Synthesizing Multicultural, Global, and Civic Perspectives in the Elementary School Curriculum and Educational Research

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Social networks and communities are rapidly expanding and changing due to the accelerating pace of globalization. In this article, we examine new possibilities for the reform of curriculum and educational research in a way that is responsive to increasingly multicultural and global communities. Drawing on literatures in the areas of multicultural, global, and civic education, we conducted a critical qualitative case study of four elementary school teachers. The teachers, two in the United States and two in the United Kingdom, are known to be exemplary at synthesizing multicultural, global, and civic education. We, the two authors, one a female from China and the other a male from the United States, employed duoethnography methodology to utilize our different positionalities as researchers in our description, analysis and interpretation of the data. As the exemplary teachers in our study illustrate, education needs to be culturally responsive, socially just, well-integrated, and empowering. We conclude with findings that have implications for the reform of curriculum and educational research methodology. Keywords: Multicultural Education, Global Education, Civic Education, Duoethnography

The increasing opportunities and constraints resulting from globalization have placed new demands upon the way we educate students to participate in democratic communities. Held and McGrew define globalization as "the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of transcontinental flows and patterns of social interaction" (2002, p. 1). These flows and patterns are economic, political, and cultural (Robertson & White, 2007). Of particular concern to curriculum theorists is the move toward a political economy in curriculum that privileges standardization, efficiency, and market rationality over citizenship and cultural diversity (Camicia & Franklin, 2011; Camicia & Zhu, 2011). The recent rise in the number of international and dual language immersion schools in the United States and China illustrates a response to a growing need to teach students how to navigate these changes. In this article, we examine new possibilities for the reform of curriculum and educational research in a way that is responsive to increasingly multicultural and global communities. Our research process draws upon our different positionalities as researchers to describe, analyze, and interpret our data by employing case study and duoethnography methodologies. Sawyer (2010) describes duoethnography as a process where "researchers and educators can work collaboratively to generate dialogue focused on personally meaningful questions, issues, and constructs. In duoethnography, two or more researchers work in tandem to critically juxtapose stories from their lives in relation to a similar phenomenon, creating a process of interrogation—not reification—of personal critical sites or socially relevant issues, such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc." (p. 24).

We conducted a critical qualitative case study of four public k-6 teachers, two in the U.S. and two in the U.K., who are noted for their ability to synthesize multicultural, global, and civic education in their curriculum. In addition, we added our interpretations of this synthesis against our backgrounds as K-12 and university teachers. One of us is from the

United States, and the other is from China. This allows us to include a perspective from China, allowing for three nations to be represented in our examination of how these curriculum areas might be synthesized. We asked participants to describe their curriculum and the interrelationships between multicultural, global, and civic education, and our interpretations included how we, the authors, have experienced these interrelationships in our different contexts. Our interpretations of what participants said reflect our positionalities.

Our positionalities as researchers and authors helped us describe, analyze, and interpret the data from different perspectives. I, Steven Camicia, am a White, gay, male, English-speaking, upper middle class, citizen of the U.S. Most of these identities, with the exception of gay, create my positionality located within the dominant culture of the U.S. In addition, being a citizen of the United States adds the identity of one who colonizes to my positionality. I am situated within historical and contemporary contexts where the United States has colonized other regions of the globe. I do research with colleagues in the Philippines and my positionality of a White male from the United States has strong ties to the historical and contemporary colonization of the Philippines by the United States. I struggle to work against creating another instance of colonization by yet another White male in the Philippines (Camicia & Bayon, 2012). This struggle is to decolonize curriculum and educational research, which currently privilege me because of my identities.

I, Juanjuan Zhu, am a female, straight, native in Mandarin Chinese, fluent in English and Han Chinese. Most of these identities, for instance, being a Han who forms the predominant ethnic group in China, place me within the dominant culture of the Chinese society. However, after I moved to the U.S. for my doctoral studies, I felt a keen status shift. The same set of identities that used to privilege me in China now pushes me to the margins of the American society because they are at variance with and thus considered less valuable than the dominant White middle-class male identity. Though not a totally enjoyable experience, the sharp change enabled me to question deeper and more critically how and what different social contexts can make and have made of a person. Like Steven, my struggle is to critically examine and deconstruct curriculum and educational research; but unlike him, I am doing so by challenging the many privileges the I used to take for granted in China while at the same time fighting for a more just and fairer treatment on behalf of many marginalized individuals and groups with whom I identify in the U.S. society. With these different positionalities, we approached our study of the exemplary teachers from unique lenses. Using a dialogic approach, which is part of duoethnography, we embed our unique approaches within our research project. We conclude with findings that extend research concerning the connections between theory and classroom practice, and as a result, findings that provide guidance for developing and implementing curriculum and educational research that is responsive to changing communities around the globe.

Problem

The problems that this study addresses are twofold. One problem is related to the social studies curriculum in different locations of the globe. Our second problem surrounds an exploration of a research methodology that would be sensitive to researchers collaborating on projects that are located in different areas of the globe. This twofold approach attempts to provide guidance for curriculum developers and educational researchers that enables a decolonizing global, multicultural, democratic curriculum.

Social studies is often the curriculum area where democratic, global, and multicultural education are included in the curriculum. From our perspectives, Steven from the United States and Juanjuan from China, we have seen that social studies curriculum in both countries is marginalized. Global and multicultural education are important parts of education for

democracy because social justice is increased as multiple cultural and global perspectives are included in the curriculum (Habermas, 1996; Young, 2000).

Given the importance of preparing students to solve problems equitably and democratically in a globalized society, it is unfortunate that curriculum in the U.S. often excludes multicultural and global perspectives (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1997; Takaki, 1993; Zimmerman, 2002; Zinn, 2003). Within U.S. schools, teachers point to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) testing requirements as a powerful force in the marginalization of social studies education in their classrooms (Burroughs, Groce, & Webeck, 2005). This is problematic because the social studies curriculum can be an ideal place to understand global and multicultural perspectives. Baily, Shaw, and Hollifield (2006) found that the amount of time allocated by school districts for social studies education in elementary grades was rarely utilized due to testing in other areas of the curriculum. In a study of the social studies curriculum in 50 U.S. states, Hahn (2002) found that students were rarely encouraged to analyze multiple perspectives on a range of social issues and historical narratives.

More serious problems confront educators in China. First of all, the content of multicultural, global and especially civic education is still under heated discussion (e.g. Chen & Reid, 2002; Wang, Yuan, & Xu, 2009; Xue, 2008) in both educational and political circles. Before the beginning of the 21st century, the notion of *chenmin,* the Chinese equivalent of "subjects under the jurisdiction of feudal or vassal states", with its exclusive emphasis on responsibilities not rights and morality not law had been deeply engrained in the Chinese mentality for more than 2000 years (Liu, 1998; Wong, 1999). Given that the lingering effect of *chenmin* can still be felt today and that "in terms of theory, little has been written about citizenship in Chinese political and legal literature [by the end of the 20th century]" (Yu, 2002, p.288), people are concerned as to how to implement civic education effectively in China's context under conditions of globalzation.

Moreover, like their American counterparts, students in China are heavily burdened with studies of core subjects like math, Chinese, and English to make sure they can excel in high-stakes examinations (Chen & Reid, 2002). Accordingly, teachers have to place other subjects such as citizenship education in the back seat and resort to direct instruction as the major pedagogical strategy (Chen & Reid, 2002). Finally, in terms of the presence of multiple perspectives in the national uniform curriculum (Zuo, 2007), Wang and Phillion (2010) have found that only the language, knowledge and culture from the dominant Han ethnic group are represented or emphasized in elementary textbooks in Mainland China. In his study about citizenship education in Shanghai, one metropolis in China, Law (2007) discovered that both teachers and students there desired to increase the global dimension of citizenship education in the curriculum.

The problems of insufficient instructional time, testing pressures, and the avoidance of diverse perspectives found in global and multicultural education make goals related to a responsive democratic curriculum difficult to attain. It is within this milieu that our study sought to find contrary examples. In other words, we sought to develop a study that would present excellent examples to pre-service and practicing teachers in the elementary grades while interpreting these examples through our perspectives as teachers, researchers, and authors. We illustrate this through the cases of teachers who resisted the pressures listed above and are known to successfully synthesize multicultural, global, and civic education in their classrooms. While the examples are located in three countries, we will see that there are similarities that have implications for a synthesis of global, multicultural and democratic education in other locations on the globe. This is an important examination because this is the first study to our knowledge that asks the following question: *How do exemplary K-6 educators in different locations on the globe who synthesize multicultural, global, and civic education describe their curriculum?* The answer to this question will provide illustrations for

other teachers and curriculum developers around the globe to help design and implement such a curriculum.

Our second research question addresses the problem of creating research methodologies that work to deconstruct the global hierarchies, often constructed through the process of colonization, that serve to perpetuate global misrepresentations and related social injustices. Through our dialectical methodology of duoethnography, which we describe later in this article, we ask: *How can we develop educational research methodologies that are multiculturally and globally responsive?* The answer to this question can guide educational researchers to methodologies that are sensitive to the unique positionalities of researchers and participants. This is particularly important when large differences in positionalities exist. With an increase in global collaborations on curriculum research and design, the answer to our second research question will provide an illustration of how positionality can be addressed between educators and researchers on different areas of the globe.

Theoretical Framework

Literatures in the areas of multicultural, global, and civic education provided the basis for the following operational definitions of exemplary teaching in these areas. These literatures also helped guide our thinking in the area of research methodology. Multicultural education helps students critique the influence of dominant cultures and privileges the voices of marginalized cultures in order to promote social justice. Global education helps students understand global issues and global citizenship. Civic education helps students participate productively in democracies.

We refer to Tilly (2007) for an operational definition of democratic institutions and their relationships with those who are members of these institutions. We call these members citizens. Tilly defines democracies as institutions where "political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation" (pp. 13-14). The components of this definition tie together and provide a rationale for our theoretical framework. *Breadth* refers to the proportion of a communities population is recognized and provided with rights of membership. This proportion of the population is considered a citizenry. Global and multicultural education emphasize adding breadth to democratic institutions because more peoples' perspectives are recognized and given rights. *Equality* refers to the relative equality between groups and citizens within an institution. Global and multicultural education focus upon power asymmetries between groups and individuals so that changes move toward greater equality and social justice. *Protection* refers to the degree to which individuals and groups are protected against institutions themselves causing harm. Civic education focuses upon the constitutional, substantive, and procedural structures and policies that students must know about to limit the size and actions of institutions. *Mutually binding consultation* refers to the degree to which institutions are obligated to provide benefits to citizens. This is another component of civic education. Students learn about equitable, procedurally binding ways that institutions must be responsive to citizens. The following literatures describe in more detail how multicultural, global, and civic education can be synthesized in curriculum in order to create more democratic local and global communities.

Multicultural Education

Banks (1994, 2004a) proposes the following as dimensions in multicultural education: content integration, knowledge construction, equity pedagogy, an empowering school culture, and prejudice reduction. One of the main learning objectives in multicultural education is for

students to understand that all social issues are seen from different perspectives depending upon a person's position within society and identities related to this position. This is called perspective consciousness. Students then build upon this understanding by examining the way that dominant culture crowds out marginalized perspectives. When this occurs in the curriculum, students are sent powerful messages about what cultures are valued and what cultures are not. When the curriculum includes marginalized perspectives, all students learn how to create inclusive, democratic institutions and the curriculum is more culturally responsive to the knowledge of marginalized students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994). In addition, perspective consciousness is an important part of prejudice reduction (Allport, 1979; Camicia, 2007b; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Paley (1990, 1995) provides compelling examples of how perspective consciousness can be realized in children as young as pre-school, dispelling many of developmental assumptions about the ability of children to engage with critical multicultural issues at a young age. From young ages, curriculum can emphasize that democracies rely upon breadth and inclusion.

Global Education

Global education theorists such as Anderson (1968), Becker (1969), and Hanvey (1976/1982) emphasize perspective consciousness and inclusion on a global scale. In addition to helping students understand the different perspectives within their local, state, and national communities, global education emphasizes the perspectives of human beings in a global community. The concept of a global citizen is central to global education. Just as citizens in local communities gather to solve problems facing the local community, global citizens gather to solve problems facing the global community. In order for the problem solving process, or democratic deliberation, to be socially just, global education emphasizes the need for students to understand power asymmetries and historical oppression between nations and regions (Case, 1993; Crocco, 2006; Gaudelli, 2003, 2006; Heilman, 2006; Merryfield & Subedi, 2001; Parker, Ninomiya, & Cogan, 2002).

Civic Education

Civic education provides an action component to multicultural and global education. Students learn about social structures, attitudes, and procedures that encourage socially just, democratic solutions to be applied to shared problems of a community. In other words, they learn how to become effective citizens. Civic education emphasizes perspective consciousness of different stakeholders within the community and how to come to an agreement over the best course of action. Deliberation of public issues is a central learning activity within civic education (Gutmann, 1987; Habermas, 1996). When students learn to deliberate these public issues, they perform the vital work of citizens in an effective democracy (Gutmann, 2004; Ochoa-Becker, 2007; Parker, 2003). Through her research, Paley (1992) found that children from very young ages are able to deliberate controversial public issues. Others have found that children can deliberate issues such as child labor, the effects of globalization, the environment, racism (Bigelow & Peterson, 2002; Camicia, 2007a), or environmental degradation (Education Center for Chinese Citizens, n.d.).

In sum, a synthesis of multicultural, global, and civic education emphasize inclusion and the means to increase equity and inclusion within a community in order to make it more democratic. This applies to communities as small as ones in a classroom and as large as a global community. While multicultural education emphasizes culture and global education emphasizes location on the earth, both aim to increase the breadth and equality within institutions such as cities, states, or global institutions such as the United Nations. Civic

education emphasizes the means to protect rights of citizens and to make democratic institutions transparent and accountable to all citizens.

Methodology

Rationale

We chose a qualitative methodology because we were interested in learning about the stories of individuals with the elements of an emergent and dialogical approach. We wanted our examination to capture nuances such as positionality and local context while seeking to generalize to theory, which is a powerful rationale for case study design (Yin, 1994). We also wanted to extend the case study to reflect interpretations from the multiple positionalities of the researchers in dialogue. This was accomplished through duoethnography (Lund & Navabi, 2008; Norris, 2008), which seeks to maintain the unique positionalities of the researchers in the interpretation of data. This is in contrast to traditional research methodologies that collapse the narratives of researchers in order to create a grand narrative. As we will illustrate later, the voices of both authors are presented in dialogue format rather than a single narrative of interpretation. We believe this is important to the fields of curriculum development and qualitative educational research because it provides an example of how a multivocal text of interpretation increases the sensitivity of a study to the multiple positionalities of researchers.

This is particularly important when considering research collaborations between researchers with large differences in privilege and positionality. Qualitative researchers are becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to understand the epistemological linkages within research project methodologies (Koro-Ljungberg, Yendol-Hoppey, Smith, & Hayes, 2009; Madison, 2005; Naples, 2000). We used the critical lenses presented in our theoretical framework to align our positionalities as researchers within the research process. It is our stance that the only way that we can move to more inclusive, culturally, and globally responsive curriculum is to include collaborations that utilize the different positionalities of the researchers in ways that are sensitive to multiple perspectives within curriculum. Because duoethnography is a dialogical approach, it provides the space for multiple perspectives within the research process. Finally, this perspective consciousness must be complemented by a consciousness of power asymmetries between individuals and societies on local and global levels. We used these principles to guide our critical qualitative methodology.

In sum, the combination of case study and duoethnography help us answer our research questions. We used case study to bound our examples within the context of exemplary teachers and their descriptions of curriculum. We used duoethnography to examine ways that qualitative methodologies can be globally and culturally responsive to the positionalities of researchers and participants. Although we see this responsiveness as important to any qualitative research project, we see it as particularly important when examining curriculum that addresses issues related to global, multicultural, and civic education.

Recruitment and Data Sources

We selected cases using purposive sampling techniques (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Our sampling method followed that of Myers (2006) who asked educators and researchers to nominate "exemplary education programs dealing with global themes" (p. 378). To identify schools in the United States where nominations would be solicited from principals, we searched the internet using the following search terms: global education, multicultural education, international education. We read the first 750 results from Google search engine. We identified results that described public schools and read their mission statements. Based

upon the mission statements in relation to our theoretical descriptions of global, multicultural, and democratic education, we selected 40 schools that seemed most aligned with our framework. We sent IRB approved emails to principals asking them to nominate teachers that were aligned with our descriptions of global, multicultural, and democratic education. We received two responses that were geographically and demographically different. We chose to recruit these two teachers in order to highlight differences due to the multiple and overlapping identities of students and the different contexts in which they live. To identify teachers in the United Kingdom, we contacted a researcher and teacher educator in the U.K. who is recognized globally as an expert in the area of global, multicultural, and civic education. In addition to observing teachers in classrooms across the United Kingdom, she has written multiple books on the topic. She nominated the two teachers in our study.

We secured approval of the Institutional Review Board at our university to recruit the participants for our study. Participants were informed about the study and consented to participate. We collected two data sets. First, a total of four public school teachers participated in semi-structured interviews. The teachers' students ranged in ages between three and eleven. One teacher, Victor, is White and teaches at a dual language immersion school in the western U.S. His students are predominately Latino and Latina, and languages of instruction are Spanish and English. Another teacher, Stacie, is White and teaches at a dual language immersion school in the southern U.S. Her students are predominately White, and students choose two instructional languages from Spanish, French, German, and English. Two teachers, Lisa and Brianna, are of color and teach at the same school in the central U.K. Ninety percent of their students are Muslim with English as an additional language. Steven conducted one two-hour semi-structured interview with each teacher. The interviews were based upon a dialogical approach where the interviewer arrives at the interview with prewritten questions (see Appendix) and uses them as a basis in a mutually constructed conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee (Mishler, 1986). Our second data set consisted of instructional materials that were collected from a lesson or unit that each teacher believes comes as close to the ideal of multicultural, global, and civic education as possible. We asked participants to bring some examples of their curriculum that reflects multicultural, global, and democratic education. The materials in the form of student artifacts such as essays, cartoons, PowerPoint presentations, and research reports were used during our interview with the teachers as reference points or sources for stimulated recall (Lyle, 2003) and illustrations of their descriptions of their curriculum.

Data Analysis

We approached the study from both a dialogical (hooks, 1994; hooks & Trend, 1996) and critical orientation (Madison, 2005). This meant that we approached the data recognizing how our unique positionalities, already mentioned in our introduction, might help us analyze the data in a complementary/complex way that represents multiple cultural and global perspectives. Interview transcripts were uploaded to Atlas.ti qualitative research software. We followed procedures for memo writing, open coding, and axial coding as outlined by Corbin and Strauss (2008). When we first read the transcripts from our interview, we wrote memos related to what we were thinking about what we were reading. This usually connected to how we understood participants to be connecting to the theoretical frameworks and ways that they did not. As Corbin and Strauss point out, "open coding and axial coding go hand in hand" (p. 198), but we will describe them separately in the interest of clarity. In open coding, we identified concepts within the transcripts and developed codes related to these concepts. For example, the concept of "responsiveness to community" was a concept that we saw frequently in the data. We developed this into a code that we assigned to parts of the text that

communicated this concept. In axial coding, we made analytical connections between concepts and codes. For example, "responsiveness to community" is analytically connected to our code "culturally responsive pedagogy." In the next level of analysis, we connected this to larger themes within our theoretical framework. For example, the above two codes are connected to themes of multicultural and global education. Finally, we connected these themes with our lived experiences, epistemologies, positionalities, and the theoretical lenses. After we identified these themes, we each created a narrative response that expressed our unique interpretation of the data.

Findings

All teachers in the study illustrated exemplary understanding and practices in multicultural, global, and democratic education. Not surprisingly, their understanding and implementation of these types of education was responsive to the students and context in which they taught. Although the teachers' responsiveness led to differences between teachers' curricula, prevalent strands carried through their curricula. They illustrated an exceptional awareness of the cultures and needs of their students, strong connections with students' communities, and a commitment to various forms of student empowerment.

The Synthesis of Multicultural, Global, and Democratic Education

When we asked teachers to describe each of the types of education and their relative importance to each other, they showed important differences concerning power relations. While Lisa, Brianna, and Victor emphasized the importance of empowering students to move from a position of disempowerment, Stacie marked a contrast from the other teachers in that her concept of student empowerment was to teach her students how to navigate the globe as responsible citizens. She states:

> Civic responsibility I thought should be taught first, because it's the crux of who we are as individuals. So you need to have an understanding of values, your morals - those kinds of things - because that's going to shape how you respond to what's going on around you, both globally and also here at home locally.

Stacie's students are from families who expect their children to be the future global leaders and world travelers. The reason for learning the different types of education is to teach students how to use their power responsibly. To Stacie, multicultural education is a component of acting responsibly in the world but it is not prevalent in the standard sense of the term, which in the critical sense means to empower those who have been historically marginalized. Instead, multicultural education means understanding other cultures and acting responsibly when interacting with others at home and around the globe.

Stacie's use of global education in the classroom also reflected her goal of teaching students about global connections and how to act responsibly. In the following, she defines global education in her classroom:

> Global education is having an awareness of what's happening in the world around, how it relates to you, and how you relate to it. It's having an understanding of the issues, the causes, and how they are intertwined together.

Victor also chose civic education as the overarching curriculum objective, but his rationale was different from Stacie's. In many ways, his students were the ones that Stacie taught her students to share resources with. The goal of civic education was different because of Victor's responsiveness to his students. He describes his rationale for choosing civic education as the most important:

> Civic education, I think that the most important role of an educator who works with the populations that are underrepresented in culture or power - maybe the most important role that they have is to empower them to work for meaningful change for themselves or families in their communities.

Victor sees civic education as the most important for empowering students to be agents of change for those who are underrepresented. While his description is similar to Stacie's in that they both want to give resources to those who have few resources, Victor talks about power as a resource whereas Stacie talks about monetary and material resources. This difference highlights the difference in rationales for civic education as seen from the top and as seen from the bottom of dominant hierarchies of culture and power within society.

All teachers saw the task of deciding which of multicultural, global, and civic education was the most important as somewhat artificial, but Lisa and Brianna expressed strongest reservations over the separation of the three. Lisa emphasizes the integration of all three in the curriculum and their student council:

> It's all cross-curriculum. It's all linked. Over here I've got school council voices, and I can give you examples of our minutes. We have English as an additional language, religious education, lots of links are made through our multicultural education and the global issues as well.

Lisa gave multiple examples surrounding the concept of student voice and the integration of multicultural, global, and civic education. Student empowerment of voice was a main rationale in responsiveness to the marginalized status of her students within the dominant culture. Student voice was strengthened by providing students the space in curriculum to express their historical and contemporary perspectives on society, as well as their language, religion, global perspectives.

Brianna also expressed the need to combine multicultural, global, and civic education throughout the curriculum. Rather than isolated subjects, these types of education are integrated in every aspect of the curriculum. Brianna described integration this way:

> There was nothing that I could relate to and that's why I think it's so important that we need to look at where children are coming from because if you're going to get them to feel good about them it's a whole thing from learning their name, making sure that you can say their name correctly, to everything that is in the curriculum and PSA, etc. It's in everything.

> **Juanjuan Zhu:** I am more with Lisa and Brianna in believing the three should be closely integrated in the entire curriculum. The same concern is well reflected in China's recent discussion about promoting citizenship education in its nine-year compulsory education. Although different scholars suggest various components and emphases, I hold that citizenship education should be an overarching term that encompasses equal and combined treatment of multicultural, global and democratic education. My experience as a privileged

citizen in China, because of certain aspects of my identity such as being a Han, and then as an underprivileged individual in America, although I am still the same person, tells me the importance of constructing a well-balanced curriculum that can best avoid hierarchies and biases constructed in any aspect. Students cultivated in such a curriculum should know how to perform their rights and obligations in their fight for equality and freedom. They should be exposed to multiple languages, perspectives, histories and cultures, and learn to appreciate differences. For example, when inviting minority children or immigrant children to present their lives, and (sub)cultures in forms like pictures, videos, artifacts, teachers can further lead all students to think about any cultural differences and prejudices. (S)he can also encourage children to identify reasons accounting for the prejudices, and ways striving for social justice. Moreover, (s)he can extend the discussion of cultural differences and prejudices within a nation to that found around the world.

Steven Camicia: Related to the responsiveness of curriculum, I found the issue of complexity to be almost overwhelming but extremely necessary. Most of the teachers and Juanjuan Zhu speak about the need to integrate considerations of dominance and subjugation due to socially constructed hierarchies in the curriculum. As a White male, I was not as aware of these hierarchies as I experienced the curriculum in schools. This is due to my privilege. The same applies to much of the curriculum in the United States related to both culture and geopolitical belonging. Even curriculum that emphasizes culture and global understanding usually does so from the United States as the point of departure and return. True synthesis will only occur when marginalized voices are not simply added to the curriculum but transform the narrative to the curriculum to express different positionalities of students and community members. While I agree that civic education is the overarching rationale for education, multicultural and global education are necessary to create a curriculum that examines rather than perpetuates social injustices.

Student Empowerment

While all teachers emphasized the need to have students make tangible changes in local and global communities, teachers spoke differently about their conceptions of power. This is to be expected because, as has already been mentioned, the teachers were responsive to the needs of their students and communities. The social positioning of students and their communities would draw upon different needs for empowerment. For example, Victor described power this way:

So it lends itself really naturally to learning about many different cultures, celebrating many different cultures, and once again to return to this idea of empowering students to participate in - I don't know the word you want to use - the culture of power.

A large majority of students in his class are not from the dominant culture and do not speak the dominant culture's language. His reference to "the culture of power" indicates that his conception of student empowerment is to teach his students about the dominant culture while not diminishing their culture. This involves knowing how the system works and how to

intervene in it as effective citizens. In this way, multicultural, global, and democratic educations serve to give access to students from historically marginalized cultures.

Referring to the topic of dual language immersion in his school, Victor also expands on his statement above by explaining how dual language immersion classrooms empower his students by reducing the dominance of English in the curriculum:

> One of the subgroups they list is English language learners and it's definitely listed - you know, it's a subgroup in No Child Left Behind. It's a weakness, right? So we turn that on its head. We say, "No, this is a strength." I mean not that you have to learn English but that you come with another language and that we nurture that, so that, I think, is valuable in a ton of ways. One is - I mean according to some people's work it's the best way to learn a second language is to get that good base in your first language. So, one, it's the best way to learn English, right? That's one thing, but secondly, kids feel empowered because, you know, they're coming from a positive place. They can be proud and celebrate what they have at home inside of school.

Stacie also focused upon student empowerment. She positioned herself as a learner with the students. Rather than a monological relationship, she emphasized the need for teachers to enter into a dialogical relationship where, following the lines of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1998), teaching is learning and learning is teaching. Stacie describes this perspective:

> So many times people will say, "Oh, they're only 10 and 11. They don't get it." They do get it. They're not oblivious. They know exactly what's going on, and if you can encourage them to continue to research it - you know, ask those questions. I don't care what you ask. If I don't know, I'll tell you I don't know, and then let's look for it together. It's not a big deal. I say, "Guys, I'm here to learn from you. I learn so much from you. I don't think education should be vertical: me giving it down to you guys. But it should be horizontal: let's learn together."

By positioning herself as a learner too, Stacie is able to empower her students as learners. Rather than passive vessels in which the teacher deposits knowledge, students are active in their learning.

Lisa described the empowerment of her students through the use of choice in the curriculum and focusing on students as active agents of change in their community. Her following description was one of many in which she told how her students were given choice:

> We had some funding last year, about 300.00 - 400.00 pounds in the pot so I asked the classes, "What would you like to do with that money?" So then the classes for each class had their own ideas. One class said, "We want to have televisions or some videos or some games to play." One of the year's groups said they want some reading books because they feel that children in the low literacy group need more information, more books to read to help with their reading and their writing. So then the school council read through all their proposals. So we looked through each proposal, we had a really good discussion of the pros and the cons of each proposal, how is it gonna be beneficial to the children. The children were then involved in choosing the books, how to spend the money.

The student council where Lisa teaches is empowered to make decisions such as the one described above as well as architectural decisions made for a new school. As Brianna mentions in the next paragraph, student decision making extended to the hiring of teachers. Students were empowered to make authentic decisions and see the impact of their decisions within their community. Brianna summed up many of the aspects already illustrated throughout this article:

> What actually happened was it was very interesting that we were going to hire two teachers but the school council liked the third candidate. As a result of that, three people were hired instead of two people. I think every teacher will be fine about wanting to deliver school council but other elements, whether it's tackling racism or dealing with sex relationship education, staff won't want to do it because they don't feel confident. I'll give you a prime example. You know the assemblies at the festival? Just before Christmas we were doing a festival assembly for staff, for parents, the community to come in. One group was doing an assembly about Devali, and one group was to do it about the pilgrimage to Mecca. The nativity play was fantastic but when it came to the delivery of the assembly it was absolutely diabolical, and the reason for that was certain words were mispronounced, lack of enthusiasm on the person who was actually presenting it, and sort of the actual work that the children did was appalling. When I questioned her afterwards I said, "What's going on there?" and she said, "How do you expect me to know these words?" and I said, "You've had the information and it's your responsibility and you know that you're leading an area and you've got plenty of staff and children around you that you could've actually gone to ask for support." Then I stepped in because I had to.
>
> The next morning we were going to do the assembly and I went to the children. These were year two children, six and seven year olds, and I said, "What would you like to be said about this festival?" remembering predominantly they were Muslim. The children came up with their own that they wanted to recite the Koran and prayers that they learned at Mosque school, which is after school. I had a child who apparently was very, very shy in the India group. He wanted to recite a passage from the Koran with another child who had behavior issues. He said, "I want to do this," and these are the seven year olds, and literally within ten minutes of this discussion we had a whole new structure to deliver.

Within this very delicate situation for Brianna, the students, and the school community, Brianna turned to the children for a solution. From the hiring of teachers to the culturally relevant and appropriate way to stage an assembly involving topics of religion, student knowledge was valued and given voice. They were learning how to read the world around them and intervene in it effectively.

> **Juanjuan Zhu:** Just as I felt empowered whenever I was able to use Mandarin Chinese in America, minority children in China can be instilled a strong sense of pride in their culture and identity if their language is considered valuable and used often. Also, they will have the potential to fight against hegemony imposed on their groups and communities. Based on my painful experience of

shying from speaking my original dialect after moving to Shanghai for college, I can attest to the significance of a curriculum valuing many variations of the Chinese language in that it can strongly boost non-local-born students' confidence.

Victor mentioned dual language education was an effective weapon he equipped his students with against the dominance of English. This strategy can be employed by those who teach students from non-dominant ethnic groups in China to reduce the dominance of Mandarin Chinese. As mentioned before, though official policies guarantee and encourage the use of approximately 120 minority languages by their native speakers (Sun, 2004), considerable discrepancies exist between the law and the practice (Wang & Phillion, 2009; Zhou, 2004). In reality, many minority languages are engendered (Wang & Phillion, 2009) and looked down upon (Nima, 2001) while mandarin Chinese of the Hans is promoted as the national language.

Apart from language instruction, other effective ways emerge that can empower the entire student body in China. Stacie exemplifies Freire's (1998) dialogical pedagogy. By placing herself on a horizontal footing with her students, Stacie communicates an important message that everyone is equal. Lisa's and Brianna's accounts are also inspirational in the sense that they not only give students the freedom to choose but the authority to decide. They treat their students with total trust and respect. Reciprocating the trust, the students perform their rights and obligations sensibly and grow into responsible citizens. To my joy, such practices are starting to be experimented in China's elementary classrooms as well (Education Center for Chinese Citizens, n. d.). Some instances could be found in Jiangsu, one of the provinces in China that have established cooperative relationship with Center for Civic Education (CCE) of America. There, the civic education teacher gave students autonomy to choose topics that interest them to carry out their research projects. Often times, students listed a full blackboard of topics such as how to protect on-campus cultural relics, how to prevent pet dogs from polluting the environment, etc. In this case, the teacher would ask all students to decide on one or two most important topics by voting. In the process of conducting research, the teacher acted as a facilitator. The students, on the other hand, were encouraged to take full charge of collecting data, finding solutions, writing up reports. As reflected by both teachers and students, these kinds of activities trained students to be active agents of change. At the same time, students were learning important lessons on how to use or resist power in a complex world. Some hope is there. But more needs to be done. How long do we still have to wait for the birth of an official curriculum that honors such empowering practices? The answer is unknown. But one thing is sure: the sooner such a curriculum is in place, the more we can benefit as an entire human race.

Steven Camicia: The comments by the teachers and Juanjuan Zhu lead me to realize the possibility of global educational alliances intent on empowering students and communities. Curriculum and educational research reforms have strong potential to change the hegemony of unjust hierarchies related to differences. As the teachers observe, students at very young ages have the

ability to raise their voices when the opportunity to do so is embedded in the curriculum. Unfortunately, neoliberal policies of standardization, efficiency, and accountability are making this more difficult. It is difficult to be responsive to students and communities when, state, national, and global standards in their present form are mandated. However, I see the possibility of creating new visions of standards that are related to the empowerment of students and a more socially just society.

Conclusion

While the teachers in this study and we, as authors and researchers, have multiple ways of looking at the intents and methodologies within the curriculum, we share in the struggle to make curriculum more responsive to our students and communities. It is only through such responsiveness that our communities can approach inclusion and social justice. Many teacher education programs, curriculum developers, and educational researchers are struggling toward a similar direction. The teachers in this study illustrate how the synthesis of multicultural, global, and civic education in the curriculum can create classrooms that are responsive to the needs of students and their rapidly changing communities.

In addition, we, along with other theorists, see the need to encourage global citizenship as a way to be responsive to culture on local levels and solve common problems on a global level. Globalization has intensified, expanded, and accelerated the need to solve global problems (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999). Multiple theorists, as well as governmental and nongovernmental organizations, have emphasized the need to educate citizens who are able to solve global problems (e.g. global warming, water deficits, poverty, and human rights abuses) in an increasingly independent world (Banks, 2004b; Case, 1993; Diaz, Massialas, & Xanthopoulos, 1999; Gaudelli, 2006; Kniep, 1986; Merryfield, 1998).

Parker, Ninomiya, and Cogan (2002) studied the preferences of a multinational panel of experts from business, scientific, and educational communities concerning the development of a multinational curriculum based upon "world trends, needed human characteristics, and strategies for developing them." Panel members reached consensus concerning the need to create "a multinational, deliberation-based school curriculum focused on complex worldwide ethical problems" with the goal of developing "multidimensional citizens" (p 162). Banks et al. (2005) concluded that multicultural, global, and civic education must be synthesized in order for students to be knowledgeable about the world, global problem-solvers, and a force for positive change. It has been theorized that new understandings of citizenship must emerge because traditional concepts of citizenship are not able to keep pace with the demands of globalization (Castles & Davidson, 2000; Ong, 1999; Suárez-Orozco, 2004). Unfortunately, research indicates that there are few social studies curricula that foster these abilities (Gaudelli, 2003, 2006; Myers, 2006).

We used a methodology in our study that is meant to lay the groundwork for similar comparative educational research studies. Our dialogical, duoethnography, case study approach utilizes our unique positionalities as researchers to describe, interpret, and analyze data. The global hegemony of the West in the academy makes such collaborations and methodologies an issue of social justice. As the exemplary elementary teachers in our study illustrate, education needs to be culturally responsive, socially just, well integrated, and empowering. It is our hope that this article will provide illustrations and possible directions for teacher education and educational research that serve as focal points for alliances for these goals.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

1. Participants will be asked to define multicultural, global, and civic education.
2. Participants will be asked to rank the three types of education in order of importance.
3. Participants will be asked to describe the reasoning behind their rankings.
4. Participants will be asked to describe the way that an ideal curriculum would synthesize the three.
5. Participants will be provided a copy of the two-dimensional plane illustrated in Figure 1. With the two-dimensional plane and the materials that they were asked to bring to the interview, participants will be asked to describe where their learning activities, lesson plans, unit plans, and overall curriculum is located on the two-dimensional plane.
6. Participants will be asked to describe the obstacles that impede the ideal implementation of these learning activities, lesson plans, unit plans, and overall curriculum.

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