is representative of the school. That encouragement helps in the same way that our yearbook advisor said, "I want our yearbook staff to look like our school so our yearbook looks like our student population." So I think that is a big effort on the part of the faculty to include immigrant students. There was a little push back, "If someone doesn't know English well, why are they on the yearbook staff?" But what it means is that there are not the same 10 kids in every picture of the yearbook when it gets published. Madeline

Participants focused extensively on one policy in particular – sheltered Civics courses for immigrant students, even after students have been exited from ESL programs. Five of the six teachers were supportive of a policy of "sheltered" or "clustered" Civics classes in which immigrant students are enrolled in the same course sections. Scholars (Olsen, 1997; Lee, 2001a) cite the advantages of clustered classes for immigrant students, such as feeling safe



and comfortable, more support for learning English and maintaining heritage languages, and stronger peer support. Luke was the most articulate in making this point.

Are you in favor of sheltered classes? Jeremy

Oh, absolutely! I can't stress this enough . . . In the ELL [sheltered] class, immigrant students felt a lot more comfortable to speak up. Like any other teenager, they are worried with their fragile psyches, "I don't want to be different from others. I just want to fit in here." Its' a lot easier to see that "I'm struggling but others are struggling too, so I'm more comfortable saying something instead of being the lone individual in the classroom where everyone else is ahead." I think about a female student with me last year, very hard worker, got to the point by the end of the year where she got there; she didn't start there, but she got there. But she also had an environment where she could ask for help. By the end of the year she was a leader serving to help others and that taught her more. This year, she is another Civics teachers' class, an Honors class, where most kids are getting it, and she is struggling. She doesn't have anyone to go to, anyone to go talk to, and it's hard for her to speak up when the rest of the class gets it, and she doesn't know what to do. So I think it isolates students and it doesn't allow them to have that environment where they can interact with one another. . . Now the great caveat I will add is this, an ELL sheltered class solely for an ELL class may not be a good thing if you don't have varying ranges. So I hope the ELL class doesn't have only new arrivals. You want an ELL class where some are new; some have been here 2-3 years. Just like, ideally, you want seniors showing the ropes to freshmen, to say "We've been here, we've done this before, here's how we do things." That you can have those leaders in the classroom to help the teacher make an environment where everyone is pushing towards greater ends. Because if you just have a classroom of students who are limited in their capabilities, limited by language barriers or the time they've been here, it's no different than when you have a group of students who have been neglected, tracked through the system. So that's an important caveat, I favor ELL classes, but they have to be mixed ability and mixed level of time that they have been in the country. Luke

Beth, like Luke, addressed the problems associated with a policy of not sheltering Civics classes for immigrant students. She specifically spoke about how damaging it can be what she calls a "singleton" - one immigrant student in a class with all non-immigrant students.

The way the schedule works, I feel bad for the situation our system puts them in. It's always better if immigrant students are grouped with at least one or two other students they can relate to in each room. I feel bad for my immigrant students who are singletons in a class full of faces that look completely different from them. I know that has to be a very uncomfortable experience, and they don't get as much out of the class. Beth

You said you aren't crazy about the system. Jeremy

So we have this ELL cohort that has been grouped together, but then students that come in outside of the cohort [pause]. In my 7<sup>th</sup> period, [an immigrant student] has been here 3 years, his English skills are very low, he has no other person in the classroom to talk to and so his response is to come in and shut down because it is hard for him to relate to anything else going on in the room. [pause, shakes head] He tends to just shut down. Beth

As the quotes above demonstrate, Luke and Beth were strong advocates for sheltered ELL classes not only for linguistic reasons, but perhaps even more importantly for cultural and comfort reasons. This finding is still another challenge to the literature which conflates the needs of ELLs with the needs of immigrant students (Goodwin, 2002).

Several teachers challenged the policy in which immigrant students were exited from ELL services and enter mainstream classes without a "bridge" of services between the two. Two participants, Beth and Madeline, stated that the single biggest challenge facing immigrant students was the transition from receiving ELL services in a sheltered class, to no services in a non-sheltered class.

I think [the biggest challenge is] feeling comfortable in the classroom when there are not built in support for them post-ESL. Last year I had an ESL teacher in the sheltered class with me. This year I have seven immigrant former-ESL students with no help in a non-sheltered class. And they don't have the structured support; it has been a lot more difficult. Beth

Two immigrant Latina students are in an Honors section, and I'm not sure if that was the right choice for them, just leaving ESL services. They've struggled. Since Christmas break I've lost both of them. . . At this point, one has dropped to a Standard Civics, and she is doing better there. The other is probably going to do

something online to try and salvage the year . . . If they are drowning in a class, let's put them on a pace where they can be more successful. Madeline

Teachers at Beth's school were in the process of developing a bridge between ELL sheltered courses and mainstream courses. They called their program the "ESL team." Beth described the program as follows:

We're starting an ESL-team at my school. We had our first meeting, we're having a professor come from Meredith to help us organize it. She will give some training to those who haven't had it. We're trying to make it a program that follows kids. We've identified core [content area] teachers who are good with immigrant students, and what we'll do is cluster the students together to have support for them. And try to get some kids that have exited ESL services but still need that help in those classes too. The way that it will work is that the kids who need ESL services are mixed in with exited students who need fewer services and mixed with some regular students. So it's not sheltered, it's clustered, so they can receive the help and support they need. So we'll have full sections of classes and make this work. Beth

Beth's participation and leadership in this innovative program exemplifies her advocacy for immigrant students. Sox (2009) has challenged teachers to take an active role in setting school policy regarding immigrant students. Beth and the ESL team at Beth's school have clearly taken up this challenge.

Although participants supported sheltered and clustered Civics courses for immigrant students, they also grappled with the dilemma of being philosophically opposed to tracking. Participants suggested the potential negative effects of isolating immigrant students in sheltered classes, many of which resemble the negative effects of tracking. These negative effects included socially isolating immigrant students from the non-immigrant student body, preventing students from taking high-level college-preparatory courses, and non-immigrant students not being able to benefit from the knowledge and experiences of immigrant students. However, even while acknowledging the potential negative side effects of sheltered and clustered courses, the teachers still supported the sheltered policy. The following focus

group discussion between Beth and Greg illustrated their rationale for supporting sheltered/clustered ELL courses.

So this is interesting because you've said you want sheltered classes for immigrant students, but we've also talked about the negative effects of tracking. So I wonder if there is a way to work this out. Jeremy

I see these as separate things. The sheltered classes don't have to do with ability; it has to do with helping with language and cultural things. The goal is for them to be in non-tracked classes. Beth

Well what we have now isn't working. They are just plopped into Standard level courses. And I might have 4 LEP kids and five or six EC kids and some other kids in a class of however many. It is just too many individual needs to be able to meet them. That is where my craving of a sheltered classroom comes from. Because realistically tracking is around. It would be great to have a more broad mixture of abilities so that you could do the groupings and all of that. I see bilingual education as the ideal, but this [sheltered classes] is a stopgap, if not the ideal. Greg

In summary, teachers lacked confidence in their knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students. Most of the policies cited by teachers were associated with issues beyond the linguistic domain such as legal, SES, and cultural issues. Although teachers were not confident in their knowledge of policies broadly, participants were still able to critique, provide suggestions, and even advocate for school-level policies with which they were familiar. Participants lauded school-wide efforts to promote immigrant students' culture through clubs and annual cultural festivals. Participants were particularly concerned with the way in which immigrant students were thoughtlessly placed in mainstream classes without needed service support. As such, they advocated for a policy of sheltered or clustered courses for immigrant students.

It is likely that North Carolina's new gateway status contributed to teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence regarding policies specific to immigrant students. It is a reasonable assumption that in schools with traditionally high areas of immigrant students the

teachers would be more knowledgeable about these policies. Fix & Passel's (2003) often quoted passage that new gateway states have "limited experience and infrastructure in settling newcomer families," (p. 8) holds true for participants in this study. The teachers simply had limited experience teaching immigrant students and were not taught about policies in their teacher education programs, which contributed to their limited confidence in their knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students. However, to their credit, most participants still took positions in support of policies specific to immigrant students in policies with which they were familiar.

### **Conclusion**

There were three major findings to this research question. Teachers have overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students, teachers recognized a multitude of challenges facing immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain, and teachers have limited knowledge about policies specific to immigrant students though they made significant efforts to help immigrant students' acculturation. These findings reveal both reasons for concern and reasons for optimism. Reasons for concern include:

1. Six challenges faced immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain
2. Teachers' lacked a comprehensive understanding of the non-linguistic challenges
3. Teachers admittedly had limited knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students.

Reasons for optimism include:

1. Teachers had positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students

2. Teachers had some awareness of the non-linguistic challenges facing immigrant students and attempted to help students overcome these challenges
3. When teachers were knowledgeable about policies specific to immigrant students, they were able to support, critique, and advocate on behalf of immigrant students.

North Carolina's status as a new gateway state influences each of these findings. First, NC classrooms have traditionally had very little diversity, beyond the Black/White racial paradigm (Rong & Preissle, 2010). Teachers believed immigrant students made NC classrooms much more diverse, which aided the learning of all students. Second, teachers perceived immigrant students were not receiving the attention and/or services they needed because immigrant students do not yet make a large enough segment of the school population to make political and legal demands. Schools which had larger numbers of immigrant students were more likely to provide services and attention. As North Carolina continues to experience immigration and more immigrant students are populating North Carolina classrooms, this trend is likely to be somewhat ameliorated. Third, it is likely that NC teachers have limited confidence and knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students because teacher education programs and professional development programs have not yet adapted to the reality of North Carolina as a new gateway state. A reasonable assumption is that greater numbers of immigrant students will lead teachers, school leaders, and teacher education programs to focus more explicitly on policies specific to immigrant students, as scholars have advocated (Sox, 2009).

## Chapter 5

### FINDINGS TO RESEARCH QUESTION 2

*“I like to think [immigrants] added to what democracy means.” Beth*

The first research question addresses teacher perceptions of teaching immigrant students overall. This second research question focuses specifically on the content area of Civics. This question is analyzed using two theoretical frameworks: additive acculturation based on Gibson’s (1995) and Valenzuela’s (1999) scholarship and the five prerequisites of competent democratic citizenship, developed from Billig & Root’s (2008) work on participatory citizenship education and Kinchloe’s (2005) vision of critical democratic citizenship. My goal in answering this research question is to identify approaches to teaching Civics to immigrant students. Furthermore, findings to this research question can inform the practices of Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators. The second research question is as follows: What are teachers’ perceptions of teaching Civics relevant to immigration and immigrant students?

Before answering this research question, I will briefly revisit my positionality statement with regard to social studies, Civics, and civic education. I take a stance in favor of enlightened political engagement (Parker, 2008). As posited in my positionality statement, I believe the purpose of social studies should be the improvement of the society and the lives of its citizens (Parker, 2008).

In order to delineate the differences between Civics teachers’ perceptions of Civics in greater detail, I merge the work of Root & Billig (2008) and Kinchloe (2005) to develop five

prerequisites of competent democratic citizenship: 1. knowledge, 2. skills, 3. values and attitudes, 4. civic involvement in the present and/or intentions to become civically involved in the future, and 5. critical civic involvement. I use the five prerequisites in order to compare and contrast the ways in which teachers' perceived and taught Civics to immigrant students. *[For examples and further explication, refer to Table 1, pg. 41].*

Before answering the research question, it may help the reader to understand teachers' views on the relative importance of the Civics course. Participants perceived Civics was the most important course for immigrant students. As such, teachers strove to "rise to the challenge" of teaching this most important course and therefore placed extra emphasis on teaching immigrant students. Many teachers noted the high interest that immigrant students showed in Civics class relative to other social studies courses they taught. These teachers also perceived the course as more relevant to the lives of immigrant students. Teachers discerned that the Civics course was practically helpful for immigrant students who wish to become citizens. These teachers commented how the Civics course was preparation for the US citizenship exam, in particular. Some teachers perceived the course was more valuable for immigrant students' lives beyond the citizenship test - these teachers viewed the course as preparation to be active, future citizens. One teacher, Luke, saw teaching Civics as an important means to facilitate dialogue which could lead to greater tolerance towards immigrant students. Each of the participants also taught at least one history course in addition to their Civics course, effectively positioning the participants to make judgments about the importance of Civics for immigrant students when compared to other social studies courses. Thus, the findings should be interpreted in the context that each participant highly valued teaching Civics as the most important course for immigrant students.



There are three major findings to this research question.

1. Participants philosophically ascribed to the additive acculturation model, yet there were tensions with the model in three areas: interpreting the role of gender and authority in different cultural contexts, and the teachers' role in outreach efforts.
2. Participants prioritized national level citizenship at the expense of local and global citizenship and had difficulty making the connection between the three levels, or applying the levels of citizenship to the contexts of immigrant students.
3. Teachers perceived teaching duties, rights, and responsibilities as the foundation of their Civics instruction, although teachers took drastically different approaches to “rights talk” for immigrant students.

**Teachers philosophically ascribed to the additive acculturation model, but had some tensions with the model in three areas: gender, authority, and outreach**

The first finding to this research question relates to the relationship between participants' philosophy of teaching Civics and the additive acculturation model.

Philosophically, the participants ascribed wholeheartedly to Gibson's (1995) theory.

However, in practice there were a few points of tension, including attempting to balance democratic notions of gender equality and critical citizenship while honoring patriarchal cultures and immigrant cultural practices of respecting authority. Another point of tension was determining the teachers' role in outreach efforts to immigrant communities – a tenet of the additive acculturation model. Several participants suggested that it should be a school level responsibility to connect with immigrant families and communities through outreach, rather than the teachers' individual responsibility to do so.

**Philosophical alignment** – *“a defender of the heritage from which you’ve come”*

*Luke*

First, teachers’ philosophically supported the tenets of the additive model. When I explained the additive acculturation model to participants, and asked if they ascribed to the model and if it fit with their Civics philosophy, the teachers invariably agreed with the theory. In particular, participants wanted immigrant students to develop bi-cultural competencies. The following quotations were representative of teacher responses.

Absolutely. . . . I wholeheartedly agree with keeping and maintaining the culture from which one came. . . . You know education is not a 0-60 in five seconds. You have to progressively build on past experiences. Sometimes having to take some stumbles along the way but eventually you’ll get up the stairs - 2 forward, 1 back. So it doesn’t make any sense to me to sort of say, “We’re gonna gut all of these stairs and start you down here and expect you to be up at the top of the stairwell with no stairs in between.” Luke

I don’t think anyone should leave something at home when it comes to culture.  
Madeline

I’m not a rah-rah 1920’s “Let’s convert you into an American and make you forget who you are.” My job is to serve sort of a defender of the heritage from which you’ve come. To make sure you don’t forget to rather embrace what you’ve experienced, learned, in the past and see how you can turn that into a strength rather than have that perceived as a weakness. Luke

You don’t have to give up one culture just to take another. You can blend and you can appreciate both cultures. Robin

One of the tenets of the additive model is making content relevant to immigrant students. All participants implemented teaching strategies which addressed this tenet. Specifically, all participants spent significant amounts of time on the topic of immigration because they perceived this topic was relevant to immigrant students. Furthermore, five of the six participants went to great lengths to target Civics content relevant to immigrant students beyond the topic of immigration.

In our discussions about the immigrant metaphors – melting pot or salad bowl - that is an opportunity. For example, I show pictures from Henry Ford’s American schools where he shows immigrant students physically jumping into a melting pot and coming out wearing American clothes. So I think fostering discussion around “Is that valuable or not? Is it a cultural good to create homogeneity or not?” I think those conversations can be facilitated and can have real value. Greg

I give them the citizenship test to see if they could pass it. I even let them take it in partners and they realize right then that they may not be able to even pass it with help. . . . It’s a way to capture all of the students; to show non-immigrant students it’s not a cakewalk. But also to validate the immigrant students by saying, “We’re all in this boat together. Don’t feel inferior just because you don’t know all of these questions because your classmates don’t either. Don’t worry because you’ll learn it this year.” Robin

I’ll use an analogy from my honeymoon in the Caribbean, our cab driver/tour guide showed us; “This is the way we do things here. This is where we go; not where the tourists go.” So my job is to say, “Here’s the society in which you’re living, this is the norms they abide by, here are the operations the general assumptions they operate under, here are some things your colleagues take for granted, here are some things you need to know to defend yourself, to thrive within the society.” So it is sort of a tour guide to help them navigate the new system they’ve come into. Luke

Today, I could have chosen any country as an example of the multiparty system. We looked at Sweden since [I teach someone] who is a student from Sweden. I have a number of South Asians, so when we use examples I put up there, “This is the largest democracy in the world.” Even though this is an American government class, we don’t have to take examples only from here. Just a nod. “Hey, I know you’re here.” You see them perk up. This Indian girl in 4<sup>th</sup> period, said “Oh I should have known that!” . . . We do [an activity] with songs, I tell them to bring songs from home; or songs from Iraq or Iran. . . . Last year from the end of year project, they used pop music from South Korea. Luke

By targeting Civics content specifically for immigrant students, participants aligned with a major tenet of the additive model. As the teachers cited above demonstrated, it is possible, despite the limitations of the Civics curriculum, to make the content relevant and meaningful to immigrant students.

**Tensions** - *“I don’t want to ask them to do things here that they will take home and have some sort of backlash.” Beth*

Despite philosophical agreement with the additive acculturation model, in three key areas, there were tensions between teachers' Civic goals and teachers' philosophical agreement with the model. The tension for teachers was interpreting the roles of gender and authority in different cultural contexts. Additionally, teachers suggested that the home-school relationship (outreach) was the purview of the school administration rather than the individual teachers' responsibility.

**Gender equality vs. patriarchy.** Teachers' civic goal of teaching equality conflicted with teachers' perceptions that immigrant students' heritage culture should be honored. Specifically, three teachers perceived a difficulty in reconciling notions of gender equality with patriarchal heritage cultures.

Three teachers perceived that immigrant students' families were not supportive of education for female students when compared to their support for male students. Immigrant education scholars (Lee, 2001a) maintain that some immigrant cultures place higher value on educating boys than girls, although Lee (2001a) and others (Hutchinson, 1997; Qin, 2006) state that many immigrant communities are adapting American, egalitarian views of gender equality in education.

I've seen glimpses of that in only a couple of situations [pause] one was with a Burmese female and I know her family didn't even value education for her. They thought she should be working all of the time. And I'm asking her to do all of these other things, and they just don't see the value in that. Beth

How did that work out? Jeremy

It was a tense situation, it turns out her family was about to move to another state, but the move didn't happen, so she came back to school, then wasn't sure if she would be allowed to come back this year, and she really wanted to be here, she was a wonderful student and loved to learn about American government so she was really buying into all of this stuff. But she's back this year in US history and doing better, so I'm assuming things worked out at home. Beth

Now one thing I see with Latino students is a family expectation. Oftentimes for girls there is an expectation that school is not important. They have jobs or child-care responsibilities at home. And a lot of girls still seem to have a very outdated idea of, “I need to look pretty and find a boyfriend and that’s the most important thing, because my mom is not educated and I don’t intend on going to college.” . . . In some ways this is a stereotype but in other ways I’ve seen the reality of this in my classroom with Latina females. Several Latina female students often don’t take education seriously because they are mostly concerned with finding a husband. In two specific cases I had two really smart girls and they would intentionally not answer questions or answer incorrectly. That drove me crazy, knowing how capable they were. When I confronted them about it they said, “We don’t need to work hard, we don’t want to go to college.” And you know in my view there is nothing wrong with being a Mom or wife, but maybe you shouldn’t make that decision when you’re 15 [pause] to decide that being a Mom is all you want to do; maybe that is shortsighted. And I believe in the power of women, I don’t march in feminist parades, but I want women to be strong and independent, so that was hard for me to come to terms with. Madeline

For Beth, this tension was the central challenge of teaching democracy to immigrant students. I believe Beth’s words were powerful and reflect her struggle to reconcile these conflicting notions.

[first interview]

Would you say them not wanting to speak out [scenarios/simulations] was shyness or a cultural thing where they might not be as demonstrative in public? Jeremy

Some of it is shyness, but I think most of it is cultural. Students from the Dominican Republic from day one were raising their hand, wanted to get involved, wanted to answer every question. My female Karen and Burmese students were very, very shy - did not want to speak in front of the whole class, barely spoke above a whisper, when talking even to me. Beth

That is interesting, because here you have a good strategy that seems to work, but they don’t want to do it. How do you overcome that? Jeremy

I try to be aware of this, but students feel like they have to have two personalities sometimes, I think they have to have what is acceptable for them at school and then they go home and their reality is very different from here. I think we have to try to not make them feel that they are this split person. Beth

That's really interesting. Do you have a specific example? Jeremy

I guess I'm thinking about my Karen and Burmese female students. In their culture, they don't speak up, they are kind of in the background, and the males are dominant, but in class they are asked to participate and do the same things as everyone else. It makes them very uncomfortable. And when they go home, it is not like that changes, and all of a sudden they are female empowered. [pause]. That's not a very good answer. Beth

Do you see yourself as a female role model for the Karen students? Jeremy

I think I feel that for all of my female students because there aren't many female social studies teachers and because you don't see many women involved in politics. Regardless of culture, I try to be a strong female role model, and I think I do. With my immigrant students I might feel that pull even more, but at the same time I don't want to overstep their culture because that is very valuable and a very important part of them too. So to try to figure out how to walk that line is sometimes difficult. Beth

[Second interview]

This idea of "split personalities," I really thought a lot about that. Can you tell me more about it? Jeremy

I just think what we expect of kids in this culture and this environment is not the same thing expected of them at home. So I feel they have to act in two different ways. . . . With my Burmese and Karen students, the girls are really shy and reserved and I'm asking them to stand up in front of their classmates, which is something they wouldn't do at home. I'm asking them to be a leader in their group when there are other males in their group from their culture, and that is not how things usually work. Beth

Your perception of immigrant students is respecting them and their culture; you've also talked about being a female politician . . . Jeremy

Yeah. So I want those girls especially to feel like they can be these voices that bring about change. They don't have to let the man do all of things for them. So I think that is still number one for me. But I think I am aware, and maybe too much aware of the fact that what I'm asking them to do might not be OK with their family. And that is what gives me the tension. Beth

When I did the transcription on our last interview, you sounded so confident, the only time I sensed where you had a tension that you hadn't resolved yet was how you perceive yourself as a female role model, and at the same time respecting student cultures where maybe there isn't always gender equality. So can you speak about that and how you reconcile those things and why those tensions exist? Jeremy

I think it's really hard to reconcile those things. And after our interview too, I was thinking about that more and I talked to [two female social studies teachers in the school], about that. We were talking about how we want to be these strong female role models but then realizing that the things we are asking these students to do is very unfamiliar and very uncomfortable for a lot of them. And it is not culturally acceptable for many of them. So trying to figure out a way to build their confidence and show them it is OK to be a strong female. It's just [pause] It's just hard. And I don't think I have reconciled that yet. It's not a very good answer, but it's something I still think about a lot. I'm not really sure of the answer yet. Beth

Beth clearly struggled with honoring both her views of democratic equality and honoring Karen and Burmese students' patriarchal heritage culture. While acknowledging the struggle to balance these two conflicting notions, Beth did not allow the struggle to prevent her from teaching in ways which honored her views of democracy more than her desire to honor patriarchal culture. While Beth recognized and was concerned about going against patriarchal Karen and Burmese culture, she also understood immigrant students' acculturation process included the blending of cultures of home and host countries and creating cultural hybridity. To help students develop bicultural competencies, Beth advocated a position of gender equality and made pedagogical decisions which she hoped would lead to female empowerment, while simultaneously respecting Burmese and Karen cultural traditions.

Luke also acknowledged the tension between democratic notions of equality and patriarchal culture. To a greater degree than Beth, Luke felt that he had found a way to balance these conflicting notions.

If you're talking about culture, depending on what the culture is, the notion that in many cultures the male is superior to the female; and then coming to an environment; in a room where you've got a bunch of really bright females and a teacher any chance he gets, espouses notions of equality. How do you deal with that? When you're from a culture that has been sort of been from this machismo, men are the dominant force; women are sort of a secondary notion. How do you fit in there? Luke

We talked earlier about honoring heritage culture, even if it's patriarchal. How do you balance that with your social justice mission? How do you resolve those tensions?

Jeremy

[long pause]. You have to start from the position that every voice is heard. As I told my students in Civics on the opening day, "Here is where I fall on the political spectrum, I want to disclose that openly, but my job here for you is to present all sides of the issues." . . . . But the other side too - that think of patriarchal societies in the Middle East, and you see the new Arab Spring. It's a notion that you can end up in an Afghanistan where women don't have to wear headdresses and can get an education, go to school. It's not going to change immediately, or overnight. Its saying, "Here's another perspective." So to try to get them to reconcile their own desires to achieve goals that they want; at the same time saying, "That might at least get me to question how I'm acting." But it's not forcing it on them. I have students who, no doubt are, to be generous, patriarchal in their thinking; and I'm not going to change their opinion. And nor do I want to. But I at least have them leaving the classroom, thinking about and having been exposed to some other notions, then there is a hope that somewhere down the line it breeds a greater openness or tolerance to opinions which are different from their own. Luke

Luke perceived that a workable method to resolve the tensions between democratic equality and patriarchal culture was not to attempt to change students' minds, but to present multiple viewpoints in a balanced manner, while also making his position known to students. Luke advocated a classroom environment where all voices are heard. He presented patriarchal positions, positions of equality, and personally took a stand in favor of gender equality. He presented the Arab Spring as an example of empowering females in patriarchal societies. Luke did not ask his students if he had changed their minds or treat them differently if students persisted in holding patriarchal beliefs. His stated goal was to open students to the possibility of alternatives to patriarchal perspectives, in the hope that with more open minds, immigrant students in patriarchal cultures will begin to value the democratic notion of gender equality.

Perhaps a solution to this tension is offered in Stacy Lee's (2001a) study of Hmong immigrant youth and Desiree Qin's (2006) longitudinal, comparative study of boy and girl



immigrant students. Lee identifies that Hmong academic success is tied to both cultural preservation and cultural adaptation. Like Gibson (1995), Lee advocates a policy of adaptation and acculturation without assimilation. She asserts that immigrant Hmong female students were most academically successful when the students accommodated certain American cultural expectations, such as equal educational emphasis for girls and boys, and preserved cultural traditions, such as girls honoring their parents' authority and maintaining ties in the Hmong community, although she did acknowledge in another article that things did not always work out the way Hmong girls expected (2002). Qin (2006) maintains that female immigrant students are more academically successful than males across national and ethnic contexts. She concludes that girls' academic success is directly related to girls being more likely than boys to "identify with their culture of origin and . . . to choose 'additive' or 'hyphenated identities,' indicating attempts to bridge both cultures" (2006, p. 14). Both Lee and Qin argue that a strategy of additive acculturation provides the best opportunity for academic success.

**Respect for authority vs. challenging authority.** The second tension was between critical aspects of democratic citizenship and teacher efforts to honor immigrant students' heritage cultural practices of respecting authority figures.

Two participants, Luke and David, proposed that immigrant students occasionally demonstrated too much deference to the teacher authority figure, which harmed the students' academic performance. Luke and David wanted their students to consult with the teachers' about their grades, concerns, school related difficulties, as well as to communicate their learning and ask for help when it was needed. Luke and David perceived that immigrant

students accepted the teachers' instruction and grades without question, even if the students' did not understand the instruction or were puzzled by the teachers' assessments.

A big challenge with immigrant students, is almost too much deference. You are the teacher; they are the student, and they [pause] For example, some of my other students will fight tooth and nail for a grade, my immigrant students, never. They accept the grade they've got and that sort of thing. David

In an ELL class with immigrant students, you have kids who are generally very respectful; they are going to try hard. It's all sunshine and butterflies. "Thank you, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_. This is great, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_. You've taught me well!" "OK, so what was that concept again?" And you get the smile but they have no idea. They are polite in saying this but you haven't actually achieved growth in learning. That does just as much a disservice to students in their learning as the students tossing paper balls or listening to their Ipods. Luke

Interestingly, both David and Luke were complimentary about immigrant students' cultural background and support for education, yet also noted how too much deference to a teacher could also lead to lower academic performance. This finding challenges the additive acculturation model, which supports immigrant students' culture as a means of high academic performance. It appears, at least in the case of two participants in this study, too much deference to authority led to lower school performance.

What David and Luke did not mention, but is worth considering, is the other aspect of too much deference to the teacher; this is academic submissiveness and passivity. Deference to authority has the potential to help or harm immigrant students' academic performance (Thorstensson, 2008; Lee, 2001a). However, an issue not addressed by the participants is the overall unwelcoming school environment with hierarchical relationships and the role of teachers in enhancing overly passive, subordinated immigrant students (Olsen, 1996, 1997).

As illustrated above, immigrant students were respectful of authority. While participants appreciated this respect, they also recognized a tension between participants' civic philosophy of taking a critical citizenship approach. How does a Civics teacher balance an immigrants' respect for authority figures while also criticizing the acts of authority figures through critical citizenship? Robin spoke to a possible solution to this tension in the following conversation.

So that's interesting that you mention immigrants are so respectful of authority, and you said earlier one of your jobs was to challenge the status quo. Jeremy

Right! I guess in a responsible manner. Being able to understand that yes you need to understand and respect your authority figures, but to challenge [pause] if not authority figures then maybe their peers. Don't take what people say to you at face value. And apply those things as you get older to your life and don't take what so-and-so says as the truth. Look into it yourself. Have the drive to question. Robin

Here Robin suggested that all students should be given critical skills which students could apply to the context most appropriate for each individual student. According to Robin's method, immigrant students whose culture discourages challenging authority figures could still apply their critical citizenship skills to challenge other acts of injustice. This approach provides students the skills needed to practice critical citizenship skills in other areas of their lives in the United States.

Another possible solution to this tension is offered by the Washington Area Partnership for Immigrants (WAPI). One of the major suggestions from the organization's 2002 study is to connect immigrants' heritage civic traditions into the US polity. Immigrants bring different histories and civic traditions to the United States. For example, in many Latino communities, civic engagement is often associated with peaceful protest, in the Cesar Chavez tradition. For Caribbean immigrants, civic engagement is usually associated with helping neighbors and celebrating traditions (WAPI, 2002). These civic traditions could be

incorporated in Civics classrooms as different aspects of civic engagement. Teachers could conduct comparative studies of types of civic engagement and the benefits of each approach. This type of instruction would promote the additive acculturation model of supporting heritage culture, and also teach different types of civic engagement to students. Furthermore, the comparative approach would allow teachers who feel more comfortable with specific types of civic engagement to emphasize those areas. For example, teachers like Luke who embraced the critical tradition could highlight the organization, peaceful protests, and marches against House bill 4437<sup>7</sup> in 2006, and explain why he supported peaceful protests. While teachers like David, who adhere to a position of teacher neutrality, could still teach about the protests to 4437, without overtly supporting the protests. Immigrant students from heritage cultures that honor authority would be exposed to both critical expressions of citizenship as well as the “good neighborly” forms of civic engagement.

### **Outreach**

Another challenge for participants, all of whom philosophically agreed with the tenets of the additive model, was determining the party responsible for enacting the tenets. Teachers were generally strong teaching three of the tenets in their own classrooms: making Civics content relevant for immigrant students, incorporating immigrant students’ knowledge and experiences in the classroom, and expressing caring and empathy for immigrant students. However, for the other two tenets - maintaining the heritage culture of immigrant students and promoting home-school relations – teachers were either uncertain about whose responsibility it was, or suggested that schools were responsible for those tenets.

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<sup>7</sup> HR 4437 was a bill passed by the House of Representatives which took a hard-line stand against illegal immigration including a provision which set a 3-year prison minimum to American citizens who “house a removed alien.” The passage of the bill sparked massive protests across in the country, including 400,000-600,000 protestors in Los Angeles. On May 1, 2006, many activists participated in the “Great American Boycott,” also known as “A Day Without Immigrants.”

Five of the six participants philosophically agreed with the additive acculturation tenet of promoting positive home-school relations. One of the participants, David, was explicit that home-school relations were the responsibility of the school, while five of the participants suggested that schools and individual teachers should jointly make efforts to promote home-school relations. However, participants intimated that home-school relations were most effective when conducted at the school level, rather than by individual teachers. The following quotes demonstrate that participants' perceived school outreach programs were the best way to promote an additive acculturation approach.

I think sometimes those populations fall through the cracks. . . . If they [administration] are making an all-call to parents and it's in English, immigrant parents won't be able to understand it. . . . That is one example of where more outreach and more awareness of the needs of immigrant students could be better.  
Robin

Having clubs that students can join and support culture and show other students of the school parts of their culture. That is important. Instead of making them feel like outsiders, like they have to assimilate immediately to our way. Accepting their differences and learning about them and respecting them. Beth

You talked about valuing certain parts of culture, *CultureFest* [an annual school sponsored event] does that very well because it gives different groups a platform. And within the school creates community and allows parents and students from different groups to work on something together. But it allows . . . it comes from the student groups themselves. So we're not telling the Burmese students what they should bring to *CultureFest*. It's a decision that they make. Madeline

The outreach efforts highlighted in the quotes above – contacting parents through phone calls in heritage languages, developing clubs specifically for immigrant students, and cultural festivals - suggest that participants ascribed to the additive acculturation model and strove to help immigrant students maintain heritage culture, yet implicitly positioned school outreach as the purview of the school administration. The interviews and focus group data

revealed little mention of individual teacher efforts to promote home-school relations with immigrant families. Furthermore, participants implicitly defined school outreach in two ways: keeping parents informed and validating heritage cultures through school-sponsored activities. These efforts are admirable. However, the outreach efforts suggested by participants are only a part of the more comprehensive suggestions in the literature on home-school relations with immigrant families (Gibson, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999). For example, in addition to inviting immigrant families into the school, Gibson & Hidalgo (2009) suggest teachers should involve themselves in outreach efforts by going into immigrant communities. Other suggestions for immigrant community outreach programs include strong counseling programs, in which counselors are specifically prepared to work with immigrant students and are supported by teachers who are knowledgeable about the counseling programs and have established working relationships with the counselors (Cooper, 2002). In other words, most participants were philosophically aligned to the additive acculturation tenet of promoting home-school relations through outreach, yet did not practice outreach in their own teaching, instead relying on the school administration to do so. Furthermore, participants were not fully informed about all of the outreach options available to teachers.

This sub-finding regarding outreach presents challenges to the additive acculturation model. Gibson (1995) indicates that teachers in her study claimed to support the model but did not demonstrate teaching strategies which promoted the additive model. She also finds little support at the school level for an additive strategy. Participant in this study invariably supported the additive acculturation model philosophically; however, there was some confusion about whose responsibility it was to promote outreach with immigrant communities. Teachers were more likely to suggest the school was responsible for home-

school relations than to take the responsibility on their own. Gibson postulates that immigrant student academic success would be enhanced if schools and teachers both practiced a strategy of additive acculturation.

In summary, the finding for the relationship between teachers' Civics philosophy and the additive acculturation model is that all teachers ascribe philosophically to the model; however, there were three tensions between participants' democratic Civics philosophy and the additive model. Extracting five key tenets from the additive acculturation model (1995) as a conceptual tool, all participants taught two of the tenets – incorporating immigrant students' knowledge, experiences and heritage culture in the classroom and expressing caring, empathy and tolerance for immigrant students. Five of the six participants taught another tenet - provided instruction that was relevant and meaningful specifically to immigrant students. Although teachers advocated the importance of home-school relationships for immigrant students, none of the participants provided evidence that they made particular efforts to promote this relationship with the parents of immigrant students. Rather, the teachers perceived that home-school relations were the purview of the school level administration. Teachers advocated for school letters and “all-calls” to be delivered in heritage languages, promoted cultural festivals and student clubs specifically for immigrant students - implicitly placing home-school relations the school leaderships' responsibility. At least in the case of promoting home-school relations, perhaps the disconnect can be attributed to a lack of clarity on whose responsibility are home-school relations with immigrant families – the school or individual teachers. Finally, five of the six participants ascribed to the belief that teachers should encourage immigrant students to maintain their heritage

culture and value aspects of American culture. However, only three of the teachers shared evidence that they practiced this tenet through instructional activities.

Table 6

*Participants' Alignment with Additive Acculturation Tenets*

| Additive acculturation tenet   | Agreed philosophically  | Provided evidence they practice in their instruction |
|--|---|--|
| 1.Encourages students to maintain heritage culture while selectively adopting some aspects of American culture               | Luke, Robin, Beth, Madeline, Greg   | Luke, Robin, Beth                                    |
| 2.Instruction is relevant and meaningful to immigrant students   | Luke, Robin, Beth, Madeline, Greg   | same   |
| 3.Incorporates immigrant students' knowledge, life experiences, and heritage cultures in the classroom                       | All   | All  |
| 4.Promotes home-school relations   | <i>(Advocate as a school-level responsibility)</i><br>Robin, Luke, Beth, Madeline, Greg | None   |
| 5.Express empathy, tolerance, and caring for immigrant students and knowledgeable about immigrant students' heritage culture | All   | All  |



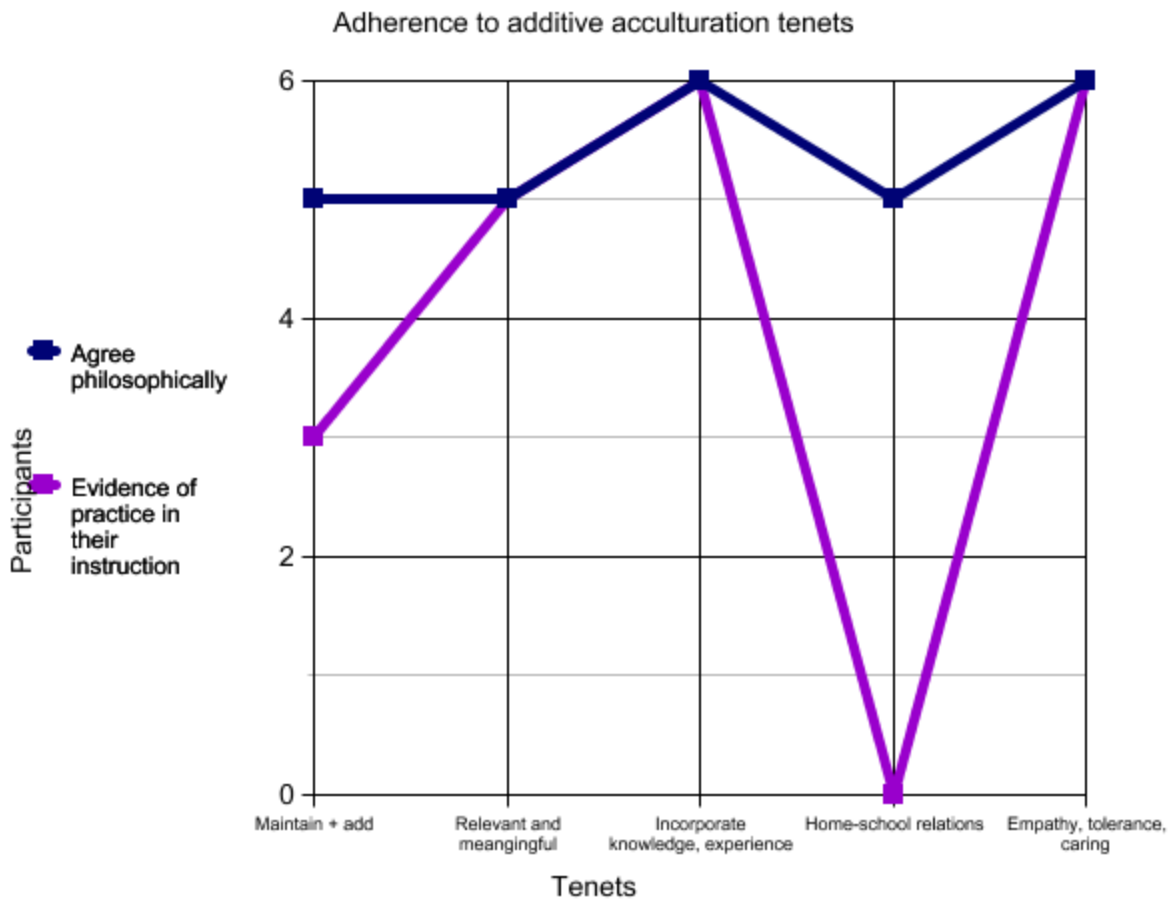


Figure 2. Visual representation of alignment with additive acculturation tenets

**Participants prioritized national level citizenship at the expense of local and global citizenship and had difficulty making the connection between the three levels, or applying the levels of citizenship to the contexts of immigrant students.**

The second finding specific to teaching Civics to immigrant students is ways in which participants perceived and taught democratic citizenship education at the local, national, and global levels, and what this meant for teaching immigrant students. As global education scholars maintain (Gaudelli, 2003), local, national, and global levels of citizenship do not occur in a vacuum, each level is invariably connected to one another. Teachers in this study, however, placed different priorities and used different teaching strategies in order to teach local, national, and global citizenship education. Furthermore, teachers had difficulty seeing connections between the levels. Teachers also took different approaches to levels of

citizenship for immigrant students, but again had difficulty seeing the importance of global citizenship for immigrant students. This finding about teaching levels of citizenship has implications for immigrant students. First generation and 1.5-generation immigrant students are, by definition, either new citizens or non-citizens to the United States. Furthermore, transnational immigrant students, whose families intend a return to the heritage country or another country, may not value national level citizenship in the same manner as immigrant or non-immigrant students who intend to stay in the United States.

There are two sub-findings about the relationship between local, national, and global citizenship education. Teachers prioritized national citizenship at the expense of local and global citizenship and teachers took different approaches to teaching the levels of citizenship to immigrant students.

Before answering this question, some explication of the levels of citizenship is necessary. The term citizenship is complicated because it can hold a multitude of definitions. As Judith Shklar quips, “There is no notion more central in politics than citizenship, and none more variable in history, or contested in theory” (1991, p. 1). Citizenship traditionally has three definitions: a legal category bestowing rights in a political body, a designation of membership to indicate inclusion in an organization, and behaviors associated with democratic participation (Goodman, 2009). The remainder of this finding will focus on the third definition, behaviors associated with democratic participation. Behaviors associated with democratic participation can occur in a traditional polity – national elections, voting for mayor, etc. Behaviors can also occur in non-traditional polities. For example, a person living in North Carolina may or may not be a citizen of Chapel Hill but may practice civic action in the Chapel Hill polity by volunteering at the Chapel Hill homeless shelter. The polity could

also be global. For example, if a student in Chapel Hill raised money to purchase rain forest acreage in Indonesia for the purpose of reducing global carbon emissions, then that student performed citizenship at the global polity level. First, here are the definitions of each of these terms for the purposes of this section:

Local citizenship education – knowledge of and civic engagement in a local polity. Examples include being aware of local issues such as recycling projects, knowing the structures of local government, speaking to locally elected officials, community service in a neighborhood.

National citizenship education – knowledge of and civic engagement in the national polity. Examples include being aware of the presidential candidates, knowing the political structures of the United States, writing letters to a Senator.

Global citizenship education – Though there is no consensus on the definition of global citizenship education (Gaudelli & Fernekes, 2004), in this study employs the following definition: knowledge of and civic engagement in global issues. Examples include awareness of global issues such as environmental degradation and terrorism, developing a website to raise awareness of a global issue.

**Prioritizing national citizenship education** – *“Maybe, unfortunately, I teach it from a national level.” David*

Teachers prioritized national level citizenship education while marginalizing local and global citizenship education. Four factors influenced teachers’ decisions to focus on national citizenship education and marginalize local and global citizenship education:

1. Standard course of study focused on national level

2. End of course tests focused on national level
3. Teachers did not see the potential connections between the three levels in the standard course of study
4. Teachers were not prepared to make the connections

The following quotes speak to participants' frustrations with the standard course of study's almost exclusive focus on the national level.

Maybe, unfortunately, I teach it [Civics] from a national level - responsibilities in the U.S. Certainly we talk about volunteerism and local responsibilities, we do mention those things. You'd like to see it [local citizenship], with Civics, you'd think that would be a giant part of what we're doing, but it's the smallest. David

I have to say that I do spend more time focusing on the national level. I feel like that are some of the basic, core principles that students need to know. I feel that is something I'm trying to work in more - more on the local level. Because I do tend to focus [on national level]. The standard course of study is geared more towards national level government. Robin

We have one, fairly short unit on state and local government; the rest of it is all tailored to national stuff. One NC and [city] unit. The curriculum is geared towards national stuff. . . . It is hard sometimes to make time in the curriculum for bigger projects that I think are more enriching and valuable for them. I'd love to do a unit on community organizing but I can't do that very well in the structure of school. Greg

These quotations demonstrated that teachers were following the curriculum to focus on national citizenship. This case was particularly interesting for David, because David's life revolves around what he perceived as local citizenship - teaching in local schools and serving as the local magistrate. This finding speaks to the power of the formal curriculum in shaping the decisions teachers make (Thornton, 2005).

Although teachers acknowledged the importance of global citizenship, they did not perceive the Civics formal curriculum allowed them to focus extensively on this level of citizenship. Many teachers did not include global citizenship in any form.

Civics is an American government class so we don't talk about world affairs as much, but that is valuable as well. . . . In the course of a Civics class it is, global citizenship is important but I don't know that it is [pause] I'm having a tough time thinking of how it fits in the scope of a Civics class. I think you can teach good character traits that are good at local, national, and global levels, but I don't know how it [global] would fit into the curriculum now as written. Madeline

In terms of global stuff, I cover that more in the economics section of the course. We get into the global economy. . . . I had kids check the labels of their clothes to see where stuff is made. We talk about how we don't make things here anymore. What does that mean? What does it mean if your shirt is made by an 8 year old in Bangladesh? Most of them haven't really thought about their role in the world as a consumer. Greg

[Prioritizing local, national, and global citizenship education] it's tough because each is important. If I were to have to rank them, I think before you can understand your place in the global world, you need to understand your place at the national level. I think a lot of times doing that sometimes falls into the local level. But I don't think that [global citizenship] should be put on the back-burner. Robin

Understanding the relationship between global, local, and national citizenship was a challenge for participants. Anatoli Rapoport (2010) identifies similar findings in his study of Indiana teachers and their views of global citizenship education in which social studies teachers were simply not being prepared to incorporate notions of global citizenship or to explore the relationship between local, national, and global citizenship education. One of Rapoport's participants stated about global citizenship education, "We cannot teach what we do not know" (2010, p. 179). While it is certainly a challenge to teach global citizenship given the US-centric Civics Standard Course of Study, global education scholars (Merryfield, 2000) argue it is a disservice to students to not assist students in making these connections. This is clearly a challenge to social studies teacher educators to help preservice teachers make connections between local, national, and global citizenship education.

In an interesting counter-example to this finding, Robin sponsored a genocide awareness club at her school. Through this after-school club, she had students raise

awareness of a global issue - eliminating genocide. Through this program, students engaged with a global issue through local and national action - students conducted awareness campaigns in the school and contacted elected representatives. In her actions with the genocide awareness club, Robin met all five prerequisites of competent democratic education.

We write editors to Congressmen, we call 1-800-genocide . . . Seeing how they respond as the sponsor, makes me want to tell kids, “It’s OK to be passionate about a cause.” Think about what’s important to you, it helps you analyze what you think . . . it teaches you how to take apart a problem and understand both sides of the issue but also be able to develop your ideas about that issue as well. . . . What we do is teach and spotlight different genocides around the world. Kids from October, for example, made a brochure on Somalia and the things they are doing there. What they do is email it to the student body, and also make fliers and give them out at lunch. The kids read it. It took that to help me appreciate; these kids feel like they are really connected with school when they get involved in something important to them. Robin

One of the great limitations of this study is that I did not follow-up with Robin for her rationale on why her sponsored club practiced more thorough citizenship education at all three levels than her Civics class. It was striking to see a Civics teacher elect to marginalize global citizenship in her Civics class, while practicing local, national, and global democratic citizenship so effectively in a voluntary, after school organization.

**Local, national, and global citizenship education for immigrant students –**  
*“Immigrants are defined outside of citizenship, so I focus on participation and community involvement” Greg*

Participants reported various responses to which level of citizenship should be emphasized for immigrant students. There was no consensus on this topic. Three perspectives emerged:

1. Citizenship education for immigrant students should focus on the national level before local or global level since immigrant students need to know and value

democratic values usually associated with a nation-state, such as rule of law, one person-one vote, etc.

I think maybe with new immigrant students that ideas of national citizenship are maybe most significant - at least understanding what it means to live in a democracy, for example. That's a national idea. Then, once that understanding is there, and for a lot of non-immigrant students that understanding is already there because they've grown up here, heard it before in the school system, so you can jump more quickly to the action in the local level. I think that should still happen with immigrant students, but you have to cover the bases and make sure there is a knowledge of what it means to be an American in a democracy. Beth

2. Citizenship education for immigrant students should focus on the local level. Since immigrants are often excluded from aspects of national citizenship (e.g., voting), immigrant students can still practice active citizenship at the local level through service.

Immigrants are defined outside of citizenship, so I focus on participation and community involvement and being agents of change because that includes everybody. . . . Certainly, there are organizations too that people can be a part of. El Centra Hispana. There are a lot of different groups. Greg

3. Citizenship education for immigrant students should look no different from other students' citizenship education.

Does that change for immigrant students? Is it still the same where the knowledge is focused at the national level but action takes place locally? Or does it look differently for immigrant students? Jeremy

I think it would be the same. Robin

There was obviously little consensus on approaches to the levels of citizenship when teaching immigrant students. Teachers were more consistent in their perceptions of local, national, and global citizenship. Namely, national citizenship earned the most time and attention because of the standard course of study and high stakes tests, while local and global

citizenship were marginalized. Because of the disparate approaches specific to immigrant students, more research needs to be conducted in this area.

On a positive note, four participants perceived that citizens should embrace active citizenship at the local level, and, in fact, perceived students had more agency at the local level. Teachers taught that citizens should vote, critique, contact representatives, and attend school board meetings, to name just a few aspects of critical civic involvement. This distinction was highlighted by teacher service learning projects, connecting students to local advocacy organizations, writing editorials, and voicing their concerns directly to local leaders.

For social studies teacher educators, these findings are also revealing. Teacher educators should encourage Civics teachers to promote active and critical citizenship at all levels. For example, teachers could cite examples of young people who have been agents of change on national issues. Young people can have agency at the national level – this belief must not be abandoned if we are to subscribe to Kinchloe’s (2005) critical democratic civics. It is also clear that most of the teachers in this study were not able to make connections between the three levels. If Civics teachers are to teach in an integrative fashion, as has been advocated by NCSS (2008), then teachers must be prepared to teach the relationships between the local, national, and global levels. Teacher educators should continue to harness and further promote teacher perceptions of the agency young people possess at the local level. Much has been written about local service projects (Root & Billig, 2008; Wade, 2000). However, in addition to service, teachers should promote critical local citizenship by not only having students serve their communities, but also work to make their communities more just places through critique, raising awareness, and organizing. Examples of this



include writing editorials to the newspaper, linking students to local advocacy organizations, and reflective/critical service learning – all of which were promoted by teachers in this study.

For teaching Civics to immigrant students, this finding is considerably problematic. Although the teachers in this study were able to articulate many of the needs and abilities of immigrant students, none of the participants recognized the transnational and transcultural nature of many immigrant families and the subsequent implications for teaching citizenship to immigrant students. Global citizenship was de-emphasized by all of the teachers in this study, while immigrant students, because of their lived experiences, are potentially well-positioned to thrive in Civics classes which address global citizenship education. Immigrant students could also offer greater understanding to non-immigrant students in Civics classes with a greater emphasis on global citizenship. The topic of immigration itself, which all participants taught in great detail, is a global phenomenon, influenced by national and global policy, with huge impacts on the local area of Central North Carolina. Yet none of the teachers approached the topic of immigration at the global level, with only two teachers studying state level immigration policies (Arizona and Alabama immigration laws).

This finding also challenges other social studies literature. For example, Merry Merryfield (2000) found that white teachers with international experiences were more likely to adopt a global perspective and teach global citizenship. Merryfield's finding did not hold true in this study. Two participants, Greg and Madeline, had extensive overseas experiences and both teachers were bilingual. Despite these lived experiences, the participants did not teach towards global citizenship because, in Madeline's words, "I don't see how it fits into the [Civics] curriculum as written." If Civics teachers are to incorporate global citizenship education into the Civics course in order to more effectively promote a strategy of additive

acculturation, the Civics curriculum will need to be expanded to include global citizenship *and* Civics' teachers' ability to teach global citizenship education will both need to be addressed.

This finding supports the major argument of this dissertation - participants made efforts to support immigrant students but were obstructed from doing so by several factors. Participants strove to help immigrant students learn about citizenship, but were obstructed from doing so in the most effective manner because of the following factors: SCOS and high stakes tests which focused exclusively on the national level; lack of knowledge about the ways to make connections between local, national, and global citizenship; lack of knowledge about the transnational nature of many immigrant students; and lack of preparation in teacher education programs and in-service training to make the connections between the levels and move beyond the limitations of the SCOS.

**Teachers perceived duties, rights & responsibilities as central to Civics instruction yet took vastly different approaches to “rights talk” for immigrants**

The third finding of teacher perceptions specific to teaching Civics to immigrant students is the relationship between teaching duties, rights and responsibilities, and “rights talk” for immigrant students. This relationship has two sub-findings: all teachers perceived understanding duties, rights and responsibilities as the foundation of Civics instruction and varied emphasis and varied teaching strategies in helping students understand rights for immigrants.

**Duties, responsibilities, and rights are the foundation of Civics teaching – “I take the notion of democracy seriously.” Luke**

Teachers consistently focused on rights and responsibilities as the foundation of their Civics instruction. This finding held true for each teacher, regardless of the teachers' Civics teaching philosophy or the degree to which they taught critical citizenship. Although teachers prioritized rights and responsibilities in different ways, each perceived that at the most basic level students must understand their civic rights and responsibilities as a minimum course requirement. For many teachers, teaching rights and responsibilities was directly tied to their philosophy of teaching Civics.

I hope that at a very basic level they leave the class at least knowing what their rights are. . . If some of them leave with only that [pause] I'm happy with that too. Beth

You want them to understand the basics of duties and responsibilities. Understanding what they must do and why they must do it. And what is important even if they don't have to do it. Duties and responsibilities come back a lot. David

My Civics philosophy is I take the notion of democracy seriously. It is your job, even though we're in a representative democracy, to still choose who is in power. Or, if not, how do you change society if you can't change it through the traditional electoral process - the right to petition, the right to assemble, the right to express yourself through protest. Luke

Don't just vote. There are a lot of other things you do with your time, that make a democracy viable and also vibrant. Because you could vote and not have any idea of who you're voting for. I think the idea of democracy relates to having certain rights and knowing those rights bring certain responsibilities. Madeline

For these teachers, teaching duties, rights and responsibilities of citizens was tied to their teaching philosophies. As Beth suggested, if students leave the Civics course with nothing other than knowing their rights and responsibilities, she was satisfied.

Many participants spoke about the importance of prioritizing duties, rights, and responsibilities by beginning with these concepts. These teachers could have chosen any topic to begin the school year, but chose to begin with duties, rights and responsibilities in order to signify that rights and responsibilities are the cornerstone of the Civics course.

We clearly define what it means to be a citizen of a nation. And we clearly define what the Civics duties and responsibilities are. Day one of the class we are talking about civic duties in terms of registering for the draft when you're 18, going to school, five civic duties, paying taxes, obeying the law, and serving on a jury. Civic responsibilities are different - voting, volunteering, those things come up very early in the class. Greg

As far as duties, the first unit I open the year with is the very basic, "What does it mean to be a citizen? As an American citizen, what are the things you are required to do and what are the things you are expected to do?" And then we talk about required things like attending school, paying taxes, and registering for the draft. And then we talk about, "Well, is that all it takes to be a good citizen? What are some other things that a good citizen should do and ways they should act?" We get into volunteering and helping your community, just being informed about what is going on around you. Voting, how important voting is and why it does matter. Beth

Our first whole unit deals with citizenship and Civics; the difference between a duty and a responsibility; what is voting, how do you get to vote, what are requirements to be a citizen. In terms of responsibilities, we spend a lot of time early in the class and even in the current unit we're on, talking about voting and elections. David

Teachers prioritized rights and responsibilities in their instruction for two reasons. The first reason promoted students' individual good; the second promoted the common good. First, teachers perceived that students benefit in their personal, non-academic lives by having a strong understanding of their rights and responsibilities. These teachers focused on the importance of rights and responsibilities in their students' individual lives beyond the course.

It's [Civics] the class I wanted to teach because knowing your rights and duties as a citizen is something you need for the rest of your life. I really do think we're learning how to live in America. Your rights, what rights do you have, why do you have them, why did the founding fathers think you deserve those rights, how did the courts interpret those rights. I mean even if they drop out of school at 16, which we hope none of them do, these are things they will come into contact with at some point. They need to know why you should follow the news and know what's going on in the community because stuff that happens affects you. Beth

My big push is, not that they have to all go campaign, but that they all understand what government does and how much it affects their lives. To be a well-rounded individual you have to stay informed. . . I give them the tools they need to learn how to do that. Robin

The second reason teachers prioritized duties, rights, and responsibilities was the teachers' commitment to improving society at large. These teachers either wanted students to carry forward democratic principles to keep America's democracy vibrant, or they wanted students to improve the communities in which they live.

Having rights means there is something you should do to make yourself of value to the group. Madeline

You know we champion liberty in this country. We champion diversity, we champion notions of equality, where are these things we talk about that are important? That is another way to try to say, "Knowing your rights is important." Know the history of how America got to where it is today, the struggle of large groups of people to make it a fairer, more just, more balanced place is important to understand. Luke

We talk about different rights and responsibilities. We ask "What is tied to American citizenship?" Voting, paying taxes, obeying laws; understanding that you have a voice at the same time. We talk about voter apathy. Why they think people think voting doesn't matter. Trying to expel those misbeliefs. Why not vote?! This is a privilege and your duty. You won't be hauled off to jail. But that is their way of empowering themselves and changing what they don't like. Robin

Participants taught their students the difference between duties, rights and responsibilities. Participants defined duties as things you *have* to do such as going to school and paying taxes, responsibilities as things you *should* do such as voting and volunteering, and rights as things you are *entitled* to do such as protesting, petitioning government officials, and voting. Although teachers focused heavily on duties and responsibilities, participants provided little explanation of the relationship between duties and responsibilities. Only Madeline argued that civic responsibilities keep "democracy vibrant and viable." Beth in particular pushed her students to question, "What makes a good citizen?" in an effort to promote student participation by embracing civic responsibilities. Each participant, excepting David, strongly encouraged his or her students to practice civic responsibilities in their own lives.

The lack of connection between duties and responsibilities is problematic for students' understanding of the proper functioning of democracy. For example, teachers established that school attendance was a duty, yet did not connect this duty to civic responsibilities in their schooling and post-schooling lives. In fact, none of the participants established that one of the major reasons public education was established was to perpetuate democracy (Kinchloe, 2005).

Rights were not so clearly defined as duties and responsibilities. Although rights were mentioned as many times as duties and responsibilities, the majority of examples provided by participants were duties and responsibilities, not rights. Only half of the participants provided specific examples of rights: Luke - right to petition, assemble, express yourself through protest, and probable cause; Madeline – rights of the accused, Beth – freedom of speech. This is potentially troubling. It is reasonable to assume that a lack of concrete examples of rights leads students to see rights as less valuable than duties and responsibilities. Theoretically, a lack of focus on rights could disempower students in a Civics class. If students are only expected to give to the polity - without their consent through duties, or with their consent through responsibilities – and not receive anything in return, students may decide not to participate in the polity, which could lead to lower civic engagement.

**“Rights talk” for immigrant students** – *“When we were going over rights, I had to keep reminding them - this is only if you’re a US citizen.” Luke*

Although all of the participants prioritized rights, duties, and responsibilities in their Civics teaching, “rights talk” about immigrants varied greatly from teaching to teacher. In fact, even the degree to which teachers were even willing to broach the subject of rights for immigrants varied greatly.

For Luke, who practiced the most critical form of democratic citizenship of the participants in this study, “rights talk” was clarifying for immigrant students that they were more vulnerable and held fewer rights than US citizens, and also to critique the United States for providing rights only to people who are official citizens.<sup>8</sup> He taught this distinction in order to empower students with the rights they do have while in the United States.

When we were going over rights, I had to keep reminding them - this is only if you're a US citizen. And they asked, “What does that mean for us? What if we're here legally on a visa?” Well that's an excellent question. So it ties into the fact that we have rights we champion in the Declaration of Independence, [but] they aren't universal. And you have to be careful if you don't have the full protection of citizenship. How are you going to act accordingly because of that? . . . And then the most important part, ask yourself critically, “Does it make sense that we have these differences? Is this the right balance between citizens and non-citizens?” Luke

Madeline took a similar approach to Luke, in that she clarified the rights of immigrants in her teaching, although Madeline's approach was from a less critical perspective. She was not specific to which rights she was referring.

For the immigrant groups I work with, authority can be very intimidating because they are new to the area, don't speak the language very well, and I think understanding despite that, most of the time authorities are there to help you. But that you also have certain rights, even if you are an immigrant student. That can be a challenge, especially with undocumented students to know that whether they are a citizen or not, they have rights that should protect them and people and groups that want to help them, even if they don't have the rights as a citizen. Madeline

However, one participant was reluctant to discuss the rights of immigrants. For David, who holds a teacher-neutral position and who was the least critical of the participants,

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<sup>8</sup> I did not question Luke to which rights to which he was referring. As clarification for the reader, immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, are entitled to most basic human rights in the United States such as K-12 public education, emergency medical services, the right to an attorney if accused of a crime, and others. However, immigrants do not have all the rights entitled to US citizens. For example, immigrants do not have the right to vote, the right to challenge court decisions on deportation hearings even if an attorney makes a mistake (Slater, 2009), and some limitations on firearm possession (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, 2011). Undocumented immigrants also have curtailed rights in terms of access to student loans, obtaining driver's licenses in some states (Frosh, 2012), among others.

talking about the rights of immigrants was a cause for anxiety. While he acknowledged that it was important to bring up rights talk for immigrant students, he was more concerned with causing conflict in the classroom and therefore alienating immigrant students.

Do you bring that [rights of immigrants] into class? Jeremy

Certainly. But you have to be careful. You've got to know your class because that can turn into a fireball if they are anti-immigration. While I think that is an important discussion, you don't want to open a can of worms you can't close. I don't want to alienate my immigrant population. It's a bit of a catch-22. David

For most of the other teachers in this study, the main distinction in rights talk was ensuring that immigrant students have a foundation of knowledge in place. These teachers asked themselves, "What are the most essential things immigrant students need to know in Civics?"

As a Civics teacher, what are your main responsibilities for preparing immigrant students? Jeremy

Teaching them the basics of American government, how our legal and political system works. They are living here and eventually going to become US citizens, then what's this country they are living in all about. What rights are they going to have when they are a citizen? What rights do they have when they are not a citizen but living here? I think giving them the basic foundational knowledge that people take for granted. . . . you have to make sure the foundation is in place. You have to think about the best way to convey the information to the students, and also think about what is the most essential information, what are the big pieces they absolutely have to leave the course with, and how do you make sure they leave with those pieces. Beth

We also talk about rights and duties of legal immigrants. They are able to understand what rights they have; what duties and responsibilities they are also responsible for. Beth

[What's most important] particularly in a Civics class, with the whole idea of going through citizenship and what it is, why is it important, what is a duty, a responsibility? Those type of things. Trying to make sure they understand the power they have as a citizen. Robin



Four of the six participants argued that immigrant students were particularly interested in rights and responsibilities discussions and activities more than other Civics topics. Two teachers identified refugee students as a group who were particularly interested in rights talk, because they had severely curtailed rights in their heritage country.

But I think a little more so with the immigrant students; possibly because the rights of the accused are new to them in the American system. “Whoa, I have that right?” So Miranda rights, search warrants – things non-immigrant students are already familiar with. Madeline

[Refugee students are] unique in depending on where they are from - the rights, like freedom of speech, they didn’t have in their home country. They say “You really can say almost anything you want to?” and I say “Yeah, you can, and you don’t have to worry about the government coming after you.” Beth

You said, “Refugees feel very powerfully American.” Can you talk more about that? Jeremy

I think they identify strongly, because they came from a situation of a lot of violence, abuse, war and horrible backgrounds. . . . There are elements that they miss of their home country. But there is safety and freedom here and I think they associate that with being American. I think that is what makes them feel more strongly attached to the country. Madeline

In summary, the teachers in this study had vastly different approaches to rights talk – from David who carefully and cautiously approached the subject, to Luke who embraced immigrant rights talk as a way to empower immigrants and promote tolerance. Refugee students were identified as a special sub-group of immigrants for whom rights talk was particularly significant. The conflicting data provided in this finding makes it difficult to provide recommendations to Civics teachers and teacher educators. Despite their disparate approaches, it was clear participants perceived the importance of talking with immigrant students and non-immigrant students about rights and rights distinctions.

This category of findings related to the centrality of duties, rights and responsibilities – duties, rights and responsibilities as the foundation of Civics, and rights talk for immigrants – speaks to Civics teachers making professional decisions to prioritize certain aspects of the curriculum over others. For this topic, unlike so many of the others, teachers never referred to the standard course of study or the End-of-Course exam. Rather than defaulting to what was deemed important by the state, these teachers perceived that duties, rights and responsibilities were the most valuable content the students needed to know. By prioritizing rights and responsibilities, the teachers in this study acted as user-developers (Ross, 2006) of the Civics curriculum which placed the needs of their students at least on par with the state mandated curriculum.

It is perhaps also valuable to note what teachers neglected to say regarding duties, rights, and responsibilities. Teachers were not specific about the source of rights and responsibilities. For example, The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights is distinctly different source of rights than the Bill of Rights or the United States Constitution. However, it is striking that when prioritizing rights and responsibilities, the core of the participants' Civics instruction, the teachers did not consider the source of those rights.

Additionally, many of the teachers neglected to discuss the structural inequality of rights in the contemporary United States. Granted, many of the teachers (Luke, Beth, Madeline, Greg) noted that non-citizens have fewer rights than citizens, and two teachers (Luke and Beth) noted that minors have fewer rights than adults. However, only Luke taught his students that gay Americans are denied the right to marriage. Social studies researchers (Schmidt, 2010; Hess, 2009) critique the field for not addressing this issue, and call for social studies teachers and teacher educators to address the issue of the “rights gap” between the

ideal and reality, particularly for LGBTQ issues such as gay marriage. Furthermore, only two teachers, Luke and Greg, taught that the wealthy, while they do not necessarily possess more rights, are granted a greater voice in American democracy than those who do not have wealth. This sentiment is echoed by E. Wayne Ross (2006) who argues that social studies scholars and educators have been complicit in not critiquing political and economic dominance by wealthy elites.

While rights and responsibilities were central to their Civics instruction, many of the teachers in this study did not acknowledge the fact that there is still a wide gap between the democratic ideal and the democratic reality. Challenging the “rights gap” presents opportunities for teachers to engage students in critical democratic citizenship. Addressing rights gap issues for immigrants is an opportunity to promote additive acculturation.

### **Contextual Trends**

This section will briefly summarize how several contextual factors seemed to influence how teachers’ perceived teaching immigrant students. These are not presented as arguments for causality. Rather, this section highlights the trends which emerged from the data analysis. Although there were not huge differences based on the contextual factors, trends emerged for three contextual factors: travel, gender, and type of school.

Participants noted that domestic and international travel experiences helped prepare them to teach immigrant students. Specifically, those who had extensive travel experiences perceived that their travel experiences led them to empathize with immigrant students and were more likely to see the benefits of teaching in an additive fashion. This finding is congruent with findings reported in the research literature (e.g., Chang, 2002). One

participant, Robin, specifically credited extensive travel as the key factor with helping her to understand that people from different cultures can learn from one another, and to view cultural hybridity as a source of strength. Two participants, Madeline and Greg, perceived that travel to Peru and Mexico, respectively, increased their knowledge of Latin cultures and helped them to be more empathetic and understanding of immigrant students from Central and South America.

All of the female participants credited gender as a significant factor in the ways in which they perceived teaching immigrant students. Robin, for example, recognized that her lived experience as a middle class, white American did not necessarily prepare her to understand or empathize with the experiences of immigrant students, who she believed are discriminated against. However, she drew on her lived experiences as a female in a male-dominated society and her knowledge of the long history of discrimination against women as a means to empathize with the struggles facing immigrant groups. Furthermore, the challenges faced by women in the United States and the collective action taken by men and women to attempt to overcome the challenges were points of emphasis in her Civics teaching. Part of her motivation for focusing on women facing and overcoming discrimination was to inspire immigrant students to take collective action and demand equality. Madeline and Beth, the other two female participants, also credited the role of gender in their perceptions of teaching immigrant students. Madeline and Beth strove to be female role models for female immigrant students in particular. To a much greater degree than the other participants, Madeline and Beth identified tensions between their Civics goal of teaching gender equality and with respecting patriarchal cultures.

The type of school in which the participants worked also seemed to influence teacher perceptions of immigrant students. Teachers in suburban schools perceived more positive relations between immigrant and non-immigrant students, while teachers in urban schools perceived much more tension between immigrant and non-immigrant students. Teachers in suburban schools also perceived that more attention and resources were being directed specifically towards immigrant students, compared to teachers in urban and rural schools.

### **Conclusion**

The findings presented in this chapter suggest that teachers have positive but complicated perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students. Taken together, the three findings presented in the chapter support the central argument of this dissertation - six self-selected, reflective practitioners who had different personal and professional backgrounds and taught in different types of schools, all had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students and strove to support immigrant students academically and socially and encouraged students to maintain their heritage culture, yet were obstructed from doing so by a series of contextual factors and professional limitations. In sum, these teachers enjoyed teaching Civics to immigrant students and strove to help students but were not always able to do so.

Participants taught in central North Carolina, a “new gateway” for immigrants which has had little preparation for teaching immigrant students (Fix & Passel, 2003). This situation is similar to Gibson’s (1995) work with Punjabi immigrant students attending school in a “new gateway” area of rural California. While the teachers in Gibson’s study philosophically agreed with the additive model but did not practice all the tenets in their

classrooms, teachers in this study performed more admirably than the teachers highlighted in Gibson's study. It is likely that the self-selected nature of the participants in this study contributed to the overall positive perceptions of the teachers. It is possible that teachers who were more positive about teaching immigrant students elected to participate in the pre-study and to participate in the dissertation.

Although participants adhered to more closely to the model than the teachers in Gibson's study, there was a range in how well teachers adhered to different tenets and also some disconnect between participants philosophical agreement with the model and implementation of the model's tenets. Overall, participants practiced three of the tenets very well – incorporating immigrant students' knowledge and life experiences, focusing on content specifically meaningful to immigrant students, and expressing empathy and caring for immigrant students. Although participants exhibited empathy and caring, participants were not completely informed about the complexities of immigrant students' experiences. Teachers implied that promoting a positive home-school relationship, a key tenet of the additive model, was the purview of the school administration rather than the teachers. Finally, three of the six participants provided evidence that their teaching encourages students to both maintain their heritage culture and embrace positive aspects of American culture.

In the concluding chapter, I will summarize the findings, discuss implications and applications of this research study, posit a model for teaching Civics to immigrant students, and suggest future lines of inquiry.

## **Chapter 6**

### CONCLUSION

This study has shed light on teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new immigrant gateway, central North Carolina. A central purpose of this dissertation is to overcome the conflation of ELL literature and the non-linguistic aspects of teaching Civics to immigrant students. Also lacking in the literature are pedagogies specific to immigrant students, apart from linguistic considerations, and Civics teacher perceptions of teaching immigrant students. This study weds two theoretical frameworks: Gibson's (1995) additive acculturation and a framework developed by merging aspects of the components of democratic citizenship education (Root & Billig, 2008) and Kinchloe's critical democratic Civics (2005).

The data in this study prioritized teachers' voices in order to understand how teachers perceived teaching Civics to immigrant students. Teaching immigrants from Central and South America and Asia as well as Southeast Asian refugees in suburban, urban, and rural schools, participants in this study are uniquely positioned to speak to gaps in the research. Only by listening to teachers themselves can scholars learn enough about this topic to inform teacher education programs in the preparation of teachers to teach immigrants in a new gateway state, or provide concrete, high-quality professional development for in-service teachers. This dissertation is a small step in overcoming the paucity of research on teaching Civics to immigrant students beyond linguistic considerations, teacher perceptions of working with immigrant students, teacher education for teaching immigrant students, Civics

pedagogy for immigrant students, and expanding the growing literature on teaching immigrant students in new gateway states.

This conclusion includes a summary the findings, and a discussion the findings in light of the theory and literature as it relates to teaching Civics to immigrant students. It also includes implications of the findings, application of the findings for Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators, and a new framework for teaching Civics to immigrant students with four distinct approaches. Finally, this chapter concludes with research limitations and suggestions for future research.

### **Summary of findings**

The central argument of this dissertation is that six self-selected practitioners who had different personal and professional backgrounds and taught in different types of schools, all had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students and strove to support immigrant students academically and socially and encouraged students to maintain their heritage culture, yet they were obstructed from doing so by a series of contextual factors and professional limitations, each of which was influenced by teaching in a new gateway state. The following six findings speak to this central argument:

1. Teachers had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students because of the soft skills immigrant students bring to class and because immigrant students aid the learning of non-immigrant students.
2. Teachers recognized a series of challenges facing immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain and want to help immigrant students overcome these challenges,



- although teachers were not fully knowledgeable about the complexities of these challenges or always prepared to help immigrant students meet these challenges.
3. Teachers had little confidence in their knowledge of policies specific to immigrant students, yet were advocates for immigrant students on policies with which they were knowledgeable.
  4. Teachers philosophically ascribed to the additive acculturation model but had some tensions with implementing the model in their teaching in three areas: interpreting the role of gender and of authority in different cultural contexts, and the teachers' role in outreach efforts.
  5. Teachers perceived teaching duties, rights, and responsibilities as the foundation of their Civics instruction, although they took drastically different approaches to “rights talk” for immigrants – ranging from apprehension when broaching immigrant rights, to embracing immigrant rights talk as an opportunity to empower immigrant students.
  6. Teachers prioritized national level citizenship at the expense of local and global citizenship and had difficulty making connections between the three levels, or teaching the levels of citizenship to the contexts of immigrant students.

**Research question 1 summary: What are teachers' perceptions of teaching immigrant students?**

Teachers had a net positive perception of teaching immigrant students. Teachers acknowledged the greater challenges and, in most cases, the greater rewards of teaching Civics to immigrant students. Teachers invariably enjoyed teaching immigrant students, both for the positive soft skills that immigrant students bring to the classroom and also because having immigrant students in the classroom aids the learning of non-immigrant students. All participants recognized the value of greater diversity provided by immigrant students.

Simultaneously, teachers recognized the great challenges faced by immigrant students; challenges which go far beyond mere linguistic considerations. Unfortunately, the literature on teaching immigrant students has remained fixated on a single challenge, learning English, while discounting the other significant barriers to academic success. Teachers in this study identified a series of barriers and worked to overcome these barriers.

First, the formal curriculum presented challenges to teaching immigrant students in an additive fashion as the formal curriculum, presented in the NC Standard Course of Study and Civics textbooks, does not include immigrant contributions beyond the token inclusion of figures like Cesar Chavez. Second, teachers identified the struggles of undocumented students due to their legal status. In many cases, undocumented students did not see the point of striving to do well academically when they saw little hope in higher education. Teachers noted high stress and anxiety in undocumented students, who fear deportation, raids on their parents' employment, or having to take on extra jobs because their parents have no job security. One teacher shared a powerful story of a student who is currently undergoing deportation hearings. Third, North Carolina's status as a new gateway state has had negative impacts on the academic achievement of immigrant students. Teachers perceived that immigrant students did not get proper services or attention because they were not a large enough segment of the school population to demand services and attention, although the literature suggests there are many factors which contribute to this phenomenon. Additionally, teachers also recognized that providing attention to a few immigrant students was a challenge to teachers' already overstretched teaching demands. As Greg said, "It's hard for a teacher to decide to spend X number of extra hours on one kid. It's just hard." Fourth, teachers noted the special challenges faced by refugee students, who often had

interrupted schooling in their heritage country and who have difficulty grasping democratic notions because their prior experiences with authoritarian governments were so oppressive. Fifth, teachers perceived an anti-immigration climate in North Carolina and in central North Carolina schools, although teachers in suburban schools noted a more positive climate than teachers in rural and urban schools. Participants in this study, particularly teachers in suburban schools, perceived a more positive reception for immigrant students than the reception immigrant students faced in other studies (Gibson, 1995; Valenzuela, 2002). Finally, teachers perceived that students experienced difficulty in determining their national and cultural affiliations. Some immigrant students expressed pride in the United States, while others expressed pride in their heritage countries. But teachers were concerned that most students had difficulty negotiating the dual affiliations. Schools, as Beth stated, often ask students to be a “split person” who must negotiate the person they are in school and the person they are at home.

Teachers lacked confidence and knowledge about policies specific to immigrant students. Although though this paper does not present a case for causality between North Carolina’s status as a new gateway state and teachers’ lack of confidence and knowledge of these policies, it was likely a contributing factor in teachers’ lack of awareness of policies specific to immigrant students. Although teachers admittedly lacked knowledge of policies, they were able to take positions on policies for which they were familiar. Participants were particularly passionate about their support for a policy of “sheltered” ELL courses for immigrant students.

Teachers developed their perceptions of teaching immigrant students through two major avenues. First, teachers who had extensive travel experience or experience living in

diverse communities argued they felt more prepared and empathetic towards teaching immigrant students. Second, teachers developed their perceptions, as Beth so concisely stated, “on the fly.” There was little mention of preparation in teacher education programs and some critique of local school districts for not doing more to prepare teachers to teach immigrant students.

Teachers were able to interpret the strengths immigrant students bring to the classroom, and were aware of the challenges facing immigrant students. Each teacher in the study made a point to get to know his or her immigrant students and the students’ life stories. Each made an attempt to draw on the immigrant students’ knowledge and life experiences to enhance the learning for all students. Furthermore, teachers were somewhat able to interpret the differences of immigrant students across ethnic and gender lines. Three teachers who teach both Asian and Latino students were able to draw distinctions between the needs and strengths of the respective immigrant groups.

**Research question 2 summary: What are teachers’ perceptions of teaching Civics relevant to immigration and immigrant students?**

Participants philosophically agreed with all aspects of the additive acculturation model. However, participants noted tensions between their civic views of gender equality and patriarchal heritage cultures and between adopting critical Civics approaches and honoring authority figures in heritage cultures. There was also some confusion over what should be included in schools’ outreach efforts and which party was responsible for promoting home-school relations; the teacher or the school.

Participants perceived that duties, rights, and responsibilities were foundational to teaching Civics to immigrant students and non-immigrant students, although few teachers addressed the source of the rights they discussed or addressed “rights gap” issues. With respect to prioritizing local, national, and global citizenship, teachers prioritized national citizenship due to the standard course of study and end-of-course tests, although teachers recognized the importance of global citizenship and believed students have more agency at the local level. Global citizenship education was marginalized as teachers did not see the connections between the Civics curriculum and global issues.

Teachers took different approaches to teaching the levels of citizenship to immigrant students: some prioritized local citizenship because immigrants are often excluded from national level systemic expressions of citizenship, while others prioritized national level citizenship so that immigrant students could learn essential aspects of citizenship like voting, freedom of the press, and others. Four factors contributed to teachers’ respective decision to prioritize national citizenship: Standard Course of Study, EOC exams, lack of knowledge to connect local, national, and global citizenship, and lack of preparation to make the connections.

### **Implications for understanding teaching Civics to immigrant students**

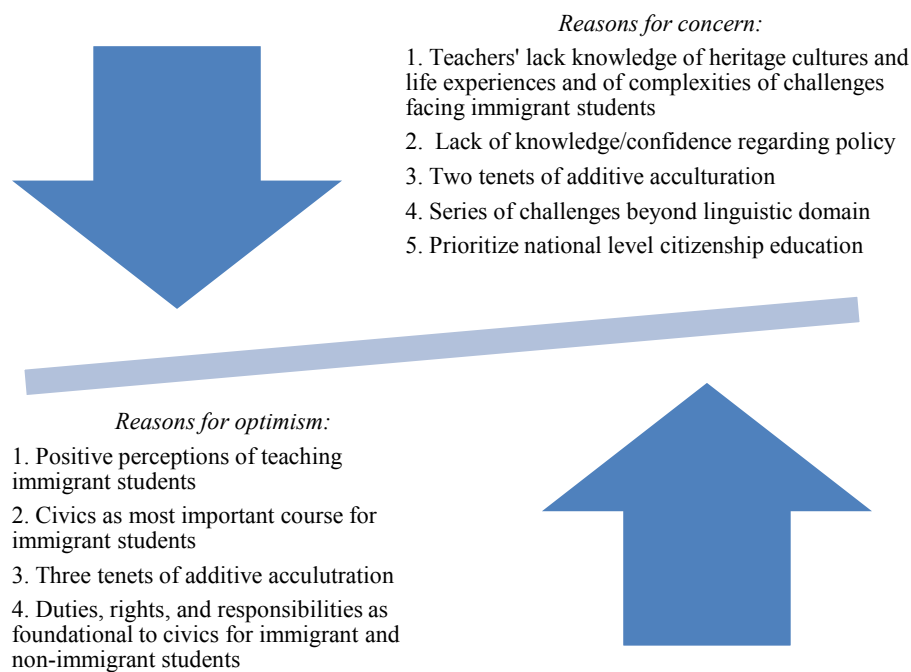
This section will address implications of the dissertation findings and will focus on two areas. First, this section will highlight reasons for optimism and reasons for concern of teachers’ perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students in new gateway states. Second, this section will include application of each of the findings for Civics teachers and teacher educators in new gateway states.

Several of the findings identified in this dissertation provide reasons for optimism about teaching Civics to immigrant students in new gateway states like North Carolina. These findings tended to be more positive than other studies on teaching immigrant students (Gibson, 1995; Valenzuela, 2002), which was likely mediated by the self-selected nature of the research design of this study. First of all, teachers had a very positive perception of teaching immigrant students. Even while acknowledging the multiple challenges and difficulties, the implicit message conveyed by participants was, “I enjoy teaching immigrant students. Even though it’s hard and there are many challenges, it is worth it.” A second reason for optimism is that teachers see Civics as the most important course for immigrant students. The Civics teachers did not shrink from the responsibility of teaching this key course. Rather, they felt honored to teach Civics because it is so critical to immigrant students’ education. Third, participants adhered to three of the five additive acculturation tenets – drawing on immigrant students’ knowledge and experiences, having empathy and care for immigrant students, and making content relevant to immigrant students. Finally, teachers prioritized duties, rights and responsibilities in a democracy for immigrant students and non-immigrant students. Participants recognized the public and private utility of duties, rights, and responsibilities for students, and responded by making duties, rights, and responsibilities central to their instruction. Thus, the participants showed evidence that they were willing to make professional decisions most beneficial for their students. This is certainly a reason for optimism when one considers the subtractive nature of the formal curriculum (Valenzuela, 2002).

Although many of the findings were reasons for optimism, there were also several reasons for concern. First, participants prioritized national level citizenship education while

marginalizing local and global citizenship education. More disconcerting, teachers seemed unable to make connections between local, national, and global citizenship. Immigrant students, with transnational and transcultural experiences, are potentially well positioned to thrive in a course which addresses global citizenship and also connect it to local issues. On the one hand, an almost exclusive focus on national level citizenship is a disservice to transnational students, whose families have no intention of staying in the United States; on the other hand, fighting anti-immigrant sentiments and legislation is largely a local and state issue. Civics instruction which identified the relationship between local, national, and global citizenship would better serve all students and immigrant students in particular. Second, participants admittedly had little knowledge of school policies specific to immigrant students. However, with respect to policies familiar to participants, such as sheltered vs. non-sheltered ELL classes, participants were able to articulate suggestions to improve teaching Civics to immigrant students. In one case, a participant became an advocate for immigrant students by taking a leadership role in developing a school “ESL team” to assist immigrant students who have recently been exited from ESL services. Third, participants did not consistently implement two tenets of additive acculturation – encouraging students to maintain heritage culture while adopting certain aspects of American culture, and maintaining positive home-school relationships. For most participants, home-school relationships were the purview of the school administration. Another reason for concern is the daunting series of challenges facing immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain. Many of these challenges, such as the anti-immigration climate and a limiting formal curriculum, were perceived by teachers to be out of their control. Finally, teachers were not always knowledgeable about the complexities of the issues facing immigrant students and were not always knowledgeable

about immigrant students' heritage cultures and life experiences. As educators are reminded by culturally relevant scholars (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009; Gay, 2000), knowledge and awareness of diverse students' cultures and life experiences are the number one concern regarding the development of culturally responsive teachers. These findings are illustrated in Figure 4 below.



*Figure 3.* Reasons for concern/optimism for teaching Civics to immigrant students from dissertation findings

### **Application of the findings**

This section provides suggestions for how Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators can apply the findings to improve teaching Civics to immigrant students. These suggestions are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, suggestions are offered in the hope that Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators in new gateway states will adapt the



findings to their own specific contexts. There are numerous applications of the findings. In order to preserve the narrative flow of the dissertation, Table 7 organizes application of findings for Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators and links application to the extant literature.

Table 7

*Application of Findings for Civics Teachers and Teacher Educators*

| Finding   | Application for Civics teachers in new gateway states with literature  | Application for social studies teacher educators in new gateway states  |
|---|--|---|
| Positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-draw on immigrant students' experiences (Gibson, 1995)</li> <li>-purposeful about developing in-class working groups to benefit learning for all students</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-draw on immigrant students' experiences (Gibson, 1995)</li> <li>-share teachers' positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students (rather than apprehension about teaching immigrant students)</li> </ul>  |
| Challenges beyond linguistic domain                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-recognize challenges beyond linguistic domain</li> <li>-use materials beyond the textbook (NCSS, 2008)</li> <li>-understand legal challenges lead to increased absences, stress, and low motivation (Rong, Thorsstenson, &amp; Hilburn, 2010)</li> <li>-create a safe place for students with legal obscurities</li> <li>-move beyond Black/White racial binary (Rong &amp; Preissle, 2010)</li> <li>- support all students, even when there are only a few immigrant students in each class</li> <li>-inquire about immigrant students' lives, including refugee students</li> <li>-don't pressure immigrant students, especially refugee students, to share if they choose not to</li> <li>-harness democratic engagement of refugee students</li> <li>-harness positive relationships in the class to thoughtfully form working groups</li> <li>-be wary of covert and overt anti-</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-teach contributions/needs beyond linguistic domain (Goodwin, 2002)</li> <li>-practice using textbook as simply one teaching artifact among many options (Ross, 2006)</li> <li>-push for more inclusive Civics standards (Banks, 2002)</li> <li>-teach "mixed-status" families and the special needs of refugee students and undocumented students (Rong, Thorsstenson, &amp; Hilburn, 2010)</li> <li>-share "new gateway state" information (Rong &amp; Preissle, 2010)</li> <li>-teach the realities of the anti-immigration climate and steps to make each classroom a safe place for all students</li> </ul> |

|                                       |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|                                       | immigration sentiments   |  |
| Lack knowledge/confidence in policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-learn school/state/federal policies with a focus on school-level</li> <li>-advocate for effective policies (e.g., scheduling)</li> <li>-teach current immigration policies like Arizona immigration law and DREAM Act</li> <li>-take a stand against anti-immigration laws</li> <li>-support school-wide efforts to promote heritage culture</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-teach policies specific to immigrant students (Sox, 2009)</li> <li>-teach policies beyond linguistic domain</li> <li>-develop a position on sheltered or clustered courses</li> <li>-confront harmful policies (e.g., Arizona and Alabama immigration laws)</li> </ul> |
| Additive acculturation and Civics     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-follow all five tenets of additive acculturation</li> <li>- take personal responsibility for home-school relations with immigrant families</li> <li>-actively promote heritage culture in class</li> <li>-teach multiple expressions of citizenship (good neighborly and critical citizenship)</li> <li>-reflect on relationship between Civics philosophy and honoring heritage cultures</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-teach five tenets of additive acculturation</li> <li>-teach occasional conflict between democratic ideals and heritage cultures (e.g., patriarchy)</li> </ul>  |
| Local, national, global citizenship   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-teach connections between three levels (Gaudelli, 2002)</li> <li>-harness potential of local civic engagement (Billig &amp; Root, 2008)</li> <li>-implement local community service projects (Billig &amp; Root, 2008)</li> <li>-</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- help students make the connections in the content between local, national, and global citizenship (Gaudelli, 2002)</li> <li>- advocate for an expansion of Civics curriculum to place greater emphasis on global citizenship</li> </ul>                               |
| Duties, rights, responsibilities      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-teach connections between duties and responsibilities</li> <li>-address ideal vs. reality when teaching rights (Parker, 2008)</li> <li>-give more specific examples of rights for young people beyond voting</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- empower teachers to make curricular decisions which are most beneficial for students (e.g., prioritizing duties, rights, responsibilities)</li> <li>-teach the ideal vs. reality in terms rights in the US system (Parker, 2008)</li> </ul>                           |

### Theoretical implications

This study is grounded in a theoretical framework that views a strategy of additive acculturation (Gibson, 1995) as the most effective means for educating immigrant students. Gibson’s framework is particularly useful for this study because she developed the strategy while working with immigrants who had no established ethnic communities to draw upon for

resources – similar to central North Carolina, which has become a recipient of immigrants since the 1990s (Rong & Preissle, 2009). Drawing on Gibson’s (1995) theory and supplemented with Valenzuela’s notion of caring, I highlighted five key tenets for teaching in an additive fashion. I found that, overall, participants philosophically align to all five tenets, and teach three of the tenets – teachers incorporate immigrant students’ knowledge and experiences, teachers make content relevant to immigrant students, and teachers exhibit empathy, tolerance and caring towards immigrant students - in their instruction. Half of the participants encouraged immigrant students’ to maintain heritage culture, but none of the participants promoted home-school relations with the families of immigrant students. Participants believed home-school relations were the purview of school-level administrators. The remainder of this section will discuss findings which confirm the additive acculturation model, findings which complicate the model, and ways in which to broaden the model’s usefulness for Civics teachers and social studies teacher educators.

**Confirm.** In this section, I use the findings in this study to confirm several of Gibson’s findings with the additive acculturation model. First, teachers philosophically agreed with the strategy of additive acculturation. Even teachers who supported a teacher-neutral position philosophically agreed with Gibson’s model. Second, participants recognized that when immigrant students and families, as well as teachers and schools, practice a strategy of additive acculturation, then immigrant students are more likely to experience academic achievement. While Gibson’s strategy was effective in California with Punjabi immigrant students, participants believed the strategy would work equally well in North Carolina, an area experiencing rapid growth in the immigrant student population. Thus, the strategy of additive acculturation seems to possess transferability across contexts.

Finally, just as in Gibson's study, there was a disconnect between teachers' philosophical agreement with the additive model and the ways in which teachers actually taught. Although participants in this study more closely adhered to their philosophical alignment than teachers in Gibson's study, there was some disconnect, especially regarding home-school relationships.

**Complicate.** Findings from this study also complicate the additive model. For example, Gibson's early work did not take into account the tremendous pressures teachers face to adhere to the Standard Course of Study and prepare their students for the End of Course test. Valenzuela's (2005) work on subtractive schooling specifically addresses the realities of this obstacle. Overall, participants in this study made great efforts to include immigrant students' lived experiences and knowledge into the classroom and to make content relevant to immigrant students. However, participants also realized the extreme challenges of doing so with uncooperative standards and tests which neglect immigrant students in new gateway states. The finding which most clearly highlighted the challenge of curriculum and testing was teachers' almost exclusive focus on national level citizenship, even as teachers' acknowledged how valuable global and local citizenship education would be to all students.

A revised additive acculturation model would do three things: recognize these challenges; encourage teachers and teacher educators to simultaneously advocate for greater inclusion of immigrants in the standards and formal curriculum; and, using both teacher education programs and in-service professional development, demonstrate the "user-developer" (Ross, 2006) approach to curriculum, whereby teachers interpret the curriculum and develop curricular alternatives specific to the teachers' context. For example, a teacher with a growing population of Burmese refugees could interpret and enact a curriculum which

makes the content relevant for the students, but also prepares students to take the End of Course Civics exam. Examples of this approach include Beth's "model citizen pamphlet" and "prioritize American ideals" teaching strategies, detailed in the following section.

A second complication is that the model calls for immigrant students to share their knowledge and experiences, yet participants expressed that many immigrant students were hesitant to share their experiences. Participants suggested several reasons why immigrant students would not share their experiences: language barriers, immigrant students wanted to hide their accent, cultural "reserve" (specifically for Southeast Asian female students), some students wished to disassociate themselves from their heritage country, and refugee students experienced violence and wished to suppress those memories. Gibson's work does not sufficiently account for immigrant students who do not wish to participate in classroom discussions or share their experiences. However, other works point to a resolution for this complication. Scholars (Thorsstenson, 2008; Hamilton & Moore, 2004) suggest that teachers should approach refugee students one-on-one to assess their comfort level with class discussions. In these conversations, teachers should affirm their interest in refugee students' lives yet not pressure students to participate. Participants in this study developed their own strategies for involving immigrant students in class discussions. Beth purposefully grouped Burmese female students together at the beginning of the year to work on presentations. Students felt more comfortable in these groups and were more willing to make presentations and subsequently participate in class discussions. Luke implemented a strategy where each student had to teach content to a partner in order to get full credit for any assignment. Luke's strategy developed a classroom culture of mutual support. In this environment, immigrant students became comfortable participating in class discussions and sharing their experiences.

A revised additive acculturation model would consider the hesitation of many immigrant students to share their experiences, and provide strategies for teachers to aid immigrant students in joining class discussions.

A third complication relates to national affiliation. Gibson was very clear that immigrant students should maintain their heritage culture while adopting positive aspects of American culture. While she encouraged immigrant families, immigrant students, and teachers to not ask immigrant students to give up aspects of their *cultural* affiliation, she did not adequately address *national* affiliation. Participants in this study noted that many immigrant students expressed national affiliation with their heritage country, by drawing Mexican and Colombian flags on their notebooks, for example. Other immigrant students, notably Karen and Burmese refugees, affiliated strongly with the United States. Participants noticed that most students struggled to identify with a single nation. Thus, Gibson's (1995) model offers little help for teachers to work through this conundrum. In Gibson's (2006) later work, she seems to advocate for a cosmopolitan citizenship education that stretches beyond the nation state. However, as the participants in this study noted, students do in fact wish to affiliate themselves nationally. As Beth stated of her stateless Karen refugees, "They are ghost citizens, and just want to belong somewhere." Perhaps the best solution is for teachers to teach citizenship at the local, national, and global levels, with a focus on the relationship between the levels. As students gain understanding of the relationship between local, national and global affiliation, they should be more likely to effectively negotiate bicultural and transnational identities. Culturally literate and transnationally educated students can affiliate with their locales through service work, affiliate to a nation by understanding national ideals and goals, and adopt cosmopolitan notions of humanity and

solving global problems. Exacerbating the need to address the relationship between local, national and global citizenship education is the phenomenon of immigration itself.

Immigration is a global phenomenon, yet recent immigration legislations (e.g., Alabama and Arizona immigration laws, 247g programs) have been implemented at the local and state level. Empowering students to know about and act locally would give students the tools to combat anti-immigration policies.

A fourth complication is the challenge of negotiating tensions between heritage cultures and teachers' democratic ideals. In this study, teachers noted tensions between their democratic ideals of gender equality and challenging authority with immigrant students' heritage cultural practices of patriarchy and deferring to authority figures. Although Gibson encourages teachers to respect and honor heritage cultures and add positive aspects of American culture, she does not cite specific examples of when positive aspects of American culture – gender equality, challenging the status quo – come into conflict with immigrants' heritage culture. An updated additive acculturation model would encourage teachers to be reflective practitioners to deeply consider their own democratic ideals and how these ideals may conflict with immigrant students' heritage culture. *See Table 8 on pg. 172 for an updated model.*

**Broaden.** One of the limitations of classroom implementation of the additive acculturation model is that it is general theory without specific pedagogical or curricular recommendations. This section will seek to broaden the framework for Civics teachers by suggesting specific pedagogical strategies which highlight the model. This section will detail three specific pedagogies enacted by participants in this study, which effectively enacted the additive acculturation model.

*1. Teaching strategy: Current events that challenge the Bill of Rights*

Madeline implemented an effective teaching strategy which speaks to the relationship between duties, rights, responsibilities and teaching Civics to immigrant students. Madeline shared this teaching strategy when examining how she teaches “the critique part” of Civics. In response to her students not fully understanding or appreciating the rights protected in the Bill of Rights, she developed a strategy wherein students identified a current event that “challenged a right identified in an amendment.” There were five steps to this project: students located a current event article from a print or digital periodical which challenged an amendment, collaboratively developed a poster using *Wordle* which visually represented the key arguments of the article, added four other visuals which represented the right and challenges to the right, and made an oral and visual presentation on their current event and how it challenges an amendment in the Bill of Rights. Madeline’s described her rationale for this assignment by saying, “My point in this is just because we have these amendments, it doesn’t mean that the interpretation is over and done with. There are people still questioning this.” She wanted her students to understand that rights will always be questioned and reinterpreted over time. With Madeline’s prompting, students related this topic to immigration. The student group which presented a challenge to the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment made a poster about the Arizona immigration law. The students presented the ways in which the Arizona law challenges and complicates the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment.

*2. Teaching strategy: “Model citizen” pamphlets and prioritizing ideals*

Two of Beth’s strategies speak to the relationship between Civics’ teaching philosophy and the additive acculturation model. Beth implemented the first strategy in order to have students synthesize what they learned in the first unit of the year, the



citizenship unit. Beth had two main goals for the citizenship unit: emphasize duties, rights, and responsibilities, and develop active citizens in the community. In Beth's words, "Students created how to be a 'model citizen' pamphlets. They take what we talked about [citizenship] and create a guide, telling someone who is coming to the country for the first time what it takes to be a good American citizen." Beth emphasized multiple expressions of citizenship, from picking up litter to voting; from running for office to protesting inequalities in education. This assignment helped students synthesize and envision civic engagement and also couched the discussion in terms of welcoming new immigrants to the United States.

In her second, related strategy, Beth had students prioritize American ideals. Beth's explication of the strategy proved to adhere to the additive acculturation model. Using their knowledge of American history and Civics and their own lived experiences, students brainstormed American ideals. Using a seminar format, Beth had students reduce the number of ideals until the class reached consensus on ten American ideals. Individually, each student then prioritized the ten ideals by ordering the ideals from 1-10, from most important to least important. Examples of ideals included these: representative democracy, individualism, diversity, human rights, equality, and civil liberties. Students were asked to make arguments about why they prioritized each ideal. This strategy asked students to alternate between working collectively and individually, had students consider the underlying principles of the "ties that bind" America's diverse people together, and asked students to defend their thought-processes, which addressed knowledge, skills, and values prerequisites of democratic education. Furthermore, this strategy encouraged immigrant students to see the relationship between their heritage cultural ideals and what others view as American

ideals, and also encouraged immigrant students to draw on their life experiences when brainstorming and prioritizing the ideals.

### 3. *Teaching strategy: Monuments on the National Mall*

Luke used a teaching strategy which highlighted the relationship between immigrants, democracy, and Civics. Luke was inspired to develop this strategy when he took his students on a trip to Washington DC. One of the highlights of the trip was touring the monuments on the National Mall. Luke realized, “You know, on the mall you see monuments to dead white men or to wars. With the MLK monument, that’s the first to transcend this.” Luke found it problematic that the Civics curriculum champions ideals such as diversity, justice, and equality, yet monuments on the National Mall do not reflect these ideals. He developed an assignment where students were assigned to “choose either an amendment or an immigrant group and to make a monument to either a right or a group that has helped make this country great.” Students worked in collaborative groups to select either a right or an immigrant group which they wanted to highlight, and then designed a monument to the right or the immigrant group. Finally, the class made presentations about why their right or immigrant group monument should be afforded space on the National Mall. In their presentations, students simulated making a presentation to the *National Mall Monument Committee* (comprised of Luke and selected students). Luke told his students,

You’re also in competition with one another because of limited space on the National Mall - tell me why your monument should beat out monuments to other rights or immigrant groups. You have to not only say the thought process, the design, but give me an argument for why we are learning this, and not necessarily a monument to us defeating yet another overseas enemy. Luke

Through this assignment, Luke connected immigrant contributions, democracy, and also asked students to justify why they should study immigrant contributions in a Civics

class. This assignment also illustrates Luke’s adherence to the additive acculturation model by making content relevant to immigrant students and encouraged immigrant students to take pride and retain aspects of their heritage. This strategy also helps students gain knowledge, practice civic skills, and take a critical position on the US’s building monuments almost exclusively to dead white men and foreign wars.

**Revised additive acculturation tenets for Civics teachers working with immigrant students**

Taking into account the findings of this dissertation, and my efforts to complicate the additive acculturation model detailed above, I will now suggest a revised additive acculturation model for Civics teachers. This revised model merges the additive acculturation model, the principles of democratic citizenship education, and findings from this study. Social studies scholars and Civics teachers could use this model in new gateway states to prepare Civics teachers to teach immigrant students. I provide a series of tenets to guide Civics teachers as they teach immigrant students. My revisions to the model are in italics and are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8

*Revised additive acculturation tenets*

| Initial additive acculturation tenets  | Revised additive acculturation tenets<br><i>[changes in italics]</i>  |
|--|---|
| Teachers encourage students to maintain heritage culture and selectively add aspects of American culture | Teachers encourages students to maintain heritage culture and selectively adding some aspects of American culture <i>while carefully reflecting on any tensions between teachers’ democratic ideals and immigrant students’ heritage cultures</i> |
| Teachers make instruction relevant and   | Teachers make instruction relevant and  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| meaningful to immigrant students   | meaningful to immigrant students <i>by drawing on relevant materials beyond the formal curriculum and by teaching the connections between local, national, and global citizenship education</i>   |
| Teachers incorporate immigrant students' knowledge, life experiences, and heritage cultures in the classroom   | Teachers incorporate immigrant students' knowledge, life experiences, and heritage cultures in the classroom <i>while being sensitive to many immigrant students' resistance (particularly refugee students and undocumented students) to share their experiences</i> |
| Teachers promote home-school relations   | Teachers promotes home-school relations <i>through school-wide outreach and individual teacher outreach</i>   |
| Teachers exhibit empathy, tolerance, and caring for immigrant students and gain knowledge of immigrant students heritage cultures and life experiences | <i>Teachers exhibit empathy, tolerance, and caring for immigrant students</i>   |
|  | <i>Teachers gain knowledge of immigrant students heritage cultures and life experiences</i>   |
|  | <i>Teachers provide school-based civic engagement opportunities for all students in order to close the civic engagement gap; these opportunities include knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, civic engagement, and critical civic engagement</i>                 |

I would like to highlight two of the revisions in particular. The fifth tenet - teachers exhibit caring, tolerance, and empathy for immigrant students and gain knowledge of immigrant students' heritage cultures and life experiences – presented problems during data analysis. In this study, all of the participants exhibited caring, tolerance, and empathy. However, there was a wide range of teachers' knowledge of immigrant students' culture and life histories. Furthermore, there was an even greater range in the efforts participants took in order to gain more knowledge – from Beth who purchased books about Karen culture, to David who relied on in-class conversations with students, to Robin who held one-on-one conversations with immigrant students about their experiences. Two aspects of the fifth tenet

- with caring, empathy, and tolerance on the one hand and gaining knowledge on the other – were experienced much differently by participants in this study. Thus, I made the decision to separate the aspects into two different tenets in order to equally emphasize both aspects.

Another revision I would like to highlight is the additional tenet – providing school-based civic engagement opportunities for all students. I added this tenet for several reasons. First, Gibson’s model focuses on academic achievement and bicultural competence while providing less attention to engagement in a polity. The additional tenet brings civic engagement to the forefront of the additive acculturation model and values immigrant students as local, national, and global citizens who take action to improve communities. Second, the tenet addresses all five prerequisites of competent citizenship education in order to overcome the civic engagement/opportunity gap between immigrant and non-immigrant students highlighted in recent studies (Marri, 2009; Levison, 2010). In order to promote civic engagement as an additional goal of the additive acculturation model, immigrant students must be offered similar school-based civic engagement opportunities. Finally, it is important to note that Civic teachers cannot be solely responsible for citizenship education. All teachers within a school and other social studies teachers in particular share the responsibility for developing citizenship education amongst all students.

### **Approaches to teaching Civics to immigrant students**

In addition to developing a revised additive acculturation model, I now turn to pedagogical approaches to teaching Civics to immigrant students. In this study, I identified four approaches to teaching Civics to immigrant students. Clearly articulating the approaches has implications for teacher educators and preservice teachers. When teacher educators

compare and contrast the approaches with their preservice social studies teachers, it will allow future teachers to see the ways in which immigrant students can be valued members of Civics classrooms and highlight some of the more critical and effective methods for teaching Civics to immigrant students.

### **Subtractive**

The subtractive approach is the type of teaching highlighted in Valenzuela's (1999) work. Teachers who teach subtractively advocate immigrant students to drop their heritage culture (e.g., heritage language, pride in heritage culture) and replace it with American culture. These teachers also lack awareness, empathy, tolerance, and caring for immigrant students' special circumstances. Rather than acculturation, these teachers advocate assimilation. None of the self-reflective teachers in this study teach in a subtractive manner.

### **Neutrality**

The remaining three approaches were based on the teachers in this study. The neutrality approach, practiced by David, is to embrace the differences brought into the classroom by immigrant students but to deny that immigrant students require different instruction or approaches when teaching Civics. In other words, these teachers are happy to have immigrant students in their classes, but do not think they need to change their teaching practices for immigrant students. For example, David enjoyed having immigrant students in his classes and valued immigrant students for the different perspectives immigrant students brought to class discussions, but did not see the value in teaching content or strategies in order to reach immigrant students. Teachers who follow the neutrality approach do not take a position on issues of immigration, or incorporate specific current events relative to

immigrants, such as the DREAM Act or the Arizona immigration law. Neutrality teachers strive for balance and want students to make up their own mind without being swayed by the teacher. The neutrality approach addresses knowledge and skill levels of the five prerequisites of competent democratic citizenship.

### **Additive engagement**

The third approach, additive engagement, prioritizes immigrants as students with special knowledge and experiences to share with the classroom which should be celebrated and drawn upon regularly. This approach, practiced by Robin, Greg and Madeline, teaches content specifically meaningful to immigrant students, draws on immigrant students' life experiences and knowledge to enrich classroom discussions, and supports heritage cultures and school-wide outreach programs. In addition to knowledge, skills, and values, these teachers also strongly encourage or require civic action, such as community service projects. Teachers who use this approach allow students to choose projects of interest so that the students may research about their own heritage culture, should they choose to do so. Additionally, these educators teach differentiated rights afforded to immigrants and non-immigrants. They recognize that non-citizens have curtailed rights, and spend a great deal of time focusing on the rights of students, so that immigrant students will know to which rights they are entitled.

### **Critical advocacy**

The final approach, practiced by Beth and Luke, is critical advocacy. This approach includes all five prerequisites of competent democratic citizenship education - knowledge, skills, values, civic action, and critical civic action. Teachers who take this approach use

examples relevant to immigrant students to practice critical citizenship. For example, Luke took a stance in favor of the DREAM Act, and then had his students conduct research on the benefits and drawbacks of the policy. Luke and Beth’s students held classroom discussions on topics relevant to immigrant students and drew on immigrant students’ knowledge and experiences. Luke required his students to write editorials and to their Congressperson, while Beth required her students to conduct a critical service learning project. Luke also brought local leaders into the classroom; not as expert guest speakers but to give students a platform to express their voices to those in power. The critical engagement approach develops immigrant student and non-immigrant student alliances to promote academic achievement and promote tolerance. In order to develop these alliances, critical advocacy teachers are thoughtful about developing student working groups, by considering students’ comfort level and leveraging the bonds of friendship which develop over the course of the school year. This approach acknowledges and problematizes the rights afforded to citizens and non-citizens in order to empower immigrant students and promote empathy among the non-immigrant students. Finally, teachers who practice critical advocacy develop and support programs specific to immigrant students. This advocacy is exemplified by Beth, who led a school-wide effort to develop an ESL-team to support immigrant students recently exited from the ESL program.

Table 9

*Four Approaches to Teaching Civics to Immigrant Students*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Subtractive</b><br/> Advocate assimilation rather than acculturation<br/> Promote monolingualism and other policies which subtract from immigrant students’ heritage culture<br/> Lacks empathy, tolerance, and caring towards immigrant students</p> | <p><b>Neutrality</b><br/> Teach knowledge, skills, and some values<br/> Support heritage culture (philosophically) and school-wide cultural events<br/> Does not take a position on immigration laws<br/> Appreciate immigrant student contributions to class discussions and soft skills immigrant</p> |
|---|---|



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>students bring to class</p> <p>Teach immigrant students the same as non-immigrants</p>  |
| <p><b>Additive engagement</b></p> <p>Knowledge, skills, values, and civic engagement</p> <p>Use examples from immigrants' experiences</p> <p>Teach content specifically relevant to immigrant students</p> <p>Support heritage culture and events</p> <p>Teach differentiated rights between immigrants and non-immigrants (acknowledge different rights for immigrants)</p> <p>Strongly encourage/require community engagement</p> | <p><b>Critical advocacy</b></p> <p>Knowledge, skills, values, civic engagement, and critical civic engagement</p> <p>Use examples from immigrants' experiences</p> <p>Teach content specifically relevant to immigrant students</p> <p>Support heritage culture and events</p> <p>Teach differentiated rights between immigrants and non-immigrants (acknowledge different rights for immigrants)</p> <p>Require community engagement</p> <p>Challenge anti-immigration laws</p> <p>Develop immigrant and non-immigrant student alliances</p> <p>Advocate for school level policies specific to immigrant students</p> |

## Limitations

Like all studies, this dissertation has limitations. First among these is the self-selected nature of this group of participants. Five of the six teachers in this study were progressive teachers, based on the pre-study survey results. It is reasonable to assume that a random sampling of Civics teachers in central North Carolina would include a lower percentage of progressive educators, and thus reveal different results. In addition to being progressive, all of the participants were interested in educating immigrant students. These teachers participated in an online survey sent to 250 social studies teachers in central North Carolina. Of the 99 responses, 12 of the teachers taught Civics, of whom six agreed to participate in the interview and focus group portion of the study. It is likely that Civics teachers who did not choose to participate in a study on teaching immigrant students would be less interested in teaching immigrant students and would provide different data for comparison and contrast.

A second limitation relates to diversity. Although diverse in terms of type of school, the teachers in this study were all white. Minority teachers would likely have different responses to the research questions. Furthermore, all of the participants had less than 10 years of teaching experience. A greater range of teaching experience and race would have provided more validity to the study.

A third limitation relates to missed opportunities. After analyzing the data as a whole, I came to realize that there were avenues I should have explored further to enrich the findings. For example, Robin's extracurricular Genocide Awareness Club exemplified teaching local, national, and global citizenship education. Yet Robin did not teach global citizenship in her Civics classes. I should have pursued this paradox to determine Robin's rationale for incorporating local, national, and global citizenship in her Genocide Awareness Club, but not her Civics class.

Another limitation is that my exclusive focus on teachers' perceptions led me to exclude potentially important information to better understand the phenomena of teaching immigrant students. Since I focused on teacher perceptions and privileged the voices of teachers, I did not concentrate on a specific immigrant student demographic. Most studies on immigrant students focus on specific immigrant groups. This study, which focused on the teacher level, included teacher perceptions of all immigrant students. Thus my study is less specific about working with particular immigrant student groups. Secondly, because of my decision to privilege teachers' voices, I did not conduct classroom observations. Classroom observations could have provided another data set from which to triangulate the data to confirm or complicate the findings.

The final limitation relates to my positionality with regard to the research participants. Although I made every effort to prioritize teacher voices in this study, as a qualitative researcher I am still the primary research instrument. As such, I made choices in the questions I asked participants and the words I chose to report, based on my research questions and the theoretical frames through which I analyzed participants' words. In the end, I had to exclude most of the research data, although much of what participants had to say held a great deal of value. Different researchers with different frames and research questions could certainly have prioritized different words and potentially identified different findings.

### **Directions for future research**

To conclude this dissertation, I now offer directions for future research, in order to better understand the phenomena of teaching Civics to immigrant students in new gateway states. First, studies which explore teachers' perceptions of working with immigrant students in new gateway states could take different approaches than I have chosen to do here: drawing from larger samples from different social studies content areas, focusing exclusively on specific types of school (rural, suburban, urban) or specific immigrant student demographics (e.g., Latino male, Southeast Asian refugee female), choosing to work with less progressive educators, or drawing participants from other new gateway states. Second, I strongly urge future research directed at the challenges facing immigrant students beyond the linguistic domain. In this study, teachers were aware of these challenges, but felt unprepared to help students meet these challenges. Third, I hope that future researchers will highlight "success stories" of teachers who have developed effective strategies for teaching Civics to immigrant students. Fourth, future research should include classroom observations in order to determine

the degree to which classroom practices align with teachers' philosophies. Fifth, this study does not offer evidence that teachers who adhere to the revised additive acculturation tenets contribute to immigrant students' civic education outcomes. Thus, a future area of study is how the teaching paradigms identified in this dissertation associate with student-learning and civic engagement measures. Finally, I agree with Sox (2009) and Goodwin (2002), who call on researchers and teacher educators to learn more about teaching immigrant students and to implement this research into teacher education programs.

In conclusion, this dissertation sought to determine high school teachers' perceptions of teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new gateway state. Data analysis revealed that six self-selected, reflective practitioners with differing personal and professional backgrounds who have taught in different types of schools all had overall positive perceptions of teaching immigrant students, strove to support immigrant students academically and socially, and encouraged students to maintain their heritage culture despite being obstructed from doing so by a series of contextual factors and professional limitations, each of which was influenced by teaching in a new gateway state. Six findings support this central argument and present both reasons for concern and reasons for optimism for teaching Civics to immigrant students in a new gateway state.

## **Appendix I:**

### Interview and Focus Group Protocols

#### **Interview 1 protocols**

- 1.) Tell me about yourself. How did you end up teaching Civics?
- 2.) What is your Civics teaching philosophy?
  - a. What do you want students to get out of the course?
- 3.) Do you teach any courses other than Civics?
- 4.) Tell me your thoughts and opinions about teaching immigrant students.
  - a. How did you develop these opinions? [What contributed to your position?]
  - b. Why do you believe that?
- 5.) What do you perceive as immigrant students' needs and abilities?
  - a. Does this change based on the immigrant students' background? (country of origin, any other factors)
- 6.) What are your teaching strategies for working with immigrant students?
  - a. How did you develop these strategies?
  - b. Why do you employ these strategies?
  - c. Are these strategies more effective for one immigrant group than another?
  - d. Are there differences between the teaching strategies you use in Civics and the other courses you teach?
- 7.) What is the relationship between your opinion of immigrant students and your teaching strategies?
  - a. How has this relationship been formed?

- b. In terms of preparing new social studies teachers to teach in North Carolina, why is it important to understand the relationship between teachers' opinions of immigrant students and their teaching strategies?
- 8.) What other contextual factors in school and out of school might explain the relationship between your opinions and your strategies?

### **Interview 2 Protocols**

- 1.) In our last interview you said \_\_\_\_\_, and I've been thinking a lot about that. Can you tell me more about that?
- a. How did you come to think this? [*prompts*] Was it from your teaching experience or something you've seen on the news, or something else altogether?
- 2.) I'd also like to follow up about the teaching strategy you told me about, \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. How did you learn about this strategy?
  - b. Do you modify the strategy?
  - c. Why do you think that strategy works?
- 3.) What school, state, or federal policies are you aware of and how do those policies affect the way you teach?
- 4.) Since you teach Civics, which has a great deal to do with government and politics . . . is the purpose of the course different for immigrants and non-immigrants?
- a. As a Civics teacher, what are your responsibilities for preparing immigrant students?

- b. As a Civics teacher, what are your responsibilities for preparing non-immigrant students?
- 5.) What would you say is the biggest benefit to having immigrant students in your social studies classes? What about the biggest drawback?

### **Interview 3 Protocols**

- 1.) This is a big question. You've shared a lot with me about your opinions of immigrant students and immigration.
- a. How did you "get here?"
  - b. How did you form these opinions?
  - c. What were the most important factors that led to your thinking this?
- 2.) There is a theory about teaching immigrant students called the additive model, which suggests immigrant students and American teachers should value and support both the heritage culture of students *and* American culture. Here are the five tenets . . . . So I have a couple of questions based on these.
- a. Do you agree or disagree overall that American schools should value and support both heritage and American cultures?
  - b. To which of these tenets do you agree or disagree?
- 3.) I was hoping to figure out how your perceptions of immigrant students and the teaching strategies you use are unique BECAUSE you are a Civics teacher. In other words, does the fact that you teach Civics, which relates to politics and government, look any different than teaching science or math or another social studies?
- 4.) My goal through these interviews has been to figure out three things: your views on teaching Civics, your perception of immigrant students, and the strategies you use to

teach Civics to immigrant students. I've also been trying to figure out the relationship between these three things. Can you tell me your view about how these are connected in your own teaching?

### **Focus group protocols**

- 1.) I've talked with each of you about teaching social studies to immigrant students. I'd like to start with the positive today and ask you to share what strategies have been particularly helpful for teaching social studies to immigrant students? What about strategies that might be effective with your other students, but aren't so effective with immigrant students?
- 2.) There is a lot of talk in the media and especially during presidential elections about immigration. How do you think this "public talk" affects what you teach and the way you teach?
- 3.) One participant mentioned how she has struggled with reconciling two things: respecting heritage cultures and also being an empowered female role model. Are there any areas where you see struggles in reconciling immigrant students' heritage cultures and your personal opinions, OR immigrant students heritage cultures and school culture?
- 4.) Each participant talked a lot about civic duties, rights and responsibilities. Which of these is emphasized in the SCOS, which is emphasized in your teaching, and which should be emphasized?
- 5.) As we went through the interviews, what type of things did you learn? Did your perceptions change at all?
- 6.) What is the greatest non-linguistic challenge facing immigrant students?
- 7.) What else would you like to share about teaching Civics to immigrant students?



## Appendix II:

### Recruitment email

Social studies teachers' opinions about working with immigrant students

Investigator: Jeremy Hilburn

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am conducting a study about Civics teachers and their opinions about working with immigrant students. I am inviting you to participate in this study. Participating in this study involves being interviewed 2-3 times for 45-60 minutes each and one focus group of one hour. To thank you for your time in completing the survey, I will offer you a \$25 gift card to Barnes & Noble Bookstores in our final interview.

You can withdraw from the survey at any time and also choose to not answer questions. I have attached a copy of the consent form with all the details you need to know about the study and your rights as a participant. I will also bring a paper copy of the consent form to our first interview, should you decide to participate. If you decide to withdraw from the study at any time, you will receive a prorated amount of the \$25 gift card, based on your participation.

At the end of the study, I am planning to write a journal article and publish the study findings. However, the information you share will be completely confidential. I will not use any identifiers or markers that link the information to you, your school, or your community; saying only that the teachers who participate in the study teach in central North Carolina.

North Carolina's immigrant population is growing rapidly and researchers are trying to understand how teachers are responding to this growth. Your support with this study would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions relating to this study, please feel free to contact Jeremy Hilburn at [phone number].

Sincerely,

Jeremy Hilburn

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## Appendix III

### Code Book

#### 20 final codes with definitions and examples (from Atlas.ti)

active citizenship <is> Root

Comment:

def - when either the teacher or the students actively work to contribute to in a democracy

Example - N: community organizing, anti-war protests

agency <is> Root

Comment:

def - students matter. students can be agents of change. Also fighting against apathy.

Ex - i want to teach them that they matter in their decisions.

Between group differences <is> Root

Comment:

def - teacher has noticed differences between immigrant groups or between immigrant groups and other groups of students

Ex - Burmese students lack TVs at home, so know less about pop culture than Latino students

challenge assumptions <is> Root

Comment:

Def - teacher or student learned something which countered their prior knowledge.

Example - N: Yeah, a lot of students have always been taught and have tended to believe that if you work hard and play by the rules that they'll be able to make it. And evidence shows that that is not necessarily the case.

challenges <is> Root

Comment:

Def - obstacles to success

Example - N: undoc. students can't afford college because they can't get aid.

civic duties and responsibilities <is> Root

Comment:

def - the types of things people can/should/have to do in a democracy

Examples - voting, volunteerism, protesting

civics philosophy <is> Root

Comment:

def - what is this teacher's view of civics? Why is it taught? what is important about it? Main goals?

Ex - create active citizens so make the world a better place for their children

community <is> Root

Comment:

Def - engagement with local actors/systems

Example - N: schools should be places to improve communities, not just individual students

cultural dissonance <is> Root

Comment:

Def - when there are differences between the immigrant students' heritage culture and American culture or between teacher's beliefs and immigrant students' heritage beliefs  
Ex - immigrant students are often too meek; they won't challenge me about grades. Whatever I say is law.

demographics <is> Root

Comment:

def - information about the immigrant students in one's classes  
Ex - I teach 8 immigrant students

frustration <is> Root

Comment:

Def - teacher has negative feelings either towards immigrant students, their heritage culture, or the school practices which harm immigrant students  
Ex - I don't understand why they aren't motivated.

history vs. civics <is> Root

Comment:

def - different ways of teaching history and civics - different philosophy or teaching method or importance for immigrant students or non-immigrant students  
Ex. - N: But the course is just not structured to do that. I feel like history is more content based than civics. In terms of students are expected to know more facts and names and things like that. Civics is more concepts and applications. How does the judicial system work as opposed to who are the key people in the system. There is some of that - they need to know John Marshall and things like that. But we don't emphasize as much because we focus on the major themes.

how did you get here? <is> Root

Comment:

def - how did the teacher end up teaching civics  
Example - community organizing didn't change opinions, so wanted to change opinions before they were set

immigrants and schools <is> Root

Comment:

def. - related to immigrants and schools historically or how schools and immigrants work together presently. can also include how the systems set up by schools (ESL programs, sheltered classes) influence immigrant students  
Ex. - purpose of American schools was to Americanize immigrants who were a problem.

local/national/global citizenship <is> Root

Comment:

def - distinctions between perceptions of citizenship at different "levels"  
Example - immigrants are left out of the citizenship discussion at the national level, but can contribute positively in local communities through community service

non-immigrants learning from immigrants <is> Root

Comment:

def. - non-immigrant students learning from immigrant students  
Ex - immigrant students bring different perspectives which opens up class discussion

patriotism <is> Root

Comment:

def - positive feelings towards either the US or the heritage country  
Ex - when they drew pictures of the American Revolution all of the Americans had happy faces because they were so proud

positives <is> Root

Comment:

def - positive contributions of immigrant students. teachers see these factors as helpful to the school

Ex. - immigrant students bring different perspectives

teaching strategies <is> Root

Comment:

def - pedagogies teachers use, which may or may not be particularly helpful for imm. students

Ex - simulations, peer coaching

unaware <is> Root

Comment:

def - teacher is unaware of information regarding immigrant students

Ex - unaware of school policies regarding immigrant students

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