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SOCIAL STUDIES AND CITIZENSHIP
EDUCATION:
TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE
IN SINGAPORE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

JASMINE BOON-YEE SIM

2006

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Author’s Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree of diploma in any other University and other institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. This thesis conforms to the requirements of the University’s Ethics Committee and it does not exceed the upper word limit for the degree.
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Finally, I thank the Lord for providing me strength and insight daily. To Him be the honour, glory and praise.
Dedicated to:

My dear mother, the pillar of the family.
Teacher Knowledge and Practice: Social Studies and Citizenship Education in Singapore Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This is a study of citizenship education as viewed through the lens of the school subject called social studies. Specifically, it is about teachers’ understandings of social studies and citizenship education, and how these understandings influence their teaching. The conceptual frame of teacher curricular-instructional gatekeeping (Thornton, 1989, 1991, 2005a) was used to explore teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education.

The study was conceptualised around a case study design using qualitative research methods. Eight teachers were selected as cases. The interest was in understanding categories and features of similarities or differences across cases. Data were collected through extensive interviews, classroom observations and document analysis.

This study found that teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education were located in three distinct groups, characterised as nationalistic, socially concerned and person oriented teacher stances respectively. Four teachers were dominantly nationalistic, with two further characterised as conservative, and two as progressive. Two teachers were essentially socially concerned, and the final two were dominantly person oriented.

The study’s findings clarified the concept of teacher curricular-instructional gatekeeping within the social studies curriculum even in a tightly controlled education system such as Singapore. The findings reflected a citizenship education landscape in Singapore that was not as rigid, prescriptive and homogenous as previous research on the Asian region had suggested.

The study found a strong relationship existed between the teachers’ understandings of social studies and citizenship education, and how the subject was taught. It substantiated the significance of teacher knowledge and illustrated the relationship between knowledge and practice even in a tightly controlled system of education with a prescribed curriculum. It suggested that when the teacher understood the subject matter of social studies to be
problematic, it begot a broader conception of citizenship, leading to teaching for or through citizenship. In contrast, when the teacher understood the subject matter of social studies not to be problematic, it begot a narrow conception of citizenship, leading to teaching about citizenship. Overall, there was consistency between understandings and practice, often mediated by the role of the personal.

The implication is to go beyond a technical conception of curriculum and recognise teacher knowledge and agency in contested social studies and citizenship education. The findings revealed a broadening perspective of citizenship and citizenship education superseding national loyalty. Further, citizenship education must be integral component of social studies teacher education, providing opportunities to work on alternative representations, and engage in the discourse on social studies and citizenship education.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THESIS

ADE  Ability-Driven Education
CEPS  Citizenship Education Policy Study
CME  Civics and Moral Education
CMIEO  Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian and Others
CEG  Civics Expert Group
CIP  Community Involvement Project
EFL  Education for Living
IEA  International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
MOE  Ministry of Education
NCC  National Cadet Corp
NE  National Education
NGO  Non-Govermental Organisation
PAP  Peoples’ Action Party
PCCG  Pastoral Care and Career Guidance
PCK  Pedagogical Content Knowledge
R  Researcher
UK  United Kingdom
US  The United States
TSLN  Thinking Schools, Learning Nation
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study is about citizenship education as viewed through the lens of the subject of social studies. Its focus is about teachers' understandings of social studies and citizenship education, and how these understandings influence their teaching. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant once said, "There are two human inventions which may be considered more difficult than any others - the art of government, and the art of education" (Kant, 1803/1900, p. 11). Citizenship education addresses both these difficulties in preparing effective citizens to maintain democracy (Crick, 2000; Hahn, 1998; Parker, 1996; Patrick, 1999; Print, Ormstrom & Nielsen, 2002). Kant's statement is highly pertinent with citizenship education located in social studies, as the field of social studies is contentious in terms of definition and delineation (Ross, 2001). After all, social studies has been described as "a schizophrenic bastard child" (Barr, Barth & Shermis, 1977, p. 1).

The importance of education in the achievement of political and social goals is familiar (Kelly, 2004). Plato drew our attention to recognising educational provision as the key to achieving the kind of society one wished to see established. He began his discussion of education with these words, "These are the kinds of people our guardians must be. In what manner, then, will we rear and educate them?" (cited in Kelly, 2004, p. 166). Citizenship education has been, in some form, an overarching goal of public schooling historically in every society. Citizenship like anything else has to be learned, as young people do not become good citizens by accident (Morell, 1991; Parker, 2003). Parker highlighted two fundamentals of citizenship, namely democratic living and justice, to be "hard-won cognitive, moral, and social achievements; none of us wanders into them accidentally, easily, or alone" (p. xv). Not educating the young for the modern world through citizenship and critical thought is to hurl them "into shark infested waters unprepared" (Hoggart cited in Crick, 2000, p. 2).

The task of socialising the next generation to the directions of the nation-state has been so important that schools, directed by many governments, have been specifically assigned that duty. Schools are charged with the responsibility of developing students' political thought, knowledge, values and beliefs (Cason, 1999; Gilbert, 1993; Rauner,
While citizenship education can occur through a variety of sources, such as family and the media, schooling remains the main source of formal citizenship education for young people and the one avenue over which governments can maintain high levels of control and accountability. So it is in Singapore that education, in the guise of formal schooling, is the primary instrument for citizenship education.

The People's Action Party (PAP) government has regarded citizenship education as an important vehicle to disseminate the country's vision since the beginning of independence. Indeed, schooling, teaching and curriculum are always about the construction of knowledge and truth (Apple, 1993). "Official knowledge", as Apple calls it, grows from what is included and excluded from textbooks, syllabi and curriculum guides. In Singapore, close attention has been given to citizenship education at a very high level of political concern. The government constantly exhorts students to "keep alive the story of Singapore and its heroes in our collective memory" (Lee, 2006, para. 12). Since Singapore attained self-government in 1959, there has been a single-minded pursuit of citizenship education, which has taken many forms over the years, but always with the central purpose of nation-building (Chew, 1988, 1998; Eng, 1989; Gopinathan, 1988; Han, 1997, 2000; Hill & Lian, 1995; Tan, 1997; Then, 1975).

1.2 Background to the Problem

Intense interest in citizenship is neither new nor unique to Singapore. In recent years, citizenship has gained renewed attention worldwide in response to major global threats and trends - Tiananmen, collapse of communism and democratisation in Eastern Europe, ethnic conflicts, globalisation of the economy, rapid development of communications technology, increased global migration - that have led to massive changes in social, economic and political circumstances in many countries. In this period, several countries witnessed political turmoil as a result of change in regimes; others, including Singapore, were hit by economic recession, intensified competition, economic liberalisation in China and SARs. The challenges ahead are even more confounding - decreasing natural resources, environmental problems and natural disasters, pressing demands for higher living standards, potential pandemic diseases, vast inequalities in the distribution of wealth, growing religious extremism, terrorism, and declining voter participation in democracy and elections. A sense of a loss of community and shared belief in the common good is also felt. These have
problematised citizenship and necessitated a reappraisal in the rapidly changing global context (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Lee & Fouts, 2005; Print, 2005; Putnam, 2001; Shafir, 1998; Turner, 1993).

Governments worldwide are increasingly aware that these trends may destabilise their societies. Consequently, many efforts have been initiated to review the nature of citizenship, and reflect upon how the understandings that are essential to their successful functioning are acquired by citizens (Cogan, Morris & Print, 2002; Lee & Fouts, 2005). This period also saw a number of major cross-national research studies on citizenship and citizenship education conducted, such as the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Civic Study (Torney-Purta, Schwille & Amadeo, 1999; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz, 2001). Reviews of policies and practices of citizenship education in many countries such as Australia, Canada, Europe, the United Kingdom (U.K.) and the United States (U.S.), brought to the fore the lack of knowledge and participation of young people in their own democracies. For example, the Civics Expert Group (CEG, 1994) in Australia reported a civics deficit amongst 15-19 year olds. Several English studies found a high degree of political disengagement and cynicism among young people (Davies, Gregory & Riley, 1999; Wilkins, 1999, 2003). Similarly, the IEA Civic Study and Hahn’s (1998) study of students’ political attitudes in five western democracies confirmed students’ low levels of knowledge and interest in the political processes. Concomitantly, citizenship education has been found to be marginalised in many countries (Torney-Purta et al., 1999).

What appears to be pervasive ignorance and indifference among young people is worrying. It suggests that they have learnt to take citizenship somewhat for granted. Parker (2003) criticised such persons as ‘idiot’- “a term of reproach in ancient Greece reserved for persons who paid no attention to public affairs and engaged only in self-interested pursuits, never mind the public interest – the civic space and the common good” (p. xv). It is important that students be knowledgeable about the political system and their role as citizens. If people were knowledgeable about and shared the values of the political system, then it was more likely that the system can function more effectively (Almond, Dalton & Powell, 2002). In other words, democratic societies rely for their very survival upon the engagement and active participation of an informed citizenry. This implies that no state or society will survive long-term
without its citizens actually being very much a part of the process (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Print, 1998; Crick, 1998).

Over the past decade a sense of anxiety about citizenship and how it is learnt has been widely felt in many countries, sparking a flurry of policy initiatives to redefine citizenship and reshape citizenship education. Common across these policy initiatives was the focus on the knowledge, skills, values and virtues needed for an active, informed and effective citizenship, and the importance of citizenship education. Frameworks, national standards, guidelines, and assessment tools on citizenship education were developed in countries such as Australia (CEG, 1994), England (Crick, 1998), U.S. (Bahmueller, 1991), and in many Asian countries (Cogan et al., 2002; Lee, 2005).

Singapore is not shielded from the impact of globalisation and international tensions. Indeed it is in the vanguard of global change and more recently the winds of change have blown strong in Singapore. The impact is perceived to be magnified for Singapore because of its precarious circumstances. Singapore is a young nation and a multiracial society. It is tiny in size, and without any natural resources except for its people. Yet it is the world's most globalised nation (Aggarwal, 2005). Inevitably, developing good and loyal citizens, described as "stayers" by the government, is critical to Singapore's survival. "Stayers" are "committed to Singapore, and also active citizens who (have) given a part of (themselves), big or small, to the country", said former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong (2002, p. 21). The PAP government has so far managed these constraints and limitations successfully with rational and pragmatic policies (Quah, 1998). However, global developments intertwined with internal developments in Singapore have renewed attention on citizenship. Its leaders acknowledged times are changing. Its economic miracle is under threat as competition mounts from larger neighbours, and the region's emerging superpowers. They admitted if the PAP cannot guarantee sustained prosperity, pressure for political reform may increase (Tisdall, 2006). Clearly, the younger generation is more diverse, affluent, educated, mobile and demanding for choices (Chua, 1995; Gopinathan & Sharp, 2004; Hong, 2006). At the same time, there are concerns with regards to the problem of an apathetic and increasingly disengaged citizenry, characterised as doubtful of the present political system and self-centred (Neo, 2003; Lee, 2006; Tan, 2001). They have been described as "quitters", "fair-weather Singaporeans who,
having benefited from Singapore, will pack their bags and take flight when our country runs into a little storm” (Goh, 2002, p. 21). Consequently, developing good citizenship has become an urgent but complex need for the government and educators to resolve.

1.3 The Problem

The concept of civic deficit (CEG, 1994) is similarly an issue in Singapore, perceived in crisis proportion by the government. This led to a massive and urgent nation-building initiative, spearheaded by then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. The trigger came from two surveys conducted by newspapers in Singapore, *The New Paper* and *Lianhe Zaobao* in 1996. The surveys revealed that younger Singaporeans had little knowledge of events surrounding Singapore’s independence and expressed little interest in nation-building issues. To verify the findings, the Ministry of Education (MOE) conducted a surprise quiz on Singapore history to some 2,500 students from primary school through to university. The results confirmed the politicians' worst fears - that younger Singaporeans were ignorant of Singapore’s recent history, ignorant of the hardships Singaporeans experienced as they grappled with the issues and challenges encountered in nation-building. This was a matter of serious concern to the government and was critical as it put the nation at risk (Goh, 1996; Lee, 1997). Lee claimed that young people might take peace and prosperity for granted. An adequate historical knowledge was essential so that young people would be committed to the nation, and to the ideals and shared values such as meritocracy and multiracialism:

This ignorance will hinder our effort to develop a shared sense of nationhood. We will not acquire the right instincts to bond as one nation, or maintain the will to survive and prosper in an uncertain world. For Singapore to thrive beyond the founder generation, we must systematically transmit these instincts and attitudes to succeeding cohorts (Lee, 1997, para. 2).

The issue at stake for the government is how to develop and deepen national consciousness – that sense of belonging and feeling for Singapore among a highly mobile younger Singaporeans. It is in this context that National Education (NE), the form which citizenship education takes in Singapore, was launched on 17 May 1997. Citizenship education in schools was revised and reinforced. Significantly, social studies was introduced as a compulsory, examinable subject in all schools at the upper secondary level in 2001, and thus its development must be seen in the full context of
NE. Singaporeans are constantly reminded of the problem of civic deficit, as Lee, now Prime Minister warned as recently as April 2006:

This is why we introduced National Education in schools in 1997. It is not to indoctrinate our young, but to instil values and impart convictions about Singapore. It is to ensure that as students mature, they acquire a good understanding of self, society and nation, and a deep sense of personal responsibility and moral obligation to contribute back to the society which nurtured them....An important part of this is to have a sense of our history, and an appreciation of why we are here – where we came from, what we have been through together, and what this country stands for....we now have a lacuna in the generation of Singaporeans who were too young to know our pioneering leaders first-hand....in building modern Singapore (Lee, 2006, para. 8).

Against this background, social studies is currently being updated to reinforce government conviction.

In light of these developments, it is important to understand the changing nature of citizenship, and what citizenship education through social studies entails in the Singapore context. The contested nature of the two curricula makes undertaking such an investigation essential yet problematic. It is not easy to conceptualise citizenship, for it is not so much a tangible entity as a construct in the minds of individuals, and a nebulous one as that (Parker, 2003). Some understand it to be patriotism, others as informed criticism, or mere geographical location. Besides, citizenship is not just an expression of individual perceptions but also the collective mindset of the society. How citizenship is understood influences the approach to citizenship education (Branneman, 1997; Fickel, 2001; Haddo, 2001; Jimenez, 2001; Walkington & Wilkins, 2000). Underlying different understandings are conceptions of knowledge and associated educational purposes believed to be important for citizenship education, each laying claim to theories of what knowledge citizens should learn, and how that knowledge is to be learnt.

The location of citizenship education in social studies is not without contention (Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001). Social studies is subjected to varying definitions, and it is uncertain that social studies is an appropriate ‘home’ for citizenship education within the curriculum (Grant & VanSledright, 1996; Longstreet, 1985; Quigley, 2000). While social studies is generally equated with citizenship education (Barr et al., 1977; Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Shaver, 1997), debates about the relationship are rife. There are tensions between those who see it as a form of political liberation and democratic emancipation, and those who see it as a necessary form of social control and socialisation (Banks, 1987; Cherryholmes, 1980). In addition, social studies is
paradoxical, its curriculum and practice are marked by both the appearances of diversity and uniformity (Vinson & Ross, 2001). On one hand, the various perspectives discussed in Chapter Two suggest diversity. On the other hand, large-scale studies found it to be stable in curricular scope and sequence, together with entrenched patterns of instruction (Cuban, 1993; Goodlad, 1984). Yet a few small scale studies of social studies classrooms (Wilson & Wineburg, 1988; Thornton, 1988) indicated considerable variations in practice. The paradox of appearances inevitably presents teachers with “troubling conflict….the educational implications are clear and yet confusing” (Vinson & Ross, 2001, p. 61). As such, Kennedy’s (1996, p. 47) question is salient, “Is social studies….its dominant pedagogy, its status in the curriculum and its perceived value by students, capable of incorporating a vigorous citizenship education programme?”

Further, in many countries it is difficult to locate a subject in the school curriculum known as citizenship education. Citizenship is often a cross-curricular theme or is embedded within a school subject such as social studies and history (Torney-Purta, et al., 1999, 2001). Locating citizenship education in a subject may, it can be argued, lead to a compartmentalised view of knowledge. This is problematic as citizenship education is seen as a low status subject and curriculum aim in most countries, where citizenship goals are thought of as important, but much less critical than goals in subject areas such as math. Consequently, academic rigour is often emphasised to the neglect of citizenship education in practice. Branson (1999) argued that for very few students is any citizenship related subject part of an important examination. Unless citizenship can be tied to a high status subject, it will receive little support in countries with traditions of subject matter rigour, where parents judge the schools on this basis. In Singapore, social studies is a specially created subject for NE, compulsory and examinable in the school curriculum. Citizenship education is thus wedded to a high stake subject. But how do teachers conceptualise social studies in schools? How is it represented and how is it taught?

The practice of citizenship education through social studies “cannot be a mechanical, largely mindless activity; it requires constant decisions and judgements by the teacher” (Kelly, 2004, p. 9), and this the teacher cannot make properly without understanding the curriculum. The teacher is salient to the teaching of citizenship
education and social studies. Parker (2003) underlined the importance of the teacher as a citizenship educator in American democracy, but it is also universally applicable:

But among them educators are the primary stewards of democracy. They must do what no one else in society has to do: intentionally specify the democratic ideal sufficiently to make it a reasonably distinct curriculum target, one that will justify selecting from the universe of possibilities a manageable set of subject matters, materials, instructional methods, modes of classroom interaction, and school experiences. Do they aim towards a democracy that fears diversity and tries to assimilate it? Do they envision citizens who mainly vote and pay taxes? Or are they imagining a stronger democracy than this (p. xvii)?

Hogan, Fearnley-Sander and Lamb (1996) stressed that it is the educator’s obligation to develop citizenship in students. Likewise Lee and Fouts (2005) emphasised that teachers are the key players in citizenship education as they implement government policies in schools.

Teachers act as the bridge between the intended and implemented curriculum. Kelly (2004, p. 10) noted the “make or break” role of teachers in any curriculum innovation, even for those which originate outside their schools, the success of which depends on teachers’ commitment, understanding of the curriculum and acceptance of underlying rationale. How teachers understand citizenship can facilitate or hinder the preparation of good citizens. Thus, gaining insights into teachers’ understanding of citizenship education and social studies is fundamental to the examination of how they implement the curriculum. Lee and Fouts (2005, p. 10) argued, “it helps to cast light on how and why the emphases of some government or policies are implemented or not.” Several studies (Branneman, 1997; Fickel, 2001; Haddon, 2001; Jimenez, 2001; Walkington & Wilkins, 2000) found that teachers’ understandings of citizenship significantly influenced the way they teach citizenship education. However, there is still a lack of cross-national research on teachers (Lee & Fouts, 2005), and in Singapore.

The official discourse on citizenship and citizenship education in Singapore is clearly articulated. The purpose of social studies is officially stated. What is not known is how teachers understand citizenship and give purpose to citizenship education through social studies in the classroom. It is assumed that with relentless changes globally, and the contested nature of citizenship education and social studies, there is likely to be a range of understandings on citizenship education and social studies. How do teachers’ understandings compare to the official discourse? How do these understandings influence what and how they teach?
1.4 Aims of the Study

This study examines how secondary social studies teachers understand and put into practice citizenship education and social studies in Singaporean schools. Within the context of Singapore, the aims of the study are three-fold. The study:

- explores, describes and interprets social studies and citizenship education in terms of teachers understandings of the subject and subject matter;
- examines how teachers’ understandings of their subject and subject matter influence their practice as citizenship educators;
- suggests implications for social studies and citizenship education curricula and pedagogy, and teacher education to better prepare teachers for their role as citizenship educators.

The study is concerned with the relationship between thought and action in curriculum practice, and thus requires an approach that encompasses the interpretive process of teachers. Hence, the study was conducted from the qualitative paradigm using the case study method.

1.5 Rationale for the Study

Several studies on citizenship education and/or social studies were conducted in other countries, and findings were diverse. Several Australian (Haddon, 2001; Jimenez, 2001; Prior, 1999; Print, Moroz, & Reynolds, 2001) studies generally found teachers to be limited in their understanding of citizenship and citizenship education, and this raised issues about planning and implementing citizenship in schools. In contrast, American and Canadian studies found teachers holding more ‘advanced’ (Branneman, 1997; DeJaeghere, 2002; Fickel, 2001; Kubow, 1996; Obenchain, 1997; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) views of democratic citizenship, with many demonstrating a global perspective to citizenship (DeJaeghere, 2002; Kubow, 2004). Consequently, this influenced their teaching in ways that facilitated the development of democratic citizenship. Several English studies (Davies et al., 1999; Walkington & Wilkins, 2000; Wilkins, 1999; 2003) were more negative in their findings, with teachers “often dismissing the term ‘good citizen’ as being redolent of a ‘middle-class, suburban’ lifestyle lived out through social and cultural conservatism” (Wilkins, 2003, p. 67), as well as experiencing “a high degree of political disengagement and cynicism” (Wilkins, 1999, p. 218). English teachers were generally disillusioned with politics and government, turning their focus to the social aspects of citizenship instead. Similarly, Lee and Fouts’ (2005) study of teachers’
perceptions in Australia, China, England, Russia and the U.S. suggested that teachers understood citizenship more in social than political terms.

There is a dearth of national studies. While many of the key issues addressed in citizenship education and social studies are common concerns of the global community, there are issues unique to individual countries. That citizenship is highly contested inevitably leads to a variation of citizenship and social studies education. In order to make sense and understand contested curricula, it must be done within its context (Hahn, 1998). The research base for citizenship education and social studies in Singapore is thin. No research in Singapore addresses these complex questions from the social studies teacher’s perspective. Even for citizenship education that is integral to Singapore schools, there is a paucity of research.

To date, only two doctoral and one master studies have been identified in relation to citizenship education. Using ethnography of moral education in one secondary school, Joy Chew (1988) focused on the school, not the teacher, and found contradictory strands of morality operating, affecting various categories of students differently. Because she studied only one school, the findings were limited. Her main focus was moral and not citizenship education where the latter was only an aspect of the former. Nonetheless, her finding on contradictions is informative. Christine Han (1997) explored the nature of citizenship and citizenship education in plural societies using Singapore as a case. She recommended the development of critical thought, and opportunities for public deliberation and participation to engender a shared identity. Irene Tan-Wee (2000) studied the implementation of NE in a secondary school. She found that NE programmes were poorly implemented, with gross misalignments between the aims of NE and the programmes implemented. What could account for the gap was suggested for future study. This study seeks to fill the gap left by these major works, and to contribute to the national literature on citizenship education and social studies by locating the curricular in the heart of the teaching and learning process – the teacher, his/her knowledge and practice.

Why and how social studies and citizenship education are taught is not known empirically. There are many facets to this problem but this study emphasises the key role that the teacher plays in this phenomenon. The teacher as a citizenship educator is also emphasised by political leaders (Daipi, 2001; Goh, 1996; Lee, 1997, 2006). In exploring how teachers make sense of social studies and citizenship education, and
how they put into practice in the classrooms, we learn how these are actually taught and possible factors to explain its implementation and effectiveness. The recent international review of policy and practice in citizenship education in 16 countries underlined that classroom practice is critical to the successful achievement of the aims of citizenship education (Kerr, 1999).

1.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework describes the theoretical orientation and sets out the sensitising concepts used to explain the phenomenon. It therefore provides a way of critically looking and understanding the world, and a basis for considering how what is unknown might be organised (Silverman, 2000).

1.6.1 A Curriculum Perspective

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the tradition of curriculum (Kelly, 2004; Marsh & Willis, 2003; Print, 1993; Shulman, 1986). Beyer and Apple (1998, p. 3) opined that a significant shift has occurred over the decades in the way that educators approach their work, “from a concern with what should be taught and why we should teach it to problems associated with how to organise, build, and above all now, evaluate curriculum and teaching.” Curriculum debates have focused on procedures, and not over what counts as legitimate knowledge. Similarly, Marsh and Willis noted that “teachers seem little concerned about the deeper question of what knowledge should be taught in schools” (p. 201), where the emphasis is about ‘how’ far more than ‘what’. This implies that “technique is winning over substance” (Beyer & Apple, 1998, p. 3). In examining teachers’ understandings of citizenship education within the social studies curriculum, this study addresses the substance – the ‘what’. It is the substance that should drive the techniques and procedures.

A curriculum perspective is concerned with issues such as the nature, selection, organisation, treatment and execution of knowledge (Cornbleth, 1990). The fundamental curriculum questions that teachers need to answer are: What knowledge is of most worth to learners? What activities are most effective in enabling learners to acquire this knowledge? What is the most appropriate ways to organise these activities? How do I know if learners have acquired this knowledge? Expressed in terms of teaching, it is about: What to teach? How to teach? When to teach? What is
the impact of teaching? (Marsh & Willis, 2003; Print, 1993; Smith & Lovat, 2003). This study broadly aligns with Print who defines curriculum as follows:

Curriculum is defined as all the planned learning opportunities offered to learners by the educational institution and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented. This includes those activities that educators have devised for learners which are invariably represented in the form of a written document and the process whereby teachers make decisions to implement those activities given interaction with context variables such as learners, resources, teachers and the learning environment (p. 9).

The curriculum includes what is intended to happen and what actually does happen in the classroom. This conceptualisation goes beyond the planned document to encompass the interaction that takes place between the document, teachers and learners, where teaching is part of curriculum.

A key aspect of the curriculum perspective is in how curriculum is conceived and viewed (Print, 1993). The conception of the curriculum suggests certain answers to the fundamental curricular questions. Conceptions are powerful in shaping thoughts and actions because they are value-laden and reflect our assumptions about the world, even if those values remain implicit and unexamined (Cornbleth, 1990; Smith & Lovat, 2003). In Singapore, social studies is overtly linked to citizenship education and is also a distinct integrated subject of history, geography, political science, sociology and economics. Typical of Asian countries, citizenship education in Singapore is subject-centred, taught through social studies, carefully planned with a clearly delineated list of aims, and objectives to culturally reproduce the elites’ view of the Singapore society.

The curriculum is inescapably political and ideological. It is consciously planned for deliberate human purposes, and therefore never value neutral but represents the dominant values of society at particular historical moments (Apple, 2004; Cherryholmes, 1985; Goodson, 1994; Kelly, 2004; Smith & Lovat, 2003). The curriculum is constructed by the authority which holds views about society, the nature of schools and subjects, learners and resources. They seek to transmit these views to reproduce the society they seek to maintain. In a centralised education system in Singapore, curriculum development begins at the highest levels of government. The authority possesses an ideal conception of society and citizenship and this is transmitted to students in terms of salient knowledge and values, to help them become loyal believers in the particular set of truths necessary to guarantee the survival of
society. While some see this as problematic, for others it is not (Goh, 1996; Lee; 1997).

1.6.2 The Centrality of the Teacher

Despite the apparent power of the politically dominated curriculum, gaps appear between what it is intended should happen and what actually happens in curriculum work (Klein, 1992; Smith, 1986). Stenhouse (1975) argued that it is the gap between the intention and the operationalising of the intention that should be the most important focus for curriculum study. This study addresses the gap and hypothesises that the teacher, located in the social studies classroom acts as the “curricular-instructional gatekeeper” (Thornton, 1989, 1991, 2005a). Individual teachers have considerable autonomy in their daily work under the structural conditions in schools, where the effect of any reform policy is inevitably filtered through the teachers’ decision-making process as based on their understandings and conceptions of the subject and subject matter. This implies that official curricular knowledge is not transmitted as it is, but altered by teachers’ gatekeeping, though this is also highly contextualised. Gatekeeping as a process concept is especially important in social studies because citizenship education and social studies are contested curricula.

Thornton (1989, 1991, 2005a) characterised teachers as “curricular-instructional gatekeepers”, as they are the primary determiners of what gets taught and how it is taught in the classrooms. Teacher gatekeeping implies that there are almost as many educational possibilities within a social studies curriculum as there are teachers. A large part of how teachers tend the gates hinges on how they understand the subject and the subject matter. Teachers construct their own theories of the world and the way it works, and these inform teachers’ curriculum processes.

Consequently, curriculum is not merely a product developed by distal experts as a script for teachers, but a classroom enactment where the same curriculum can be arranged and taught in countless ways (Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1997; Thornton, 2005a). Further, teachers have leeway to interpret a prescribed curriculum even in an examination oriented education system. As a result, the enacted curriculum looks more varied than the intended curriculum, even in a tightly controlled education system such as Singapore.
1.6.3 Curriculum Positions

This study also draws on MacNaughton’s (2003) analysis of the curriculum that provided another set of lenses to make sense of teachers’ understandings of citizenship education within the social studies curriculum. She adapted Habermas’ (1972) knowledge interests from three perspectives - technical, practical and critical, corresponding them to the conforming, reforming and transforming curriculum positions respectively.

A conforming curriculum position is “concerned with finding out how things happen and how we can control what happens [which] often leads to knowledge that conforms to existing understandings and practices” (MacNaughton, 2003, p. 4). This position believes that education should achieve national and social goals defined by the government. It emphasises reproducing “the skills needed to achieve national economic, social and political goals”, and “the understandings and values that enable society to reproduce itself” (Feinberg cited in MacNaughton, 2003, p. 121). This position foregrounds the idea that an aim of schooling is to ensure the induction of students into a common set of experiences. Socialisation and transmission are the key ideas.

A reforming curriculum position takes a practical approach, where “resources and pedagogies are selected in and through the process of working with children, and on the basis of broad principles and flexible approaches” (MacNaughton, 2003, p. 160). The underlying ideas are grounded in liberal education, emphasising the growth and development of the child. The belief is that education should produce a rational individual capable of independent thought and self-discipline. Social and personal developments are emphasised, with social responsibility and self-realisation as key indicators of success. The idea of social reform is important, where students learn to be good citizens who are self-supporting, law abiding and developed to their full potential. Values such as morality, individual participation and the common good are upheld.

A transforming curriculum position takes a critical approach focusing on critical reflection on action. It seeks to create a more just and wise society by transforming “the individual into a morally, intellectually and politically engaged actor” (MacNaughton, 2003, p. 182). This position equips students with the knowledge to recognise and confront injustice, and to resist oppressive ways by challenging power.
relations. It offers diverse possibilities for which one can become, by critical analysis and inclusion. A moral approach to citizenship is emphasised, with the concern for the political expression of the values of self-fulfillment, self-determination and equality (Carr, 1991). Citizenship education hence attempts to problematise the social and economic structures of society with a view to changing it (Hursh & Ross, 2000; Goodman, 1991).

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research study contributes towards building the national research base for citizenship education and social studies in a country where national identity and committed citizens are of utmost importance. It adds to the critical social science base for educational innovation and policy. Any educational innovation and policy change, particularly on citizenship, needs to be grounded in local evidence of “everyday classroom pedagogy, on the intellectual and discourse work of teachers and students in classrooms” (Luke et al., 2005, p. 9). Given the integral yet contested nature of both curricula, it is not tenable to rely on findings from research outside of Singapore, where political contexts and citizenship issues are very different. This study is part of a significant drive, particularly in Singapore, towards research-based innovation and reform.

In order to make sense of citizenship education, it needs to be understood in its context. This research provides thick descriptions and insights into what and how citizenship education in practice is like, as understood and practised by Singapore teachers. This helps give policy makers, curriculum developers, teachers and teacher educators a better sense of the most viable instances of citizenship education here. Further, much of social studies research is located in western democracies. Little is known about social studies education in Asia. Consequently, this results in superficial and stereotypical ideas of Asian classrooms. But Asia is not homogenous, and the circumstances in Singapore are unique. This research contributes towards understanding social studies education in Singapore. It serves as a way “of holding stereotypes about Asian learners and learning, schools and classrooms up to critical scrutiny” (Luke et al., 2005, p. 9).

This research also contributes to the literature on social studies as an integrated subject, as well as the dynamics between social studies and citizenship education.
incorporating teachers' perspectives. Existing studies (e.g. Brenneman, 1997; Jimenez, 2001) have not addressed these complex issues. These issues cannot be resolved by rationalistic studies but can only be addressed by well designed qualitative studies. The findings from this research provide a perspective to these complex issues.

The research contributes to understanding the curriculum process at the level of the enacted curriculum in a centralised and examination driven education system. The teacher as a human and not a technician in enacting the curriculum is highlighted. In Singapore, where a technocratic view of the curriculum is widely held (Cornbleth, 1990, Tan, 1997), the research provides insights into the idea of teacher agency in understanding, interpreting and mediating the curriculum. Consequently, this informs policy makers, curriculum developers and teacher educators of the significance of teacher curricular-instructional gatekeeping. Teacher gatekeeping must be understood if policies and the intended curriculum are to be enacted with fidelity, and to achieve the intended outcomes.

Teachers can benefit from this research, as it illuminates the vital role they play in the classroom. Teachers who participated in this study reported that their experiences were beneficial by providing them with the tools necessary to analyse their own understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education. Social studies teacher educators will also benefit from this research. The findings will encourage a reflection of their own practice. Social studies methods courses must help teachers in their role as citizenship educators, and raise awareness of the discourses. Opportunities must be given to teachers to engage in pedagogy that emphasises reflection, deliberation and active participation, so that they become experiences for citizenship educators to bring into their classrooms.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

Chapter One introduces the study and discusses the major contentions on which the study is based. It sets out the conceptual framework and the significance of the study. Chapter Two provides the theoretical and research-based context to the study by reviewing the literature relevant to the research questions. It reviews the developments of social studies, citizenship education and key research on teacher knowledge. Within this context, a view of teacher knowledge is established for this study. Chapter Three describes and justifies the research design for this study. It
details how the research was conducted, the methods for data collection and analysis, and how rigour was ensured. Chapter Four describes the Singaporean context within which the findings are interpreted and understood. It discusses citizenship in Singapore and the role education plays in nation-building. Citizenship education and the development of social studies at the upper secondary level are traced. Chapter Five provides a sketch of the four schools and the profiles of the eight teachers to situate the teachers’ knowledge and practice. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight discuss the findings and analyses of the case studies. The data from the eight cases are analysed, and the findings synthesised and presented according to the characterisations that emerged. Finally, Chapter Nine summarises the study, highlights and discusses the major findings, and makes final comments. Limitations of the study are explained and suggestions for future research made.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the study's research questions, especially how teachers understand and put into practice social studies, and give purpose to citizenship education. The purpose is to provide the theoretical and research-based context within which the findings will be presented and interpreted. Literature is reviewed from three main areas: social studies, citizenship education, and teacher knowledge with attention to social studies and citizenship education.

The first section of this chapter reviews the definitional debates of social studies and argues that the lack of consensus is problematic for social studies teachers. It then establishes citizenship education as the *raison d'etre* for social studies, and discusses the traditions of social studies. This leads to a review of citizenship education research and approaches to citizenship education based on the maximal-minimal continuum. The third section focuses on the teacher and teacher knowledge. The teacher is the curricular-instructional gatekeeper who constructs his/her understanding of the subject and subject matter, and this influences his/her practice. Finally, a perspective for teacher knowledge is established.

2.1 Social Studies

2.1.1 Defining Social Studies

For over a century, scholars have debated on the definition of social studies, but none of the definitions proposed have yet attracted a robust consensus (Barth, 1996; Evans, 2004; Martorella et al., 2005; Nelson, 2001; Ross & Marker, 2005; Thornton, 2005a). What is certain is social studies' lack of a distinctive definition, a situation described as an identity crisis. Lybarger (1991) underscored that "one of the most remarkable aspects of the history of social studies has been the ongoing debates over the nature, scope, and definition of the field" (p. 9). Thornton affirmed that the arguments have been "a dominant theme in the theoretical social studies literature" (p. 10). An analysis of the social studies definitional literature shows that these debates have been contested over the following questions as shown in Table 2.1 on page 19.
Table 2.1: Summary of Social Studies Definitional Debates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of debate</th>
<th>Issues/Questions</th>
<th>Examples of Scholars/Researchers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of social studies</td>
<td>Discipline vs non-discipline</td>
<td>e.g. Bruner, 1969; Fenton, 1966; Keller, 1991; Longstreet, 1991;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aggregation vs integration of social sciences</td>
<td>Massialas, 1992; Nelson, 1991; 2001; Wesley &amp; Wronski, 1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of social studies</td>
<td>Relationship between social studies &amp; citizenship education</td>
<td>e.g. Barr et al., 1977; Barth, 1996; Martorella et al., 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/subject matter of social studies</td>
<td>Subjects, disciplines inclusion</td>
<td>e.g. Evans, 1996; Keller, 1991; Ravitch, 2000; Trofankenko, 2005; Whelan, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role of history in social studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach to social studies</td>
<td>Perspectives taken, treatment of social studies knowledge</td>
<td>e.g. Barr et al., 1977; Evans, 1996; Martorella et al., 2005; Nelson, 1996; Ross, 2001; Wraga, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisation of content/subject matter e.g. Issues-centred Teaching methods in social studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ross and Marker (2005) distinguished two phases in the history of social studies that have characterised the debates. The first century began from early 1900s, where social studies is likened to a “story of a field of study not yet coming of age”, “marked by confusion, competing visions, inconsistency, incoherence, and intolerance” (p. 139). Barr et al., (1977, p. 1) contended that during that period “the field of social studies is so caught up in ambiguity, inconsistency, and contradiction that it represents a complex educational enigma. It has also defied any final definition acceptable to all factions of the field”. Similarly, Evans (2004) described the first century as problematic, consisting of wars, factions, and contradictions. Now social studies is coming of age, marking it as a field that is alive and constantly evolving. However, Ross and Marker warned that insistence on a singular idea of social studies would retard the developmental process.

Indeed, defining social studies is a Herculean task, given the confounding history, conflicting conceptual ideas and epistemological questions, and the ideological divide in both political and educational philosophy (Barth, 1996; Barr et al., 1977; Evans, 2004; Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001). This results in definitions that rest on differing claims of purposes, instructional methods, historical derivation, curricular design and knowledge structure. Such disparities in the criteria have spawned competing conceptions of social studies.

The all encompassing nature of the social studies curriculum complicates matters considerably (Barr et al., 1977; Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001; Stanley, 2001; Vinson & Ross, 2001). Barr et al. wrote that “the content of social studies is a smorgasbord of this and that from everywhere” (p. 2). Hence, social studies could be the study of a
single discipline or as wide as all human experiences that bear upon the citizen. Ross described social studies as "the most inclusive of all school subjects" (p. 19), for its knowledge base is enormous, drawing on a wide range of disciplines and other fields.

Yet such breadth is unhelpful as defining a subject is of critical importance to its meaning and legitimacy. Barth (1996, p. 9) argued that definition establishes the essence and the intrinsic identity of the subject "that sets it apart and gives it a unique quality." But he did not reconcile the debates over its nature, only identified the essential elements to include improving the welfare of citizens, meeting students' needs for problem solving, and developing democratic citizens. Nelson (2001) countered that these elements did not resolve the key disputes over definition. In "Defining Social Studies", he examined the various approaches to defining the field over the past century, and argued that definitional questions are not esoteric disputes but significant in shaping thoughts, ideas and perspectives. He emphasised the disciplinary question, criticising the claim of history as superior on grounds of disciplinary knowledge as academic imperialism. He defined social studies as social education, and argued for an interdependent and interrelated approach to fields of social knowledge, as the basis for education in a democracy.

Against such problematic definitional backdrop, it is necessary to re-visit the definition of social studies in the different landscape of the 21st century. If social studies is to help educate citizens for the world we live in, then it needs to address the changing social, political, economic and technological demands of contemporary society (Passe, 2006). Issues of multiculturalism (Banks, 1991, 1995; Hursh, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Pang 2001), internationalism (Angell & Avery, 1992; Merryfield, 2001; Thornton, 2005b), media literacy, and information technologies (Risinger, 2006; Sperry, 2006) need to be more vigorously debated.

Currently in the U.S., the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, whose publications, Where Did Social Studies Go Wrong? and Terrorists, Despots, and Democracy: What Our Children Need to Know, has sponsored one of the most visible recent efforts at changing social studies. In the push for cultural certainty, the neo-conservatives argued that the survival of American democracy required a transmission of content and cultural values role for social studies. This sparked a vigorous debate regarding the nature of social studies education whereby most scholars critiqued that the
prescriptions offered by the Institute would stifle democratic inquiry (Kornfeld, 2005; Ross & Marker, 2005; Waltzer & Heilman, 2005).

The purpose of reviewing the definitional literature is to locate social studies theoretically as a contested subject. It sensitises one to possible variations in teachers' conceptualisations and practices. Nelson (2001) wrote that the definition of social studies has significant implications for the school curriculum and teacher practice. Goodlad's (1984) study of 38 schools revealed teachers' uncertainty about the nature and status of social studies. Consequently, teachers emphasised memorisation of information. Earlier, Barr et al. (1977) argued that the confusion about the nature of the field is difficult for teachers. As a result, teachers drew on their life experiences, apprenticeship of observation, and undergraduate subject majors, to guide them in their understandings and practice of social studies (Adler, 1982; Cantu, 1997; Johnston, 1989; Fickel, 2000; Slekar, 1998). Recently, Whitsun (2004) argued that the fluidity of social studies makes it problematic for what teachers need to know, content and the pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Thornton (1991, 2005a) suggested that the fluidity of social studies gives leeway for teacher curricular-instructional gatekeeping.

The social studies definitional research is mainly American, with a lack of research elsewhere, particularly in Asia. In Singapore, there are no studies on teachers' understandings and practice of social studies. Unlike the U.S. where social studies is an umbrella term for a collection of subjects, social studies is an integrated and distinct subject in Singapore. There is a need for more engagement in this area as Seixas (2001, p. 548) argued, "It is impossible to sidestep the issue. Research on teaching social studies implicitly or explicitly involves conceptions on the part of the researchers and teachers about what should be taught." Siskin (1994, p. 165) characterised social studies as a subject area where "contests are frequent, and where everything must be locally negotiated, since there are few standardised assumptions about how things must be." Given the necessity to "locally negotiate" social studies, of importance is the teacher's understanding because the teacher enacts the curriculum. Shaver and Larkins (1973) argued that clarity of what social studies knowledge is would help make teaching and learning simpler. Goodman and Adler (1985) observed that the lack of clear definitions may lead to the teacher enacting a
social studies programme that lacks substance. Recently, Fickel (2000) and Thornton (2005a) reiterated the same point.

Armento (1986, p. 944) criticised that "the focus of most of the research (is) on isolated and minor questions, the atheoretical nature of current work, and the lack of accumulated knowledge after years of inquiry." Although definitional statements about social studies are legion, descriptions of teachers' understandings and practice are not (Seixas, 2001; VanSledright & Grant, 1994). However, since Adler's (1982) study, hailed as one of the earliest to investigate teachers' perspectives of social studies, there have been several empirical studies in this area (Brenneman, 1997; Cantu, 1997; Jho, 2001; Johnston, 1990; Stodolsky & Grossman, 1995; Wynne, 1994). A landmark piece of work is Wilson's (1988) study of history teachers which did much to advance our knowledge of this area. Due to the gatekeeping role teachers play, Fickel (2000) argued it is imperative to critically examine teachers' understandings and practice of social studies.

2.1.2 The Relationship between Social Studies and Citizenship Education

There is widespread agreement that social studies in the broadest sense is equated with citizenship education, the preparation of young people in the knowledge, skills and values necessary for active participation in society (Barr et al., 1977; Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Gross & Dynneson, 1991; Marker & Mehlinger, 1992; Martorella et al., 2005). But variations of the equation are expected given that citizenship itself is immersed in ideological controversy. This inevitably leads to a variation of citizenship education, hence social studies and the connection between the two. The delineation of what social knowledge is most important, which skills and behaviours are most valuable, and what values are most significant are contested. This legitimises contradictory pedagogical and curricular manifestations (Gehrke, Knapp & Sirotnik, 1992). Further, conceptions of citizenship will necessarily vary from country to country (Sears, 1994). Thus, to make sense of the social studies curriculum and its relationship to citizenship education, it must be understood within its context. The lack of such studies in Singapore justifies this research.

A review of the research led to Marker and Mehlinger's (1992) conclusion that the apparent consensus that citizenship education is the *raison d'être* for social studies is almost meaningless, because of the wide ranging diversity in goals and methods.
Specifically, they offered three reasons: the breadth of citizenship education, the lack of an agreed-upon body of knowledge, and the similarity between the goals of citizenship education and schooling itself. Evidently, disagreements are rife regarding which specific purpose the curriculum should serve in promoting citizenship education. These differences are described along a continuum with indoctrination and critical thought on opposing ends. Should social studies promote citizenship that is adaptive to the status quo and interests of the socially powerful, or one that aimed at transforming and reconstructing society (Barr, et al., 1977; Cherryholmes, 1983; Hertzberg, 1981; Hursh & Ross, 2000; Nelson, 1985; Ross, 2001; Stanley & Nelson, 1994)? Is citizenship best developed via a single, multi- or inter-disciplinary approach? Should it be issue-centred (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Evans & Brodkey, 1996; Hess, 2002; Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Whelan, 2001), or incorporate a range of curricular orientations (Ross, 2004)?

These disagreements have impacted the research. Overall, until the mid-nineties, citizenship was not a key criterion in the studies that explored teachers' understandings and practice of social studies (Adler, 1982; Cantu; 1997; Evans, 1989; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Jho, 2001; Johnston, 1990; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988; Wynne, 1994). Findings also revealed that teachers did not have clear ideas of the relationship between social studies and citizenship education. If they had, it was implicit, tacit and idiosyncratic. For example, Adler and Goodman and Adler identified six teacher perspectives of social studies as: a non-subject, human relations, citizenship, school knowledge, the great connection, and social action. Despite citizenship education being a fundamental part of social studies, it was not significant in teachers' perspectives, for citizenship was only one of the six perspectives, and not a prominent one too. Brophy (1993, p. 223) noted:

If teachers are to become more goal-directed in their instructional planning in social studies they will need to acquire a vision of the subject as a coherent curriculum component designed to accomplish unique citizen education purposes and goals, not merely as a collection of miscellaneous content to be covered. A coherent orientation toward the field does not guarantee successful social studies teaching,...but it is a necessary precondition.

To make sense of the wide ranging and conflicting purposes offered for social studies, researchers have identified several analytical frameworks (Barr et al., 1977; Brubaker, Simon & William, 1977; Dynneson & Gross, 1995; Janzen, 1995; Martorella, 1996; Morrissett & Haas, 1982; Stanley & Nelson, 1994). For instance, the frameworks by
Barr et al. and Martorella were cited as a way of providing an overarching coherence amidst the diversity of social studies purposes and goals (Seixas, 2001).

This present study focused on teachers' understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education. The aim was for categories to emerge from the data and not apply \textit{a priori} ones. But Miles and Huberman (1994) advised that "any researcher, no matter how inductive in approach, knows which bins are likely to be in place in the study and what is likely to be in them" (p. 18). Social studies is complex and dynamic, difficult to capture theoretically and measure empirically. Thus, the analytical frameworks served as sensitising ideas, not preconceived categories to force fit the data. It took heed of Cantu's (1997) analysis of the limitations of social studies research that used \textit{a priori} categories for defining teachers' perspectives (Bennet & Spalding, 1992; Carter & Hacker, 1988; Evans, 1989).

2.1.3 \textit{Traditions in Social Studies}

Reviewing the traditions in social studies, namely Barr et al. (1977) and Martorella's (1996, Martorella et al., 2005) frameworks, the three traditions of social studies is the most influential and enduring framework. Using a combination of purpose, method and content to analyse official documents issued over a century, classroom research, and analysis of textbooks, Barr et al. identified three distinct epistemological positions: social studies taught as citizenship transmission, as social science, and as reflective inquiry. These positions are called traditions as they can be traced historically. They are distinct, competing philosophical systems, yet all focused on the development of active, informed citizens.

Similarly, Martorella (1996; Martorella et al., 2005) emphasised the central role of citizenship. Drawing on the works of Engle (1977), and Nelson and Michaelis (1980), he added two categories, social studies taught as informed social criticism and as personal development, to establish five alternative perspectives. Vinson and Ross (2001) described the five perspectives as a comprehensive framework. But Martorella cautioned that they are not exhaustive of possible classifications, and emphasised overlaps among the categories. This differed from Barr et al. (1977) who claimed that each tradition is distinct. The rest of this section reviews the respective positions in terms of the characteristics and conceptions of teaching.
First, citizenship transmission is the oldest and most dominant approach to social studies (Barr et al., 1977; Cuban, 1991, 1993; Vinson, 1998). Social studies should consist of “transmitting traditional knowledge and values as a framework for making decisions” (Martorella, 1996, p. 20). The purpose is to socialise students into mainstream knowledge and values, equated with acceptance and internalisation of norms, beliefs and values, obedience to laws, and participation in approved activities, to ensure the continuity of society. The authority possesses the ideal conception of society and citizenship to be transmitted. All students learn a common body of knowledge, such as certain ideas, persons, events and facts. This information is assumed to be critical to the practice of good citizenship and constant over time, and forms the basis to create collective adherence to a particular social-political existence (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Marsh, 2004; Morrissett & Haas, 1982).

Citizenship transmission is characterised as teacher-centred and didactic in style. Lessons are tightly structured, dominated by teacher-initiated questions, occurring in a whole class setting. The purpose is to acquire facts, develop concepts, together with a restricted range of cognitive skills focused on convergent problem solving. There is little opportunity for student-initiated questions or discussion. Correct answers are often stated or confirmed by the teacher. Description is used when the teacher believes the content is intrinsically important to be transmitted directly and without interpretation. Persuasion is used for knowledge open to multiple understandings, the purpose is to convince students that only one is ‘correct’ (Vinson & Ross, 2001).

Citizenship transmission is advocated by social and political conservatives (Agresto et al., 2003; Finn, 2003; Leming et al., 2003; Ravitch, 2000), particularly in society which is not amenable to conflict or disruption. Issues would be resolved by governments acting in national interest. Consensus making processes are emphasised, where diversity of experiences and multiculturalism are downplayed as society is viewed as relatively homogeneous in culture (Marsh, 2004). Jackson (1986, p. 117) described citizenship transmission as a mimetic conception of curriculum “because it gives a central place to the transmission of factual and procedural knowledge from one person to another, through an essentially imitative process.” This generally takes the form of preactive curriculum, a body of materials prepared in advance and intended for instruction. Citizenship transmitters “have no hesitation in indoctrinating
their views” (Barr et al., p. 61). However, there is a range of citizenship transmitters, from the doctrinaire teachers to those who are selective of the values they identify.

The second tradition characterises social studies as social science taught in a simplified version of the constituent disciplines, with criteria for curriculum and instruction derived from the disciplines (Thornton, 1994). Here social studies consists of “mastering the social science concepts, generalisations, and processes to build a knowledge base for later learning” (Martorella, 1996, p. 20). The scientific methods and objectivity, and perspectives on human behavior, are emphasised. It is assumed that to the extent students learn the inquiry techniques of the social sciences, they will function more effectively in society. Instructional methods stress conceptual development, processes and problem solving related to the respective social science discipline. The teacher determines the methods and investigations where students learn to make decisions on problems pre-selected for them by the discipline and the teacher (Barr et al., 1977; Martorella et al., 2005; Vinson & Ross, 2001).

Whether the educational effects are mimetic or transformative depends on how the social sciences are conceived (Shaver & Knight, 1986). Thornton (1994) argued that scholarly social science interest tended to be mimetic. Conversely, broader conceptions of citizenship education make it transformative. He was skeptical that a scholarly focus would not involve students in the active construction of knowledge and analysis of values (cited in Seixas, 2001). Seixas countered that the foundation of social science is critical analysis. Thus, inherent in engaging in the practice of social science is the active construction of knowledge and analysis of values.

The social science tradition was first typified by the American Historical Association before 1900, where social studies was the study of history. Later, advanced by Bruner (1969) and Schwab (1969) as the structure of the disciplines, it formed the basis of the new social studies in the 1970s (Fenton, 1966, 1991; Massialas, 1992). This focused on learning the inquiry techniques from the major social science disciplines, as in the classic example Man: A Course of Study (Bruner, 1969). Recently, the focus is towards individual constructions of the social science disciplines where instructional approaches emphasised constructivist understandings of meaning and interdisciplinary conceptions of content (Barton, 1997; Foster, Hoge & Rosch, 1999; Sexias, 1993, 1998; VanSledright & Afflerbach, 2000).
The third tradition, social studies as reflective inquiry, is grounded in Dewey’s (1916, 1933) work, and used by Engle (1987), and Hunt and Metcalf (1968). It seeks to develop the abilities for decision-making within democratic settings. Reflective inquiry is process oriented, emphasising intellectual and personal development through the active engagement in solving problems (Martorella et al., 2005). Students learn to make reasoned decisions, with problems constituting the content for decision making. They do not first learn facts then engage in problem solving but use their prior schemata to integrate new subject matter into meaningful knowledge structures as they problem solve. Effective citizenship education works through problems identified by students, where teachers are facilitators, raising issues, clarifying underlying problems and value stances. The approach is student-centred, and begins with the interests of students within their social contexts. It is open-ended and promotes transformation of the students’ attitudes, values, and interests.

The fourth perspective, extended by Martorella (Martorella et al., 2005), is social studies taught as informed social criticism. It focuses on “providing opportunities for an examination, critique, and revision of past traditions, existing social practices, and modes of problem solving” (p. 30). It is directed towards social transformation, grounded in values of justice and equality. This means challenging the injustices of the status quo, and is rooted in the work of the social reconstructionists (Brameld, 1957; Counts, 1932), critical pedagogues (Anyon, 1980; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1998), and the socialisation-counter-socialisation theorists (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). The pedagogical goal is to support students as they come to understand their world and have agency as citizens. Students are introduced to multiple perspectives where knowledge is seen as problematic. They learn to deconstruct knowledge by critically inquiring into the claims of the curriculum, and consider alternate premises in bringing about a just society. These are done through reflective teaching (Gore, 1993), dialogical method (Shor & Freire, 1987), socio-cultural criticism, textual deconstruction, critical thinking, and social action (Stanley & Nelson, 1987). In this respect, social studies counters “the replication of a society that is classist, sexist, and racist” (Vinson & Ross, 2001, p. 46). Hence, valued knowledge is personally constructed, with no attempt to impose the same knowledge on all students (Marsh, 2004).
Martorella's (Martorella et al., 2005) fifth perspective is social studies taught as personal development. It focuses on “developing a positive self-concept and a strong sense of personal efficacy” (p. 30). Accordingly, effective citizenship involves understanding one's freedom to make choices, as well as one's obligation and responsibility to live with their ultimate outcomes. It is student-centred, focusing on developing the student in his/her natural growth. The students' needs and interests are key, where they learn to construct meaning to and out of their individual experiences. Knowledge is instrumental in so far as it is useful and serves the student's needs and interests, while content is selected and pursued by the students themselves. Individualised instruction and the project method (Kilpatrick, 1918) are often used, where the teacher facilitates the learning. The approach is holistic and transformative.

2.1.4 Alternatives to the Traditions of Social Studies

2.1.4.1 Research and Critique of the Traditions of Social Studies

The three traditions of Barr et al. (1977) have been critiqued by contemporaries. Brubaker (1977) doubted if educators made choices based on awareness of philosophical traditions. Besides, the traditions assumed a linear sequence from purpose to methods and content which is unlikely in practice. Engle (1977) noted the exclusion of social criticism and policy studies. Giroux (1980) and Popkewitz (1977) argued that the approaches did not enable students to question the social construction of knowledge. Martorella (1996, Martorella et al., 2005) proposed five alternative perspectives by extending the initial three. The fourth perspective of informed social criticism addressed the concerns of the critical theorists. In a review of social studies, Thornton (1994) argued that the three traditions are normative and ideological, where transmission is seen as bad, social science better, and reflective inquiry best. Teachers would see their job as moving teaching from transmission to reflective inquiry. Notwithstanding, scholars commended Barr et al. on the identification and clarification of the competing philosophies (Engle, 1977; Fair, 1977; Helburn, 1977). There is little doubt, that “the influence of the three traditions model...has been widespread and pervasive” (Stanley, 1985, p. 316). This influence has extended beyond curriculum into conceptions of social studies teaching (Barr et al., 1977; Stanley, 1991; Thornton, 1994).

White (1982) claimed that the traditions are more prescriptive than descriptive; while the positions looked distinct, they became uneven in practice as they responded to
classroom realities. This implied the limitation of using *a priori* categories in exploring teacher understandings and practice in social studies and citizenship education. In 1978, Barr et al. proposed that current teaching practices corresponded with the three traditions. They found teachers to be somewhat evenly distributed into six traditions-based categories as shown in Table 2.2 below. The largest frequency occurred in the overall citizenship transmission/social science/reflective inquiry combination, which they claimed to be “inconsistent”, where “teaching is confused” (p. 52). This was supported by Barth and Norris (1976a, 1976b, 1976c), who measured teaching orientations using the Social Studies Preference Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.2: Distribution of Teachers using the Three Traditions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>citizenship transmission</td>
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<tr>
<td>social science</td>
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<td>reflective inquiry</td>
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<td>citizenship transmission/reflective inquiry</td>
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<td>social science/reflective inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>citizenship transmission/social science/reflective inquiry</td>
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In White’s (1982) validation study of the Barth-Shermis Social Studies Preference Scale, the findings contradicted Barr et al.’s (1978). White found that teachers did not view the social science and reflective inquiry as distinct positions. Teachers viewed social studies in two not three positions, suggesting that a two tradition view of social studies was more relevant in teaching. Besides, many teachers adhered to all three traditions simultaneously, choosing eclectically from each tradition to achieve their instructional goals, with 81% sharing a combination of all three traditions, 14% with a social science and reflective inquiry combination. To extract a unified definition of social studies from the three positions is thus questionable.

Two decades later, Vinson (1998) explored teachers’ instructional approaches using Martorella’s (Martorella et al., 2005) five perspectives. A quantitative survey was carried out on a random sample of 500 high school social studies teachers. The questionnaire consisted of closed, forced-response items, where the findings challenged earlier ones (Barr et al., 1978; White, 1982), as Vinson found clear distinctions in instructional approach. Teachers identified more strongly with reflective inquiry, informed social criticism and personal development than citizenship transmission and social science. Several reasons explained this. The previous studies explored three traditions but the present extended it to five perspectives. The questionnaires were built on different assumptions and literature.
Populations of social studies teachers also changed over time. Noteworthy, however, were the similarities across the studies. All three studies emphasised the popularity of the hybrid perspectives and instructional eclecticism among teachers. This implied that approaches became less distinct in practice as overlaps across approaches suggested that teachers were more pragmatic and context-driven than ideological. But Brubaker et al. (1977) found that while teachers' instructional strategies may be eclectic in manifestation, they tended to adhere to a single conception of social studies. None of the studies, however, used direct observation but relied on teachers' self-reporting, thus limiting the power of the findings.

In a different locale, Carter and Hacker (1988; Carter, 1990) observed social studies teaching based on the three traditions in Western Australian high schools. Some 40 social studies teachers were observed, with 22 teachers identified as social scientists, 15 as knowledge transmitter and three as reflective thinkers. A teacher from each category was then selected for in-depth analysis. The credibility of the study is compromised by forced fitting the data into preconceived categories and by the small sample size, but it did provide insights to how each approach looked in practice.

Moving on to an alternative conception of social studies, Morrissett (1977) conducted a survey of 440 social studies teachers using Brubaker et al.'s (1977) five-camp model, and found reflective inquiry, history and structure of the disciplines were teachers' preferred conceptions of social studies. Vinson (1998) noted that agreement existed on reflective inquiry conception across the two studies in different decades implied the Deweyan roots of social studies were an enduring influence among teachers. Vinson also argued that findings must be understood in their historical context. The structure of the discipline was popular among teachers as the study was conducted in the heyday of the new social studies.

2.1.4.2 Alternative Classifications

The three traditions and five perspectives do not exhaust the possibilities for classifying approaches to social studies education. Alternative classifications emerged alongside, as summarised in Table 2.3 on page 31.
Table 2.3: Alternative Classifications of Social Studies

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three Traditions</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Five Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizenship transmission</td>
<td>knowledge of the past as a guide to good citizenship</td>
<td>conservative cultural continuity</td>
<td>subject-centred</td>
<td>cultural transmission</td>
<td>transmission of the cultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social science</td>
<td>structure of the disciplines</td>
<td>intellectual aspects of history &amp; the social sciences</td>
<td>civics-centred</td>
<td>discovery</td>
<td>social science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflective inquiry</td>
<td>reflective inquiry</td>
<td>process of thinking reflectively</td>
<td>issues-centred</td>
<td>inquiry</td>
<td>reflective inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>socio-political involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>social action</td>
<td>informed social criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>student-centred tradition</td>
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<td>life adjustment</td>
<td>personal development</td>
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<td>multicultural</td>
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These classifications are not dissimilar but represent modifications or extensions of the three traditions. For example, Morrissett and Haas’ (1982) classification is similar to the three traditions, Brubaker et al.’s (1977) five-camp model relates to Martorella’s (Martorella et al., 2005) five perspectives. In an extensive literature analysis, Janzen (1995) derived an alternative framework, emphasising life adjustment to be the most influential social studies approach in classroom practice due to its practical focus. But there is a lack of empirical research on this approach. The multicultural approach is a contribution to contemporary classifications, emphasising the ability to think and observe from the perspective of others, and acceptance of diverse cultural understandings, belief systems and ways of life.

Stanley and Nelson (1994) classified social studies as subject-centred, civics-centred, and issues-centred. The subject-centred focus is on subject matter knowledge from the disciplines; civics-centred social studies emphasised the development of civic competence; and issues-centred social studies focused on addressing controversial issues. Each classification supports a wide range of purposes. For example, in issues-centred social studies, there are arguments for issues to be directed at conscientisation (Freire, 1970), others as a way to help students adapt to society.
VanSledright and Grant (1994) noted that scholars provided extended accounts of the relationship between social studies and citizenship education, but few empirical studies of how citizenship education in practice looks in social studies. Findings from the classifications studies are also uneven, but suggest an interconnection between how social studies is taught and teachers’ understandings of social studies and citizenship education.

2.2 Citizenship Education

2.2.1 The Concept of Citizenship

Like social studies, citizenship education is difficult to describe, given “the continual diversities or elusiveness around the term citizenship” (Fouts & Lee, 2005, p. 20). This is attributed to cultural, historical, philosophical differences, language usages and the nature of the political system (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Fouts & Lee, 2005). Lambert and Machon (2001, p. 4) argued that the challenges facing teachers of citizenship lies in “the slippery nature of the concept of citizenship.” Indeed, there is no such discipline called citizenship, and it is difficult to locate a subject in the school curriculum known as citizenship education. Many countries embed aspects of citizenship education within a school subject, such as social studies (Torney-Purta, et al., 1999, 2001). This has caused confusion among teachers, many encountering difficulty conceptualising what should be planned to implement effective citizenship, thus fuelling the impetus to understand how teachers conceptualise and practise citizenship education within social studies.

In its simplest form, citizenship is membership in a political community (Barbalet, 1999). Unlike slaves, vassals or subjects, whose status implies hierarchy and domination, citizens formally enjoy sovereignty, legitimate and equal membership of the political community (Faulks, 2000; van Gunsteren, 1994). Citizenship embodies two relationships; a vertical one between citizen and state, where citizens receive the highest protection from the state as rights, and in turn, owe it the most onerous of duties; a horizontal one between citizens developing a community that shares loyalties, civic allegiance, and the national character (Lambert & Machon, 2001). Additionally, citizens have the right to be involved in the political process as Aristotle (1970, p. 131) highlighted “..... a citizen is... one who has a share both in ruling and in being ruled”. Thus, citizenship is both a set of practices, and a bundle of rights and duties (Hill & Lian, 1995; Isin & Wood, 1999; Oldfield, 1998).
Here, the political community is the context for citizenship (Faulks, 2000; Oldfield, 1998; van Gunsteren, 1994). A shared identity is pivotal - who we are, how we live together, what we want future generations to be - birthed out of self-determination, a common history, language, or continued occupancy of the same territory. Identity is self-consciously recognised, acknowledged and taken on, leading to solidarity and cohesion of the political community. The nation continues to occupy the commanding heights of political allegiance and identity (Smith, 1995). Citizenship is thus seen as membership of a nation-state, an assumption that is universally held (Hoffman, 2004). Scholars agreed that five categories constitute citizenship, which are: a sense of identity; the enjoyment of certain rights; the fulfillment of obligations; a degree of interest and involvement in public affairs; and an acceptance of societal values. Each part varies depending on the political system (Cogan & Derricott, 2000).

Citizenship arose in the beginnings of democracy, with the development of the city-states of classical Greece and Rome. Both are intimately linked, as the sovereignty of the citizen is a vital element of citizenship. Thus, individuals necessarily play an essential role in the political process, with the need for a degree of freedom and autonomy to make decisions. They need the knowledge, skills, and a sense of morality to make judgements that are considered and appropriate to their community. In recent times, scholars have argued that people living under a monarchy, or in a totalitarian government, and who have no part in determining the government or its policies, cannot be properly called citizens (Faulks, 2000; Heater, 1990; Oldfield, 1998; Turner, 1992). Therefore, citizenship must be seen in the context of the democratic ideal, and developed with reference to it.

Debates on citizenship tend to fall along two divides – the liberal individualist tradition which views citizenship as a private conception, and the civic republican conception which is community-based (Hill & Lian, 1995; Oldfield, 1998). Citizenship in Singapore is modeled on the civic-republican tradition. Civic republicanism may be traced back to Aristotle's notion that man is a political animal, and the political entity provides opportunities for individuals to serve the community. Morality is giving one's service to, and fulfilling one's duties in, the community. It is basic to participate in the government of the political community. Such participation is a duty, not a privilege as citizenship is not just a status, but an activity or a practice. Not to engage in the practice is not to be a citizen. In civic republican thought,
individuals can, and should have a degree of autonomy. But this autonomy should be circumscribed in that it ought to be exercised, “not just with respect given to the autonomy of other people, but also in accordance with a practice which is socially defined, and which they have a duty to engage in” (Oldfield, 1998, p. 70). In this sense, citizens are duty-bearing units where the interests of the community preside over those of the individual. Citizenship therefore has a normative component, which is the acceptance of national and societal values.

2.2.2 Key Studies on Citizenship and Citizenship Education

Many nations cite citizenship education as an important function of education, construed broadly to encompass the preparation of young people for their roles and responsibilities as active citizens in a democracy. Recently, governments and scholars have been actively working on redefining citizenship and its implications on citizenship education. Several large-scale and cross-national citizenship studies were conducted, the findings have advanced our understanding of the direction for citizenship education in the 21st century.

Lee and Fouts (2005) noted three common emphases in these studies. The first is policy, particularly policy-makers’ views on future trends and the implication for citizenship education. The nine nations Citizenship Education Policy Study (CEPS) is an example (Cogan & Derricott, 2000) where the views of the respective country elites were sought and major challenges for the future identified. Among them, the gap between those who have access to water, material resources and information technology and those who do not will widen; the rate of population will outstrip natural resources, causing migration and poverty; progress in science and technology will cause complex ethical issues. Consequently, eight citizenship abilities were identified as critical for the 21st century, including: the ability to approach problems from global perspectives, work co-operatively and responsibly, appreciate and accept cultural differences, think critically and systematically, resolve conflicts by peaceful means, adopt an environmentally friendly lifestyle, defend human rights, participate actively in politics both nationally and internationally. A multidimensional citizenship model, comprising personal, social, spatial and temporal, was proposed to foster these abilities. Lee and Fouts described the model as a significant contribution. Noteworthy, is the absence of citizenship as a political concept.
A second emphasis is concerned with students' civic knowledge and political attitudes, and the implications for democracy (Hahn, 1998; Print et al., 2005; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). A notable example is the IEA Civic Education Study of 90,000 14-year-olds in 28 countries (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). The study found students' understanding of democracy superficial and detached from life, with little regards for political participation. It was found that students' knowledge of democracy was positively correlated to voting behaviour. The study recommended that civic education be cross-disciplinary, participative, interactive, related to life, conducted in a non-authoritarian environment and cognisant of the challenges of societal diversity.

A third emphasis is school and the curriculum. The Asia-Pacific civics study (Cogan et al., 2002) across six countries (Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and the U.S.) examined how civics was implemented in schools. Findings revealed different emphases on civics such as for survival, duty, leadership and future. Of significance to this study is the difference in how civics was constructed in schools between the Asian and Western societies, ranging from commitment to preconceived set of ‘good citizens’, to civic action and democratic processes. Asian countries with centralised education systems and national curricula were prescriptive, with distinct subjects designed to inculcate civic values. The focus was knowledge, and assessment was formal. In contrast, civic education in Western societies was more participative and interactive, where teachers had discretion as to the content and resources, and assessment was largely non-formal.

Lee and Fouts (2005) noted a paucity of cross-national studies on teachers. A focus on teachers is salient as they are the key players in citizenship education by implementing citizenship programmes in schools. Examining teachers' perceptions is significant as how they implement the curriculum is inherently influenced by their understanding of citizenship. This then formed the rationale for Lee and Fout's multi-nation study on teachers' perceptions of good citizenship. Teachers were surveyed about their perceptions of good citizenship using a closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings led the authors to argue the importance of social citizenship. Teachers in Australia, China, Hong Kong, England, Russia and the U.S. emphasised the social dimension of citizenship, meaning social concern, social and community awareness. ‘Good citizenship’ is an active concern for the welfare of others - someone who is caring, unselfish and prepared to respect a diversity of views.
and values. Thus, citizenship is a matter of being socially and morally concerned than politically literate and active. They concluded that teachers across nations shared similar goals and objectives of citizenship education that transcended cultural and political boundaries. But this study is limited by its use of a closed-ended questionnaire that restricted choices of citizenship characteristics. Nonetheless, a key contribution is the social dimension of citizenship on which different countries converged on a contested concept. Conversely, it is of concern that the political dimension is not perceived as important by teachers, given that in democracies, citizens necessarily need to participate in the political process.

In another study, Kubow (1996) explored prospective social studies teachers’ views of the changing nature of citizenship in Canada, England and the U.S., compared with those of the policy-makers. Data were gathered from 147 teachers using questionnaires and follow-up semi-structured interviews with 43 of them. In light of the findings, six recommendations were made for teacher education: establish democratic classroom climates; integrate citizenship education to teacher preparation; increase attention on global issues, emphasise critical thinking and democratic forms of pedagogy; and encourage community action and involvement. The thinking underlying how they can be better prepared as citizenship educators alludes to teachers’ understandings of citizenship education.

Comparative analyses by Kennedy (1997), Ichilov (1998), Lee et al. (2004), and Noddings (2005) called for a global dimension to citizenship. Kennedy was concerned with conceptualising citizenship in the globalised and post-modern world. He warned of an excessively inward looking citizenship education, suggesting that civics must incorporate ideas about global responsibilities and relations. Similarly, Ichilov focused on the implications of recent social and political changes for citizenship education. The underlying theme is the lack of commitment to citizenship education in terms of resources, teacher preparation and programmes based on sound theories. Noddings stressed the need for citizens to be globally aware in the 21st century, in which she argued three key areas to focus, namely, environmental, social and cultural diversity, and peace. Lee et al.’s work is a landmark given that citizenship discourse often centred on western democracies and there are few works focused on the notion of Asian citizenship and its epistemological roots. Various perspectives on citizenship, including Confucian, Islamic, humanist, global, indigenous, cultural,
political and comparative were taken. This sensitised one to the nature of citizenship within a diverse Asia-Pacific context.

In sum, it is significant that Singapore had not been a participant in the major cross-national studies reviewed. As a key player in Asia, and being possibly the world’s most globalised nation (Aggarwal, 2005), its participation should be axiomatic in contributing towards the understanding of how different nations cope and educate their citizens in changing times. Not surprisingly within Singapore, there is a lack of studies on citizenship particularly to do with teachers. This study seeks to address the gap and add to the literature.

2.2.3 Desirable Citizenship Attributes and Citizenship Education

The crux of citizenship education is to develop ‘good citizenship’. In many countries, including the U.S. and Australia, the task of preparing young people to be citizens has been focused on social studies classrooms (Gonzales, Riedel, Avery & Sullivan, 2001). Dynneson and Gross (1995) wrote that ‘good citizenship’ is confusing. Fouts and Lee (2005, p. 32) cited Dynneson’s (1992, p. 55) definition of ‘the good citizen’ as “a label commonly used to describe people who consistently do the right thing according to a formal or informal list of values and behaviours.” The identification of these behaviours is a way to operationalise what good citizenship means.

Fouts and Lee (2005) argued that ‘good citizenship’ is context-bound, inherent in particular definitions are values and behaviours that are desirable, and reflective of the respective societies. Lawton (1998) described defining citizenship education as a struggle, the task made difficult by the various shades of meaning the term acquires in different contexts and countries. Findings from the Asia-Pacific civics study (Cogan et al., 2002) revealed that each society placed a different emphasis upon civics education according to its vision of good citizenship. Kennedy (2004) cited a number of Asian countries, namely Singapore, Malaysia and China, where considerable debates have ensued on the issue of a citizenship built on distinctively Asian values. On this note, moral values and ‘right conduct’ are regarded as essential to being a good citizen. In Singapore, the concern of citizenship education has always been the development of the ideal citizen described in moral terms, one with a commitment to the state (Gopinathan & Sharpe, 2004; Han, 1997). Japan, Taiwan and Thailand also emphasised the moral elements of citizenship (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Cogan, et al.,
In Thailand, citizenship is firmly based on Buddhism, hence what constitutes good citizenship is religious-based (Pittiyanuwat & Sujiva, 2002). Angell and Hahn (1996, p. 361) highlighted that good citizenship in Japan focused on "the values of hard work, loyalty, obedience, and cooperation as a group member – of the family, class, neighbourhood, nation. Participation is taught as a form of group cooperation; contestation is largely absent from school behaviour." Similarly, Fouts and Lee noted a strong element of moral education in Chinese citizenship programmes, emphasising ethics, morals and virtues.

Overall, good citizenship behaviours in Asia reflect obedience to authority where there is a lack of an encouraged critical perspective for citizens (Han, 1997; Koh, 2002; Morris, Cogan & Liu, 2002; Print, 2000; Print & Smith, 2000). Recently, this has become problematic in a rapidly changing global landscape. Increasingly, voices of concern are being raised regarding the levels of engagement of citizens across a diverse range of Asian democracies (Cogan et al., 2002; Han, 2000; Koh, 2002). As Asian countries become more economically powerful, and the individual wealth of their citizens increases, it is likely that demands for greater engagement and accountability of governments will occur.

In contrast, in traditional Western democracies such as Australia, Canada, England and the U.S., 'good citizenship' is active citizenship and participation in civic action (Osborne, 2004; Parker, 1996, 2001, 2003; Patrick, 2005; Print, 2005; Print et al., 2002). The democratic ideal and democratic education are emphasised. Osborne argued that 'good citizenship' is more than good personhood. Democratic citizenship required citizens who are willing and able to play an active and morally principled part in the public life. Parker (2003, 2005) reiterated the necessity to engage with and in public affairs, not to do so is idiosy. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) convincingly argued in their article, "What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy", based upon supportive empirical evidence, that three kinds of citizens can be identified in modern democracies – personally responsible citizens, participatory citizens and justice oriented citizens. The personally responsible citizen considers his/her community and accordingly acts responsibly. Such a person recycles, obeys laws, donates blood and volunteers to help others such as handicapped people, unemployed, senior citizens. The participatory citizen actively engages in public affairs and the public life of the community at local, state and national levels. They
join organisations, organise assistance and communicate with government. The justice oriented citizen critically assesses social, political and economic structures to address areas of injustice. They will explore social problems through questioning, analysis and debate in order to improve society. The authors argued that it is the participatory and justice oriented citizens who really contribute to making a democracy effective. ‘Good citizenship’ in democracies thus requires traits associated with participatory and social justice oriented citizens.

Engle and Ochoa (1988) argued for both. A ‘good citizen’ displays love for nation, responsibility and obedience to laws and norms. Of significance is the ability for independent thinking and responsible social criticism. Essentially, it is active, informed citizenship, which involves thinking for one’s self, making informed decisions, and questioning the status quo. Martorella (Martorella et al., 2005) used the term “the effective citizen”, to describe one who is aware of his/her rights and recognises the corresponding commitment to contribute to the sustenance and improvement of society. The nationalistic and global perspectives are emphasised, where nationalism engenders a strong sense of community and identification with others who have similar characteristics, experiences, commitments, and aspirations. This sense of community is extended out to an increasingly interconnected world, where people’s destinies are inextricably intertwined. The effective citizen is a reflective, competent and concerned citizen.

Pratte (1988) argued that even in western democracies, what is considered a desirable set of citizen characteristics is also paradoxical: thinking, loyal persons versus critical questioners, private interests versus public interests, patriotism versus redefining conditions of social justice, national pride and identification versus criticising and judging the values and limits of national pride. Hahn’s (1998) study supported this claim, where a major finding revealed the diversities in the ways different countries prepared their students to participate as citizens. Desirable citizen characteristics must be seen within distinct set of values of a particular culture. She concluded that the forms citizenship education take are necessarily context specific. Thus, effective citizenship education may not be easily generalisable across settings. However, Lee and Fouts (2005) argued the importance of social citizenship which cuts across both Asian and western countries. Several issues need to be considered since the five
nations were not representative of all Asian and western nations. Beneath the general agreement may lie contested meanings of the social dimension.

2.2.4 A Continuum of Citizenship Education

Citizenship education involves preparing young people in the essential areas of knowledge, skills and values of an informed, responsible and participative citizen of their respective countries (Naval et al., 2002; Patrick, 1999; Print, 1997). It is concerned with the role of education through schooling, teaching and learning in the development of 'good citizens'. Cogan (1989, p. 341) maintained that active participation as adult citizens begins in schools when “students and their teachers become active participants in the society….How else does one ensure active participation as adults if this is not learned naturally in the living laboratory represented by the school?” Parker (1989, 1996) argued that above all, the school has a distinctly civic mission, though he also characterised citizenship education as essentially contested, because of the diverse discourse communities that exist, and the many needs, goals, and beliefs assigned to citizenship.

While citizenship education takes many forms, there is a growing trend across the world that it is based upon the concepts, processes and values of education for democratic citizenship (Dynneson & Gross, 1995; Naval et al., 2002; Patrick, 1999; Torney-Purta, et al, 1999, 2001). Hence, citizenship education aims to develop young people’s capability for thoughtful and responsible participation as democratic citizens in the political, economic, social and cultural life. These citizens are willing, able and equipped to exert influence in public life, but they do so with critical capacities to weigh evidence before acting (Crick, 2000). Useful pedagogies for developing such citizens focus upon engaging students in active learning experiences, stimulating an understanding of values and encouraging reflective, critical thinking (Print, 2005; Print & Smith, 2000). Many teachers support such pedagogies and often apply them in classrooms. But Print and Smith noted the limited empirical evidence to support this where further research is required.

Citizenship education can be approached using a continuum of interpretations. Kerr (2000, 2003) drew on McLaughlin’s (1992) notion of ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ approaches to identify a continuum that distinguishes between maximal and minimal interpretations of citizenship education in school curricula. Each end of the continuum displays
different characteristics and approaches to citizenship education. The location of citizenship education on the continuum is related to underlying political beliefs and contrasting interpretations of democracy.

Minimal interpretations define citizenship narrowly where particular, exclusive and elitist interests in society are promoted. Here, approaches to citizenship are narrow and formal, content-led and knowledge-based, characterised by formal education programmes. The key purpose is to inform through the provision and transmission of information on a country's history, geography, structure of its government and constitution. It lends itself to didactic teaching and learning approaches that are teacher-led. It is a passive and conservative approach to citizenship education, emphasising socialisation where children are taught to fit into the existing social order, and to fulfill their role as citizens in an appropriate manner (Durkheim, 1956; Engle & Ochoa, 1988). Equally valid is to describe such approaches as education about citizenship (Kerr, 2003). The outcomes are narrow, focused on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and usually measured through written examinations.

Cornbleth (1982) asserted that citizenship education that is minimal in interpretation is illusory and technical, and thus conforming in nature. The illusory form predicates on passive citizenship, with participation restricted to voting. Consequently, citizenship education focuses on a limited range of political content and learning activities stressed rote memorization unrelated to students' experiences. Discipline and ritual are emphasised. Knowledge is static and students are expected to accept predetermined answers. The technical form focuses on efficiency, discipline and management procedures. It is mechanical, offering carefully pre-planned series of activities intended to yield measurable competencies. Knowledge is standardised, with political content limited to discrete skills and bits of information to be mastered. Students' role can be moderately active insofar as they strive to attain the objectives set for them. The technical form supports change in the interests of efficient management.

In contrast, maximal interpretations define citizenship broadly. It is inclusive and actively involves all groups and interests in society. Approaches to citizenship are both formal and informal, and extend beyond content and knowledge, to actively encourage investigation and interpretation of knowledge. The primary aim is to help students enhance their capacity to participate. Both content and process of teaching
and learning are emphasised. A variety of pedagogical approaches are used, ranging from didactic to interactive, inside and outside the classroom. Structured opportunities are created for greater student interaction, independent learning and participative experiences. This is an active approach emphasising engagement with and participation in societal issues. The outcomes are broad for it includes not only the acquisition of knowledge, but the development of values and dispositions, skills and attitudes. As such, these outcomes are more difficult to assess.

Maximal interpretations of citizenship education are akin to education through and for citizenship (Kerr, 2003). The former is an experiential approach, where students learn through active participation in the school or beyond. The latter encompasses education about and through citizenship. Citizenship education is constructive (Cornbleth, 1982), where students are encouraged to be independent, take initiative, and to engage in a variety of activities. They are to critically examine a broad range of political content and possibilities, and participate effectively in public affairs. Comprehension is emphasised with content meaningfully integrated into students’ experiences. Knowledge is tentative, different perspectives sought, and multiple ways of learning and knowing recognised. Citizenship education is thus transforming in nature (Cornbleth, 1982).

Citizenship transmission leans towards the minimal interpretation, taking an illusory or technical form, while reflective inquiry, informed social criticism and personal development approaches lean towards the maximal interpretation and are constructive. The social science approach varies depending on the perspective taken by the parent discipline. Walkington and Wilkins’ (2000) study supported the correlations, where teachers’ social worldviews influenced their citizenship education practice. Accordingly, transmission approaches were associated with knowledge outcomes, while critical and reflective thinking were associated with participatory strategies.

Engle and Ochoa (1988), Parker (2001), and Cogan and Derricott’s (2000) approaches are constructive and characteristic of the maximal interpretation. The approach by Engle and Ochoa serves a dual purpose of creating persons loyal to the nation-state while developing their capability to critically assess their society. They argued that citizenship education in any democracy can be the basis for both socialisation and counter-socialisation. The goal of socialisation is to encourage conformity, ensure the continuity of the society, and strengthen social cohesiveness. But it must be balanced
by counter-socialisation, a process of expanding the individual’s ability to be a rational, thoughtful, and independent citizen by promoting active and vigorous reasoning. This means reappraising what has been learned through socialisation. It does not reject what has been learned early in life, but calls for thinking for one’s self, making informed decisions, and questioning the status quo.

Similarly, Parker (2001) described the desired outcome of education for democracy as enlightened political engagement. This concept has two dimensions, democratic enlightenment and political engagement. The former refers to the importance of developing the knowledge and skills to enable informed decision-making and problem solving. The latter refers to the actions of participating in public decision-making and problem solving, including campaigning, letter-writing and even civil disobedience. Enlightened action, Parker explained, refers to the democratic commitments and values which shape this action.

Grossman (2000) argued that conventional content-based approaches are increasingly rendered obsolete in meeting the challenges of a globalised world. The CEPS proposed a multidimensional citizenship education to foster citizenship characteristics for the 21st century (Cogan & Derricott, 2000). Multidimensional citizenship education is a continuous process of civic learning, deliberation and action, that centres on the development by citizens of their personal civic beliefs, capacity for joint social and public action, ties to localities and the world, and awareness of past, present and future. The interconnectedness of thought, belief and action in the four interrelated dimensions of personal, social, spatial and temporal are emphasised. Multidimensional citizenship education is maximal in interpretation, encompassing education through and for citizenship to cope with the future. Scholars have argued the inadequacy of the minimal interpretations of citizenship education in preparing students to be active citizens, as they focused attention simply on the acquisition of knowledge to the neglect decision-making and critical thinking skills, the recognition and understanding of personal values and beliefs, and an understanding of the civil society (Evans, 1995; Hogan, Fearnely-Sander & Lamb, 1996).

How does social studies in Singapore fit into the scheme of approaches discussed? The intended social studies curriculum is dominantly citizenship transmission in approach, given that it arose out of NE and is a major vehicle for NE at the upper secondary level. The purpose is to meet the national needs, that is, the survival and
continuity of Singapore beyond the founder generation. To ensure this, social studies, organised around NE sought to socialise students into the set of national values, quoting then Deputy Prime Minister Lee, “We must systematically transmit these instincts and attitudes to succeeding cohorts” (Lee, 1997, para. 2). This is characteristically transmission in approach, as was discussed in Chapter One, and again in Chapter Four. On the continuum of citizenship education, such an approach is more minimal in interpretation – where citizenship is defined as particular and exclusive, located in a formal subject, which is knowledge-driven and measured through written examinations. Noteworthy, that thinking is also infused into the social studies curriculum, which has complicated an otherwise ‘water tight’ transmission approach, and therefore allowed for relative flexibility in the enacted curriculum.

Yet it can also be argued that in the current Singapore context, a maximal interpretation of citizenship education, particularly, civic participation is not in opposition to its values and goals. The Education Minister, Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam (2004, para. 10), spoke of the importance of encouraging “our students to question as they learn, and to speak their mind.” An aim of the Combined Humanities syllabus (MOE, 2006. p. 1) of which social studies is a part, states, “To equip pupils with the skills of independent enquiry and critical thinking.” In short, one of the goals of schooling in general, and social studies in particular is that of preparing young people to become thoughtful, enlightened, decision-makers. If students are not taught to make thoughtful judgments, nor asked to question what they learn, it can reasonably be assumed that such thoughtfulness and decision-making will not find its way into the political arena.

2.3 Teacher Knowledge

2.3.1 Teacher as the Curricular-Instructional Gatekeeper

This study takes a curriculum perspective. Curriculum can best be understood as decision-making action that integrates both intention and the manner in which the intention becomes operationalised into classroom reality (Smith & Lovat, 2003). In this, teachers are central, since it is through them that the goals are realised (Gudmundsdottir, 1988, 1991; Lee & Fouts, 2005; Marsh & Willis, 2003). The content of any curriculum never flows directly and uninfluenced into the minds of learners. As enactors of the curriculum, teachers interpret, modify, augment, and choose selectively from any materials that are made available to them. This means
that teachers negotiate and transform what they are required to teach into a course of study, units and lesson plans (Armstrong, 2003; Ben-Peretz, 1990; Brady & Kennedy, 2003). Of importance to this study is that the teacher is viewed as an active and autonomous agent in his/her classroom (Clandinin, 1986).

Thornton (1989, 1991, 1998, 2000, 2001a, 2001b & 2001c, 2005a) characterised teachers as the curricular-instructional gatekeepers, “where teachers make the day-to-day decisions concerning both the subject matter and the experiences to which the students have access and the nature of that subject matter and those experiences” (Thornton, 1991, p. 237). Gatekeeping is the decision-making teachers perform about curriculum and instruction, and the criteria they use to make these decisions (Ross, Cornett & McCutcheon, 1992). Shaver (1979) defined curricular decisions as decisions about appropriate teaching goals and the experiences provided to students to reach those goals. Instructional decisions are concerned with questions of how to teach within an implicit or explicit curricular frame. Consequently, gatekeeping underscoring the significance of individual teacher’s professional understanding of what is to be enacted daily in their classrooms.

Similarly, Parker (1987) developed the idea of teachers’ mediation in social studies. Parker and McDaniel (1992) called this, “Bricolage - teachers do it daily”, as teachers adapt and transform curriculum inventions that originate outside for the classroom context. What this means is that teachers are the primary determiners of what gets taught, and how it is taught in the classrooms. Teachers decide what learning experiences the students in their classrooms will have, such as what issues, content and topics students will engage with, the instructional materials, and the pedagogy that will be used, and how they will be used. As gatekeepers, teachers then determine consciously or otherwise, their students’ access to knowledge and bound their opportunities to learn (Adler & Confer, 1998; Fickel, 2000; Kennedy, 1990; Parker, 1987; Thornton, 1989, 1991, 1998, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2005a).

Where citizenship studies are concerned, Lee and Fouts (2005) argued for greater research on teachers. Teachers are both the recipients and providers of citizenship education in the context of schools. As recipients, they do what is expected of them by the society, education body, official curriculum and school; as providers in actual practice, they decide on what to teach and how to teach, and determine what is important for what groups of students. To a large extent, teachers’ decisions depend
on their understanding of citizenship. The meanings teachers associate with citizenship are diverse and can reflect such influences as their worldviews, political agendas, or beliefs about how society could operate in the ideal. Similarly, Print (1993) argued that teachers as recipients play a significant role in applying the curriculum developed elsewhere. It is certain there would be re-interpretation of the intended citizenship education, and possibly greater variation as teachers modify and adapt the curriculum for application in classrooms.

Similarly, Thornton (2005a) argued that in the context of the U.S., the teacher’s curricular-instructional gatekeeping is more crucial to social studies curriculum and instruction than the form the curriculum takes. Whichever form or definition social studies take, teacher gatekeeping implies there are almost as many educational possibilities within and between any forms. This is true where the meaning of social studies continues to be contested. Thornton suggested that gatekeeping plays a significant part in shaping the meaning of the social studies curriculum. Brophy et al. (1991, p. 187) affirmed this:

"The effectiveness of a social studies curriculum for developing students' understanding of and ability to apply its content depends less on what general topics are covered than on what content is selected, how the content is organised and presented to students and developed though discourse and activities, and how learning is assessed though assignments and tests."

Thus, “teachers have great leeway to interpret a prescribed curriculum” (Thornton, 2005a, p. 11). Thornton (1991) also noted that gatekeeping can take place consciously or otherwise. Given that classroom time is finite while learning is infinite, a teacher necessarily has to select the knowledge to place before children. This selection is driven by the frame of knowledge and values in the mind of the selector.

The basis of gatekeeping is teacher agency. Even careful efforts at implementation do not circumvent gatekeeping, as teachers interpret the prescribed curricular (Thornton, 2005a). While to varying extents examination constrains teachers’ autonomy and choice, Thornton argues that it does not have to be seen in binary terms, where it is either total autonomy or none at all. Thoughtful teachers find ways to teach for more in-depth study to stimulate student interests, and are informed by their worldviews. From this perspective, teachers get to construct curriculum reality for students on a daily basis. In doing so, teachers are transforming what they know and understand of, and in the subject and subject matter they are required to teach into a form that

The teacher’s beliefs about schooling, his or her knowledge of the subject and of available materials and techniques, how he or she decides to put this together for the classroom – out of the process of reflection and personal inclination comes the day-to-day classroom experience of students.

With reference to social studies, and how it is taught, Thornton (1994) reiterated that it is the teacher’s conception of the subject that puts it in the best position to influence pedagogical reasoning to transform the subject matter for instruction (Grossman, 1990; Grossman & Yerian, 1992; Gudmundsdottir, 1988, 1990).

2.3.2 Knowledge, Conceptualisations and Understanding in this Study

The vehicle for understanding this research in social studies and citizenship education is teacher knowledge and practice. Duckworth (1996, p. 13) defined knowledge thus:

I do not mean verbal summaries of somebody else’s knowledge. I am not urging textbooks and lectures. I mean a person’s repertoire of thoughts, actions, connections, predictions, and feelings. Some of these may have as source something read or heard. But the individual has done the work of putting them together for himself or herself, and they give rise to new ways to put them together.

In this study, knowledge is meaning-making (Kegan, 1982, 1994) and as such knowledge is interpretive because it helps us make sense of the world (Walker, 1997). Walker elaborated that using knowledge interpretively is not only applying one’s knowledge, but it is using knowledge for understanding a situation: “In interpreting, our knowledge is not necessarily applied specifically and directly. It is used as a point of departure, a form of sorting, organising, and making sense of something” (p. 42).

Conceptualising means developing ways of thinking and talking about something (Walker, 1997). This includes making distinctions, defining, naming, and noting significant features. A successful conceptualisation contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon. Exploring how social studies teachers conceptualise their subject would give insights into their understanding of how they conceive the curricula in contributing to citizenship education.

Posner and Rudnitsky (2006, p. 46) defined understanding as comprising “the information and beliefs with which we think”. It can be thought as knowing in a deep sense. Understanding is the possession of knowledge coupled with the capability of
reasoning and making judgements relating to the applicability of the knowledge. This involves going beyond literal or linguistic comprehension. Understanding ideas, as this study is concerned with, involves justified beliefs, which means accepting of an idea or assertion as true based on good reasons. Perkins (1993, 1995) added a performance perspective to understanding. Understanding is being able to carry out a variety of actions that show one's grasp of a topic and at the same time advance it. It is being able to take knowledge and use it in new ways. Duckworth (1996) argued that the basis for understanding is making new connections for ourselves, even if people take pains to point out to us connections they have been able to make. She also emphasised multiple pathways to understandings, "I have found a vast array of ways that people come to their understanding – a vast array of perfectly adequate ways. And I have also found that people can come to equivalent understandings in such different ways that they do not recognise each other’s” (p. xi).

In the same vein, von Glasserfeld (1989) proposed a constructivist perspective of knowledge and meaning. Two principles govern constructivism, they are: knowledge is actively constructed by the learner, not passively received from the environment; coming to know is a process of adaptation based on and constantly modified by a learner’s experience of the world, whereby knowledge is being actively constructed by the cognising subject. Fundamental to constructivism is that the individual must actively construct his/her own knowledge and understanding (Bruner, 1990). Constructivism deviates from the traditional view that knowledge exists independently of the individual. Knowledge is not out there to be discovered, it does not discover an independent, pre-existing world outside the mind of the knower. To understand a very complex world, it must be understood from the point of view from those living that reality (Schwandt, 1994). Understanding also presupposes the teacher’s own biases, as such biases are part of the historical reality of one’s being (Gadamer, 1996).

Duckworth, von Glasserfeld and Bruner emphasised the inner workings of the individual, while the significance of the social and cultural factors were de-emphasised. But a citizen is invariably a citizen of a particular country, political entity and community. Consequently, teachers’ knowledge and understandings must be understood within the individual teachers’ lived experiences at both the personal and societal levels. Meanings are contextual, and citizenship is a normative concept which
derives its meaning in relation to the political community. As citizens of a nation, the sources of understanding and actions should be understood in the context of shared cultural meanings and historical developments (Prosser, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978).

Therefore, how one understands citizenship, and how one confronts deep-seated issues of citizenship and identity, such as ‘Who am I?’ ‘What am I?’, must be explored in the context of an evolving political and social framework. As social studies is a vehicle for citizenship education, teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education are appropriately informed by the social constructivist perspective (Vygotsky, 1978). Social constructivism emphasises the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructs knowledge based on this understanding. Hence, knowledge and reality are human products, socially and culturally constructed in interaction with others, as well as by the collective definitions of the situations in the context of the political climate prevailing at any given time (Kelly, 2004; Tan et al., 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). In this study, teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education are not simply constructed, but co-constructed. This perspective of knowledge is congruent to gatekeeping, where teachers actively construct their understanding of social studies and citizenship education, and the understandings influence their practice in the classroom. The teacher is the filter through which the intended curriculum passes (McCutcheon, 1988).

2.3.3 The Teacher’s Knowledge Base

This study focuses on teacher understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education. It is located within the body of literature that recognises teacher agency whereby the teacher transforms what he/she knows of, and in the subject he/she is required to teach into a form that students can understand (Grossman et al., 1989; Gudmundstottir, 1988, 1991). In doing so, the teacher brings his/her knowledge to the teaching process. This section focuses on knowledge and teacher. Two strands in the research are noted (Clandinin, 1986), one focuses on what the teacher knows, and the other, what we know about the teachers. Both strands are helpful in exploring how teachers in this study understand and practise social studies and citizenship education.
2.2.3.1 What the Teacher Knows: Sources of Teacher Knowledge

Grossman (1995) noted that the proliferation of research in teacher knowledge from 1983 through to 1992 was to develop a conceptual framework relating teacher subject matter knowledge and the processes of planning and instruction. Prior to this, valid knowledge was defined as theoretical and residing with the experts. Teacher knowledge was largely ignored, with teachers viewed as conduits of theoretical and cultural knowledge embodied in various curricular, “merely an agent fulfilling someone else’s intentions, a transmitter of external knowledge” (Clandinin, 1986, p. 3). In contrast, the attention to teacher knowledge recognises the teacher as an active and autonomous agent, not a passive transmitter of knowledge embodied in various curricular (Clandinin, 1986; Elbaz, 1981). Thinking and decision-making accompany the teacher’s action. Consequently, questions concerning the knowledge and beliefs that informed teachers’ decision-making are significant, as issues related to what teachers know, how they know and how that knowledge informs classroom practice are central (Grossman, 1995; McNamara, 1991).

Table 2.4: Grossman’s Typology of Teacher Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>What it includes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content knowledge</td>
<td>Teachers’ knowledge of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• subject matter knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PCK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of learners and learning</td>
<td>Teachers’ knowledge of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• learning theories</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• physical, social, psychological, cognitive development of students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• motivational theory &amp; practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• ethnic socioeconomic, gender diversity among students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of general pedagogy</td>
<td>Teachers’ knowledge of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• classroom organisation &amp; management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• general methods of teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of curriculum</td>
<td>Teachers’ knowledge of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• processes of curricular development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• school curriculum within &amp; across grade levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of context</td>
<td>Teachers’ knowledge of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• their students &amp; their families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• historical, philosophical, &amp; cultural foundations of education within a particular country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of self</td>
<td>Teachers’ knowledge of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• their personal values</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• dispositions</td>
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<td>• strengths &amp; weaknesses</td>
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<td>• educational philosophy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• goals for students</td>
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<td>• purposes for teaching</td>
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Several frameworks for domains of teacher knowledge have been proposed (Grossman, 1990; Leinhardt & Smith, 1985; 1990; Sanders et al., 1993; Shulman, 1987; Wilson et al., 1987). Shulman (1986, 1987) established the seminal knowledge base for teaching that includes seven categories of what teachers should know: content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values, and PCK. This typology has since been re-interpreted and re-defined. Later, in a review of literature on teachers' knowledge, Grossman (1995) proposed a more embracing typology including six domains, as shown in Table 2.4 on page 50.

This typology helps locate teachers' understandings of social studies and citizenship within the broader context of teacher knowledge. In coming to understand and operationalise the understanding, the teacher draws from and integrates a number of knowledge domains. In other words, teacher knowledge is interconnected and dynamic. In the process of teaching and reflecting, teachers also develop new understanding of the content and themselves. Due to a lack of a method for capturing the dynamism of teacher knowledge, scholars have recommended the attention to documenting the wisdom of practice (Grossman, 1995; Shulman, 2004; Yeager, 2000). As such, this study investigates both teacher understanding and how that understanding is practised in the social studies classroom.

2.2.3.2 Subject Matter

The teacher's understanding of the subject matter has been established as a central component for teaching, particularly in social studies where the meaning is contested (Goodman & Adler, 1985; Haddon, 2001; Jho, 2001; Jimenez, 2001; Stodolsky & Grossman, 1995; Thornton, 2005a). This is further complicated by its connection with citizenship. Subject matter is the content of the curriculum that includes the knowledge such as facts, concepts, generalisations, principles, processes or skills, and the values and attitudes associated with whatever is being learnt (Print, 1993).

Subject matter has external and internal characteristics (Marsh & Willis, 2003). The former deals with how accurately and broadly the chosen subject matter represent the reality of the world. Presumably, subject matter should be rooted in, and transmit this greater reality. The latter deals with the logic inherent in how the chosen subject
matter are arranged. Any subject matter has its own organising principles that should not be violated. For example, in history, the internal logic deals with chronology. Similarly, Wilson et al. (1987) described subject matter to include substantive and syntactic structures. Grossman (1989, 1990) added content knowledge and teachers’ beliefs to Wilson et al.’s definition. This refers to the teachers’ perceptions of what is important knowledge within a subject and how one knows this information. Grossman argued that these four components play a significant role in how a subject is taught, and how the particular disciplines are represented to students.

The amount of subject matter must necessarily be limited, as classroom time is finite while learning is infinite. Therefore the teacher must make choices about what subject matter to include and what to leave out. Selecting the subject matter within social studies believed essential for educating citizens is highly political, due to the complexity and multiple constructions that can inform one’s view of citizenship (Apple, 2004; Gross & Dynneson, 1991; Print, 1993). The teacher acts as the curricular-instructional gatekeeper, whose understanding of social studies and citizenship education influences his/her choices.

Apple (1993, 2004) contends that how teachers understand and select the subject matter, its subsequent organisation and practice, is an ideological process that typically serves the interests of particular groups. While the ideological process may be less obvious in Singapore, it is nevertheless present. Apple explains that such occurrences happen through consciousness saturation, where the life experiences that produce the group ideologies are so pervasive and influential in their effects, that we come to believe that they are reality and commonsense knowledge. In other words, our experience of the world and the language codes that we are socialised into using to give meaning to, and express meaning about these experiences is reality, rather than just one way of making sense of it. Because of the power of this saturation, we come to act, usually without thinking explicitly about it. Chua (1995) described such commonsense knowledge in Singapore as the ideological hegemony/consensus fashioned by the PAP.

Shulman’s (1986, 1987) work established a new domain of educational research addressing subject matter knowledge (Grossman, 1995; Print, 1993). Numerous studies examined different aspects of subject matter knowledge (Ball, 1990, 1991; Carlsen, 1991; Grossman et al., 1989; Kennedy, 1990; Lienhardt et al., 1991; Wilson,
1988; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988). The research indicates that teachers need to be knowledgeable about the subjects they teach, for within a subject, teachers emphasise areas they are knowledgeable. They are more likely to ask cognitively higher order questions and able to construct explanations and activities for students. Ball (1991) found that teachers with relatively weak conceptual understanding of a subject were likely to represent the nature of knowing as arbitrary and rule bound. Studies of subject matter also established the importance of PCK in teaching (Grossman, 1989, 1991; Gudmundsdottir, 1988, 1991; Wilson, 1988).

The impact of Shulman’s work on social studies research suggests that teachers’ subject matter knowledge affects what they teach and how they teach it:

The more knowledgeable teachers not only knew more about subject matter but also knew more about the relationship among the parts of this knowledge; how this discipline or field related to other areas of knowledge; and equally important, how best to represent this knowledge so students would come to understand (Stanley, 1991, p. 253).

Wilson (1988; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988) studied 11 social studies teachers with varying degrees of historical subject matter and pedagogical expertise. Using semi-structured interviews, teachers were tapped on their knowledge of the Depression and New Deal, and knowledge of how to teach them. She found that teachers’ disciplinary backgrounds were key influences on how they transformed the subject matter for teaching. Fred, a beginning teacher with a political science major structured his U.S. history classes as “the study of political science – he not only emphasised politics and economics, but organised the entire course around those themes” (p. 535). In contrast, Bill and Jane had good historical knowledge, and broader conceptions of history which facilitated their teaching, leading to more attainable goals consistent with the history curriculum. Despite Fred’s goals of developing conscientious citizens, his narrow conception of history as simply facts, combined with his limited historical knowledge, served to constrain his efforts.

Jimenez’s (2001) study drew on the PCK framework. Using a qualitative case study design to explore the experiences of three Australian history teachers who incorporated civics benchmarks into their teaching, he found that teachers who were successful at working with civics had the ability to draw connections to their existing subject matter knowledge and PCK of history. The goals and purposes that the teachers assigned to civics played an influential role when they selected and rationalised content and planned their lessons. The study demonstrated that a lack of
subject matter knowledge, combined with unclear purposes assigned to civics, can limit a teacher's ability to rationalise the importance of what and how to teach. Jimenez's work is relevant to this study, given the few that investigated teachers' knowledge of both civics and history, and the impact on teaching. The work is conceptually strong, but the study was conducted during the pilot period of a curriculum innovation, and it is uncertain if teachers were ready to incorporate civics into their day-to-day teaching.

The study of subject matter knowledge was not unique to Shulman's Knowledge Growth Project. Shulman (1987) drew from Dewey and his notion of "psychologising" subject matter (Grossman et al., 1989). Other studies looked at teachers' understanding of the subject and subject matter, not in the conceptual context of relating the constituents of teacher knowledge, but in broader epistemological and personal terms. Recent studies were conducted by Branneman (1997) and Haddon (2001), earlier ones by Evans (1988, 1989, 1990) and Adler (1982, 1984), and Yeo (2002) and Tan (2005) in Singapore.

Haddon (2001), using a qualitative case study, investigated how eight teachers in four Australian primary schools conceptualised civics and citizenship education, and translated this into classroom practice. Despite the national civics initiative, teachers were limited in their conception and practice of civics and citizenship, lacking clear focus on what civics was, and how to plan for instruction. Teaching civics was informal and incidental, as a result of an unsupportive school culture. The study was conceptually weak. For example, civics and citizenship were not differentiated. The study was not located in a subject area but an array of subjects, ignoring research on the importance of subject matter in teachers' thought processes.

Citizenship is a key criterion in Branneman's (1997) study. She focused on the personal theorising of two exemplary social studies teachers about social education and the influences on how democratic citizenship was developed in students through teaching of history. Teachers' views of themselves and social studies knowledge were emphasised, where both teachers saw themselves as role models who were thinking, caring and valuing, framing historical knowledge from a critical and multicultural perspective. History teaching thus provided opportunities to critically examine issues. Both teachers presented a non-authoritarian view of teacher knowledge, encouraged student involvement, emphasised trust and respect, and shared their pedagogical
decisions with students. They were conscious of preparing students for a participatory democracy. Brenneman concluded that teachers’ theorising mattered; teachers’ perspectives concerning social education shaped their practice, and what these views attempted to teach students about democracy. This study is thick in description, locating the teachers in their everyday experiences. However, one drawback is because exemplary teachers were selected, the findings were already biased.

Evans’ (1988, 1989, 1990) qualitative study inquired into teacher beliefs toward history. He found teachers’ conceptions of history varied. While their conceptions shaped the transmitted curriculum, the impact on students’ conceptions was unclear. Teachers’ conceptions were then related to teaching style using a typology of storyteller, scientific historian, relativist/reformer, cosmic philosopher or eclectic. However, force fitting into a priori categories ignored the richness of emerging conceptions and undermined the credibility of the study. The impact of the five conceptions on the transmitted curriculum was uneven. But due to familiarity, the storyteller and scientific historian were more impactful than others.

In Singapore, Yeo (2002) examined 10 teachers’ perceptions and practices of history, finding variations in teachers’ perceptions, such as history is about the past, present and future; history as a story; and value of history. But in practice, Yeo found that teachers taught to the examination. Similarly, Tan’s (2005) study also found teachers to have vague understanding of history, where most do not teach for historical understanding, but to the examination.

So far, studies into teachers’ understanding of subject and subject matter have emphasised disciplines, particularly history. The social studies curriculum has unique attributes and goals different from history (Seixas, 2001; Stanley, 1991). It is difficult to see how the disciplinary research contributes to the social studies curriculum. Stodolsky and Grossman (1995) noted five features of social studies distinct from history that affected teachers’ understanding and practice. Accordingly, social studies is a poorly defined subject with many disciplinary roots; the broad scope of social studies results in less course rotation; it is less sequential than other subjects; and it is a more dynamic subject. Besides, social studies is an integrated subject in Singapore. The commonly stated goal of social studies is citizenship, and while Branneman (1997) and Jimenez’s (2001) studies illustrated how history contributed to citizenship, these findings have limited application to an integrated social studies. Goodson (1987)
suggested that citizenship could be organised around how each discipline contributes to this goal. But as an integrated subject, social studies is utilitarian in nature and promotes practical knowledge. How do teachers understand such a subject and its subject matter? How do teachers conceive of an integrated curriculum in contributing to citizenship? Clearly, research needs to focus on teacher understanding of social studies as an integrated subject.

For another group of studies, subject matter was seen as emergent and integrative to the personal meanings teachers hold for social studies (Adler, 1982; Brenneman, 1997; Cantu, 1997; Cornett, 1990; Coughlin, 2003; Johnston, 1990). In these studies, 'personal practical theories', 'perspectives', and 'beliefs' were typically used, suggesting a subjective and interpretive understanding of social studies more than in disciplinary terms. These studies revealed that teachers commonly drew upon their personal knowledge to negotiate and reflect on their understandings and practice.

Grossman (1995) described such a focus as knowledge of self. It is not theoretical but represents a personal and inevitably idiosyncratic domain of teacher knowledge. Among others, Johnston (1990), Fickel (2000) and Coughlin's (2003) studies are examples. All except for Coughlin used the qualitative case study to examine the factors underlying teachers' understanding and practice of social studies. Johnston found that teachers' background knowledge, beliefs and experiences mediated what they learnt and how they learnt to teach social studies. Noteworthy, these personal variables were stronger influences on their understandings and practice of social studies than the methods courses. Contrary to Wilson and Wineburg's (1988) findings on the dominance of disciplinary background, Johnston found that the teachers "had views about subject matter in the social studies, but they were not framed by a particular disciplinary perspective" (p. 212).

In the same vein, Fickel's (2000) case study of a teacher revealed how personal theories, life experiences and teaching contexts influenced the enacted curriculum. Of significance is the teacher's personal philosophy such as aims of education, nature of knowledge and learning. Her concern was with how such "tacitly held idiosyncratic theories" (p. 385) affected students' access to learn socially valued knowledge. To move teaching towards a more socially just and equitable pedagogy that promote democracy, attention must be given to the investigation of teachers' personal philosophies and the influence on the enactment of social studies. Coughlin (2003)
studied how teachers’ life and family histories influenced how they projected the subject matter of U.S. history. This is a fairly large-scale inquiry of 62 teachers, using both a closed-ended survey and in-depth interviews. She found teaching to be strongly influenced by teachers’ life and family histories, where they rejected attempts to de-personalise and standardise history teaching and learning. Significantly, these studies suggested that teachers’ personal knowledge is a key determinant in the understandings and practice of social studies.

2.3.4 Teachers and Contexts

Another area salient to this study focuses on knowledge of teachers (Clandinin, 1986). Lortie’s (1975) study is a notable example in giving insights into the contexts and influences on the teacher and his/her knowledge. Offering a sociological description of teachers, he argued that teachers have no common, technical knowledge because of their weak socialisation. Hence, they rely on personal knowledge in teaching. The key idea of the personal perspective resonates with the social studies fraternity, where the lack of consensus on the nature of the subject confuses and weakens professional socialisation. Consequently, social studies teachers rely more on personal knowledge in their understandings and practice of the subject.

Of interest is apprenticeship of observation. Lortie (1975) contended that teachers develop their own understanding of what it is to teach when they were students, and this influenced their teaching. Accordingly, individuals construct a tacitly held set of beliefs about how teaching and learning occur, and what knowledge should be included in different areas and courses. This accounted for the maintenance of traditional practices, as we teach how we were taught, and traditionally teaching has been rooted in a transmission and teacher-centred model. Slekar’s (1998) study of history teachers reported that teachers often repeated the direct instruction methods by which they had been taught history themselves. Similarly, in her study, Fickel (2000) found her teacher grounding his teaching in the images he held of specific teachers in his schooling days.

Similarly, teacher knowledge and practice are influenced by the institutional context where the teacher works (Cornbleth, 2001; Jho, 2001; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; McNeil, 1986). McNeil explored how the administrative contexts of schools affected what was and how it was taught in social studies classes. Hidden tensions between the
social control functions and educational purposes within the schools exerted powerful influence on teaching. Consequently, teachers taught defensively to maintain social control by lowering the difficulty level of the subject matter, and reducing demands on students in return for classroom order and students’ compliance. The findings suggest that teacher knowledge and practice are mediated by underlying institutional tensions which can compromise teaching, and the achievements of the curricular purposes.

Likewise, Cornbleth (2001) identified five perceived climates of constraint and/or restraint that influence teacher and practice. They are: a bureaucratic climate with an administrative emphasis on law and order; a conservative climate intent on maintaining the status quo; a threatening climate of external curriculum challenges and self-censorship; a climate of perceived pupil pathologies and pedagogical pessimism; and a competitive climate dominated by student testing and public school ranking. A recent qualitative case study by Jho (2001) of the working lives of social studies teachers in a Korean public school, explored how teachers’ curricular-instructional gatekeeping interacted with the institutional demands and constraints placed on them. He found that social studies instruction became largely idiosyncratic as teachers accommodated to the institutional conditions. This reiterates the institutional impact on teacher knowledge and practice. Other studies reviewed earlier (Adler, 1982; Evans, 1988, 1989, 1990; Haddon, 2001; Tan, 2005; Yeo, 2002) also noted the institutional impact. In Singapore, the examination in particular, exerts a strong influence on teacher understanding and practice.

2.4 Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature in three key areas of this study: social studies, citizenship education, the teacher and his/her knowledge. The review first established social studies as a contested subject, further complicated by its link with citizenship education. Frameworks for organising the relationship of social studies and citizenship education were reviewed and discussed in detail. Citizenship education was then established as equally contested along a maximal-minimal continuum. The chapter has argued that a maximal interpretation of citizenship education is imperative in preparing citizens for the demands of the 21st century. Subsequently, the review focused on teacher knowledge where the role of the teacher as an active and autonomous agent was examined, and the teacher established as the curricular-
instructional gatekeeper. Gatekeeping as a process concept is especially important given the contested curricula of social studies and citizenship education. It was argued that teachers' understandings of social studies and citizenship education influence their teaching. Within this conceptual frame, a view of knowledge for this study was established, informed by the social constructivist perspective.

It is evident there is a dearth of research on social studies and citizenship education incorporating the teachers' perspective in Singapore. With social studies as a high-stakes subject in schools, it is imperative that this gap be addressed. Further, the inquiry needs to be located in social studies as an integrated subject, and in exploring the dynamics of both social studies and citizenship education and the influence on teachers' practice. The next chapter discusses the research design of the study that gives attention to how the design best addresses the research questions and plug the gaps identified in the literature.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and justifies the research design for the present study. The study is designed as basic qualitative research using the case study method, with teacher knowledge and practice as the vehicle for understanding social studies and citizenship education. The research questions that guided the study are:

- How do teachers conceptualise social studies in Singapore secondary schools?
- What are teachers' understandings of the subject matter of social studies?
- What do teachers understand about the nature of citizenship and citizenship education?
- In what ways do teachers teach citizenship education through the vehicle of social studies?
- How do teachers' understandings of the subject matter of social studies influence their teaching of citizenship education?

To explore such a phenomenon requires an approach that focuses on the interpretive process of teachers. The interest is in discerning “meanings – how people make sense of their lives, experiences and structures of their world” (Creswell, 1994, p. 145), and the need to describe and understand these meanings. It emphasises the subjective aspects of people’s behaviour, and attempts to gain entry into the conceptual world of the teachers in order to understand how and what meanings they construct about social studies and citizenship education in their daily lives (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

3.2 Selection of the Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative research methodology is the best approach for answering the research questions. It provides the interpretive and inductive approach to support the exploration into teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education. Qualitative research is “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and concluded in a natural setting” (Creswell, 1994, p. 1). The choice of methodology was governed by the need to investigate from the teachers’ viewpoints their knowledge and practice. This intention is contrasted with the process-product research that uses the quantitative methodology. Meaning-
making is subjective and must be explored from the participants’ perspectives (Fenstermacher, 1994; Ross et al., 1992; Jimenez, 2001; Shulman, 1986). The study is concerned with the emic view, “for understanding meaning, for grasping the actor’s definition of the situation” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). Krathwohl (1998) noted that qualitative research is extremely useful for exploration into understanding phenomena, where the researcher does not assume he/she knows what things mean to the people he/she is studying.

This study draws from phenomenology in its emphasis on experience and interpretation (Merriam, 1998). The central interest is “in human meaning in social life and its elucidation and exposition by the researcher” (Erickson, 1986, p. 119). In other words, human actions are grounded in meanings that must be interpreted to understand. Because meanings and interpretations differ, qualitative research regards the meanings and interpretations individuals assign to their actions as potential causative factors, and seek to understand those perspectives to explain behaviour. Consequently, qualitative research requires the researcher “to be in the field, making observations, exercising subjective judgment, analysing and synthesising, all the while realising their own consciousness” (Stake, 1995, p. 41). Thus, this study involves fieldwork, for to interpret it is necessary for the researcher to be intimately familiar with the phenomenon in its context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Likewise, qualitative procedures are typically inductive in orientation.

As qualitative research, this study is supported by a constructivist world view, with the ontological assumption that knowledge is actively and socially constructed by the cognising subject (Merriam, 1998). This implies there are multiple realities, as “realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exists as many such constructions as there are individuals” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 43). A constructivist world view accepts that the reality constructed depends on the range and scope of information available, and this underscores the importance of collecting a large amount and variety of relevant data.

Hence, the way different teachers construct their own realities are equally valid. Teachers construct their own understandings of social studies and citizenship education, and these understandings inform their practice. Thus, the enacted curriculum frequently appears more varied than the intended one. This reiterates the importance of exploring teacher knowledge and practice from the perspective of the
teachers living the reality (Schwandt, 1994). The intent is to promote "a subjective paradigm", where subjectivity is not a failing but "an essential element of understanding" (Stake, 1995, p. 45).

A key assumption of this study is the significance of meanings in context. Context is defined as "what people are doing and where and when they are doing it" (Erickson & Shultz, 1983, p. 148). This takes place within specific historical moments, in a web of possible meanings that is bounded by cultural, institutional, and linguistic limitation and constraints (Geertz, 1973, 1983). Broadly speaking, the subject is the immediate context, where biography becomes the foundation of, and rationale for people's interpretations and choices (Freire, 1970; Greene, 1998). Knowledge is also embedded in the work of teachers, and in the organisation where they work. The prevailing political and social framework is another context that interacts with one's knowledge and practice.

Citizenship is a normative concept that derives its meaning in relation to the particular political community. Teachers are members of the political community, where the sources of their knowledge and actions are grounded in shared cultural meanings and historical developments. Reality is socially constructed by the individual teacher within the context of collective definitions of the situations, and the prevailing political climate at the given time (Kelly, 2004). How the teacher understands and confronts deep-seated citizenship issues must be considered within the evolving political and social context. Qualitative research facilitates attention to relationships among people, places, and environments that enables capturing more accurately the complexity of teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education, two curricular fields that are invariably contested.

In qualitative research, what is learnt about the processes, meanings and understandings, is presented as rich and thick descriptions that focus on words and pictures (Merriam, 1998). Such data offer "rich, full and real" explanations of the phenomena that happen in real life situations (Maxwell, 1996, p. 32). These are presented holistically and cannot be reduced to independent parts.

3.3 The Case Study as a Research Method

A case study is "an exploration of a bounded system or a case (or a collection of cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of
information rich in context” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). The case study is used as a research method in this study as it enables the researcher to get as close to the personal world of meaning and understanding as possible (Bromley, 1986). Methods refer to the technical aspects of the research, which are concrete techniques or procedures such as interviews and observations (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In this study, the case study is employed as the overarching method structuring the techniques.

In a review of research on teacher knowledge across subjects, Calderhead (1996) noted that case study designs had been helpful in building knowledge base in the area. In particular, the qualitative case studies produced “a detailed and supported interpretation of the behavior and perspectives of others” that “enable the complex network of factors involved in particular classroom actions to be explored” (p. 712). Specifically in research on social studies and/or citizenship education, researchers have also adopted the case study design (Adler, 1982; Angell, 1991; Brenneman, 1997; Cantu, 1997; Fickel, 2000; Haddon, 2001; Jimenez, 2001; Johnston, 1990; Wilson, 1988). When the case study design is used by a sole researcher, the number of cases is usually limited to a few. Fewer teachers were investigated but in substantial depth and over considerable period of time that yielded detailed accounts, intimate knowledge and insights, and often, each case is presented in separate chapter. Fickel, Jimenez and Wilson’s case studies were intrinsic in nature, where the case itself is of primary interest (Stake, 1995). They were curious about the particular cases and their individual experiences, not because by studying the cases they learn about other cases or about some general problem.

The case is a unit of study, “a specific, a complex, functioning thing” (Stake, 1995, p. 2). It is a bounded and integrated system, and people are prospective cases. In this study, each teacher is a case. This study takes a different angle with case study method by extending the scope that had been done using case study design. Unlike the above mentioned studies, this study examines a larger number of cases. The interest is not the cases per se, but the insights they shed on the research questions. Few qualitative studies on teacher knowledge and practice in social studies and/or citizenship education took the focus that addressed the need for a general understanding of how teachers conceive of their curricula as contributing to citizenship, with attention to the categories and themes across the cases. What do the
themes that run across the cases tell about the teacher knowledge and practice? What are the features, similarities and differences? How can they be characterised? Given the centralised education system in Singapore where teachers are all government employees, the differentiation between individual teachers though noticeable, may not be huge. Consequently, a general understanding is more informative, useful and meaningful.

The researcher chooses a teacher to study, looking at how he/she understands social studies and citizenship education, and how this affects his/her teaching. In this way, the use of case study method is to understand something else other than understanding this particular teacher. It is believed that insights into the research questions are best derived from studying several cases, with each instrumental to learning and understanding about the teacher's understanding and practice. Multiple case studies allow for variation of context and teacher type. A single or few case studies would have provided a limited range of different teachers and school contexts. By selecting more participants this study allows for greater breadth of understanding in different contexts. This added considerably to the work but gave a rich and varied insight to answer the research questions.

The individual case studies are co-ordinated with an interest in understanding categories and features of similarities or differences across cases than what individuals are saying by themselves. Consequently, there are no separate chapters devoted to individual cases, but rather to themes, categories and characterisations. This research method is described as the instrumental collective case study, where "individual cases in the collection....are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, perhaps better theorising" (Stake, 1994, p. 237). Similarly, Yin (1994, p. 137) stated that "in a multiple-case study, the individual case studies need not always be presented in the final manuscript. The individual cases, in a sense, serve only as the evidentiary base for the study and may be used solely in the cross-case analysis.”

The case study research method employed here invites an intensive examination of the social studies teachers and provides a foundation upon which description, induction and interpretation can be drawn. The up-close and personal examination sensitises the researcher to an otherwise taken-for-granted world, such as the details and the assumptions under which people operate (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Because
of the intensive and inductive nature of case studies, it will “generate rich subject data, they may bring to light variables, phenomena, processes and relationships that deserve more intensive investigations” (Burns, 1990, p. 313). Scholars have argued that the case study is most responsive to the qualitative methodology particularly in describing, understanding and explaining (Hamel et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). In light of this, the case study method is conducive to drawing “attention to the question of what specifically can be learned” (Stake, 1994, p. 236) from the study of the cases.

A key condition for choosing the case study method is the type of research question posed (Yin, 1994). The purpose of the study and the questions it seeks to answer are important determinants of the appropriateness of case study research method. The case study method is useful in addressing exploratory and explanatory questions, focusing on “what”, “how” and “why” respectively. This study has both exploratory and explanatory components. The appeal of the case study method is that it can construct better than any other type of research, a richly detailed picture that is interesting, informative and potentially filled with implications. In this respect, the case study method serves to elucidate the what, how and why appropriate to the purpose of this study.

Further, the case study method is suited for “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1994, p. 13), “but when the relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated” (p. 8). Such is the situation at hand, for this study is a “contemporary phenomenon”, where teachers were interviewed and observed in their everyday setting rather than contrived for the purpose of research. But this also posed difficulties in that the phenomenon was not easily distinguishable from the context in which it happened. Real life is textured with overlapping layers of contexts. This is also intersected with the normative and contested concept of citizenship, which made the phenomenon all the more complex. Consequently, what, why and how the teacher understands about and puts into practice social studies and citizenship education is not something that can be controlled by the researcher, and thus lends well to case study method.

Finally, the case study method strives towards a holistic understanding of cultural systems of action (Orum et al., 1991). It tells a story of a bounded system,
emphasising unity and wholeness of the system, and its confinement to those aspects relevant to the research problem at the time (Stake, 1995). This is facilitated by the use of multiple sources of data (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1994). The qualitative and descriptive work was derived from interviews, observations and document review, each of which are the cornerstones of qualitative case study.

However, a frequent criticism of the case study method is the issue of generalisation, where concern is frequently raised at the lack of basis for statistical generalisations. Stake (1995, p. 8) explained that the case study method does not seek “to optimise production of generalisations.” Yin (1994, p. 21) added that “the investigator’s goal is to expand and generalise theories and not to enumerate frequencies.” It would be “a fatal flaw in doing case studies….to conceive of statistical generalisation as the method of generalising the results of the case”, because cases are not chosen on the basis of “sampling units” (p. 31). Instead, it is analytic generalisation that is applicable. This is pertinent to the present study where eventually it would make a contribution to building an understanding through categories, themes and features about teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education within the social studies curriculum in Singapore.

3.4 Site Selection

Schools were the research sites where teachers were located. Prior to selecting the schools, approval was sought and granted to conduct the research in schools from the University’s Human Ethics Committee and the MOE in Singapore. A list of criteria for selecting schools included good examples of teachers, range of contexts and possible explanatory factors.

The first criterion was that the schools had to follow the mainstream curriculum and offer the GCE ‘O’ level social studies at the upper secondary level. Social studies was initially a compulsory subject in all secondary schools, though following the 2002 Junior College/Upper Secondary Education Review Report (MOE, 2002), several elite government schools were allowed to adopt alternative curricula that did away with the GCE ‘O’ levels. Currently, neighbourhood secondary schools offer the GCE ‘O’ levels and hence social studies. Neighbourhood schools refer to the majority and non-elite schools in Singapore. These schools are located in residential estates in all parts of Singapore, and therefore the description ‘neighbourhood’.
A second related criterion was stability where the school’s location, programmes and staffing were concerned for a three year period, otherwise it would be disruptive to the research. The third criterion was school context that can have strong influence on teachers and teaching (Cornbleth, 2001, 2002; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). However, the researcher hypothesised that the influence may not be strong in Singapore given the centralised school system that exerts a largely homogenising effect on schools. Nonetheless, the third criterion was still to choose a range of schools in terms of geographical location, history, size, types of government schools such as government, government-aided, and autonomous, to reflect the range of schools in Singapore. The difference between a government and government-aided school is that the former is fully funded by the government while the latter receives 90% funding from the government, with the other part funded by organisations the school is affiliated to such as the Anglican church. Autonomous schools have greater autonomy and a wider range of enrichment programmes (MOE, 2006).

Based on these considerations, schools were contacted and then selected once the principals gave their consent and formal permission to conduct the study in the selected schools was granted by the MOE. Table 3.1 shows a summary of the schools selected to provide teachers for the study using their pseudonyms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Average Student Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Secondary</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>&gt; 30 years</td>
<td>Neighbourhood, Co-educational, Government</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wharton Secondary</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>&gt; 100 years</td>
<td>Neighbourhood, Co-educational, Government-aided, Autonomous</td>
<td>1,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayshore Secondary</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>&gt; 8 years</td>
<td>Neighbourhood, Co-educational, Government</td>
<td>1,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kovan Secondary</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>&gt; 50 years</td>
<td>Neighbourhood, Co-educational, Government</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Selection of Cases

The teacher is the case and the unit of analysis. A key question related to using the case study method, as Stake (1995, p. 4) highlighted, is “how shall cases be selected?” The choice of the cases is of primary importance in qualitative research, and the main criterion is to “maximise what we can learn....given our purposes, which cases are likely to lead us to understandings, to assertions....” This means that the “opportunity to learn is of primary importance” (p. 6). Similarly, Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 30) indicated that the “collective case study demands clear choices about which types of
cases to include.” On this issue, the researcher was guided by how rich and complex each case within the collective should be.

In view of this, purposeful sampling is used in selecting the cases. Creswell (2002, p. 194) explained that “in purposeful sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals...to learn or understand the central phenomenon.” Two purposeful sampling strategies were used: concept and criterion sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994). By concept sampling, individuals are sampled because they can help the researcher understand the concepts in the study. In this study, the researcher sought to explore teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education. The researcher was cognisant to select a balance and variety of cases so as to maximise the opportunity to learn (Stake, 1995). By criterion sampling, criteria that “directly reflect the purpose of the study and guide in the identification of information rich cases”, are used for selecting cases that are information rich (Merriam, 1998, p. 62).

A criterion was to select a range of teachers with different disciplinary background such as history, geography, political science, sociology, English language, economics and mathematics. Past studies on teacher knowledge (Jimenez, 2001; Wilson, 1988; Wilson & Wineburg, 1998) showed that teachers’ disciplinary background made a difference to what and how they taught. This is pertinent to social studies as it is not a single disciplinary but an integrated subject made up of different aspects from various social science disciplines. Teachers usually major in single disciplines in their undergraduate studies. The common specialisations are history, geography, political science and sociology, with more recent specialisations including economics, literature, English language and mathematics.

A second criterion was selecting teachers who had or not undergone pre-service social studies methods course. In the first two years when social studies was introduced, teachers who taught social studies were current history and geography teachers. They were not trained to teach social studies, but attended a crash course by the MOE on the new examination format, focused on setting and marking the examination questions. After 2001, new teachers underwent social studies methods course education at pre-service level. Selecting teachers from both groups would reflect the reality of social studies teaching. Literature on the impact of teacher education on teacher knowledge and practice contradicted. For example, Johnston (1990) found the
methods course had little impact on the way teachers understood and practised social studies, while Wilson’s (1988) study showed otherwise.

A third criterion was the length of teaching experience, tied to three stages of teacher professional development - an initial stage of survival and discovery, a second stage of experimentation and consolidation, a third stage of mastery and stabilisation (Berliner, 1986; Fuller & Brown, 1975). To limit the study to teachers of a particular stage or length of experience would make it less characteristic of social studies teaching in Singapore. Therefore, the teachers selected had teaching experiences ranging from three to 20 years.

The researcher also selected teachers of different ethnic groups to reflect more realistically the multiracial makeup of Singapore. As a multiracial society with three official races (Chinese, Malays, Indians) as well as other ethnic groups, race is an important element in Singaporean identity. Posited with teaching a value-laden subject such as social studies with citizenship education purposes, it is necessary to understand if race makes a difference to teacher knowledge and practice. Gender was another criterion used in selecting teachers so that some balance was achieved. Where citizenship issues are concerned, it was hypothesised that men and women think and act differently, as Singaporean men undergo compulsory National Service. National Service is a process of socialisation and citizenship duty. It was also important to select teachers who had no intention of transferring out of the school in 2004 when data collection was in progress. While this could not be guaranteed, the researcher tried to find out from teachers their future plans.

Once the criteria were established, the next question was the number of cases to select. This question must be dealt with conceptually for in qualitative research using case study, choice was more important than numbers. Stake (1995, p. 5) argued that even in a collective study which may be designed “with more concern for representation but, again, the representation of a small sample is difficult to defend”. Any best possible selection of cases would not give compelling representation nor statistical basis for generalising, for that is not the purpose of using the case study method. The price of having too many cases would be thinner and confusing data. Miles and Huberman (1994) considered a qualitative study with more than 15 cases to be unwieldy. Given also the practicality issues of limited time and access to fieldwork, eight cases were considered adequate to meet the needs of this study.
Eight cases were chosen as it met the needs of the study and the criteria for case selection. This study used the case study as a method to facilitate more intensive study of teachers but with the purpose of seeking more general understanding across the cases of how teachers conceive of their curricular as contributing to citizenship than individual cases per se. As such, it needs to examine a larger number of cases. A summary of the eight teachers is given in Table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Disciplinary Background</th>
<th>Social Studies Training</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vind</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Political Science &amp; English literature</td>
<td>MOE Crash course</td>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Pre-service</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn</td>
<td>Wharton</td>
<td>Geography &amp; Economics</td>
<td>MOE Crash course</td>
<td>Twenty</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leong</td>
<td>Wharton</td>
<td>Political Science &amp; Sociology</td>
<td>Pre-service</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frida</td>
<td>Bayshore</td>
<td>Political Science &amp; Sociology</td>
<td>MOE Crash course</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Bayshore</td>
<td>Asian Studies &amp; History</td>
<td>Pre-service</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ying</td>
<td>Kovan</td>
<td>Political Science &amp; Economics</td>
<td>Pre-service</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcus</td>
<td>Kovan</td>
<td>Maths, Economics &amp; Sociology</td>
<td>In-service</td>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the approval of the principals of the schools, the researcher contacted the eight teachers to participate in the study. Meetings were scheduled with the teachers to explain the study and expectations of participation. The subject information and consent forms were given to the teachers. See Appendix 1 for sample. All eight teachers accepted the invitation to participate in the study, with the knowledge that they were free to withdraw at any time. The researcher reassured them that their identities would be confidential, and in reporting the data, careful steps would be taken to maintain their anonymity including pseudonyms for both teachers and schools in the study.

3.6 Data Collection

Three prevailing data collection methods in qualitative research are interviews, observations and document analysis (Creswell, 1994; Yin, 1994), and all were utilised in this study. Secondary methods used included the researcher’s reflexive journals and out-of-class fieldnotes. The qualitative case study method lends itself well to the use
of a variety of data collection methods to capture the multiple realities of the participants. This also helps to capitalise on the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of each (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Characteristic of qualitative research, the researcher was the human instrument through which data was collected and interpreted. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 193) identified the advantages that make humans the “instrument of choice” for naturalistic inquiry. Humans are responsive to environmental cues, they are able to: interact with the situation, collect information at multiple levels simultaneously, perceive situations holistically, process data as soon as they become available, provide immediate feedback and request verification of data; explore atypical or unexpected responses. In this way, the human instrument is able to get as close to the personal world of meaning as possible (Bromley, 1986).

Data were collected from January through December 2004 for the eight cases. There were times when a school and a few teachers were more intensively observed than others, in particular where social studies was implemented on a modular system. Interviews were more evenly spaced throughout the data collection period. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described three phases of data collection that a qualitative study goes through: orientation and overview that included gaining access into the schools, focused exploration, and member check.

3.6.1 First Phase: Orientation and Overview

This phase lasted from January to February 2004. The objective was to “obtain sufficient information to get some handle on what is important to follow up in detail” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 235). Prior to entering the school, the researcher had learnt a good deal about the schools from their internet websites.

Stake (1995, p. 49) advised that “qualitative study capitalises on ordinary ways of getting acquainted with things.” When the new academic year began in January 2004, the first three weeks were spent gaining entry, and familiarising with the procedures of the schools. The researcher spent at least two full days in each school in these weeks to observe the routines of the school’s days as well as building rapport and trust with the teachers. The guiding idea in data collection was to minimise interruptions to teaching. In the first classroom observations, the teachers introduced the study and the researcher to the students. It was a time of familiarising with the
classroom setting and with how teachers interacted with their students. Overall, the initial entry into the four schools was smooth. The teachers were welcoming and not hesitant in inviting the researcher to their classes.

Stake (1995, p. 49) explained that “there is no particular moment when data collection begins”, hence it begins as early as there is an interest to do the study. Even as the researcher was acclimatising herself to the school environment, data collection was on-going. Data collection in the first three weeks was less formal and routinised, where more out-of-class fieldnotes were written. Data gathered were more impressionistic as the researcher familiarised herself with the cases. Stake wrote that even though these early impressions would later be refined or replaced, they are nevertheless included in the pool of data for the case study. However, it was after the first three weeks at the beginning of the year, where teachers’ timetables and schedules were confirmed, and the observation and interview schedules worked out that data collection became more intensive and routinised.

One classroom observation each was conducted for each teacher in this phase, with two lessons observed for each of the teachers from Wharton Secondary School where social studies operated on a modular system. The first interview on the teacher’s background was conducted with all eight teachers around this time, and there were also many casual conversations with teachers in between classes. The researcher’s journal entries revealed that the first phase of data collection was for the researcher, a period of anxiety and learning to cope with multi-tasking. It was “a period of trying out, reflecting on the data collected for that observation, and then refining the focus of data collection for the next observation” (J/12/2/04). The concern for the appropriateness and adequacy of the data never went away entirely, but the researcher “grew more confident with data collection in the subsequent months” (J/15/8/04).

3.6.2 Second Phase: Focused Exploration

The bulk of the data were collected in this intensive phase lasting from February to October 2004. The purpose of focused exploration was to obtain in-depth information about teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education by attending to those elements deemed to be most salient. This involved sustained data collection and on-going data analysis, which had progressively fallen into regularity. Observations and interviews followed the schedule. Each teacher was visited at least
once every two weeks. The research questions closely guided the data collection and on-going analysis. The journal entry noted that “I had gained more confidence in the course of data collection. My on-going analysis shows that the data answer the questions. The hard work pays off, juggling on-going data analysis is tedious, but it is a reality check” (J/15/8/04). The journal had also become an indispensable platform to refine ideas and re-work the research questions guiding the study.

3.6.3 Third Phase: Member Check

The final phase was to check the trustworthiness of the data which began around October through May 2005. This was done by providing interview transcripts and relevant parts of the draft report to the teachers for their scrutiny. In 2005, this was done face-to-face, through emails and short text messages on mobile phones, where the researcher would send a question to be clarified, or short paragraphs of her interpretations to the teachers to confirm that it had captured the data as accurately as possible. Modifications were made to reflect their inputs.

3.7 Sources of Data

Yin (1994) stated that the strength of the case study method is the reliance on many sources of evidence. Using multiple sources of data allow for “converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation” (p. 92). Data for the study were collected primarily from interviews, classroom observation and documents. Secondary sources came from journals and out-of-class fieldnotes. These data were the empirical materials through which the object of the study was understood. The following sub-sections discuss the major categories of data.

3.7.1 Interviews

The interview is one of the most important sources of data for a case study (Yin, 1994). It is a purposeful conversation, usually between two people, that is directed by one in order to get information from the other (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In qualitative research, the purpose of the interview “is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale, 1996, p. 6). This means that interviewing provides a necessary road to the meanings participants make of their experience as it gives “access to the context of
people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior" (Seidman, 1991, p. 4).

A mix of semi-structured and in-depth interviews were used in this study. The semi-structured format was chosen given the limited timeframe binding the research, and where interviews served as the primary source of data. The interview schedule comprised a mix of more and less structured questions used to facilitate and not to direct or dominate the interview. The researcher brought into the interview a set of predetermined core questions relevant to the research questions which sought specific information from all participants. This allowed a potentially comparable data set to emerge among the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Another part of the interview was guided by a list of pointers on particular topics where neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions was determined ahead of time. This format gave the scope for teachers to talk in-depth on particular topics, and allowed the researcher “to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging world view of the respondents, and to new ideas on the topic” (Merriam, 1998, p. 74).

A total of 43 interviews were conducted with eight teachers over the period January through December 2004. Five teachers were interviewed five times, and the other three six times. The extra interviews with the three teachers were for the purpose of clarifying and following up on issues that emerged from the interviews and/or observations. Each of the interviews had a focal area related to the research questions as shown in Table 3.3. See Appendix 2 for interview guides.

**Table 3.3: Interview Focus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teacher Background and Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teacher's Understanding of Social Studies, Citizenship and Citizenship Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>School Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Follow-up and Clarifying Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Singapore Context: National Day Rally, Change of Prime Minister and so forth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Concluding Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviews were staggered over the year in consideration of teachers’ teaching schedule, and to allow sufficient time for transcription and analysis. In between the interviews, frequent informal discussions and conversations with teachers also provided another crucial data for the study and written as out-of-class fieldnotes.

On average, each of the interview lasted for 90 minutes. With participants’ consent, all interviews were audio recorded and stored securely. Anonymity and
confidentiality were guaranteed. All interviews were transcribed verbatim to reflect the interview as fully as possible with schools and teachers given pseudonyms. Transcribing interviews was demanding and time-consuming; it took about five hours to transcribe a 90-minute tape. While it was possible to listen to sections that seemed important to the research questions and then transcribe only those, the researcher chose not to do so. Winnowing too early may lead to premature judgments about what is or is not important (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Further, it enabled the researcher to know the interview data well which would facilitate analysis (Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Seidman, 1991). This generated a thousand pages of data for eight cases. Transcripts were then given to teachers to read for accuracy and confirmation.

3.7.2 Classroom Observations

Observations work towards greater understanding of the case as they necessitate physical presence in the natural field setting (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). Non-participant classroom observations of social studies were carried out as the social studies classrooms provided the practical, real life contexts to observe how teachers put their often abstract understandings into practice. Non-participant observation was used as schools were reluctant to allow for researcher participation in teaching upper secondary level due to the national examination, and because the researcher had more effective observational opportunities. Observational data complemented that of the interview as they represented the direct firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest. In this way, the observations served to triangulate data obtained from teachers’ interviews and other sources.

During observations, no taxonomy was developed as this presumed a priori knowledge of salient foci. Instead, observational notes were recorded in an attempt to build categories and themes. The focus of the observation was the teacher: what the teacher said, did and emphasised; how he/she interacted with and responded to students; the teacher’s choice of teaching strategies, types of learning activities, how they were organised, presented; purposes and objectives. The researcher tried to record the details of what occurred in the classroom objectively to provide a relatively incontestable description for further analysis and ultimate reporting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Stake, 1995). With the teachers’ consent, the lessons were audio recorded, which afforded the researcher greater opportunity to watch and listen, alleviating the compulsion to write every detail of what the teacher said. More reflective observation
notes, usually in short sentences or phrases, were included. These notes were given
the notation ‘O.C.’, which stood for observer’s comment, and emphasised “on
speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions, and prejudices” (Bogdan

A total of 84 lessons were observed for the eight teachers as seen in Table 3.4. In all
the schools except for Wharton, social studies classes were double periods of 35
minutes per period, conducted once per week. At Wharton, each social studies class
was a single period of 45 minutes and conducted twice a week. Some teachers were
observed more because of the varying duration across schools of lesson times, ranging
from 35 to 45 minutes per period. As a non-participant observer, the researcher kept a
low profile during lessons so as not to affect the teachers’ practice. The teachers
quickly became comfortable with the researcher’s presence, noting that the
researcher’s presence had little effect on their teaching.

Table 3.4: Breakdown of Lessons Observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>No. of Periods Observed</th>
<th>Duration per Period</th>
<th>Single or Double Period per Lesson</th>
<th>Total Hours Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vind</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>11 hrs 40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>11 hrs 40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn</td>
<td>Wharton</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>9 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leong</td>
<td>Wharton</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>9 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frida</td>
<td>Bayshore</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>11 hrs 40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Bayshore</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>11 hrs 40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ying</td>
<td>Kovan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>11 hrs 40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcus</td>
<td>Kovan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>11 hrs 40 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fetterman (1989) recommended the daily typing of observation notes to ensure that as
much of what was observed could be recalled and expanded during transcription.
Observation notes were written up on the day itself or not later than the day after an
observation. Additional researcher comments were added in writing up the notes.

3.7.3 Documents

Various types of documents were collected and reviewed, broadly categorised into
official school and teaching documents. Official school documents included policy
memoranda, principal’s messages, organisational goals and plans, student’s handbook,
school magazines, newsletters and so forth. Teaching documents were those specific
to teaching social studies or NE. These were further sub-categorised into documents
from the MOE including syllabi, textbooks, workbooks, teaching guides;
departmental documents such as scheme of work, subject evaluation reports, examination papers; and personal teaching documents such as lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, tests, powerpoint slides. Not all the teachers were forthcoming in sharing their lesson plans because they did not always plan their lessons on paper.

Unlike interviews and observations which specifically addressed the research questions, documents were produced for reasons other than the research (Merriam, 1998). Data collected from available documents were uneven across the eight teachers. They did not form the primary source of data for the case study but were used mainly to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources (Yin, 1994).

3.8 Data Management

Large amounts of data were collected from the eight cases. To keep track of the data and facilitate “easy, flexible and reliable use of the data” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 44), Yin (1994) suggested creating a case study database to organise and document the data collected. Documents were stored in the computer in Microsoft Word format, as running texts and tables. Hard copies of documents were filed and indexed to match the files in the computer.

Developing a formal database is critical in increasing the reliability of the study. Within the database, a folder was created for each case, consisting of two collections - the data and the researcher’s reports as suggested (Yin, 1994). The former comprised the raw data, analyses-in-progress such as codes, coded data, memos, while the latter were interim reports and articles. Within each collection, sub-folders were created to organise the data to match the design of the collection methods and research questions. This format of data management worked well in managing the burgeoning volume of data collected in the 12 months of fieldwork.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of “bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data” (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 112). This involves “working with the data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesising them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 157). The general analytic strategy for this study grew out of the research aims which were reflected in
the research questions and literature review. Analysis was data-driven and inductive. An inductive or bottom-up approach examines the data first and then chooses concepts to help explain why they fall that way, an approach commonly found with qualitative research (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Content analysis was used where the content of interviews, classroom observation and documents were analysed (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). Analysis was inductive, as the researcher did not search out data to prove or disprove hypotheses held before entering the study, but allowed categories, themes and patterns to emerge from the data. It is "not putting together a puzzle whose picture (she) already knows", but "constructing a picture that takes shape as (she) collects and examines the parts, which emerges from bottom up from many disparate pieces of collected evidence that are interconnected" (Bogdan & Biklen, p. 6). Nonetheless, Miles and Huberman (1994) noted that even with an inductive approach, the researcher would be sensitised to the concepts through the literature reviewed and research questions. Noteworthy that the sensitivity only provided a useful heuristic lens for initial analysis, through a start list of codes. Beyond that, analysis was largely shaped by the notion of 'grounded theory' emerging from the data (Glaser & Straus, 1967). New concepts and categories emerged, changed and were refined as the data were scrutinised many times over. The initial start list was combined and merged with the grounded categories that were emerging from the data. As a result, the analytic scheme evolved throughout the study.

The researcher went into the study knowing that qualitative data analysis was an on-going, integrated part of the research process, and not something to be done only at the end (Fetterman, 1989). As such, analysis is not a linear process but iterative and cyclical with no single stage or unitary form (Miriam, 1998). The simultaneity and on-going nature were critical in focusing the data, ensuring possibilities of collecting new data to plug gaps, and to test new ideas that emerge (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

This study adopted Miles and Huberman's (1994, p. 10) view of data analysis, consisting of "three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification." The first is data reduction that "sharpens, sorts focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that 'final' conclusions can be drawn and verified" (p. 11). Data reduction began early and continued throughout the
research, requiring the research questions to be constantly reviewed with the purpose of focusing and refining subsequent collection and analysis. The data were summarised, coded and compared across data sets to find larger patterns and then subsumed under broader categories. Data display is the second, in which the information was organised into a form accessible and compact to facilitate development of hypotheses and drawing of conclusions. Data were displayed using different matrices for within-case and between-case analysis. Drawing conclusion and verification were third with the focus on "noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions" (p. 11) as the data were further distilled, compared and displayed. The following section describes the data analysis in two stages, the on-going and intensive stages.

3.9.1 On-going Analysis during Data Collection

Data analysis began early during the data collection phase. After each interview or classroom observation, debriefing notes were written that included a general description of the interview or observation, immediate reactions and inferences regarding the session. Following that, interviews or classroom observations were promptly transcribed, documents scanned for usefulness and classified. Interviews and classroom observations were transcribed into tables with several columns using Microsoft Word. The tables preserved the running texts of the interviews and observation notes, with columns for further remarks, cross-referencing and codes.

Marshall and Rossman's (1989, p. 113) advice to "read, read, read" the interview transcripts, observational data and documents was taken seriously. In reading and re-reading, reflections were jotted, including comments, new hypotheses, cross-referencing to another part of the data set, recurring ideas and emerging categories and patterns. The data were coded with a "start list" of coding categories gleaned from the conceptual framework, research questions and literature, with new ones added in the analysis. An example of a segment of an interview coded and analysed is given in Table 3.5 on page 80 where the teacher, Frida, was asked how she understood social studies.
Table 3.5: A Segment of Interview Coded and Analysed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Transcript page 3</th>
<th>Coding</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ok, actually, I see it as ur....in a way, it is a social form of....control, probably, or [influence over the minds of the young].</td>
<td>SS-Conc-purp-social control [Elab-define]</td>
<td>2 ideas of SS Social control Propaganda Gives context why Similar ideas? Xref CE-Conc-NE-p4 Propaganda element Is conc related to her minority status? Check her thinking of ethnicity p45-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yah, in a way it is propaganda....umm....but [I don’t think it is anything negative, associated to propaganda. We always have this negative connotation that we associate with, but this is just a matter of....with regards to making the students understand Singapore’s past, and also the constraints we are faced with].</td>
<td>SS-Conc-purp-propaganda [Elab-context-Sp]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first readings of this segment, two ideas emerged. They were social studies as social control and social studies as propaganda. These ideas were elaborated, the type of elaboration specified, one was a definition, the other gave the context. A suggestion was also made if the idea of control and indoctrination were related to a minority perspective. Cross references were made to similar statements, and to further sharing about her ethnicity somewhere else in the data set. At this early stage of analysis, the focus was to capture the ideas that were emerging, and not concerned with aggregating them yet. A note was also made if the two ideas were actually similar.

Summary sheets adapted from Miles and Huberman’s (1994) contact summary forms were devised. After reading and re-reading each interview transcript or classroom observation notes, a summary sheet was completed where salient points were noted, with tentative ideas and categories stated or raised as issues. Things to ask or observe in the next data collection were noted. The summary enabled the researcher to remain task oriented amidst the welter of details. It also facilitated the initial comparisons between data sets, and were useful in informing the next data collected. This was similarly done for every document reviewed to identify the relevance and usefulness to the research questions.

The processes of prompt transcription, reading, coding, commenting and summarising the data were built into the on-going data analysis cycle. The constant review of the data helped ascertain the categories that were emerging, identify the developing patterns, raised additional questions, and note if the multiple sources of data supported or contradicted one another. It enabled the researcher to continually refer back to the research questions and generate assertions while data collection was on-going.
As the study progressed, further analytical processes were built into the cycle. A key analytic strategy used at this stage was memoing by the researcher. Memos were written in three week intervals. They were critical pieces in the on-going data analysis, as they captured the researcher's thoughts at the time, and facilitated the formalisation and systematisation of the researcher's thinking into a coherent set of explanations. They were 'think pieces' that were conceptual in intent, as the researcher tried to make sense of the data by tying together the different pieces into recognisable clusters, and to show how the clusters related to the larger substantive issues (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The memos were critical as they catalysed the process of drawing conclusions and writing up of the findings.

Parallel to on-going data analysis was the researcher's daily reflexive journaling, recording the day's work, thoughts about emerging ideas, meanings and themes. In hindsight, the journal entries were useful as contextual information for the primary data. On-going data analysis was tedious, it took a lot of hardwork and discipline to complete. Two motivating factors were noted, the fear of being overwhelmed by the data, and the excitement and satisfaction of seeing emerging ideas, themes and patterns to the research questions (J/15/8/04).

3.9.2 Intensive Analysis after Completion of Data Collection

The intensive analysis is discussed in two sub-sections, within-case analysis and between-case analysis.

3.9.2.1 Within-Case Analysis

The intensive period of data analysis began with the completion of data collection. This phase built on the on-going data analysis, and there was little difference in how data were analysed except that now data analysis assumed the main focus and thus intensifying the process. The constant comparative method was used in this study by unitising and categorising the data already began earlier, but in this phase the bulk of the work was done (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The constant comparative method is premised on grounded theory where the basic strategy was to constantly compare (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Three steps were involved in this method: unitising, categorising and re-categorising. In each case,
transcripts, observation notes and documents were combed through to identify units or incidents. A unit or incident is the smallest bit of information that can stand alone, the purpose is to provide some understanding of the questions being researched (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Identification of the units was shaped by the research questions and drawing on the tacit knowledge in making these judgments. Using the same example of Frida’s understanding of social studies, three units were identified. Note that in the example in Table 3.6, the unit 2.2.1 could stand on its own but also related to unit 2.2:

Table 3.6: An Example of Unitising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Units Identified in Interview Transcript page 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Ok, actually, I see it as ur....in a way, it is a social form of....control, probably, or influence over the minds of the young.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Yah, in a way it is propaganda....umm....but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>I don’t think it is anything negative, associated to propaganda. We always have this negative connotation that we associate with, but this is just a matter of....with regards to making the students understand Singapore’s past, and also the constraints we are faced with.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once unitising was completed, categorising occurred for each case. Categorising is concerned with the emergence of meaning that occurs through repetition of incident, or through discovery of corroborating or disconfirming events throughout the case (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Categorising began with coding, where the focus was to sort the units, examine, compare, conceptualise and then assign a code. A code is a means to represent the underlying meaning, significance, or relevance of a particular unit, in light of the research questions and as insight to the concept and individual being investigated. The units were initially coded using a start list. For example, the start list included categories pertaining to conceptualisation of social studies and citizenship education. This was given a code SS-conc and CE-conc. Properties of the conceptualisation such as the purpose would be denoted with SS-conc-pur, or if skills, then CE-conc-sk. The dimension of the properties would be given SS-conc-pur-tf or CE-conc-sk-max, describing the purpose as transforming or the citizenship skills as maximal in interpretation. The codes in the start list were refined as the data was further scrutinised.

After an initial round of coding, the codes were examined for patterns, where units were compared for similarity or repetition to determine categories to explain the data. Each unit was compared to another to see if they belonged to the same category, and if so, they were categorised together. If not, another category was started. This allowed categories to emerge (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Categories that emerged were
not the only categories that could emerge, but were also those that were reasonably constructed by the researcher. In addition, theoretical notions found in the literature were also compared to those emerging from the data.

After establishing the initial categories, they were re-examined and re-categorised to better represent the data and generate themes. Attempts were made to reduce the categories where codes were collapsed into broader categories to identify themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). An example is taken from Leong’s classroom observation data. In the initial readings of the data, the researcher was struck by how much of his lessons were on raising issues. A tentative category ‘raising issue’ emerged. Combing through the data again, units or incidents of the category were identified and then compared to one another in the same data set, and then across other sets, with an eye to the attributes and diversity of the dimensions. Yet another tentative category, ‘challenging’, emerged. These categories were then compared for similarity, and if they could be aggregated to a more general category. It was found that ‘raising issues’ could subsume ‘challenging’. A list of recurring themes pertaining to the research questions was then developed.

The categories were also prioritised according to the following characteristics: relates to the research questions, frequently mentioned by teachers, accorded more credibility by teachers, uniqueness, and opened inquiry into areas not otherwise accessible (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). After re-categorisation, the categories for each case were then organised and placed under the appropriate research questions and displayed in a matrix. Matrix clusters several research questions so that meanings can be generated.

Through the recursive process of constant comparison, the analysis became crystallised for each case. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 62) noted four ending points to analysis: “When all of the incidents can be readily classified, categories are saturated, and sufficient numbers of regularities emerge and overextension”. Each is an indication to stop processing the data for the case.

3.9.2.2 Between-Case Analysis

The categories and patterns that emerged from the data were first compared within each case and then across the cases. Once within-case analysis was completed, between-case analysis began by putting the data from all eight teachers together for comparison. Between-case analysis “is to deepen understanding and explanation” of
the experiences of the eight teachers (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173). The categories from the different teachers related to the common questions were grouped together. Codes were consistently applied and data displayed using similar matrices across the cases. This facilitated the researcher’s ability to “collapse the cross-case data into partitions and clusters” (p. 178).

For between-case analysis, a table was established. One side of the matrix displayed the research questions, and the other side, the teachers. Each cell elaborated on the category that emerged for each teacher in relation to the research questions, and this was done across the eight teachers. The focus of analysis was to tease out the themes, and identify the similarities and differences across the eight teachers. The categories were reviewed and re-examined several times for themes and commonalities. See Appendix 3 for the overview of the cross-cases.

Three distinct groups of teachers emerged. The largest group of four teachers was characterised by a dominantly nationalistic stance. Another two groups of two teachers each, were characterised by a dominantly socially concerned stance and a dominantly person oriented stance respectively. The characterisations are discussed and analysed in detail in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

3.10 Steps to Ensure Rigour of Study

Qualitative researchers must build system and rigour into their studies (Preissle-Goetz & LeCompte, 1991). Research must reflect an accurate representation of the phenomenon under investigation with trustworthiness of the data and interpretation as accurately representing the perspectives of the teachers involved. Authority is derived from the truthfulness of the interpretation. With truth comes trust in the text’s claim, and this gives rise to legitimation and power (Denzin, 1997). In this study, steps were taken to establish the trustworthiness by addressing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994). The techniques used to ensure credible findings and interpretations were triangulation, prolonged engagement, persistent observation and member checking.

Credibility is a major trustworthiness criterion (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It refers to the “compatibility of the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the inquiry’s respondents with those that are attributed to them” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 30). A
key technique used in this study to ensure credibility was triangulation of data sources, meaning "cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means within qualitative methods" (Patton, 1990, p. 467). Multiple sources of data including interview transcripts, observational notes, audio recordings of interviews and observations, document analysis, out-of-class fieldnotes and reflexive journals were used, enabling the researcher to verify and cross-check findings. For this study in particular, interview data were compared to observational data. In addition, consistency of teaching materials such as lesson plans, powerpoint slides and so forth were compared and contrasted. Each type and source of data has its strengths and weaknesses. Using a combination, as in the present study, increases the credibility of the study and its findings as the strengths of one approach compensates for the weaknesses of another.

Prolonged engagement in the field also ensured credibility. This gave the researcher ample time to collect a variety and large quantity of data to verify the accuracy of the data, to observe a range of events and behaviours at different times. It enabled trust to be built between the participants and the researcher, and this translated to more open sharing by the teachers. Further, the researcher was able to identify and take account of distortions that appeared in the data, including those of the researcher herself. This study was conducted over three years and during this time, the researcher was invited to attend many school functions. Consequently, she knew school contexts very well.

Another technique was persistent observation where teachers were persistently observed in their classrooms for 10 to 12 times. Persistent observation prevented early closure of data collection that may obscure particular actions or behaviours. Interviews were similarly spaced out over the year. The use of a reflexive journal by the researcher also upheld credibility and dependability. This displayed the researcher's "mind processes, philosophical position, and bases of decisions about the inquiry" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.109). In this study, the researcher used her journal to record impressions, reactions, insights, and possible explanations. This was maintained as a diary on a daily basis throughout the study.

Member checking was another technique used where data, interpretations and conclusions were tested with the teachers from whom the data were obtained. To Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 314), this was "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility." In this study, member checks occurred formally and informally.
Interview transcripts were given to the teachers, where they checked for accuracy, amended or added anything to reflect their views. Sections of the final report were forwarded to them, where they could provide their interpretation if it differed from the researcher. Informal checks occurred frequently throughout the study, such as through conversations before and after observations, emails and mobile phone text messages.

Transferability refers to the "extent to which the findings of a particular inquiry have applicability in other context or with other subjects" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). In qualitative research, the task of establishing transferability is very different from that of external validity in a positivist research. The task of the qualitative researcher is to provide thick description of the phenomena. Such description is essential for facilitating transferability, as it enables others to make comparisons about the characteristics of the cases and their situations. Consequently, readers can determine and match similarities and differences, thereafter apply or transfer the findings and meanings to other familiar contexts. This study provided a rich description of teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education. It provided a detailed profile of each teacher. These had been done in a form that is familiar to readers so that they can derive meaningful naturalistic generalisations from it and transfer the findings to familiar situations. Lincoln and Guba’s guiding conventions were followed, where the writing was sufficiently detailed and readily accessible to the readers so it is effortlessly transferable. The writing was not evaluative except in those sections explicitly intended for such purposes. The teachers’ interpretations and the researcher’s own re-interpretations were distinguished. The writing also erred on the side of over inclusion in the first draft of the report. The researcher also scrupulously honoured promises of confidentiality and anonymity. Finally, an audit trail was maintained.

Dependability relates to the concept of consistency, in which the researcher attempts to “determine whether the findings of an inquiry would be repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same (or similar) subjects (respondents) in the same (or similar) context” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Reflexive journaling and a trail were maintained so that an audit could be performed to ensure dependability.

Confirmability refers to the “degree to which the findings of the study are a product of the focus of the inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 34). Reflexive journaling was key in ensuring this. Further, the researcher also
shared upfront her perspective and possible biases, so that readers would have an informed view of her positioning in the study.

3.11 Researcher Perspective

All research is informed by who the researchers themselves are, particularly in qualitative interpretivist research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). There are a set of assumptions and biases that I as the researcher brought to this study. I recognised the issue of "problematisation of meaning" (Jaffe & Miller, 1994). Who, what and where I am, are important to understanding my interpretations, as they can shape the creation of meanings. I am of the view that the world is not something out there to be discovered, but emergent. Reality is created and re-created by people. Just as my teachers created their own meanings of social studies and citizenship education, I created meanings of their meanings. I take it as a given, as do other many qualitative researchers, that in the end, my interpretive study of teacher knowledge and practice is a biased construction. In this section, I make my interpretive position transparent so that the reader will have an informed view of my positioning with regard to the research subject. In addition, I explain my perspective to enhance the reliability and validity of the study.

I did my primary through pre-university education in Singapore. My undergraduate and postgraduate studies were done in New Zealand, the U.S. and Australia. In total, I lived in three different western democracies for more than eight years. The curricula I was exposed to emphasised among others, agency, choices, thinking, freedom and responsibility to influence decisions, respect for diversity, justice, equal opportunities and active participation. The overseas experience had broadened my perspective and influenced my worldview. I have learnt to be more questioning and open to differences. Consequently, I am more willing to share my views with less hesitation.

I started out as a history teacher and had a stint in the MOE holding different portfolios such as developing curriculum and working with principals. Following that, I moved on to be a social studies teacher educator at the teacher training institute. In the courses I teach, I emphasise active learning and participation. I believe in giving space for meaning-making.

I am familiar with the social studies curriculum and also how teaching is like. I do not feel, however, the need to reduce 'insider bias' because of the difference between a
teacher educator and social studies teacher in the school. The schools selected were
different from those I once taught, and the teachers were recommended by the schools
or volunteered themselves. I am at once familiar with the social studies curriculum,
yet also detached from the schools because I do not work directly with schools daily.
This enabled me to do more effective bracketing of my pre-judgements, biases,
experiences and relying on intuition or imagination to obtain an understanding of
teachers’ understanding and practice.

3.12 Organisation of Findings

The findings are presented according to the three distinct groups of teachers that
emerged from the data. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight presents and discusses the
findings and analyses for three groups of teachers - nationalistic, socially concerned
and person oriented. In each chapter, the findings are organised in two parts; the first
focuses on the characterisation as a whole; the second focuses on the three strands of
the study: teachers’ conceptualisations of social studies, teachers’ understandings of
citizenship and citizenship education, and teachers’ practice of social studies and
citizenship education. Within each strand, the findings were categorised and discussed
under the main themes that emerged from the data. The thematic presentation was
concerned with painting a thick description of the salient characteristics, distilling the
essence and sensitising one to the meanings constructed by the respective teachers.
The purpose was to illustrate and elucidate on the characterisation.

Although the characterisations emerged from the categories grounded in the data, it is
maintained that characterising teachers was still an artificial imposition. Teacher
characterisation was based on the categories and dimensions which were dominant in
their conceptualisations, though categories were not mutually exclusive, as no single
category or dimension could really be isolated. Influences and connections among
categories existed to varying extent. In reporting the conceptualisation and
understanding of each teacher, one must, of necessity, focus on the dominant aspect of
the teacher’s conceptualisation and understanding. Consequently, the characterisation
of the teacher may appear more rigid than what he or she actually was.

3.13 Summary

This chapter indicated that the study was designed as basic qualitative research using
the case study method, in seeking to understand eight teachers’ knowledge and
practice of social studies and citizenship education. The chapter explained how the cases were selected, clearly laid out how data were collected and highlighted the methods guiding data analysis. The following chapter presents the Singapore context framing the study. Subsequently, together with the research design and an awareness of the Singapore context, it is then appropriate to introduce the eight teachers and discuss the findings in Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight.
CHAPTER 4: THE SINGAPORE CONTEXT

This chapter presents the Singapore context framing the study. It covers three areas; first, the state and education; second, citizenship and the development of citizenship education, and finally the social studies curriculum.

4.1 The State, Education and Nation-Building in Singapore

Nation-building is an attempt by the state to create and construct a nation, defined as “a community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and that they have a common destiny for the future” (Emerson, 1960, p. 95). The aim of nation-building is to imbue in citizens patriotism, a sense of belonging, loyalty and knowledge of the country, through the development of national institutions, political socialisation and the creation of national loyalty (Birch, 1989; Then, 1965). To achieve this goal, countries invariably utilise their education system to serve the process of nation-building (Green, 1997).

In Singapore education is the primary instrument for nation-building. Education as an instrument is fundamental and powerful as it straddles both the cultural-symbolic and civic-instrumental dimensions of nation-building (Hill & Lian, 1995). It not only provides a high level of technical skills and knowledge for the purpose of economic development, but develops the attitudes and motivations in individuals to foster a common sense of identity, commitment to and active participation in the goals of national development (Green, 1997). In this regard, education has the potential to transform a generation into sharing a common destiny, by focusing efforts to build and mould a nation economically, culturally and psychologically (Chua & Kuo, 1991). Apart from the mass target audience it could capture, the high degree of methodical exposure to subjects and activities that could fuse with socialisation objectives makes education essential in the state’s nation-building efforts. It is from this perspective that the relationship among education, nation-building and citizenship should be understood.

Singapore is a developmental and strong state in which rapid educational advance has become an ‘inherent’ process, where the state leadership and bureaucracy play a dynamic and shaping role (Gopinathan & Sharpe, 2004; Green, 1997). Underpinning
the legitimation of state power is the ability to promote and sustain economic development, regarded not as a goal but a means. Economic development is also one of the few goals on which a multiracial society like Singapore can agree (Han, 1997). The goals of national development are sacrosanct and couched in survival terms, and hence nation-building is a protracted process that always remains unfinished (Hill & Lian, 1995).

Independent nationhood was thrust upon Singapore when it suddenly separated from Malaysia in August 1965. This left Singapore with grave challenges that threatened its existence - the vulnerability as a tiny island state with no natural resources, diverse ethnic and racial mix, tugged by chauvinistic and particularistic pulls. Geographically, it is flanked by two Muslim nations, was threatened by communists, had an undeveloped economy with high unemployment, and many social problems. The Japanese Occupation and the racial riots in the early years of independence drove home to its leaders that for Singapore to survive, the challenges of nation-building in developing a shared national identity, building an infrastructure and modernising the economy were urgent (Chua & Kuo, 1991).

The Peoples Action Party (PAP) government consolidated Singapore’s independence through the politics of survival, emphasising economic pragmatism and rationality, built on multiracialism, meritocracy and multilingualism. For the PAP government, which has been consistently returned to power since self-government in 1959, the overriding priority is economic growth, perceived to be inextricably linked to national survival. Security and survival became recurrent themes on the leaders’ exhortations and the goals of the exertions subsequently. These became the founding myths for nation-building, and subsequently underpinned the school curriculum (Chan, 1971; Chua, 1995; Hill & Lian, 1995; Selvaraj, 2003).

It has long been recognised that formal schooling is a central agent of political socialisation, readily controlled by the state (Tapper, 1976). The PAP very early turned to schools as allies in the nation-building cause. The education system was centralised and brought under government control, putting into government hands an important ideological apparatus (Gomez, 1991; Gopinathan, 1974; Kho, 2004; Sharpe & Gopinathan, 2002). Since then, the education system has been highly responsive to perceived national and social needs. Economic survival meant that education is “an investment in human capital” (Chua, 1995, p. 62).
Curriculum development is centralised under the MOE, and political leaders wield direct influence over citizenship education. All curricula related to citizenship education such as social studies, history and Civics and Moral Education (CME) are developed by the MOE. Within the educational system, coordinated and sustained effort is made to transmit relevant knowledge, desirable values as well as to shape attitudes and behaviours influenced by the PAP state ideology. This exemplifies the single-minded effort to mould a nation, and to ensure that the curricular objectives and content are congruent with national goals.

Recently, steps have been taken to decentralise the management of schools for experimentation with differentiated curricula particularly in the case of ‘elite’ schools, reflecting the Thinking Schools, Learning Nation (TSLN) vision launched in 1997. The national curriculum was revamped to infuse thinking skills and integrate information technology. National Education (NE) was also launched in 1997 in conjunction with TSLN to reinforce nation-building. These initiatives are linked to economic development and nation-building, and must be seen in light of an intensively global, competitive economy, underlined by a human capital ideology and a competitive nationalism that sees education as a social investment in preparing human resources. The purpose is to produce a thinking and creative workforce able to problem solve and design niche products to sustain the competitive edge of the economy (Goh, 1997; Koh, 2002; Tan & Gopinathan, 2000).

TSLN marks a transition from the efficiency-driven (1980-1997) to the ability-driven (ADE) phase of education in Singapore. With ADE, greater flexibility is injected into the system to facilitate a responsive education structure, learner-centred environment, and a quality teaching service. Schools are encouraged to customise their educational programmes to maximise the talents and abilities of every student and teacher. ADE empowers schools and teachers within the broad framework, with no one right way of doing things (MOE, 2006).

4.2 Citizenship in Singapore

4.2.1 A Conception of Singapore Citizenship

Citizenship in Singapore is modeled on the civic-republican tradition (Hill & Lian, 1995; Oldfield, 1998), where citizens are required to fulfill their duties and obligations to the community. In civic republican thought, it is the duty of citizens to
participate in the government of the political community. The kind of public service that an individual should offer includes "anything to do with defining, establishing and sustaining a political community" (Oldfield, 1998, p. 77). In the early years of independence, the government appealed to the individual's sense of civic duty by referring to the 'crisis' in which Singapore found itself, reminding Singaporeans of the role they should play in ensuring the country's survival (Hill & Lian, 1995). For the PAP government, the ideal citizen is seen in terms of service to others, where civic virtue is mainly defined as grassroots volunteerism in which people organise to help each other (Goh, 1979). It is evident that the political aspect of citizenship at the national level, received less emphasis (Han, 1997, 2000). This continues to be the essence of official discourse on citizenship today.

Participation and national identity are two main and inextricably linked themes of citizenship in Singapore (Han, 1997, 2000). National identity rests on the basis of a common culture, where engaging the community of people in exploring issues concerning their society is a means to develop it (Han & Pring, 1998). In this light, the freedom of association allowing groups to organise and participate through public deliberation, is a feasible means of developing a genuine sense of caring for the community, a society over self principle, and the basis for patriotism and a sense of ownership (Bell, 1997). Thus, participation is basic to developing a national identity and consciousness and on this count, it is critical that citizenship education prepares students to engage in public deliberation by developing:

Procedural values such as fairness, a respect for others; a willingness to understand views different from one's own, a respect for truth and for reasoning, etc....to acquire the ability to accept that there can be views that are legitimately different from their own, and to become accustomed to the idea of engaging in debate, not to win the argument, but to arrive at greater understanding of oneself and others (Han & Pring, 1998, p. 970).

However, the absence of the skills of critical thought and procedural values crucial to citizenship education in a democracy is noted in Singapore (Han, 1997).

In Singapore, citizenship is rather passive where the citizen's main role is to elect a party into power, and to cooperate with it to govern in the interests of the country as a whole. There have been attempts to encourage the involvement of citizens on local and national issues, through feedback via the para-political institutions such as Community Centres and Citizens' Consultative Committees. But the form of participation made possible by these organisations is of a distinctly limited kind. It is
evident that active participation in the political process at a national level is not encouraged (Han, 1997, 2000).

Although formal features of democratic electoral politics are in place, the PAP government is skeptical of the rationality of ordinary citizens and is equally unapologetically anti-liberal, paternalistic and authoritarian (Chua, 1995). Since 1959, the PAP has remained the dominant political party with no credible opposition ‘allowed’ to exist. As Prime Minister Lee said, “It’s a system where the PAP is the dominant party. We represent all of you, the mainstream of Singapore, and we occupy a broad middle ground” (Chua, 2006, p. 1). He reiterated that without opposition distractions, the government can focus on long-term issues and act in time to tackle challenges ahead. Civic groups too, have been forced to submit to the authority of the state, “marginalising to near extinction the cooperative instincts that had served Singapore since colonial days” (Cherian, 2000, p. 128).

4.2.2 **Pragmatism and its Effects on Citizens**

The concept of ‘Asian democracy’ is championed in Singapore. Based on the belief in a set of differentiated Asian values which enabled Asian countries to become economically powerful, the central tenet is that development must come ahead of personal freedoms and liberties for the masses. This justifies the restriction of human rights and freedoms in return for strong economic development (Print et al., in press). Consequently, Asian democracy is characterised by strong leaders, governments vested with upholding collective needs, and an absence of many liberal democratic practices, such as restricted freedom of speech, separation of powers, civil and political rights as conceived in Western political thought and constraints on opposition parties. In light of this, the Singapore government adopts an economic instrumental rationality, encapsulated ideologically in the PAP’s concept of pragmatism in all its policies, where the government sees its role as paternalistic and a deliverer of goods. Consequently, this pragmatic approach provided a range of plausible rationalisations and justifications for state interventions in the name of economic growth and improving the welfare of society (Chua, 1995).

While these policies have helped provide a stable environment for economic growth, the consequence is political ennui. Singaporeans are seen as passive, materialistic and politically apathetic (Neo, 2003; Tan, 2001). There is a general mindset to defer to the
government, where many are contented to let the government take the lead in civic affairs. Scholars have debated on this, and two explanations have prevailed. Firstly, a result of deliberate de-politicising education since Singapore gained its independence (Bedlington, 1978; Chan, 1975); secondly, an ideological consensus between the leaders and the led (Chua, 1995).

4.2.3 Re-addressing Citizenship in Singapore

The rise of a global economy demands a creative and adaptive workforce, and this meant that Singapore needs citizens who are more active, informed, engaged in problem solving than passively deferring to the government. The local landscape is also changing with greater social class differences and the emergence of new lifestyles, reflecting greater affluence and individualising tendencies. Demographically, the post-65ers Singaporeans, aged 40 years and below, born after Singapore achieved its independence make up more than a third of the population. Post-65ers grew up amidst relative affluence in the period when Singapore advanced from a fledging nation to a cosmopolitan and international business city. Well-educated, widely traveled, technologically savvy, and growing up in a transformed environment, the younger generation has diverse needs and aspirations. Many desire more control in personal spheres and more say in the decision-making processes in the collective arena (Chua, 1995; Lee, 2004). It is urgent that the PAP government re-addresses citizenship for self-preservation, but political leaders also recognised the detrimental effects of excessive paternalism on the survival and future of the nation.

Recently, the government has been more open to engaging and consulting citizens in issues at national level. Efforts were made to engage a wide cross section of Singaporeans to discuss issues in the Singapore 21 and Remaking Singapore initiatives in 1997 and 2002 respectively. Nonetheless, the government defined what constituted active citizenship:

Active citizens form a people sector that can cooperate with and complement the public and private sectors. Effective consultation, mutual respect and trust, and a common understanding of our national interests form the basis of this partnership, along with the values and principles that underpin Singapore (Singapore 21, 2003, p. 52).

There is an underlying ambiguity in what was implied by national interest, for this is often subjected to the regime that rules a country. There is also no basis to assume that national interests are reflective of the interests of the citizenry. If it was still up to
the government to be the final arbitrator of national interests, can there still be a place for active citizen involvement?

Nevertheless, these initiatives are signs towards a qualitatively different state-society relationship, albeit gradually and sometimes hesitantly. The *Singapore 21* and *Remaking Singapore* are instances of educating Singaporeans in the intricacies of policy-making and political life, and in bringing the political maturity of the Singaporean on par with its economic attainments (Chua, 2003). Since taking over the government in August 2004, Prime Minister Lee has painted a vision of an inclusive Singapore, a key focus of which is to engage youth in playing a more active role in building Singapore. He has called for empowering youth, “to give them a say in their lives, and to make them feel they can make a difference” (Lee, 2004, para. 96). There appears to be a gradual step towards greater openness in the political process. A model of the informed and more active citizenship is emerging. This holds implications for citizenship education, and it is in this frame that the development of social studies at the upper secondary level is understood and explored.

4.3 **Historical Background of Citizenship Education in Singapore**

Educational development in Singapore is seen in three phases, namely survival, efficiency and ability driven (Gopinathan, 1999). In the survival-driven phase (1959-1979), the emphases were to produce trained workers for industrialisation, and develop national cohesion through a nationalised school system. The efficiency-driven phase (1980-1996) provided effective education at a reasonable cost. A key policy, streaming, was introduced to reduce educational wastage (Goh, 1979), and moral education was also reinforced in Singapore schools (Ong, 1979). The ability-driven phase began in 1997 with TSLN, and attempts to move away from outcomes to a more process oriented system to cater to diversity in pupil ability and aptitude, emphasising character and motivation than just academic achievement.

Since Singapore attained self-government in 1959, there has been a single-minded pursuit of citizenship education, and it has taken many forms over the years to meet perceived social and national needs. Between 1959 and 1966, Ethics was taught to "lay the foundation for character development in young children so that they would develop into self-respecting individuals and good citizens" (Ong, 1979, p. 2). With Singapore’s separation from Malaysia, Civics replaced Ethics in 1967 in lower
secondary school. Civics dealt with the constitution, legislation and international relations, including values such as patriotism, loyalty and civic consciousness. In 1973, Education for Living (EFL), a short-lived interdisciplinary programme integrating civics, history and geography was adopted at primary school. The purpose was social and moral education. Civics and EFL reflected the concern to develop in children a sense of national identity in the initial years of Singapore’s independence.

In the context of rapid industrialisation in the 1970s and 1980s, there was concern among the political leaders that with the adoption of science and technology, the increasing use of English, and an English-stream education, younger Singaporeans were becoming too westernised. Western values which emphasised the individual over the community was perceived to deculturise Singapore and individualise the society (Hill & Lian, 1995). Citizenship education in this period was viewed in dichotomous terms - Asian versus Western values, and consisted primarily of moral elements, with the aim to inculcate Asian moral concepts and values. Noteworthy that there was an absence of the skills of critical thought and of procedural values considered crucial to citizenship education in a democracy.

There were attempts to use the mother tongue in citizenship education. Though highly contestable, the belief was that language was salient in teaching moral and civic values. Asian values such as closeness in family ties, filial duties and loyalty were believed to be more effectively conveyed in the mother tongues, and would provide cultural ballast to Western values by emphasising ethnic identity and values. Moral education and citizenship education were closely integrated; moral values and right conduct were key to being a good citizen. Whatever the variations in the citizenship education programmes, the element of moral education has always been present, as the ideal citizen is described in moral terms (Gopinathan & Sharpe, 2004; Han, 1997).

Two new citizenship education programmes, Being and Becoming in secondary schools, and Good Citizens in primary schools replaced Civics and EFL respectively by mid-1980s. Both programmes focused on values and moral education. Religious Knowledge and Confucian Ethics were introduced in 1982 to strengthen moral values, but were soon abandoned by the end of the decade as it was perceived to have heightened religious fervour and thereby threatened racial and religious harmony, and national security (Hill & Lian, 1995; Tan, 1997).
Being and Becoming and Good Citizens were later revised with the latter retaining its name, while the former renamed Civics and Moral Education (CME) in 1992, with the aim of reinforcing commitment to nation-building. CME emphasised moral and political socialisation and was not concerned about helping children to develop skills to think independently about social and political issues (Chew, 1988; Han, 1997). CME and Good Citizen continued to be taught as compulsory non-examinable subjects. The curricular were further revised after 1997 to incorporate NE.

Citizenship education was values inculcation and an acceptance of the status quo. The adequacy of the various citizenship education programmes has been questioned in terms of the individual’s ability to think critically about issues affecting the country, and independently to make decisions concerning these issues (Han, 1997; Tan & Chew, 2004). If they are to be citizens in the full sense of the term, people need to be equipped to handle complex issues concerning morality and politics.

4.4 National Education and Social Studies

The development of social studies must be located within the chronology of citizenship education in Singapore, reflecting the continuous single-minded pursuit of citizenship education to meet perceived national needs. Social studies was conceived in the context of NE, and it is a major vehicle for NE in secondary schools. In Singapore, citizenship education takes the form of NE with a focus on the nation, a common culture and shared values.

4.4.1 National Education in Singapore Schools

At the Teachers’ Day Rally on 8 September 1996, former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong outlined the challenges to the Singapore education system - a key imperative was NE. NE is fundamental in the educational process of every Singaporean child, the purpose was “to develop instincts that become part of the psyche of every child. It must engender a shared sense of nationhood, an understanding of how our past is relevant to our present and future. It must appeal to the heart and mind” (Goh, 1996, para. 16). As discussed in Chapter One, surveys revealed that younger Singaporeans were ignorant of Singapore’s recent history. According to the political leadership, this ignorance puts the nation at risk. Subsequently, an executive committee chaired by Mr Lim Siong Guan, then Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister’s Office and
Education, was appointed by the Prime Minister to plan the implementation of NE into the education system. A year later, NE was launched on 17 May 1997.

NE is the latest nation-building initiative in which citizenship is addressed. It is aimed at developing and shaping positive knowledge, values and attitudes of its younger citizenry towards the community and the nation. The purpose is to develop national cohesion, the instinct for survival and confidence in the future by:

- Fostering a sense of identity, pride and self-respect in being a Singaporean;
- Relating the Singapore story: how Singapore succeeded against the odds to become a nation;
- Understanding Singapore’s unique challenges, constraints and vulnerabilities, which make us different from other countries;
- Instilling the core values of our way of life and the will to prevail, all of which to ensure our continued success and well-being (MOE, 2006).

The purpose is systematically translated into six key messages to facilitate understanding and implementation in schools. The six messages are:

- Singapore is our homeland; this is where we belong
- We must preserve racial and religious harmony
- We must uphold meritocracy and incorruptibility
- We must ourselves defend Singapore
- No one owes Singapore a living
- We have confidence in our future (MOE, 2006).

NE programmes were swiftly implemented in schools, a major curriculum initiative was the introduction of social studies at upper secondary in 2001.

NE is high-stakes education, helmed by the Prime Minister and his Deputy. The speed at which NE programmes were implemented in schools underlined the urgency of the task; social studies took only five years, from conceptualisation to implementation in schools. For all intents and purposes, efforts at scrutinising curriculum content were undertaken with considerable care and seriousness at all levels. From the outset, NE is related to understanding the recent history of Singapore. The focus is with events related to the development of nationhood, encapsulated in what is called, the Singapore Story. The government maintains that passing down this knowledge from generation to generation is of unparalleled importance for Singapore’s survival. The
future and survival of Singapore depends upon building up of a national consciousness based upon the Singapore Story, as Prime Minister Goh said:

We must anchor Singaporeans in our country, so that we keep our bearings and our identity in a rapidly changing and borderless world. This is the aim of National Education – to make sure we never forget what Singapore means for us, and what it means to be a Singaporean (Goh, 1997, para. 19).

The message is clear, there must be concerted effort and systematic transmission of these instincts and attitudes into the psyche of succeeding cohorts, to become “part of the cultural DNA which makes us Singaporeans” (Lee, 1997, para. 2).

Noteworthy that NE was initiated in the absence of war or any real crisis by which the citizenry is often tested and nations are built. From time to time, the state engenders crisis in the citizenry so that leaders can present themselves as possessing means to solve people’s crises and provide them with a certain identity (Benjamin, 1988). Crisis construction and management is a strategy used openly and a conscious goal of enhancing the sense of dependence on the state, thereby maintaining the nation (Hill & Lian, 1995). A critical interpretation suggests that NE is an attempt by governing elites to maintain power in contexts in which that power is increasingly challenged by forces such as globalisation.

The NE outcomes for secondary school focus on “knowing Singapore”. The emphasis is knowledge, developing an awareness of facts, circumstances and opportunities facing Singapore, to enhance students’ ability to make decisions for their future with conviction and realism (MOE, 2006). Social studies was introduced at the upper secondary level for this purpose.

4.4.2 Key Features of Social Studies at Upper Secondary Level

Characteristic of past citizenship education programmes, social studies is top-down in approach, state initiated and driven. Social studies is a key subject for citizenship education in Singapore where nation-building continues to be the focus. It is developed in direct response to address the problem of young Singaporeans’ lack of knowledge of Singapore’s recent history. The aims of social studies are to:

- Understand the issues that affect the socio-economic development, the governance and the future of Singapore;
- Learn from experiences of other countries to build and sustain a politically viable, socially cohesive and economically vibrant Singapore;
• Develop citizens who have empathy towards others and who will participate responsibly and sensibly in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious society;
• Have a deep sense of shared destiny and national identity (MOE, 2006).

Social studies seeks to develop the essential areas of knowledge, skills and values of an informed, responsible and participative Singapore citizen. See Appendix 4 for details.

Social studies was implemented in all secondary schools at the upper secondary level in 2001. It is a compulsory examinable subject and was first examined at the GCE ‘Normal’ Level and GCE ‘Ordinary’ Level national examinations in 2002. Social studies makes up one half of a full GCE ‘N’/‘O’ Level paper called the Combined Humanities; the other half comprises an elective component of history, geography or literature. In 2006, social studies enters its sixth year of implementation. The syllabus was revised in 2005 to bring perspectives and issues to date. The revised syllabus would be implemented in schools in 2007.

Social studies includes elements of history, economics, political science and human geography. The subject matter of social studies is organised around the six NE messages. Six themes form the framework for the teaching and assessment of social studies, and the organisation of the textbook. They are: Birth of Nations, Harmony and Discord, Conflict and Co-operation, Growth of Nations, Looking Ahead, Challenge and Change. In tandem with the outcomes of NE, social studies at upper secondary level focused on knowledge - an enhanced awareness of national issues, pertaining to the historical, economic and social development of Singapore. The syllabus also addresses regional and international issues which can affect the development of Singapore. It is hoped that pupils will be more informed of Singapore’s achievements and limitations, and have confidence in her future. The syllabus highlights that this would prepare them to adopt a more participative role in shaping Singapore’s destiny in the 21st century.

4.4.3 An Analysis of Social Studies

The introduction of social studies is a significant milestone in the development of citizenship education. In the past, citizenship education emphasised moral education and underlying it, a relatively passive citizenship. But social studies is set up to
emphasise knowledge. For this, it separates the moral education aspect from the citizenship education related subject. The separation of the moral elements from citizenship education is a key development as it recognises that to develop thinking citizens, it must be done away from an explicitly moralising context to one where divergent thinking and views are tolerated.

What is the nature of thinking that social studies seeks to develop, for social studies is a vehicle for NE? Koh (2002, p. 263) suggested that it “has to be adapted and translated as a thinking tool....to serve the instrumentalist ideology of producing a generation of thinking workforce to support the Singapore economy.” Notwithstanding, the emphasis on thinking in social studies is a significant departure from past citizenship education programmes. To achieve this, the new assessment format is designed to assess students’ ability to interpret and evaluate given information, thereafter to construct explanations. Further, a new method of marking, the Level of Response Marking scheme which awards students for demonstrating higher order thinking skills, was adopted.

In the past, citizenship education focused only on socialisation. Two reasons suggested were the fear of deculturalisation, and the need to train a compliant, disciplined and efficient workforce for industrialisation in the 1970s and 1980s. As such, thinking was largely neglected. Given this background, emphasising thinking in social studies is an important curricular move towards counter-socialisation, albeit narrowly (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). The assessment objectives of social studies such as making judgements, evaluating evidence, recognising values and detecting bias, drawing conclusions based on a reasoned consideration of evidence and arguments, are features of counter-socialisation.

Engle and Ochoa (1988) had the democratic ideal as the basis of counter-socialisation, where social criticism and participation in decision-making by citizens on public issues are outcomes. But Singapore is a non-liberal democracy, where the government is paternalistic and authoritarian (Chua, 1995). In this regard, even though social studies helps students develop skills to think independently about issues, it does not accommodate the critique of the political economy and society. It is skeptical of the active participation of its citizens in the political process. The basis for counter-socialisation thus differs. For Singapore, it is linked to economic development and
nation-building. Thinking is de-politicised and focuses on creative problem-solving and mastery of skills, processes, procedures and practice (Koh, 2002).

While any subject can serve as a context for developing thinking in students, the significance of social studies is that it is a vehicle where both citizenship education and thinking intersect. Thinking has complicated a citizenship transmission approach to social studies, as the outcome of developing a thinking citizenry is not easily anticipated. Helping students to think more independently about issues can enhance their consciousness as citizens. And this consciousness can be converted into a basis for negotiation. Thus, the potential for political education is present in social studies.

Finally, the social studies syllabus mentioned preparing pupils to adopt a more participative role in shaping Singapore’s destiny. But the nature of participation is vaguely stated, where the assumption is that by developing the knowledge base, one will become more participative. While knowledge can enhance awareness, it does not necessarily translate to participation. The literature has argued for participative and active learning of citizenship by young people (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Hahn, 1996; Osborne, 1991; Parker, 2001; Patrick, 2002; Print & Smith, 2000). The premise is that an active approach to learning by students often begets an active approach to participative citizenship as adults.

4.5 Summary

This chapter provides the Singapore context. It began by positioning the relationship among state, education, and nation-building, and argued that the state uses education for nation-building. The conception of citizenship in Singapore was discussed, in which the state-citizen relation was described as pragmatic, where citizens left politics to the PAP government as long as it provided them with a good life. This transformed Singapore economically but left citizens disengaged.

However, a changing global economy and local landscape necessitated the development of an active citizenry. Consequently, the PAP government has been more open in engaging citizens. The historical background of citizenship education in Singapore was traced. Until the introduction of social studies, citizenship education had a strong dose of moral education. Though social studies must be seen in the context of NE, it is also a significant departure from past trends. Two features were highlighted. Firstly, moral education is decoupled from social studies, and secondly,
the focus on thinking. As a result, it leaves greater space for exploring different approaches to social studies beyond citizenship transmission. The subsequent chapters on teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education will be seen from this perspective.
CHAPTER 5: PROFILES OF CASES

This chapter profiles the eight teachers in this study. The major purpose of the investigation was to inquire into teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education, but it would be misleading to analyse the phenomena in isolation. It is necessary to describe the teachers to situate their knowledge and practice and these backgrounds provide insights and guide in understanding that knowledge and practice. The teachers are grouped according to the schools they come from and a sketch of each school locates the teacher in their work environment.

5.1 Central Secondary School

Central Secondary School, established more than 30 years ago, is a government, secular, co-educational school situated in the central part of Singapore. Nestled in an old housing estate in Singapore, it is a typical neighbourhood school with a steady enrolment of 1,300 students. Most of the students come from the surrounding estate and have diverse ethnic backgrounds, representative of the national percentages according to the Chinese, Malay, Indian and other categorisation. Approximately 80% of the students come from non-English speaking homes and generally of lower socio-economic background.

Although the school building is old, it is well maintained, with facilities constantly being added. Motivational phrases are painted on the walls of the four story building. The classrooms are homogenous and arranged for frontal teaching. Desks are lined in rows, either in pairs or singly. The average class size is 40 students. After the students take their seats, there is hardly room left for movement or group work in class.

Daily, five to six desks are placed outside the general office of the school. The students sitting there are disciplined for bad behavior. They have to reflect on their wrongdoings. The principal pops out of her office regularly to check on them. With the current principal, discipline in the school has greatly improved. The school has also made vast improvements in academic results and in co-curricular activities.

There are a total of 65 teachers. The staff is generally young, with an average age of 28 years and less than five years of teaching experience. Two strengths of the school are, first, the cohesive and cooperative staff, and second, a supportive principal who
gives the staff autonomy in their teaching. However, a problem faced by the school is the lack of experienced teachers, a situation common to schools across the nation.

Peter and Vind are the only two social studies teachers at Central Secondary School. Between the two, they teach all 18 social studies classes. The school only offers the geography elective at upper secondary. Both teachers share in preparing the slides and worksheets for teaching social studies, but how these are used is left to the discretion of the teachers.

5.1.1 Vind

In her mid-30s, and having taught for more than eight years, Vind is one of the more experienced teachers in the school and in this study. She is an ethnic minority, and is keen to highlight that race has never been an issue to her:

I grew up with Chinese, Malay, Indian friends, nobody cares about race, we eat, go out, share together. I don't feel like I am a minority, or my identity is threatened. Rather, it gives me opportunities to learn from others. From my experience, race relations are ok here. You can never get 100% equality anywhere (28/5-51).

She described herself as "an easy going person, not ambitious" (16/1-2). But lately, she has become increasingly discontented with the hectic pace of life in Singapore and this is personally dilemmatic, "I love Singapore, but I don't like the system we work in, it is pressurising, with little margin for error, we have no time. I want quality of life, where one is a bit laid back, less achievement oriented" (28/5-48). Vind is restrained; while she has critical awareness, she is afraid to express them, she feels she "needs to say the correct things" (28/5-4) as a teacher and civil servant. Accountability drives her actions and how she sees her citizenship. This means supporting the status quo - the peace and stability, and the government that ensures it.

Central Secondary is the only school Vind has taught in. She has stayed in the school because she enjoys the camaraderie among the teachers and prefers to teach students from humbler backgrounds, highlighting two characteristics of the students from Central Secondary – willingness to learn and appreciative. Recently, she has been thinking of a change. As such, she has applied for a posting to the MOE headquarters. The reason is that "I have only done one thing and taught in one school. I am a frog in the well. I need new challenges to grow professionally" (16/1-9).
Vind is the subject head for social studies and history. She teaches nine social studies and one English class. Vind started out as an English teacher but soon requested to teach history. When social studies was implemented in 2001, she switched to social studies: "I was excited when social studies was introduced. It's a subject that's alive and current, that's what I like about it. I like topics on international conflicts" (16/1-26). Vind was not trained at pre-service level to teach history or social studies. She attended three workshops on setting and marking examination questions organised by the MOE. At pre-service level, she was trained to teach English literature and language, as she did English literature and political science at the university and obtained better results in the former. She never elected history at the university nor teacher education. She confessed that when she taught history, "I taught by relying on how I was taught as a student, what I liked and did not like about it" (16/1-4). She was familiar with the subject matter of social studies because it resembled political science. Where teaching is concerned, she confessed it was "trial-and-error, on-the-job learning. I am not sure if I am doing the right thing, but it worked, and the results are improving" (16/1-16).

Vind 'discovered' teaching, as she "never thought about becoming a teacher. After university, I didn't know what I wanted. I looked around and realised there weren't many interesting jobs. So I tried relief teaching and it was a pleasant experience. I like the interaction with the students" (16/1-24). As a teacher, she is "quite fun, caring but can be very sarcastic. Students call me the Queen of Sarcasm and we joke about it, they know I mean well because I am serious about their work" (16/1-26). She admitted that her teaching is "traditional, I still do a lot of teacher talk. I feel if I'm not talking, I'm not doing my work. I tend to over talk, rather than get students to talk" (16/1-29). In her opinion, a good teacher "shows concern for students, and knows what's happening with them. She brings important life issues into her teaching, and not only cares about getting a 100% pass. She sees what's best for the students in the longer term" (16/1-29). But "honestly, for me, it is very important to get them through the examination, otherwise they can't go further" (16/1-29).

For Vind, accountability undergirds her teaching, and this often overrides other considerations. Consequently, her understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education reflected a constraining bent. As a social studies educator, she was characterised as nationalistic and constraining.
5.1.2 Peter

Peter is in his early 30s, and has been teaching for four years. He teaches nine social studies and two English language classes. His principal and superintendent have noted his potential for higher responsibilities and in only three years, Peter was made the head of the humanities department. Peter is ambitious and go-getting. He is confident of his own knowledge and abilities, believing that effectiveness in teaching “boils down to the ability and skills of the teacher” (14/7-10). He feels he can make the difference, as he said:

The single most useful tool in social studies is the teacher’s brain. It’s in here (points to his head) that I formulate my lesson, provoke students, get them excited and turn what’s in the textbook into something they understand. This can only be done with a good brain. I read a lot, I’m flexible in thinking, I’m always looking at things in different ways, and ask how can I make it better. I’m full of ideas. As I mature, my ideas get better, and my presentation improves (16/3-20).

For him, teaching “is all about packaging, organising and presentation” (16/3-10).

Peter is well regarded by his superiors and is eager to do well in his work. He is grateful for the recognition and opportunities for career advancement. Likewise, he feels privileged to be a Singaporean, as he wholeheartedly embraces the government’s vision for Singapore. Thus citizenship means aligning with the government. Peter is also an ethnic minority, and he strongly believes in Singapore’s multiracial policy:

In Singapore, every race is treated equally. There is opportunity for all regardless of race. I can be myself. I belong, I am comfortable with my environment, I can speak to anybody in English, and I am happy with the place. Everything is fair, I don’t feel I need to prove myself because everybody gives me the respect accorded to everyone else (17/1-29).

Adopting a strategic attitude to work he takes on heavier responsibilities in school, and works hard to get his students through the examination with good grades. Developing thinking skills and from different perspectives are important, but these were often compromised as he was task-focused on good examination results. He gives the impression of being in control where the know-how to good results is concerned: “I tell them I have the means, if you follow me, I will lead you to ‘O’ level heaven. They listen to me because I know the right way to get there” (14/7-20). Consequently, teaching was often reduced to drills on the methods of answering examination questions. His teaching has been described as militaristic, where he deliberately creates a tense and competitive atmosphere to spur students. He demands students’ full attention in class.
Peter graduated with history honours from the local university. Unlike Vind, Peter was trained to teach social studies at pre-service level. Central was his first school. Initially, he taught social studies and English language at upper secondary and history at lower secondary. Following a restructuring of the humanities department, Peter taught only social studies, which he said:

I enjoy teaching social studies. It's provocative, exciting and allows me freedom to use different examples like my own experience and what I see everyday. Everything that I read in the newspapers, I can use in class. So, it's very challenging, it depends on how interested you are and how open your mind is (16/3-10).

Teaching was second choice to law; only when he did not get admitted to law did he choose teaching. He was awarded an undergraduate teaching scholarship. His parents were influential in his career choice:

My dad's a lawyer, mum's a teacher. So when law didn't go through, teaching is alright. Initially, I wasn’t very interested. It was later in the army, when I had more time to think about it, then I realised teaching is powerful, it's an opportunity to guide people. It's something I can be good at (17/1-24).

As a teacher, he is “very strict and organised, but can be approachable. I insist on attentiveness and I like students to ask me questions” (17/1-25). He describes his teaching as “dramatic” as “I use my voice and expression to provoke reaction” (17/1-28). He believes a good teacher must have “interest in what he teaches, skillful in imparting and simplifying knowledge, and be able to relate to students” (17/1-24). He is confident he can be like that.

For Peter, what stands out is control, he wants to be in charge where he makes it known to students that he is the authority. Consequently, his understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education were enforcing in nature. As a social studies educator, he was characterised as nationalistic and enforcing.

5.2 Wharton Secondary School

Wharton Secondary is a well established co-educational school enjoying a good reputation with a rich Christian heritage. The school was established 100 years ago and provides an education grounded in Christian values. It is now a government-aided school, receiving government subsidy and in return, offers the national curriculum and employs teachers assigned by the MOE. The school is recognised for good academic programmes and co-curricular achievements, and reputable for the holistic
development of its pupils through innovative teaching and learning. With an average enrolment of 1,450, the student population is drawn not only from the surrounding estate. A sizeable portion of the student population are children of alumni and/or come from Christian primary schools. The student population is less ethnically diverse, with 90% Chinese. Over 70% come from English speaking homes.

Wharton has a strong and visionary leadership. The principal is an alumna, dynamic and dedicated. Under her leadership, Wharton embarked on a "journey of transformational change" (W-D5-1) to build the capacities of students and staff. The belief is that every child can learn and lead, and teachers play a critical role. The vision is to establish the school as an outstanding and vibrant learning community, the mission to nurture every student to reach his/her fullest potential as an active lifelong learner and influential leader, service-oriented and impactful to both local and global communities.

Care is a distinctive quality of the school. Teachers know their students as individuals very well. The school adopts a holistic approach to pupils' development, emphasising values, leadership and lifeskills. Weekly assemblies, morning devotions, chapel services, staff contact time, and class visits by the principal are platforms to communicate values and care to the pupils and the staff.

The school buildings are upgraded with larger IT-enabled classrooms. The class size is smaller with 35 students. The homeroom system is adopted, where teachers decide, with students' involvement, in the creation of the learning spaces in the classroom. Desks are clustered for group work. Teachers are trained and empowered to deploy a range of teaching strategies such as cooperative learning and brain-based learning approaches to facilitate learning. A positive learning environment is evident where structures promote a culture of student-centred learning, sharing, and coaching.

There are 68 teachers, a quarter of whom are alumni. Almost half the staff is below 35 years of age, with five or less years of experience. Staff professionalism and well-being are promoted through training, empowerment, and increased ownership of staff towards excellence in their work. There is a general sense of commitment and dedication among the staff.

Carolyn and Leong are among a team of seven social studies teachers at Wharton. The school offers both history and geography electives with social studies for the
Combined Humanities paper. The teachers work as a team for social studies, resources are shared and they frequently consult and learn from one another. Weekly professional sharings in the humanities department are held.

5.2.1 Carolyn

Carolyn has taught for 20 years and is the most experienced teacher in the study. She is also one of the most experienced teachers in Wharton, is senior member of staff and the head of the humanities department. Her contribution is described as “20 years of sterling and dedicated service” (W-D3-6). She is well respected by the principal, staff and students as a mentor and expert teacher. Carolyn is a dedicated alumna, coming back to teach in her alma mater was seen as giving back to the school that had nurtured her. She rejected the MOE’s offers of promotion into higher leadership positions in other schools due to the responsibility she felt towards Wharton.

Responsibility and service orientation underpin her attitude and decisions. She believes that leadership is not self aggrandisement but about being a ‘servant’ of the people. The theme of giving back and contributing to society reverberated throughout her interviews and teaching. Similarly, citizenship means “giving back to the community, willingly serve and give back what you received from it” (2/7-12). It also means responsible citizenship, upholding societal values and working for the progress of the nation. As a staunch Christian, she is inclined to obey the authorities, “Biblically, I would support them because they have been elected. They are put in position, and they know the right thing to do” (15/3-44).

Carolyn is in her mid-40s and Chinese in race. Teaching is Carolyn’s only job; other than a year’s break, she has unstintingly taught at Wharton. Teaching is not just any profession, but a special calling to nurture young people: “If you want to be a teacher, you must have the heart for the children” (21/9-9). She is guided by the philosophy “that everybody has a good brain, nobody is stupid, it’s how much you use your brain” (8/-25). She respects her students as individuals and never puts them down. As a teacher:

I’m firm and no nonsense. I expect you to be responsible and pass up your work or face the music. But there are times when I will listen and negotiate with them. They cannot be selectively responsible, where they choose to try one and not others, like be punctual for sports, but sloppy in class. It is the attitude. I make known my expectations clearly to them (8/1-25).
She is particular about the way students should carry themselves with pride and dignity in their uniform. Further, “when it comes to teaching, I am conscious I have to speak and put myself in their shoes to make the lesson relevant. So they will enjoy and remember it” (8/1-13). Similarly, as head of department she leads by example, encouraging the teachers in her department to work closely as a team, supporting one another professionally and personally.

After all these years, Carolyn’s passion for teaching is still evident. She enjoys learning, and is never shy to learn from junior teachers. She graduated with geography honours and a major in economics from the local university. She was then trained to teach geography and English language. When social studies was implemented in schools, she volunteered to be trained by the MOE to teach social studies, leading the teachers in her department by example. She teaches four social studies and four geography classes. One of the teachers in the department said of her:

She doesn’t send you into the unknown alone, she puts herself up for the task as well. You feel encouraged. She is a good boss, fair, understanding and caring. She is sincere and committed, but also expects us to be so. A few of us are young in teaching, she is concerned that we have a work-life balance. I am inspired by her (W-F4-2).

Christian principles, responsibility and service orientation guide Carolyn’s teaching and outlook of life. Her understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education were characterised as nationalistic and reforming.

5.2.2 Leong

Leong is a Chinese man in his early 30s who has been teaching for five years. He did contract teaching in a school for a year before undergoing teacher education. Since his student days, he has been active in the co-curricular activity, National Cadet Corp (NCC). He continues to volunteer, working up to become the Assistant District Commander. He was awarded a local military bursary for his undergraduate studies, which ensured him of a job with the military after he graduated. However, because of his experience with schools through NCC, he was offered teaching instead. He sees teaching as a challenge:

Teaching is challenging. I know how teachers think, I’ve worked with them in NCC. They lack commitment to NCC. When their boys come for training, they sit and mark. I want to change their mindsets, I want them to take interest in their students’ training, be involved in nurturing the boys into loyal citizens. I also enjoy helping others learn. When you help others learn, you also learn something from them (9/1-17).
Thus he came into teaching with rich experience. He requested to teach the weakest and unmotivated classes. He understands the mindsets of such students, having worked with very weak ones and even delinquents in NCC. He does not use hard methods, but reasons with them “to win their trust”, believing that “change must come from within, when they realise and are willing to try” (9/1-5):

I help them realise that for every choice they make, there is a consequence, so they must exercise their choice carefully. I have chit chat sessions, I listen and persuade them, help them understand why. Play it cool, give them chances, talk to them, and see how they respond (9/1-6).

Leong is the NE co-ordinator of his school, consequently “I am updated on issues confronting Singapore, and get to attend closed door sessions” (9/1-18). By virtue of his rank in NCC, he also has access to classified information on defence. Consequently, Leong has an insightful understanding of Singapore’s vulnerabilities, which explains his conviction and patriotism. To him, citizenship is “the duty to protect and defend the land given to us” (23/6-26). He also trusts and supports the government for its practice of good governance. As such, “it is my personal duty to support the government, and trust it will bring the country to greater heights and continue the peace” (1/3-24). Leong’s outlook is no doubt influenced by his military experience, and this reverberates in his teaching.

Leong studied political science and sociology in the local university. Then he was trained to teach social studies, history and English language. Upon completion of his teacher education, he was posted to Wharton where he is also an alumna, but unlike Carolyn, he was hesitant to accept: “I wanted another school to expand my horizon. It is hard to work with ex-teachers too as I have strong views” (9/1-10). He teaches seven classes of social studies and seven classes of history. He is dependable, highly committed and conscientious. He is the first to arrive in school, and one of the last to return home, spending a lot of time interacting with students.

He is innovative, unconventional and active in teaching; he uses simulation, and is creative in using the space in the class to engage students in their learning. Further, “I don’t give notes, it doesn’t help in the long term. I want my students to learn to think. The results will come when they think” (23/6-4). He is not condescending towards students, but respects them as capable individuals. Consequently, students respect and trust him and call him the ‘no-holds-barred’ teacher. His fellow colleagues appreciate
his resourcefulness; he suggested several ideas to improve teaching and learning which were implemented school-wide.

Leong’s passion and beliefs about education drive his teaching: “Education is not about tests and grades. It doesn’t matter if you got it right or wrong. What matters is you have learnt (9/1-10). He stands by his beliefs and teaches with conviction, as he said, “You can teach well only if you believe. I believe in the importance of social studies. I believe that Singapore must be defended by ourselves. This is what makes me tick as a teacher” (9/1-20). For him, a good and inspiring teacher is one “who helps students understand issues through connecting with their experiences. A good teacher comes down to the level of the students, to understand their needs and to help them” (9/1-17).

Indeed, he is a true Whartonian, one who has a heart for students, willingly serves and gives back to the community in various capacities. Conviction, loyalty and patriotism are qualities that guide him in life. His understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education were characterised as nationalistic and reforming.

5.3 Bayshore Secondary School

Bayshore Secondary is a relatively new neighbourhood school, established nine years ago in the eastern part of Singapore. As such, Bayshore has little precedence to fall back on, thereby giving teachers greater flexibility to chart the course of the school. The staff-student relationship is closer and warmer, “as in a new school, we work closely together to set up many things” (9/1-9). Ex-students often visit the principal and teachers, greeting them with hugs. The principal and staff know the names of every student, demonstrating a somewhat familial atmosphere in the school.

The school has consistently attained value-added results at the national examinations. In co-curricular activities, the uniform and cultural groups have done well. Bayshore reverberates with energy, inspired by the vision of developing a thinking community of learners and innovators. The principal sets the tone for the openness and dynamism, maintaining an open-door policy. Discipline is generally good, for while the principal and staff are open with students, they are also firm. Errant students enter into contracts with the principal and their teachers to improve behaviour. Expectations are made known to the students and the onus is on them to keep the agreement.
Daily, the school teems with activities, such as fieldtrips, exhibitions, stalls set up by the entrepreneur club, or students collecting signatures for petition. A special day is set aside each term for the school community to work on projects, such as a learning festival or a fun fair to raise funds for charities. The objective is to develop lifeskills by working on authentic tasks. School-wide structures are in place to encourage students to speak up such as the monthly senior management-student dialogues.

Not surprisingly Bayshore clinched several people developer awards. The school has also embarked on school-wide action research to improve practice. Teachers also participate in a community project, where they take turns to help out in a nearby special education school. The objective is to develop the teachers' sense of ownership and participation in the school and community.

There are 70 teachers in total. As with the other schools, the staff is generally young, half of them below the age of 35, with less than five years of teaching experience. The principal’s preference is for younger staff who are energetic. The school has an average enrolment of 1,450 students, with a majority coming from the surrounding area, non-English speaking and lower middle income homes. The student population is ethnically diverse, mirroring that at the national level.

The school facilities are up-to-date with large and airy classrooms. While the desks are arranged in rows, teachers can easily reconfigure them to suit the classroom activities, and this often happens. The school offers history and geography electives together with social studies. Frida and David are among the five social studies teachers in the school who all share their resources and are engaged in an action research project to improve the teaching of social studies.

5.3.1 Frida

“I’m the true Singaporean, of mixed parentage and multiracial blood, all Singapore cultures rolled into one. I am proud of that” (23/3-48). Frida’s consciousness and pride in her ethnic identity are striking. Her parents are part Chinese and Indian, as her paternal and maternal grandmothers are Chinese and grandfathers are Indian, and her husband is Indian-Muslim. Hence, she “is friends with everyone as I am of every ethnicity. It makes me very Singaporean. Best of all, I can talk about sensitive issues, and no one can accuse me of being racist. It works to my advantage in social studies” (23/3-46). For her, convictions must be lived out: “Proud of being part of the
community, I want to participate and stake my ownership in my community” (23/3-5). Similarly, citizenship is about overlapping identities, and the “building up of the common space” (23/3-4). She focuses on social capital and the relationships among people in the community. In this, she supports the status quo.

Frida is in her early thirties and has taught for eight years at Bayshore, her first school since joining it in the pioneer year. She was recently appointed head of the humanities department. Well-liked and highly regarded by colleagues, she is described as “considerate, dependable and energetic. She is an effective head and works with the teachers” (31/1-19). The principal also thinks highly of her commitment to work and the students, commenting that, “Frida has the heart for the students” (7/4-3). She cares a lot for students, and is understanding, patient and persistent in working with difficult ones. She is intuitive and knows just how to respond to individual needs and idiosyncrasies. She would eventually win the trust and respect of the difficult ones. As such, she is a very popular teacher.

Frida’s passion for learning underscores her teaching. Despite her busy schedule as head of department, she makes time for learning. Her greatest fear is “to stagnate, become so busy that I have no time to read and think, and deepen my knowledge. I short change my students if I don’t constantly learn” (9/1-9). She is currently leading an action research study on improving the teaching of social studies, and recently completed a two-year advanced diploma in social studies. She admitted it was tough balancing work and study but was motivated by her passion to learn and a sense of professional integrity:

I want to learn how to teach social studies better, be informed of the possibilities which would give me a better choice of how I can best approach the subject. If I simply do what I am told, then it would be hard to safeguard against propaganda. I want to explore various approaches to reach out to the students (23/3-17).

She is passionate about teaching social studies as she sees the knowledge and skills as empowering one to live meaningfully in society. Frida graduated in political science and sociology from the local university, noting it was a “turning point” in her life because the training in social sciences gave her “a set of lenses to see things differently”:

These disciplines opened my eyes, I never saw relationships in this way. We looked at women in society, race, class and the struggle for power. I always had the impression that
everything is ok. I was shocked to learn how society is constructed to maintain powerful bases. Now I know, I don’t exist blindly, and hopefully, I can effect change (9/1-26).

She hopes for a similarly empowering experience for her students through her teaching of social studies. Frida displays a social consciousness and is concerned about developing her students as active citizens. She wants them to learn to “have a voice”, “speak up” (23/3-39), encouraging them to “take responsibility and ownership of the school community” (9/7-16).

After graduating, she applied to teach because:

I relief taught and enjoyed relating to the students. I am also very inspired by two of my teachers, they were good, caring and intelligent. I want to be like them. It was economic downturn when I graduated, there weren’t many attractive jobs. So it’s partly circumstances, but deep within, there is an inclination to teach. I don’t regret my choice, I am proud to be a teacher. I want to instill my passion for social science in the students (9/1-10).

She was trained to teach history and English language, but readily volunteered to teach social studies when it was introduced. She teaches seven social studies and seven history classes. She described herself thus as a teacher:

It is not a bad deal to have me as a teacher. I care a lot for students. I am approachable, willing to help, sensitive to their needs. I am patient, and will teach until they understand. I care that they don’t just learn for the exams, I want them to be interested too. So I use a variety of strategies to help my students learn. I am passionate about what I teach, and this comes through in my teaching (9/1-30).

In her opinion, a good teacher is “reflective of her teaching and students’ learning, is humble to learn, cares and puts students’ needs above others” (9/1-25). She added, “I try to do that” (9/1-26). She has fond memories of good and inspiring teachers as a student, and highlighted that their passion made the difference. She looks upon them as role models. For Frida, passion for learning drives her being and teaching. As a social studies educator, she was characterised as social and empowering.

5.3.2 David

David is in his late 30s and has the most wide-ranging experiences among the teachers in this study. The path he took to be a teacher was relatively less trodden and his teaching is very much shaped by these life experiences. His head of department said, “With David, students are in good hands. He exudes confidence, he’s not restless, nor out to prove something” (15/10-14). David explained:
I saw the outside world, tried various things, and chose to go back to the neighbourhood school. I used to feel that the grass is greener on the other side. I went over, came back, and learnt that the grass is green wherever. It's good to venture out, if you don't, you will keep asking yourself what if I had? You owe it to yourself to try and then decide (31/1-3).

Because of his varied experiences, he is mature in attitude, steady in temperament, and responsible. His principal regards him as “a good role model for the students” (15/10-14). He is committed and clear about what he wants, and not swayed by short-term gains nor wants to be rushed into leadership positions.

Yet his ethnicity is an issue for David: “It’s been a struggle since I was a student” (30/8-9). David is Chinese in race but is unable to speak his mother tongue and even failed Chinese in school. Instead, he speaks fluent Malay:

I know the wrong language for my race, and I’m constantly reminded of it through the language policies and campaigns. Even when I go to the market, they speak to me in Chinese and can’t believe I don’t speak Chinese. Am I less of a Singaporean (30/8-10)?

He feels he does not fit into the Singaporean-Chinese identity, and the experience has affected the way he understands his citizenship. He is disengaged and detached from Singapore, but does not let the feeling dampen his spirit, instead it helps broaden his view of life. Consequently, he adopts a more liberal and individualistic outlook, supporting a citizenship that is accepting of differences. He is also less inclined to collective action, preferring the pursuit of personal development and fulfillment.

David has been teaching in Bayshore for six years, and teaches eight social studies and eight history classes. Resilience and adaptability describe how David coped with life experiences. “Never mind, just do it. How do you know you can’t when you haven’t tried” (23/6-4)? His ‘can do’ spirit motivates students. They often approached him to champion ideas such as organising a prom or fieldtrips. He is “willing to help students with their ideas. I want them to have a ‘dare to try’ attitude” (15/10-16). He attributes his outlook to “surviving the many twists and turns in my life” (23/6-5).

David was a victim of a rigid educational system that defined success narrowly. He “wasn’t academic, more the hands-on type who can’t sit and learn” (23/6-5). He dropped out of the system, having failed Chinese and had to find an alternative route to further his studies. He then pursued his interest in cooking, working in a hotel for two years to save enough money to study in the U.S. He applied to do hotel management but ended up with a liberal arts degree in history and Asian studies. This “roundabout experience was a blessing”, in the process “I learnt there are many
pathways. The point is not to give up. Set your own yardsticks of success. I could
have given up when I failed, but I didn’t and now I am richer for it” (31/1-5).

He returned to Singapore and relief taught for half a year. As a fresh graduate, “I felt
cooped up in the school when there’s a bigger world outside” (31/1-18). So, he
worked in the travel industry for five years, and rose to managerial positions.
However, he found the profit driven environment “cold and calculating”, and finally
made a mid-career decision to teach:

I was doing well but you wonder if there is more to life than profits. You are valued for
squeezing your clients, but if you lose the deal, fingers point at you. Deals are suddenly
withdrawn as better terms are found elsewhere. I yearned for something deeper, more
satisfying than wins and losses. That’s when I remembered teaching (31/1-7).

He applied to teach, was accepted and trained in history, social studies and English
language teaching. David has taught a range of students, from the very weak classes
to the better ones. Six years have passed but:

The satisfaction runs deep, is real and meaningful when you have kids who said they
understood because you helped them. The satisfaction is worth more than a million dollar
contract, because the contract lapses with time. But what you have impressed on the kids
can endure and be significant in their lives (31/1-7).

As a teacher, “I like to be given independence. I also give students independence. I
won’t jeopardise the academic and exams, but I want them to realise they have it in
them to be in control of their own lives, and to trust in their abilities” (31/1-25). A
good teacher cares about the holistic development of the student and he tries to be so.
He sees himself as a facilitator who gives students space for meaning-making. His
teaching is guided by the principle of multiple intelligences and the belief that
learning should be authentic and involve the senses. Experiential learning in the form
of fieldtrips is “my pet thing” (15/10-8). As a social studies educator, he was
characterised as personal and liberalising.

5.4 Kovan Secondary School

Kovan Secondary School was established 50 years ago and was recently given a new
campus in the northern part of Singapore. Kovan is not the choice school for residents
in the neighbourhood. The school faces stiff competition from surrounding ones in
attracting better students. The average enrolment is 1,400. Only when students fail to
get into the better schools would they consider Kovan. Hence, students are
academically weaker, with most coming from the lower income and non-English speaking homes. Consequently, the school has not been performing well academically. It is also tightening its discipline to ensure that students do not get into delinquent activities. Disciplinary measures are punitive; daily one can see delinquent students being scolded by the discipline master or made to run around the school.

The school is rather austere, “doesn’t encourage creativity, nor display much of the students’ works. Students can’t decorate their classes, they were warned not to tape on the walls as this spoils the paint” (29/1-17). The school has become clinical in the drive to improve the percentage pass. Students attend daily remedial lessons after school until five in the afternoon.

There are 74 teachers, with a good mix of young and experienced ones. Staff morale is low as school programmes often meet with limited success. After a while, teachers feel disillusioned and perceived that they are valued only when they meet the percentage pass. The humanities department is lax with little planning and guidance for teachers. Overall the leadership in the school is best described as administrative and bureaucratic.

Facilities are up-to-date, classrooms are big, and class size averaged at 40 students. The desks are arranged traditionally in double rows. Marcus and Ying are two of six social studies teachers in the school, though the teachers work independently in social studies. Kovan offers both history and geography electives with social studies.

5.4.1 Marcus

Marcus is in his mid-30s and Chinese by race. He has taught in Kovan for nine years, and only recently “converted to teach social studies”. He is “a well trained math teacher who can get students to pass with As” (21/7-34). He graduated in social science, majoring in math, economics and sociology from the local university. He had wanted to study engineering or business but did not get admitted. He never thought of teaching as “my dad had secured a well paying logistics job for me in the family business” (13/1-17). He worked in logistics for almost two years.

It was a turning point in his life: “I never had a chance to decide what I wanted to do. Working in logistics made me realise what I wanted” (13/1-18), sharing an incident that opened his eyes:
The workers were looking for one guy in the warehouse to calculate the M3. Only he knew how to do it, and without the M3 they cannot load the goods. When they found him, he took the measuring tape, measured up and down, then gave me a figure. I asked how he got the figure and he said it came with experience. Later I discovered M3 is cubic meters! Length, breadth, height, round off to one decimal place. And only one guy in the warehouse knows how to do it! He’s so all important and refuses to teach others (13/1-25).

Such encounters pricked his social conscience:

They don’t know LC, letter of credit. I can give them any piece of paper, and they won’t know. We can be logistic hub, the business can make millions, but the workers are deprived. They can’t move up in the job because people don’t teach them, and they don’t have the means to find out. All their lives they drive the forklift, earn little and depend on overtime. They have no time for anything else, including their kids (13/1-26).

He struggled, “I saw the other side of society. If only they have basic literacy, they can do better. I am so confused. I am among the profit-makers, we exploit the workers, we keep them down to keep costs down” (13/1-26). His soul searching led him to teaching: “I felt for the workers and decided I want to help them learn M3” (13/1-27).

It was not an easy decision, but he finally applied to teach. He was trained to teach math and English language due to his social science training. He chose to teach in a neighbourhood school and does not regret becoming a teacher.

Marcus came into teaching with a sense of purpose. He also wants to help students develop interpersonal skills: “Don’t always be at each other’s throats, be more tentative as views can change with new evidence. Be open to ideas, give and take, hear other perspectives” (27/4-23). He encourages students to be more enquiring and exploratory, “be brave to say I don’t know what’s out there, but with the skills I have, I am willing to explore and see what I can make of it” (27/4-46).

Marcus became disillusioned with teaching math to the examination. This led to “rigid and questionable practices, insisting on one right method, drilling and remediation. They put the list of failures on the board, to shame students into doing better” (21/7-33). This was the last straw: “Shaming is unscrupulous. These kids need to pass math, but not through shaming. What message are we sending? I cannot agree with the way of doing things” (21/7-34). As head of CME and Community Involvement Project (CIP), he also faces an uphill task in convincing teachers to take the non-examinable subjects seriously.

Marcus was not trained to teach humanities but he requested to teach social studies. He was excited by the more open-ended and integrative nature of the subject matter, and the resemblance to social sciences which he believed should be taught to school
students. The principal was willing to let Marcus try, thus he was given four social studies and four English language classes to teach. He attended an in-service diploma course in social studies as on-the-job training.

For Marcus, a good teacher is one “who is very caring and helps students achieve their goals” (13/1-24). He tries to walk his talk: “The students have so many dreams of what they would like, I want to help them fulfill some of their dreams” (13/1-31). He is “always choosing the difficult, foolhardy, some may say”:

It's like betting on the dark horses. The path in logistic was laid out, but I chose to teach. I was offered a teaching position in an elite school, yet I chose a weak neighbourhood school. I moved out of math to social studies, where teachers shy away from especially with academically weak students (13/1-31).

There is a deep conviction to do what is right and needful for fellow citizens. Citizenship is an active concern for the community and particularly the relationships within it. He seeks progress and improvements. Marcus is idealistic and enthusiastic in the things he sets his heart on. Yet, he self-critiques, admitting he has been “a passive citizen, concerned about bread-and-butter issues” (27/4-34). Finally, Marcus is a well-read, even though social studies is a new subject for him. As a social studies educator, he was characterised as social and participatory.

5.4.2 Ying

Ying is in her mid-20s and has taught for only three years. She is the youngest and with the shortest teaching experience in this study. She typifies the younger generation who grows up in affluent Singapore - technologically savvy, lifestyle conscious and is skeptical of the government. She acknowledges her passivity as a citizen. As a young working adult, she finds managing a work-life balance rather overwhelming. As a beginning teacher, she spends an inordinate amount of time preparing lessons and is left with little time and energy for anything else.

Two key influences in Ying’s life are “my religion and my family” (5/5-30). Ying volunteers with her church. “Religion is very important to me. I try to live by the Christian values, be understanding, compassionate, think for and love your neighbour” (29/1-35). She comes from a close-knit family: “I spend a lot of time with my parents. They have brought me up well, anchoring me in strong values” (29/1-4). Ying considers herself “a homebody, don’t like to go on long trips, I miss my home. I still hold traditional Asian values - respect your elders, filial piety” (5/5-45).
She graduated in political science and economics from the local university. Although teaching was a career option, she wanted to give marketing a try first as she saw both jobs as people oriented which suited her personality. However, “after looking for a marketing job for six months, I was getting nowhere. I might as well teach” (29/1-4). She applied to teach but due to the timing of her application, was given half a year of contract teaching before undergoing teacher education. She was trained to teach social studies, history and English language.

Although only a beginning teacher, she has taught the worst classes in the school, taking over six problematic social studies and history classes from relief teachers. Nonetheless, she was able to handle the classes effectively. She even followed her classes through two years to provide the continuity in preparing for the national examination. She recounted:

The long hours and effort in preparation, cracking my head over how to engage them, the tears and heartache when things don’t work or when they refuse your help. Sometimes I am at wits end how to help them learn. I am thick skinned, I don’t mind making a fool of myself, like act cutesy, to keep them engaged and listening to me. If it’s achieved, I don’t mind (5/5-14).

Ying is reflective, she is aware of her inexperience and the need to constantly learn:

I’m a beginning teacher, I am improving on my classroom management, developing my own style of teaching. In social studies, I’m now more integrative, teaching content and skills together, I’m trying out, and I think it is more effective in giving students a holistic view of issues (29/1-30).

However, she is doing well and her senior colleague commended her:

She is doing a good job with the worst classes. She gets them interested and motivates them to study. I see them seeking her for exam questions. For a new teacher, she is good and committed. Many new teachers in her circumstances would have given up. She has lots of potential (27/4-3).

She emphasises the development of good and strong values such as “care for others, honesty, respect and compassion” (29/1-33). Further, “my basic expectation is students must at least try their best. If they don’t bother to try, they are not giving themselves a chance” (14/9-20).

Her idea of a good lesson is one where students are responsive, participative, and motivated to learn. She tries to engage students by creating a safe classroom, being creative in her teaching, and capturing teachable moments. Although her early experiences as a beginning teacher were difficult, she feels encouraged and appreciated: “They know I am sincere and care for them. They respect me for that,
and I put in my best effort for them" (29/1-30). Ying’s understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education reflect a personal bent. She was characterised as person oriented and enriching.

5.6 Summary

This chapter profiled the eight teachers and their schools. The purpose was to paint a larger picture of each of the teacher to situate his/her knowledge and practice social studies and citizenship education. The profiles of the teachers provide the contexts for the following three chapters on the characterisations of the teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education.
CHAPTER 6: TEACHERS AS NATIONALISTIC EDUCATORS

Among the eight social studies teachers, a group of four teachers could be characterised as nationalistic educators. This chapter discusses the findings and analyses of this group of teachers – Peter, Vind, Leong and Carolyn and identifies why they are dominantly nationalistic in stance.

6.1 The Nationalistic Characterisation

Nationalism was a dominant theme running through the understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education of these four teachers. Nationalism is commonly accepted as meaning support for the nation by members of that country. It is a contested concept, and there exists a continuum of nationalism (Leung & Print, 2002). While extreme forms of nationalism are problematic, moderate forms are inclusive and compatible with democracy. In the moderate form, nationalism is rational and considered important in providing the sense of common identity, belonging, membership, rootedness, solidarity, understanding and loyalty needed in a liberal society (Kymlicka, 2001; Martorella et al., 2005).

The form of nationalism Peter, Vind, Leong and Carolyn referred to in their understandings and practice was of the moderate kind. They had a sense of national consciousness in terms of knowing of and affection for the nation, a sense of unity of the nation, sharing collective memories and myths, and acceptance of core societal values. These were manifested in their attitudes in which they cared about their identity as members of the nation. They sought to sustain the nation through emphasising and achieving the national interests and goals.

But the four teachers were not homogenously nationalistic, for there were varying interpretations and operationalisations of social studies and citizenship education. The nationalistic stance is conceived of in terms of a continuum as shown in Figure 6.1 on page 125. On one end is a conservative stance and on the other end, a progressive one. Peter, Vind, Leong and Carolyn shared many salient features of the nationalistic stance in common, but they differed in the intensity and manifestations of those features. There were two distinct sub-groups within the nationalistic characterisation; one sub-group including Peter and Vind, were conservative and traditional, the other including Leong and Carolyn, were progressive and moderate.
A key finding was the variation within the nationalistic teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education. Figure 6.1 shows the variation on the continuum of nationalistic stance. Individual teachers’ understandings and practice were characterised along the continuum. On the conservative end, Peter was characterised as nationalistic and enforcing, while Vind was nationalistic and constraining, with Peter more conservative than Vind. On the progressive end lie Leong and Carolyn who were both characterised as nationalistic and progressive, with Carolyn more progressive than Leong.

6.1.1 The Conservative Nationalists

Peter’s nationalistic stance had been characterised as enforcing. Nationalism was overtly and forcefully manifested in his understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education, where the needs of the nation prevailed over that of the individual. Peter emphasised, “Social studies is nationalistic. The focus is the nation” (14/7-5). Lessons taught related directly to the nation with clear implications for the role of the citizens:

It’s about preparing Singaporeans. You must know about our country. You must understand Singapore’s past, what the government is doing and the challenges facing us. Students must know how to play a part in meeting these challenges. It’s our responsibility as citizens, what we must do for our nation (16/3-26).

Peter advocated such a stance by emphasising and urging the interests of the nation. In all lessons observed, he distilled the lessons learnt for Singapore. Often these lessons showed a stark contrast of an enlightened and efficient Singapore government vis-à-vis a less efficient and enlightened one. Even when he framed the issue as an argument opened to challenges, the accompanying tone was imbued with moral conviction of the rightness of what Singapore had done, that it always cornered students into accepting his point of view. His aim in teaching the subject was grounded in national interests. These were “purposefully and consciously taught”, because “I strongly feel that getting students to understand the issues at stake for Singapore is extremely important. I will make that come out clearly” (14/7-8).
National interests were not to be questioned but transmitted to “pull us together” and “align us to the government’s vision for the country” (16/3-4).

Although on the same conservative end, Vind presented a somewhat contrasting picture. Her nationalistic stance was hesitant at times, resulting from the tensions she felt. She made a distinction between the nation and the government in a context where the PAP government was often conflated with the state and nation. This accounted in part for the tensions. When asked what she thought about social studies, Vind responded, “Do you mean my honest thoughts? Honestly?” She laughed, “I feel the real reason is propaganda. It trains you to follow rules, and to behave in particular ways” (8/5-2). It conditioned students to think “that government policies are always good and beneficial to the people. The message is the government is always correct”. Vind highlighted, “The syllabus and textbooks present the government and their policies in the best of light. Students read and believe we have an infallible government” (28/5-3). Her image was one of governmental control, where social studies and citizenship education were contrived and constraining.

Vind reflected some critical awareness of citizenship education and social studies. Social studies was constructed by the governing elites to support a particular reality (Apple, 2004; Smith & Lovat, 2003). This awareness was not empowering but dilemmatic, as it conflicted with her consciousness of perceived accountability as a civil servant, “As a teacher, I am a civil servant, I think I shouldn’t be too critical in class” (28/5-4). She embodied the contradictions, for while she saw the necessity of developing students to be more thinking, in the same breath, she referred to the need to control, “The government wants to allow thinking, but is afraid for students to think. So they control, think within limits. What does it mean for my teaching” (28/5-26)? She self-censored, “I feel I have to present one view of thought in class. I let students take different perspectives on issues, but I still have to say we need to come back to the official line” (28/5-4). Hence, a perceived climate of control bent on maintaining the status quo blunted her critical awareness and constrained meaningful teaching and learning. Vind resigned reluctantly to support the official line towards the nation. She chose the safer way of following the syllabus closely and by focusing on the examination. She rationalised that even if the government imposed and controlled, the benefits to the nation outweighed the costs to individuals, such as curbing personal
freedom to ensure national security. Thus, this made the controlling measures acceptable in light of the costs-benefits to the nation.

There were differences between the enforcing and constraining characterisations although both were conservative. Vind’s constraining understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education stemmed from the irreconcilable tensions arising from a critical awareness in a perceived conservative climate. While she was supportive of the nation-building purposes of social studies, she was also wary of the propagandistic use by the government. If she taught in a constraining manner, it was circumstantial rather than a conviction to constrain and control, and a reality independent of her deliberate doing. She too was subjected to the constraining forces of the curriculum. In contrast, Peter’s characterisation as enforcing was purposeful. He not only understood social studies and citizenship education as nationalistic, but took on the advocacy role. Enforcing was thus a reality of his deliberate doing.

The conservative nationalistic stance was top-down in nature, as Peter said, “it’s putting together a package to direct someone to feel nationalistic, a prescribed tablet that you take to make you react in that way” (16/3-3). Students were envisaged to be passive and accepting, storing up information and skills for later use.

6.1.2 The Progressive Nationalists

Leong and Carolyn were progressive, but their reference remained unmistakably the nation. The distinctive feature of the progressive characterisation was its emphasis on thinking to ensure the progress of the nation. It envisaged a more active and participative role for the students in the nation-building process, where social studies and citizenship education were understood to build the capacity for bottom-up support for the process.

The sovereignty of the nation was the unflinching priority in Leong’s understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education. He differentiated the survival of the nation from that of the political party or government: “It is about the continuity of Singapore our nation and not political party or government” (1/3-35). Leong explained the abstract idea of the nation in terms of the society, thereby making it easier for students to see they had a tangible part to play in ensuring the well-being of the society they lived in:
Through our actions, attitudes and responses, we can influence how our society becomes. It starts from us. Take discrimination, some people accept it as fate. If they respond this way, our society will stagnate. But if they respond in another way, it may change and progress. We can shape our society, it depends on our attitudes (1/3-4).

Characteristic of the progressive stance, Leong encouraged “students to be questioning. If they do not think about issues, they will become complacent. In a crisis they don’t know how to respond and this threatens our survival as a nation” (1/3-19). The point was to develop a rational and self-disciplined individual firmly rooted in the nation. Questioning reinforced conviction for the nation: “You confirm the validity of our values and way of life. The nation will be robust when these are tested and stand true” (1/3-17). Consequently, he often used simulation activities to help students think through different scenarios.

Carolyn emphasised choice in her understanding and practice of social studies and citizenship education. “Thinking and reasoning for informed decision-making, in the context of their lives and the country - that’s what social studies is” (15/3-33). Her nationalistic stance was more overtly manifested in her teaching than articulated in the interviews. She often raised issues for class discussions, the focus was to rationalise policy choices. The value of social studies lay in the broadening effects on students: “I felt it was a good subject, it allowed students to read about issues outside of Singapore. I was concerned that students are narrow in their understanding” (15/3-2). She attempted to develop the interest for global issues which suggested a more cosmopolitan outlook in her nationalistic stance (Leung & Print, 2002). The focus was the betterment of the nation, but expanding the scope to include the global community.

Both Leong and Carolyn were characterised as progressive but they also showed distinct emphases. Leong emphasised the participation of the people in shaping society, while Carolyn paid attention to the broadening nature. Leong was more overt in articulating a nationalistic citizenship than Carolyn.

6.1.3 A Dominant Conforming Position

The nationalistic stance reflected a dominantly conforming curriculum position (MacNaughton, 2003). The salient idea in teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education was that education should be useful to society and meet its needs. The teachers believed that the purpose of education was to achieve national social goals. They accepted that the government defined the roles and
purposes within education to ensure that national goals and values were maintained. Peter captured this point, “Social studies helps students understand our national goals and priorities, that is, what the government’s direction for our country is. It aligns students to the national vision, so that everyone works together to stay ahead” (14/7-6).

The conforming position was concerned with controlling how things happened. This led to knowledge that conformed to existing understandings and practice. The emphasis was on reproducing the understandings, skills and values to enable the continuity of the society (MacNaughton, 2003). Leong’s excerpt is evident:

It’s helping our students acquire a set of correct understandings and values to function well in society. If they do not perceive the right information or hold certain social values, we may end up with past mistakes again. But if everybody keeps to the dos and the don’ts of what they learn, then there won’t be any problems to our current status (1/3-5).

Consequently, citizenship education through social studies was a process of socialisation. This foregrounds the idea that a key aim of schooling via citizenship education and social studies is to induct students into a common set of experiences.

Aspects of the nationalistic teachers’ understandings and practice were identified as reforming, particularly with thinking. But thinking was built on a dominantly conforming nationalistic stance. Teachers believed that education should produce a rational, thinking and self-disciplined individual for the nation. Ideas of constructivism and interaction focused on prior knowledge and active learning were emphasised. A reforming position was inclined towards improving conditions within the socio-political milieu. Leong’s example is illustrative:

We need to think of how we can improve our society. Let’s take transparency. We are taught that transparency helps prevent corruption. Past examples are used to illustrate this. I can use this principle to measure against all areas of government to improve. It is reported that many ministries are ill-disciplined in their auditing. We can use this principle to help streamline and improve this in the ministries (1/3-5).

Teachers’ understandings and practice did not challenge the status quo because they were making sense and working within the existing power structures. Logically, they constructed meanings in ways mediated by the power relations embedded in it.

6.2 Teachers’ Conceptualisations of Social Studies

This section discusses the findings of the nationalistic teachers’ conceptualisations of social studies. Two themes emerged - the primary theme was social studies as a
vehicle for citizenship transmission, and the subsidiary theme was social studies as a school subject. Teachers’ conceptualisations referred to two aspects; one focused on social studies as a subject, and the other was concerned with the subject matter. These were interrelated, as one’s conceptualisation of social studies influenced his/her understanding of the subject matter. Thus they are discussed together.

6.2.1 Social Studies as a Vehicle for Citizenship Transmission

This theme focused on the relationship of social studies to citizenship education. The ability to see the link invariably governed attitudes as to what was taught, how it was taught, and the outcomes of the intended learning. The nationalistic teachers conceptualised social studies as synonymous with citizenship education, in which three features were distinct. Firstly, purpose was the basic criterion used in defining the relationship between social studies and the nationalistic goals; secondly, transmission was the dominant approach; and thirdly, the nation’s past was emphasised. For all four teachers, the focus of social studies was ostensibly the needs of the nation, where individual needs were secondary to that of the nation. Their common refrain was the need for citizens to work together to protect the national interests. In this sense, the nationalistic teachers were reproductive in mindset.

6.2.1.1 Citizenship Purpose as Basic Criterion for Social Studies

For the nationalistic teachers, purpose was the basic criterion used in defining the relationship between social studies and citizenship education. Gender was the differentiating variable more than the continuum of nationalistic stance. Peter and Leong were lucid in conceptualising social studies as citizenship education. Peter said, “In teaching social studies, I am preparing students to be citizens for Singapore, social studies is citizenship education” (16/3-30). Leong echoed, “Social studies and citizenship education are linked” (1/3-33). The nationalistic goals were the explicit focus, where the nation was the fulcrum hinging social studies and citizenship education. Peter stated, “I consider social studies as citizenship education, it’s educating students about our national interests. It’s NE and social studies is the academic part of preparing students for the nation” (14/7-5). In practice, Peter was overt in exhorting citizenship education, while Leong weaved it into his teaching, doing it more implicitly.
In Singapore, National Service is compulsory for all male citizens who have to undergo two years of full-time military service at age 19, followed by reservist training until the age of 50. How Peter and Leong saw themselves as social studies educators was in part influenced by their National Service experiences. In his lessons, Leong often shared examples of his army experiences. Peter talked about the impact of National Service that explained his conviction and enforcing characterisation:

What I’ve gone through in the army left a powerful impact. It’s a feeling of strength in unity. It’s hard to describe unless you are part of it. You see it, it’s visual - the flag, weapons, power, and what your country has that you never realised. You see and feel the safety in numbers, the soldiers coming together to train to defend Singapore. I realised what this army is about, what we are capable of if we stand together, and I want to impart that to my students (16/3-24).

Peter was the most purposeful in his conceptualisation of social studies as citizenship education to achieve the nationalistic goals:

Social studies is about engendering the nation, to get students to understand where they came from, where we are going, and how they can contribute towards the nation. It’s a means to an end. It is nationalistic and purposeful, you are to learn about our nation. That’s very clear and that’s what I do in my classes (16/3-3).

He was driven by the concern that younger Singaporeans lacked the emotional attachment to the nation, without which he believed, weakened the nation. Peter’s conviction was built on the ideological consensus with the state and its construction of reality around national interests (Apple, 2004; Chua, 1995; Kho, 2004). This lent strength to the purpose of social studies as citizenship education that was mission-like. On the other hand, Leong’s purpose was less deterministic and controlling. For Leong, “citizenship education goes beyond social studies”. He saw social studies to be limited as “it is theoretical, where the important facts become meaningful only when applied” (1/3-33). Therefore, he used simulation activities to give students experiences to help them feel for the nation.

Although Vind and Carolyn knew that social studies was introduced in the context of NE, their initial responses regarding social studies, NE and citizenship education were quite uninformed. This indicated a general lack of understanding about the purpose of social studies. They explained they had not been introduced to citizenship education in their teacher education nor by the MOE. Carolyn said, “The social studies syllabus doesn’t really talk about citizenship, does it? I’ve not seen it, is there something I’ve missed”? She continued, “I honestly have no idea. The MOE did talk about NE, but they just said, these are the six messages, as you teach, talk about them. Is that
citizenship education in social studies” (15/3-34)? She was not able to draw the connection among the three in a definitive way. Similarly, Vind also missed the point, “Social studies as citizenship education? Actually I didn’t see that link. But now that you say, yes, I see it now” (28/5-38).

The connection Carolyn and Vind made between social studies and citizenship education was tacit and accidental. Carolyn noted, “I think unknowingly some of us are teaching citizenship education through social studies”. The reason was that teachers were not exposed to the discourse on citizenship education and social studies in teacher education nor were there clear MOE guidelines on the approach. She added, “There are no details in the syllabus. We taught according to our beliefs. A structure would be good to give a frame of reference. Right now the link between social studies and citizenship education is just off the cuff, what I think this topic lends itself, in areas I know” (15/3-35). Similarly, Vind admitted, “It’s at the subconscious level that I know what students are learning is for citizenship. But, exactly in what ways, and how, is never really articulated” (28/5-38).

Vind and Carolyn did not state the relationship in the interviews. They had to be probed, and the relationship inferred from what they said and through the lessons observed. As the teachers became familiar with the concept of citizenship, they were also more confident in understanding how social studies and citizenship education related. Carolyn said, “Initially, I have no idea what citizenship education is in social studies. But now that I am aware, then I will say yes, I’ve been teaching it all along, that’s the purpose of social studies” (15/3-48). Both teachers were able to describe social studies in which the meaning was clearly that of preparing students in a select body of knowledge, skills and values necessary for functioning in the nation. Embedded within their understanding and practice of social studies were assumptions focusing on the nation.

Vind’s purpose was muted by her awareness of social studies as a tool for control. Yet, in a conservative educational climate, her critical awareness was rendered powerless to address the issue. Consequently, she taught to the examination and inevitably implicated as a pawn in fulfilling the agenda of controlling. Carolyn gave more scope to the role of individual agency in purposing. Citizenship education was taught as a naturally occurring process in social studies. This was because the goals of citizenship education aligned to her beliefs about education and social studies. For example,
Carolyn’s pedagogical preference for small group discussions was grounded in her belief in active and student-centred learning. But these approaches were also recognised as pedagogically sound in developing active citizenship (Torney-Purta, et.al., 1999, 2001).

6.2.1.2 Citizenship Transmission Approach

The nationalistic teachers adopted a citizenship transmission approach to social studies. The intention was to inculcate in students certain values, beliefs and convictions about the nation via the teaching of selected pieces of information to represent reality in particular ways. Peter’s excerpt illustrates this:

You put together a package to teach them to feel nationalistic. It has to be taught as our students have not gone through difficult times, so they have no ideas and experiences that can pull them together. Because they don’t have a base, we need to package in a way to shape how they are to understand and respond to what happened as citizens. Social studies is to make students understand about the nation and their role as citizens (16/3-3).

On the progressive end, Carolyn’s understanding and practice also suggested socialising students into the core societal values and behaviors: “There are many good values in social studies that students learn - filial piety, family values, racial harmony, community before self, dutiful. I inculcate these values” (2/7-4). A somewhat critical perspective was held by Vind, who saw transmission as controlling in that discrete pieces of information were selected or omitted to construct a particular reality:

It shows other countries in a bad light. Students think that Sri Lanka is awful and racist. This is not the whole truth. We always compare ourselves to countries worse than us, purposely so that students see and then say - we are so good, look at them, they are terrible. If we are not careful, that’s how we will end up. So social studies shows students what and how to think and act (28/5-8).

In the above examples, the assumption was that the authority possessed the ideal conception of society and citizenship that must be transmitted to students to help them become loyal believers in the particular set of truths. The idea was to reproduce the understandings and values to enable society to reproduce itself. This was deemed necessary for the survival of the nation (Feinberg, 1983).

As social studies was introduced in the context of NE, teachers regarded it as the platform for the transmission of the set of government ‘approved’ truths, in terms of the salient knowledge, values and attitudes, and desired outcomes discussed earlier in Chapter Four. These truths were equated with acceptance and internalisation of the mainstream values, obedience to laws, and participation in approved activities in
order to preserve the peace and stability of the nation. Simultaneously, this also maintained the political order and status quo. Peter reflected this attitude in fearing to overstep into perceived out-of-bounds areas:

R: When students come up with an opposing points of view, what do you do? Do you encourage students to make it known, to participate.... (Peter interrupted)
P: Oh no, that I don’t do. If I did that, then I will be going a bit far....no way. No, no, I don’t do that, I steer away from these areas (16/3-18).

Among the four teachers, a range of citizenship transmitters existed. The conservative teachers were more doctrinaire than the progressive ones. The conservative teachers linked social studies closely with NE. Peter saw social studies as synonymous with NE, he said, “Social studies is similar to NE” (16/3-2). He used social studies and NE interchangeably and sought to categorically transmit the entire set of truths embodied in NE. National issues framed by NE dominated his lessons. He believed that the “MOE has stated the rationale for social studies, the teacher must align to it and not have a different opinion” (16/3-8).

On the other hand, Vind seldom talked about social studies in terms of NE. Instead, she saw social studies as a controlling mechanism of the government. It indoctrinated students to believe that the government was always good. Nonetheless, she ‘played safe’ by following the syllabus closely and in doing so, approached it as citizenship transmission. Further, she team taught with Peter, and used the materials he prepared that had an NE bias. Even if she prepared her own materials, she admitted the content were “sieved from the textbook” (28/5-23) produced by the MOE. In doing so, she was boxed into coupling social studies with NE.

The progressive teachers did not intertwine social studies with NE. Their conceptualisations of social studies as citizenship transmission were more mosaic. Three features were discernible: a broader scope of citizenship, evidence of counterculturalisation, and selectivity of the knowledge and values to be transmitted. Citizenship and national ideals were stressed, but through the ability to rationalise and decide. Leong’s understanding was an example in which he emphasised the need to validate NE by questioning the messages. In this instance, questioning NE was seen as rationalising with the intention to enhance conviction. It did not reject NE nor challenge existing power relations. Leong explained, “You must be convinced of the knowledge and values you are learning. Question and test their robustness for the sake
of the nation. If you find no fault, then accept them, hold true to the values with conviction. This is the basis for questioning (1/3-17).

Although Leong and Carolyn's conceptualisations of social studies were dominantly citizenship transmission, both shared aspects of reflective inquiry and social science approaches. While Leong was keen to explain issues from the perspective of social rules and processes, influenced by his sociological training, his main focus remained socialising students into society's norms. Aspects of reflective inquiry were identified in how Carolyn saw social studies, where her lessons were issues-centred emphasising thinking and understanding. However, she maintained a transmission approach in persuading students to a point of view. Further, influenced by her religion, she also felt ambiguous about challenging authority. Nonetheless, by not coupling social studies with NE, Carolyn was able to broaden her scope and be more selective of the knowledge and values to emphasise. She was concerned with the concept of interdependence, manifested in terms of developing broadmindedness, a more global outlook, and concerns with environmental issues. To a large extent, this was influenced by her disciplinary and professional training in geography. Noteworthy, her overriding goal of national survival framed the global outlook.

6.2.1.3 Significance of the Nation's Past

National history was referred to as 'the nation's past', and it was pivotal in the teachers' understandings of social studies and its subject matter. They distinguished that from history per se. Leong's description was a common understanding among the nationalistic teachers: "For history, it's about the concepts and skills in understanding the past. But for social studies, the focus is the present, and the role of the nation's past is a way of getting into the present" (1/3-9). While the teachers saw the close connection between history and social studies, all but one used issues-based rather than the chronological approach in teaching. This further suggested the teachers' ability to appreciate the purpose of using the nation's past as the subject matter of social studies. Peter explained:

In social studies, we're not memorising the timeline, nor interested in the facts or concepts - which warship fought against which little trawler. We want to look at conflicts and understand the causes why countries fight. Then ask ourselves, how does it apply to Singapore, what can we learn to prevent us from slipping into that state (16/3-21).

The subject matter of social studies was understood to focus on the nation's past in two ways: Firstly, the nation's past was foundational for understanding the present
and guiding the future. Leong explained, "For social studies, we learn from the past to look towards the future" (1/3-9); Carolyn concurred, "You must start with the historical perspective for the context to understand the present. See the past and present in relation, and as a base to look into the future" (15/3-6).

In deriving examples of the past to inform the present, the teachers adopted a conservative attitude towards the subject matter. The subject matter was the medium for socialising students, guiding present and future behaviours grounded in the past experiences of the society. The assumption was that the subject matter was constant and timeless. Vind used the example of "the racial riots that happened in the past" (28/5-9), with the belief that awareness of the riots helped people behave in ways to avoid future clashes that threaten peace and stability. This piece of history was understood without controversy and taken out of context, the purpose was to preserve prevailing practices and values for social cohesion. This suggested that teachers' understandings of the subject matter were focused on maintaining and strengthening the status quo.

The conservative teachers were less questioning of using the past to inform the present. Peter, characterised as enforcing, was openly supportive and non-challenging. He believed that knowing the nation's past helped students appreciate the government, and therefore "aligns citizens to their vision" (16/3-4). He felt "very optimistic, this way of life is good. I am happy I have this government. I am willing to support their way of doing things and the mindset. I hope everybody will" (15/9-8). Hence, the meanings Peter constructed were associated with those who have the most power within the culture to articulate and circulate meanings (Freire, 1970). Characterised as constraining, Vind saw herself a product of socialisation, a state which she found difficult to transcend. The progressive teachers reasoned and rationalised than accept at face value. For example, Leong reasoned why it was futile to use protest to precipitate change, tracing back to past examples of violence:

Will protest work in Singapore? No, protest will not work here. If they protest, then they have not learnt from the past. From history, every state that wanted independence first went through peaceful means, when they failed they protested which often led to violence. Is it worth it? Look at past examples. In the end, what is the cost? Then look at Singapore, did we go through that stage? No, we did not. We asked, rejected the first time. So we asked a second time, third time, fourth time, finally we tried to find other ways, go around the problem, and resolve the issue without violence (1/3-8).
Similarly, Carolyn focused on making informed decisions with the benefit of hindsight: “The textbook shows what happened. But you need to draw from it, and decide how to go from there” (15/3-23).

Secondly, the teachers concurred on the significance of the Singapore Story as essential subject matter to augment nationalism. Peter’s statement was typical: “This phase of history must be taught. We have no common experiences to pull us together. Experiences build ideas, thoughts and feelings. We don’t have them, so we need to create the Singapore Story to make them feel the emotional attachment and rootedness to Singapore, to support what we are doing” (16/3-28). Similarly, Leong explained:

Politically, we can’t do without an official history. Even today, there are still people who question why we broke up with Malaysia. We were kicked out! We are so vulnerable, and once we are not careful, our neighbours can stomp us. Hence, students need to know. Learning about the Singapore Story makes us aware we need to protect our sovereign country (23/6-16).

History was used discursively as a trajectory to promote national sentiments and was an ideologically loaded practice. The teachers knew that the Singapore Story focused only on a selected aspect of Singapore history and from the dominant political viewpoint. But none except Vind saw the subject matter to be problematic. They did not find the scope limiting nor the biases an issue. Generally, the teachers were accepting of the Singapore Story as the definitive nation’s past. Reality was accepted as that which the authorities constructed to meet predetermined needs. The teachers were consumers of the meanings and conclusions given in the subject matter. The conservative teachers accepted the subject matter as given, while the progressive teachers interacted with the subject matter by rationalising to deepen conviction.

Peter was not skeptical of the selection and organisation of knowledge. He was insistent on the deliberateness of the subject matter and keen for information to be presented “in bite size” (16/3-24) to target for a precise outcome. Hence, the body of knowledge was necessarily fixed and not opened to interpretations and challenges, where the subject matter of the Singapore Story was indisputable facts. Peter was dismissive of the suggestion that the Singapore Story was propaganda. He felt the biases were necessary for cultivating a shared understanding. Vind, on the other hand, was resigned to accepting the authority of the Singapore Story. She was conscious of the manipulative nature of the nation’s past. She described the issues as controversial,
yet she could not construct any meanings as she liked of the subject matter, hindered by the need to uphold the status quo.

Although progressive, Leong also did not find the discursive use of history problematic. Unlike Peter who focused on the government, Leong’s loyalty was clearly to the nation. The Singapore Story educated students on the vulnerabilities that could threaten Singapore’s sovereignty, these were the “important facts which must guide their thinking” (1/3-17). Therefore they were to be accepted as truths. This limited the extent of thinking and interaction with the subject matter. In one lesson, what started out as an open debate on governance ended with Leong justifying the principles of good governance. He denied that the subject matter of the Singapore Story was politically motivated.

By contrast, Carolyn was more tacit in acknowledging the authority of the nation’s past. That the Singapore Story was problematic did not cross her mind. She highlighted she was not history trained, therefore not as familiar with the subject matter. But it was less an issue of familiarity than the lack of a critical consciousness. She was surprised when posed the question if the Singapore Story was problematic. She was not sure how to answer:

R: Do you find the Singapore Story problematic?
C: What...problematic? You mean the history? Are there problems in the history?
R: The way that the nation’s past has been presented.
C: Oh....ok....history is history, you don’t really question much. If the government has this certain policy, and it has already implemented this policy, you can’t change it. So, shouldn’t be problematic, it’s quite informative (15/3-43).

Carolyn was also less insistent on the neutrality of the subject matter. She initially entertained the thought of propaganda, but changed her mind in the course of teaching, realising she had the independence to make the curricular and instructional decisions in enacting the curriculum.

Overall, the four teachers understood the subject matter as a defined body of knowledge that can be passed from person to person, or text to person. The nature of the subject matter was ‘detachable’, that can be possessed and also dispossessed. The knowledge can also be judged right or wrong by comparing with the ideal.
6.2.2 Social Studies as a School Subject

Social studies was identified by three out of the four teachers as a school subject rather than an academic discipline. Only Leong saw social studies in disciplinary terms: “It’s the study of society, its development, structure, interaction, and the collective behavior of different groups and their consequences” (1/3-32). Social studies was understood to be sociological, but he did not preclude interdisciplinary subject matter and methods of analysis which entailed seeing phenomena from more than one point of view. Further probing however, confirmed that for Leong, the citizenship purpose not social science, was key in his understanding of social studies.

On the other hand, Peter best illustrated the contrast between what teachers generally understood as a school subject versus a discipline: “Social studies is not a study of society. We don’t examine the society. We want to impart the knowledge of our experiences, our teaching of social studies is very focused on our experiences and what we have gone through” (14/7-5). As a school subject, three features were evident – examination, functionality and thinking.

6.2.2.1 Examination

The nationalistic teachers frequently referred to social studies as a practical school subject. Peter’s description was typical: “It’s a subject with both academic and utilitarian goals” (16/3-15). As a school subject, the attention on examination was emphasised. Carolyn said, “Social studies is a subject that is examinable with new types of questions - the source-based case study and structured essay” (15/3-10). Peter considered the examinable status an advantage, because it motivated students to take social studies seriously: “Students take social studies seriously, they study to pass it” (16/3-18). The examination raised the status of the subject.

As an examinable subject, it implied a fixed set of content and skills to be learnt, and these were derived from the syllabus and predicted from past examination questions. The teachers were able to list the topics, issues and set of skills to be taught for the examination. This reinforced the portability of the subject matter that it can be passed from teacher to student, text to student. The examinable nature encouraged an understanding of the subject matter to be knowledge-driven and cognitive focused.

Teachers were concerned with getting their students through the examinations. The conservative teachers were more overt in their emphasis on the examination, allowing
the examination to drive their teaching. Peter said, "Primarily, it is to get students to pass the social studies examination" (16/3-15). It was difficult for the conservative teachers to reconcile social studies as an examinable school subject with its citizenship goals. The immediateity of the high-stake examination often overshadowed the more abstract citizenship goals. Vind admitted that she and Peter even wrote up model answers so that students need only learn them up for the examination.

The progressive teachers were also concerned about the examination. For example, Carolyn explained, "When the topic allows, we talk about citizenship, I wouldn't deliberately do it, I've got to make sure we have time to practise the questions" (15/3-30). She also felt the burden of the examination. It was observed she focused a lot on teaching the source handling skills and constantly reminded students of the requirements of the examination. But in practice, Carolyn had spent more time and seized many more opportunities than what she believed, to teach citizenship. This was because the citizenship purpose aligned with her understanding of the purpose of social studies.

6.2.2.2 Functionality

As a school subject, the subject matter of social studies was understood and valued more for its functionality than its intellectual essence. Consequently, no distinct and coherent disciplines guided the subject matter. Instead, the selection and organisation of the subject matter were tactical and expedient, where content can be added or eliminated without concern for disciplinary integrity, as Vind shared, "New initiatives and content are often added, it's responsive to changing circumstances to ensure what we learn stay relevant" (28/5-9). This dovetailed conceptualisations that used purpose as a criterion. The subject matter was understood to be eclectic and not from a logic of the disciplines, but different pieces of information combined to serve the purpose of the day: "There is the historical perspective, bits of economics, something on governance, geography and current issues. It's different information put together to help students understand the issues facing Singapore" (28/5-9). The criteria for selection were it had to be Singapore focused, and real issues.

Peter's understanding of the subject matter was the most functional, deliberate and prescriptive. It was "a means to an end, to get someone to feel nationalistic" (16/3-3). Social studies was an antidote for the perceived ailment of young Singaporeans'
ignorance and indifference towards Singapore. The subject matter was curative, formulac and measured, like “a tablet that you take….a capsule” (16/3-3). Otherwise, it was “an artificial package” (14/7-29). For Peter, the subject matter was contrived and purposeful to condition students to a particular version of the past, present and future. Real issues were those useful in facilitating the development of nationalism including speeches by political leaders and policies. Similarly, the subject matter related to other countries was studied with a focus on lessons for Singapore:

Social studies is about other countries for application to Singapore. That is how I teach social studies. I start off with Singapore and the focus is always on Singapore. Even when we study other countries, at the back of our mind, we are trying to see how this can apply to Singapore, how we can learn positively, and to make sure that it doesn’t happen to us (14/7-3).

Vind understood the subject matter to be biased in presenting the achievements of the government. Further, controversial issues were sanitised. For example, on the racial and religious harmony, Vind highlighted that it was not teaching for an understanding of diversity but conditioning the message that without racial and religious harmony, Singapore would end up like Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland. This was starkly presented to warn students. Yet, she did not raise this as an issue in class, as she felt “as a teacher, it is safer to follow the official line because students are not mature enough and may sensationalise sensitive issues” (28/5-5).

Initially, Carolyn also thought that the subject matter was “propaganda kind of a thing”. However, “I went in with an open mind to see what the subject has to offer. In the process of teaching, I saw it differently. I felt the subject matter was broadening” (15/3-2). Subsequently, she found the subject matter to be more dynamic than contrived because “you could relate to what’s really happening in society” (15/3-4). Carolyn felt empowered to make decisions about what and how to teach: “It is up to us to explore, and education is not limited to books” (2/7-8). For example, she was not constrained by the fact that the subject matter was “too Singapore oriented, it’s an overdose” (15/3-27). Instead, she took advantage of the functionality of the subject matter, interpreted and enacted the curriculum in the way she saw suited the context. She reorganised the topics to diffuse the Singapore focus, and tweaked the balance of the local and global emphasis in her teaching. Kerr (2003) argued that teachers need to use their professional judgement to interpret the syllabus and decide how best to approach it as there is a fine line between education and indoctrination. As a school
subject where the subject matter was more utilitarian than disciplinary, it enabled
Carolyn to maneuver than be tied down by disciplines.

6.2.2.3 Thinking

As a school subject, the thinking aspect of social studies was highlighted. All four
teachers described that the subject matter lent well to higher order thinking, because it
was organised around themes and issues, and were more open-ended. The subject
matter was understood to be more conceptual and complex. The new examination
format was seen to be more thinking, focusing on the use of sources with the
possibility of de-contextualised study. Thinking was about the ability to apply
concepts and generalisations to different contexts.

None of the teachers talked about the political dimension of thinking in social studies,
due perhaps to a lack of knowledge. Thinking was confined to the economics
dimension, and understood as skills-based, and in terms of the cognitive aspects of
problem solving (Koh, 2003). Hence, the importance of mastering the skills,
processes and procedures. Leong and Carolyn’s conceptualisations of thinking were
clear examples. Carolyn noted, “We can’t have robots, only doing things when told.
People must learn to think better to create new knowledge and products” (15/3-53).
Leong added, “Students need to be able to think out-of-the-box, to have the know­
how to solve problems and the skills to handle difficult tasks” (1/3-37). Nonetheless,
the progressive teachers’ understandings of thinking were more organic and applied
within the context of decision-making and rationalising.

Another variation was to see thinking in terms of the mastery of discrete skills and
procedures, and this was most evident in the conservative teachers’ conceptualisations.
For Peter and Vind, thinking was closely related to answering the examination
questions. They simplified the subject matter to templates and lists, where thinking
skills were reduced to a series of mechanical steps. It felt more like a mechanism for
controlling and disciplining students.

Finally, what the teachers referred to as thinking was essentially rationalising, which
sought to convince students to accept a given policy by reason, description and
persuasion. In this, the alternative was not entertained. It was not a thinking to explore
possibilities, but a thinking to accept the given. In other words, it was convergent
rather than divergent thinking. To varying extents, the teachers had this in mind.
Peter’s elaboration is illustrative: “Thinking is important in social studies. The purpose is to get students to realise what is going on, and see why they can be proud of being a Singaporean. We want students to think and decide that staying here is the best” (14/7-6).

6.3 Teachers’ Understandings of Citizenship and Citizenship Education

This section discusses the findings of the nationalistic teachers’ understandings of citizenship and citizenship education. The nationalistic teachers’ understandings of citizenship education were predicated on their conception of citizenship. The good and competent citizen was the overarching conception of citizenship, understood within the nationalistic framework, upon which a generally minimal interpretation of citizenship education was based. This section first discusses what teachers understood as the features of good and competent citizenship, after which, the teachers’ understandings of citizenship education are discussed.

6.3.1 The Good and Competent Citizen

The prevalent image in the nationalistic teachers’ understandings of citizenship was the good and competent citizen with feet firmly planted in the nation. The teachers consistently described citizenship with reference to the nation. Good citizens have a sense of national consciousness in terms of knowing of and affection for the nation, a sense of unity, are conscious of their societal obligations, and accept the core societal values. They support the nation-building efforts (Martorella et al., 2005; Leung & Print, 2000). Peter noted, “Citizenship is about loyalty, belonging, a feeling of togetherness as Singaporeans, upholding harmony, peace, understanding one another’s race and religion, working for a common goal to build a nation” (16/3-26).

For all four nationalistic teachers, two essential qualities of good citizenship were frequently mentioned, loyalty and patriotism. Leong explained, “The most important quality of citizenship is loyalty. People sing the national anthem and say the pledge with fervour, but when there is a crisis, they leave the country. Loyalty makes the difference, it makes him stay and fight” (1/3-30). Peter noted the importance of patriotism, “There must be love and devotion for the country” (16/3-16). The teachers did not distinguish between loyalty and patriotism, with both the conservative and progressive teachers using the terms interchangeably. Good citizens also obey authority. Carolyn noted, “Obey the rules, do it for the good of everyone else, and
understand the reasons for it” (2/7-9). Leong agreed, “Obey the law, but know the reason for why there is no chewing gum, littering, spitting” (1/3-31). The progressive teachers focused more on understanding the law than the conservative teachers, as Vind highlighted, “A good citizen obeys and accepts the law, follows the rules, and not do anything to cause problems” (28/5-24). Good citizens also place the nation above self. Carolyn explained:

The soldiers leaving for Iraq have to accept the authority and go. Whether they can return home was irrelevant. It is doing what is best for the country. Sometimes, it requires you to put the country above yourself. This is what good citizenship and sacrifice for the country is (15/3-44).

The four teachers understood citizenship to be about the relationship between the government and people. The government was seen as paternalistic, stable and pragmatic, and providing for the people. In return, good citizens should feel appreciative and supportive of the government. Carolyn said, “I wanted students to see they have benefited from the government and appreciate it. Go beyond the taxes and restrictions, look at the fact that we are secure and protected, stable and peaceful, we have jobs and homes” (15/3-30). Peter concurred, “Be optimistic with the government’s vision for Singapore, support the mindset” (15/9-9). To challenge the status quo was not considered good citizenship. Leong and Peter’s excerpts illustrated this; Leong stated, “It is the citizen’s duty to support and trust the government to bring us to a higher standard. For the sake of the nation, we cannot undermine the government” (1/3-24). Peter added, “Citizens must understand and align themselves to the government’s vision for the nation, so that we work together to stay ahead. You are not a good team player if you don’t” (16/3-4).

Perhaps surprisingly in the context of Singapore, all four nationalistic teachers understood good citizenship not to be a state of passivity, but an active condition. Vind highlighted this:

A good citizen takes an interest in what’s happening in Singapore. Awareness is the first step in realising that things happening do affect me. Then understand that I have a part to play, I can do something and I want to do something about it. I should get up and influence things that concern me, in areas I am able to (28/5-25).

Within the nationalistic framework, active citizenship meant taking an active role in supporting the nation-building process. This included bottom-up initiative to organise
activities to improve the community and secure the progress of the nation. Citizenship participation would be discussed later in this section.

Good citizens were also competent citizens. The teachers understood it to mean possessing a repertoire of thinking, problem solving and interpersonal skills. Carolyn explained, “He is able to think, reason, and make informed decisions, he knows how to evaluate given information” (15/3-44). Teachers also emphasised the interpersonal skills of cooperation to facilitate teamwork, seen in light of preparing for future work life. The progressive teachers consistently used group work for this purpose. It was not the case with the conservative teachers, for individual seatwork was often used to facilitate mastery learning. Nonetheless, all four teachers agreed that good citizenship was primarily about meeting the obligations towards the nation and accepting the core societal values. There was little evidence of citizenship as directed to the political sphere. Overall, a major focus of teachers’ understanding and practice was the meaning of being a good and competent citizen.

6.3.2 A Sense of National Identity

Citizenship was understood most clearly as national identity. Identity was defined in national terms with the nation as the basis. It “is being Singaporean” as opposed to non-Singaporean, the concerns were with, “Who am I? What does it mean to be a Singaporean” (2/7-12)? Identity was exclusive and geographically located. Leong’s understanding illustrated this: “I think of citizenship in terms of defending the nation. It is tied to the nation. If the nation is there, you are a citizen. We must protect the land, it validates us and gives us our identity” (23/4-26).

Despite multiple and overlapping identities, such as ethnic and religious, national identity remained dominant. Leong and Carolyn are Chinese by race, which is the largest ethnic group in Singapore, but they seldom thought of themselves in ethnic terms. This was particularly the case with the ethnic minority teachers, Peter and Vind, who never described their identities in terms of their race or religion. When asked what he understood as citizenship, Peter spontaneously answered Singaporean. Vind shared, “I mix around well, and my best friends are not from my race” (28/5-18). When probed, they insisted they were Singaporeans and avoided the ethnicity issue. Both teachers were uncomfortable talking about their ethnicity. They believed it was not politically correct, as this was “individualising tendencies” (16/3-26). They
associated national identity with the unity of the nation by engendering a strong sense of community and identification with others who have similar experiences, commitments, and aspirations. Consequently, they emphasised the commonalities at the expense of recognising the differences, suggesting that identity was problematic.

National identity was understood to relate to a sense of belonging and patriotism, often described more in terms of intrinsic feelings. Carolyn felt strongly that “if the person is not touched in the heart, and do not feel committed to the nation, then it is hard for him to stay in Singapore and feel proud to be a Singaporean” (2/7-13). Peter described it as feelings of attachment, togetherness and shared destiny; Leong understood as loyalty and defence; and Vind as caring for the nation. Patriotism also surfaced strongly in teachers’ understandings of citizenship. Leong linked patriotism to national identity, treating national symbols with utmost respect:

As a Singaporean, I will respect the country, the code of arms, sing the national anthem, show and pledge loyalty to the country by defending it. By doing so, I am constantly reminded of my national identity, the sovereignty of my country, and the need to protect its sovereignty otherwise, I lose my identity (23/6-16)

Others emphasised the feeling of love and pride for the country because of the values and principles Singapore stood for. Carolyn also talked about contributing back to the society as important in reinforcing commitment to the society.

Despite the global connectedness (Aggarwal, 2005), the impact did not influence how teachers understood citizenship identity. None of the teachers understood the global dimension to citizenship. Even Carolyn’s objective to help students be more globally aware was Singapore-focused and not about developing a global citizenship.

6.3.3 Responsibilities, Obligations and Duties to the Nation

Citizenship was understood in terms of responsibilities to the nation, where good citizenship was fulfilling the responsibilities owed to the nation. Leong stated, “Being a citizen means there are duties you have to carry out, obligations you have to fulfill and responsibilities you need to perform” (1/3-29). These responsibilities, obligations and duties were non-negotiable as they were fundamental to the survival of the nation. Leong’s point about National Service is illustrative: “It is the fundamental duty of citizens to look after the land, without which there is no citizenship. National Service is the citizen’s duty. When the need arises, the boys will be called up to fight and
defend. No question about it" (23/6-24). Although Leong was resolute, in practice, he was not imposing on students.

Among the nationalistic teachers, Vind adopted the most passive view of responsibilities: "It is something required of everybody, obey laws, pay taxes and vote" (28/5-25). This passive state was reflected in the way she simply followed the syllabus in teaching. In contrast, Peter’s understanding of responsibilities was more active but with condescension. Responsibilities were entrusted to all citizens, but he believed only the able citizens were privileged to lead, the rest were to follow: "The better ones must take charge, assume leadership positions, while it is the responsibility of the rest to support and follow the leaders" (16/3-32). He gave students little opportunities to exercise responsibilities in class, and often imposed his views on them. Carolyn’s idea of responsibility was the most thoughtful, described as the act of contributing back to the society. This suggested a level of agency, willingness and commitment rather than coercion in performing the responsibilities.

Citizenship was not understood from the individualist perspective. There was little understanding of the individual as a citizen as is the basis of most western democracy such as the U.S. and Australia. Instead, the nationalistic understanding of citizenship was civic republican in tradition (Hill & Lian, 1995; Oldfield, 1998). Individual rights were not significant. The teachers were quite uninformed about rights; none of them brought up rights unless asked, neither could they explain confidently. The following interview with Vind illustrates the point:

R: What about rights and citizenship, you have not talked about rights.
V: Ur....rights....like voting? Freedom of speech kind of thing? No, no, I didn't think about rights. I supposed I was putting myself in the context here where we seldom talk about rights. We are not very concerned about individual rights. So no, rights didn't come to my mind. I supposed I do have rights, but they are not sacred. Those things don't really matter, we value bread-and-butter issues, as long as my job is safe, I have money, very materialistic (18/5-47).

The teachers referred to benefits bestowed by a benevolent government in exchange for good behavior within a paternalistic framework. Scholars noted the Asian character in this (Gopinathan & Sharpe, 2004; Kennedy, 2004; Lee & Fouts, 2005).

The nationalistic teachers understood participation as a responsibility to the nation. Participation was seen less as a democratic process and more as a nation-building process. It was not a political skill, thus not talked about in the context of the political dimension. The conservative teachers saw political participation to be an out-of-
bounds area. Vind also rationalised that Singaporeans were also indifferent towards public issues, preferring to defer to the government. The progressive teachers, on the other hand, focused participation towards contributing to the economy.

A sociological functionalist perspective informed the conservative teachers’ understandings of citizenship participation. Roles were prescribed and predetermined, and participation was of a less active form. Peter’s elaboration is illustrative:

As a student, your role is to study hard, get good results, a job, and contribute to the economy. In this way, you help Singapore to move ahead. Every citizen has a role to play and you must know your role. As a teacher, my role is to teach students to the best of my ability. In Singapore, every citizen is important, no one can say, I am going to take a rest. If one does that, we are short of that effort. Every citizen must perform his role to the best of his ability. This is responsible participation for the nation (16/3-35).

Vind talked about participation in more passive terms: “To participate is to follow the rules and behave in ways that are expected of you, that’s the way it has been here” (28/5-24). Further, both also defined participation in knowledge and cognitive terms, in which a citizen who stayed informed of and had an opinion on issues in the country was already considered participation. It was a state of awareness rather than actual action. Vind explained, “Participation was for later, when they grow up as adult citizens, when they go out to work” (28/5-25).

In contrast, participation was understood in more active terms by the progressive teachers. Leong and Carolyn defined participation in terms of voluntary work in the local community, with little focus on the national level. Leong emphasised the attitude of gratitude:

You enjoyed the benefits of being looked after by the government, it’s a responsibility to look after the less privileged. It’s community service. What you are experiencing is because your parents provided for you. So you should be responsible to participate in taking care of others in our society (1/3-32).

For Carolyn, participation was synonymous with contribution, the emphasis was on being a useful citizen. She understood participation as the responsibility of every citizen to contribute and give back to the nation. For example:

To participate means to contribute to the community. There are small and big ways of participating; small ones like personal responsibility, like don’t litter. The big ones would be contributing your effort to help others in the community. There are people who are in need, and you participate by helping those in need. This is responsible participation (2/7-12).
The nationalistic teachers' understandings and practice of responsibility and participation served the status quo by working within established social order rather than questioning it. So as not to overstep boundaries, they marked off some areas as out-of-bounds (Lim, 2005; Tan & Gopinathan, 2000).

6.3.4 Core Societal Values

The understanding was that the nation needed a common set of core societal values to develop social cohesion. Citizenship was therefore understood as the respect for and acceptance of the core societal values embodied in the Shared Values (1991) and NE. The teachers recognised the importance of racial harmony, transparency and communitarianism in a multiracial society. The internalisation of these values was deemed unproblematic and considered ingredients of good citizenship. Good citizens were expected to live these values.

The focus of the ethnic minority teachers, Peter and Vind, had been multiracialism. Racial tolerance and harmony were salient to their understanding of citizenship. Peter described citizenship to be “living in harmony, understanding one another’s race and religion, and working together for a common future” (16/3-26). Similarly, Vind emphasised the importance of maintaining harmony amidst racial and religious differences to ensure peace and stability, “Don’t think because I am Malay, I must support Malays. You live in a multiracial society, you must learn to tolerate the other races, give and take to get along” (28/5-52). On the other hand, the progressive teachers focused less on multiracialism. For Leong, the values of honesty and transparency in governance were basic to building trust between the government and its citizens, “otherwise how can we entrust our country and lives to the government” (1/3-5)? Carolyn focused on respect which she believed must underpin the way of life in any society. Likewise, she modeled it in practice, where she treated students as individuals and with respect.

The nationalistic teachers adopted a conservative understanding towards the core societal values. Values were understood to be grounded in Singapore’s past experiences and embodied in the Singapore Story. The teachers constantly referred to the industry and foresight of the forefathers, the Japanese Occupation, the racial riots of the 1960s and so forth to justify the relevance of the core values. These values were good because they had endured through time. Leong explained, “They were shaped
and tested through several generations to have worked well for Singapore, so we must uphold them” (1/3-5). The nationalistic teachers saw these values as foundational to the peace, stability and success of Singapore and deserved to be adhered to firmly. They also regarded the core values as unproblematic truths, with Leong describing them as “the set of correct values”, “the right social values and norms” that helped citizens “behave as what the society expected of them” (1/3-5). Similarly, Peter referred to them as antidote for societal ills. Generally, they believed that contesting the core values would threaten the peace and stability of Singapore and put the nation at stake. The difference between the conservative and progressive teachers was that the former accepted these values at face value, while the latter were inclined to rationalise and select the values to emphasise.

Overall, the nationalistic teachers viewed the consequences of not adhering to the societal values in crisis proportions. This paralleled the government’s appeals to civic duty that were often expressed in crisis and survival modes (Hill & Lian, 1995). This suggested the understandings and practice of the nationalistic teachers emerged from the ideological consensus with the state. Apple’s (2004) consciousness saturation explained this phenomenon. Thus, it was commonsensical that good citizens abided by the core societal values (Chua, 1995).

6.4 A Minimal Interpretation of Citizenship Education

Patterns across the four nationalistic teachers suggested a citizenship education towards the minimalist interpretation (Kerr, 2003; MacLaughlin, 1992). Citizenship education was dominantly knowledge driven, exclusive and transmission in approach. Nonetheless, there were positive moments of a thicker citizenship education with the progressive teachers.

A major preoccupation of the nationalistic teachers was the provision of information. Citizenship transmission was the dominant approach, with the focus on transmitting a sufficient knowledge and understanding of the key issues facing the nation. Peter explained, “It is to give them the foundational knowledge of Singapore’s past to the present” (14/7-2). While the conservative teachers lectured and imposed their views on students, the progressive teachers described, persuaded and rationalised to convince students. Likewise, values were key to citizenship education where teachers believed there was a set of desirable values to be transmitted. Inculcation was the common approach to teaching values. The difference between the conservative and
progressive teachers was that the former exhorted while the latter preferred a more subtle strategy of role modeling. Essentially, citizenship education was understood as training or disciplining the good citizen towards an acceptance of the status quo (Tan & Chew, 2005). Leong’s excerpt is illustrative: “Citizenship education is learning the key knowledge and values. If citizens do not possess the right information or hold the correct values, they can destroy the society. It is to socialise them into the set of correct knowledge and values to function in society” (1/5-5).

Citizenship education was generally understood to be located within a subject in the formal curriculum. Social studies was seen as the vehicle for citizenship education. The teachers saw the advantage of locating citizenship education within a subject, as it gave context and embodied ideas that may otherwise be abstract and broad. For example, Peter explained how social studies embodied NE, locating the messages in real events and issues to help students understand. Surprisingly, none of the teachers found the examinable aspect of citizenship education to be an issue. A reason was the gap that existed between teachers’ understandings and practice, and particularly in the case of the conservative teachers. They located citizenship education in social studies, but in practice, they saw social studies as an academic subject, the “ultimate objective is to achieve the academic goals and pass the examination” (14/7-8). The progressive teachers noted the limitations of locating citizenship education within a subject and advocated a more integrated and holistic approach. They talked about the need for a more interdisciplinary and school-wide citizenship education. Hence, Leong and Carolyn’s lessons often emphasised active learning by students, and this provided to varying degrees, positive moments and possibilities for personal growth, community service and active citizenship.

The nationalistic teachers understood citizenship education to operate within the boundary of the nation-state. It was about “how to be a Singaporean” (2/7-13). The conservative teachers were explicit and doctrinaire in transmitting the ideal conception of Singaporean. They often imposed their views and didactically directed how the students should behave. Unlike them, the progressive teachers gave students space to rationalise and explore what it meant to be Singaporean. There was little support given to the global citizenship. Without a balance of global awareness, teachers’ understandings of citizenship education were more like patriotic and nationalistic education.
The nationalistic teachers’ understandings and practice of citizenship education was not entirely minimalist, as they were neither elitist nor exclusive. They believed citizenship education as important for all students through a common curriculum. The progressive teachers were more inclusive than the conservative ones. Leong held similar expectations for students in both the stronger and weaker classes, as he said, “I do not discriminate among the stronger and weaker classes. I hold similar citizenship expectations for all, everyone is capable of leadership role, not just the better ones” (1/3-42). On the other hand, Peter and Vind differentiated between the better and weaker students. Peter believed in developing leaders among the better students, while disciplining the weaker students to be obedient followers.

Overall, the conservative teachers were overtly conformist in their understandings of citizenship education, where they sought outrightly to perpetuate the status quo. By contrast, the progressive teachers were more reformist and inclined towards working for improving existing conditions within the socio-political milieu.

6.4.1 A More Thinking Citizenship Education

A secondary theme related more to the progressive teachers’ focus on developing a more thinking citizenry. Carolyn’s response was typical: “The goal is to develop people who are forthcoming, more thinking and willing to make choices” (15/3-38). Leong added, “It is to teach them to think. Many issues require them to make decisions. If they don’t know how to evaluate issues, and jump into hasty conclusions, there will be consequences for the nation” (1/3-33). For these teachers, good citizenship included the ability to think through issues independently, understand the alternatives and impact of their decisions the nation.

The teachers’ understandings suggested that thinking should not be reserved only for the elites. It was necessary to build the capacity of ordinary citizens who formed the bedrock of society. Vind, the conservative teacher, emphasised this, “Ordinary citizens need to be taught how to think and question, and not simply believe what they hear out there. What they think and do en masse can threaten the stability of our nation” (28/5-34). For the conservative teachers, developing thinking was considered in the wake of the arrest of the Jemaah Islamiah (JI) members in Singapore. This jolted them into realising the need to help students be more thinking and not be easily influenced. The logic was to protect the peace and stability of the nation. Further, Peter saw thinking to be a double-edged sword. The consequence of developing a
thinking citizenry can lead both ways: “We want our students to think and decide on their own that staying here is the best. But we also take a risk, if I think it is not worth staying, I will leave. We risk losing Singaporeans, but the benefit is conviction in one’s decisions” (14/7-6). It was the double-edged nature of thinking that led the conservative teachers to shy away from it in practice. The progressive teachers, on the other hand, were consciously developing thinking in students, where their idea of thinking was largely informed by a human capital ideology.

The approaches to teaching thinking ranged from transmission-like ones such as mastery learning, to more active learning through simulations, cooperative learning, and the initiate-response-evaluate type of questioning. The conservative teachers focused on mastery learning, while the progressive teachers used more active learning.

6.5 Teachers’ Practice of Social Studies and Citizenship Education

This section discusses the findings of how the nationalistic teachers taught citizenship education through social studies. Generally, they gave a central place to the transmission of salient knowledge and core societal values. The conservative teachers combined dominantly expository and highly structured approaches in their teaching, drawing more from the mimetic tradition (Jackson, 1985). The progressive teachers adopted a mixed approach, building reflection and thinking on transmission. Their practice drew from both the mimetic and transformative traditions. The teachers’ practice was reflective and influenced by their understandings of the subject matter. The conservative teachers viewed the subject matter as an authoritative, fixed body of knowledge, skills and values to be learnt by students. The progressive teachers were relatively constructivist towards the subject matter, giving scope for some agency.

6.5.1 The Expository and Highly Structured Approach

Characteristic of the expository and highly structured approach to teaching citizenship education through social studies was the attention to procedures and techniques. Peter and Vind explained that these helped break down complexities for easy management of information and skills. Peter added that they helped structure and discipline students’ thinking. The idea of control underlay their approach.

Overall, the conservative teachers always structured and reduced their teaching into a predictable set of procedures comprising a series of fixed steps. A general pattern was discerned. Typically, lessons were highly structured and tight; it began with
presenting the information in point form, followed by teaching particular points or skills through demonstration. Then students were drilled for mastery of the skills taught or rehearsed the points through questions posed by the teachers. They practised the skills on discrete pieces of information. Then they were tested on the ability to use the skills. Finally, the teachers allowed them to apply these knowledge and skills on the examination questions. These steps could be carried out over a series of lessons or within a single lesson. For example, in Peter’s lesson on ‘Singapore’s Separation from Malaysia’, he instructed his students on the procedure:

This is the way to learn. Know the issues first. Each issue, know only three main points. Then explain each point with a supporting detail. Two lines on the detail, no more. Then practise until these steps become automatic. After you master these steps, then I can let you practise on the exam questions. You cannot jump into the questions when you are not sure of the skills, this will confuse you, and make you answer wrongly. Listen to me, you won’t go wrong, know the steps first (P-O2).

The conservative teachers liked to devise procedures for teaching, work them into simple discrete steps or devise techniques that can be mechanically learnt and applied to different contexts, in this case, different types of questions. An extract from Peter’s third lesson illustrates this:

He instructed, "In your exams, any one of your points can replace race riots. It is possible to say ‘To what extent were the elections of 1963 the main cause?’, or ‘To what extent was the Malayan Solidarity Convention or the anti-PAP campaign’. Anyone of the questions can appear in the exams. But the method to examine them is the same. The technique to answer is the same. You learn one, you know all. If you follow the method, you will answer correctly and score well. I will teach you how to do so.

Next step, race riots is one point that the question has mentioned, but if you only talk about race riots and nothing else, you will not pass because you have not demonstrated your knowledge. You must at least show two points. We teach you to always write three, because you want to be safe. Sometimes our points are not clear, or not well developed and we lose the marks. So, it’s better to write three. If you write three points following my strategy, you will finish the answer, with time to check. Anything more, you get into trouble. Remember there is always a strategy and technique to do things (P-O3).

These procedures were transparent and simplified, the purpose was to demystify the issues and skills. The focus was not for students to understand issues in its complexities, but to reduce the issues to simplistic terms for easy control. There was always a right versus a wrong answer to learn. It was evident both teachers did not trust students to be able to construct their own understandings. The assumption was that students lacked the intellectual capacity to handle complexities. Consequently, they must be told, and trained on what and how to think.
Acronyms of the steps were often used to train students to remember. Vind reminded her students, “Remember to PEE on your question” (V-O5). The acronym related to the inference type of question; P stood for the inference, E was an evidence for the inference, and the other E stood for explanation. Further, issues were organised into a list of predicted questions for the examination. These questions were then tabulated with the main points listed in one column, the analysis in the centre, and the explanation in the last one. The causal links were clearly indicated. In this sense, complex issues were reduced to listed points. One was reminded of Peter’s description of the subject matter as “bite size” (16/3-3). Further, the utilitarian nature of the subject matter enabled teachers to strategise expediently without care or constraint of the structures of the disciplines.

Once a strategy was taught, students were then drilled into the techniques of tackling the questions. Peter and Vind constantly reminded students of the steps by recitation and elicitation. Individual seatwork was the staple, but once in a while, Peter used group work to reinforce learning. A debate and a competition to work out the best group answers for a source-based question were observed. In the former, each group was given a key point to argue as the most important cause for Singapore’s separation from Malaysia. What took place was not a debate or understanding of the different perspectives, but a mastery of their given points and adherence to the techniques for presentation that mimic the examination question. In both activities, competition with rewards of extra marks drove the teaching and learning.

Teaching was teacher-centred, frontal and didactic where information was presented to students to be learnt in a lecture format. Even though Peter told students they could challenge him, his authoritarian demeanor cowed them. Peter couched information in simple arguments, presenting each in point form without the complexities. Arguments were often presented such that the ‘correctness’ of some were unmistakable. Subsequently, templates were given to help students organise their answers coherently. Students seldom constructed their own arguments but learnt up Peter’s answers. The assumption was that he knew better, and therefore had the right to enforce his understanding. Integral to learning up the points and counterpoints, students imbibed the worldview underpinning his arguments.

Vind’s standard practice was to get the facts to the students. These facts were often presented chronologically, where she was more descriptive than analytical. She
admitted it resembled a history lesson especially like those she experienced as a student. She avoided controversial issues, using the chronological approach or sticking closely to the textbook, to maintain control over students’ discourse. In a lesson on Switzerland for example, she avoided raising the gender issue. The following is an excerpt from the lesson, where teaching and learning were constrained:

Vind showed students pictures of Swiss francs. A male student asked about the illustrations on the Swiss francs. Vind explained they were the important people in Swiss history. Another male student noted that the francs had pictures of women, “I thought important figures are men. Our Singapore dollars feature only the men.” He showed surprise that women were featured on the francs. Vind replied in an impatient tone, suggesting she wanted to close the issue, “Why not?” The student responded, “I thought only men can be the president or king.” Vind said, “Who says that? Never mind, let’s get back to....” Before she could complete her sentence, another student interrupted, “But here our presidents and prime ministers are men.” Vind, very impatient now, said, “Ok, this is not in the exam. Let’s move on to the textbook.” She quickly brought the exchange on gender, equality and possibilities of citizenship education to a close (V-O2).

A lot of what was observed in the teachers’ classrooms focused on reviewing and remembering information and skills as defined by the syllabus. This approach to teaching brought to the fore Peter’s description of the purpose of social was “to feed the mind with information” (14/7-7). The idea that there was a packaged set of knowledge to be transmitted to students to dictate the way they should think and feel towards Singapore reverberated. Similarly, Vind highlighted it was conditioning students to particular ways of thinking. Such an image conceived the subject matter as a mere set of selected information with predetermined conclusions, to be transmitted top-down and accepted by a passive recipient. This meant teachers provided the facts and students stored up the information for later use as citizens. This method amounted to disciplining for passive citizenship (Shermis & Barth, 1982).

The conservative teachers believed that discipline and proper behaviour were critical for teaching and learning. Peter explained that this was pertinent for social studies as it was a vehicle for citizenship education. It was standard protocol for Peter and Vind that when they walked into the classroom, students must have only the social studies textbooks on their desks, standing and quiet, ready to begin lessons. An extract from Vind’s third lesson illustrated this, and also typical of Peter’s classes:

When Vind entered the class, the students stood up, the noise level dropped immediately. Students did not greet her but remained standing. Vind waited for everybody to be ready. There was less fidgeting, and this indicated they were ready to start the class. She greeted the students, “Good afternoon, students”. They responded. “Ok, sit”, the students sat. There were 36 students in the class, two stood outside because they were late (V-O3).
Discipline was maintained throughout the lesson. Vind scolded students who constantly talked in class or were sarcastic to them. Peter's disciplining was more pervasive and integrated into his teaching. He walked around the class as he taught, to monitor students. He tapped on students' shoulders to ask them to answer questions, or warn them to sit up. Students appeared tense when Peter did this. Peter's head of department had described his teaching as "controlling and militaristic" (15/9-10).

Peter and Vind adopted a narrow, pro-government Singapore focus in their teaching, exhorting. Peter did it more deliberately than Vind who stuck closely to the syllabus. Peter often supplemented the textbook with policy statements and ministerial speeches, the message of which were transmitted uncritically to the students. In one lesson, he used the Prime Minister's 2004 National Day Rally Speech to launch into teaching about good governance. In all the classroom observations, Peter distilled the lessons learnt for Singapore and then related them to an NE message or value. These were taken as truths to be accepted.

For both teachers, issues were painted in binary terms, and consequences were easily traced to only a few causes. These consequences served to warn rather than to educate. Vind warned the students that if they did not think, they would easily fall prey to the JI fundamentalists. Similarly, Peter shared his racist encounter on his visit to Canada in contrast with the safety and security he felt in Singapore because of the multiracial policies. Based on one incident, he claimed he would never emigrate to Canada, and warned students to firmly uphold multiracialism as a basis for racial harmony. Both teachers used discrete pieces of information without controversy and sensitivity to the context, to construct a representation of the actual events. The purpose was to enhance the dominant viewpoint. It was more implicit than deliberate because of consciousness saturation (Apple, 2004). Consequently, students learnt little about the complex society they lived in, and even less about their role as change agents.

The expository and highly structured approach to social studies offered what Cornbleth (1982) called a technical-illusory citizenship education. This form of citizenship education focused on pre-planned series of activities to yield measurable competencies. Learning was mechanical, knowledge was standardised and right answers were predetermined. Citizenship education understood in practice comprised two distinct features; an acquisition of a body of knowledge learnt as lessons for Singapore, and a set of thinking skills reduced to mechanical steps. The illusory
aspect was evident in their emphasis on discipline, proper behaviour and passive learning. It reflected a conformist orientation with the focus on maintaining the status quo by reproducing the knowledge, skills and values. Citizenship education was not meaningfully integrated into social studies and remained unrelated to students' experiences. Citizenship education was carried out in an ad hoc manner for Vind as her focus was the examination. Despite Peter's conceptualisation of social studies as a vehicle of citizenship education, in practice, covering the syllabus took priority.

6.5.2 The Mixed Approach

Citizenship education was integral to Leong and Carolyn's philosophies for teaching. They emphasised the development of thinking and good values together with the acquisition of knowledge. Their approach was more naturalistic in contrast to the forced feeding of the conservative teachers. Four features including modeling, persuasion, relating to students' experiences and decision making were distinct.

The progressive teachers were keen to encourage students to think through the issues and rationalise available options, which reflected their understandings of the subject matter as conceptual and open to multiple perspectives. Leong and Carolyn seldom lectured in class as they felt it did not encourage active learning. Leong explained:

In lectures, the tendency is to feed information. I don't tell them everything. When they ask for notes, I won't give nor craft the arguments for them. They have to do it themselves, but I guide them. They have to think through the issues and own their learning. If you give them notes, they will remember every point in there, and regurgitate them in the answer. Good for examinations, but not good for their development, and not good for the country with citizens who don't think through issues and make informed choices themselves (1/3-13).

He stood by it even when the examination results were poor, trusting that it would eventually pay off. Similarly, Carolyn preferred a more interactive style of teaching and learning: "I don't lecture because I prefer two-way communication. Every child has some experiences he can share that relate to the issues, and I want to give him the opportunity to do so. This will start them thinking and talking" (2/7-23).

Both teachers were student-centred in their teaching focused on engagement and active learning. It was common to see the students sharing answers, engaging one another in discussions, participating in simulation exercises, and self and peer assessing. Leong and Carolyn used a lot of group work to engage students to learn actively, be more self-directed and independent in their learning. The objective was to
help students be accountable for their learning. Both teachers would not take monosyllabic responses, encouraging students to explain, elaborate, and give examples. Both teachers pushed students beyond simple recall and comprehension to higher order thinking. They wanted students to understand issues and not just to memorise the facts, even when students worked on examination questions.

Aspects of reflective inquiry were also evident with the focus on issues and sources. Carolyn taught issues through the use of sources; she integrated source handling skills with issues to focus on teaching students decision-making. Although social studies was examinable, she often broadened the applicability to life in general. For example, on the issue of Singapore’s separation from Malaysia, she asked students if Singapore should re-merge with Malaysia. This stimulated a rich discussion that reinforced understandings of the implications of such a move:

Will Singapore go back to Malaysia? There was 100% no. They discussed and won’t stop! They thought about the issues - the common market not established and so on. Then they said, “No, Singapore is so forward looking, we can’t have a pro-Malay government”. They brought up the race issues, that the country is big and not focused on what they want. They deliberated and came to a consensus. I didn’t want a yes or no answer. They related the past with the present and future. It was a good session (15/3-34).

In the final lesson on the conflicts in Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland, Carolyn got students to work in groups on the issue of citizenship, focusing on the following questions: Why is it important to be a citizen of a country? What can Singapore learn from the conflicts in Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland? The objectives of this activity was noted in her record book as to “get students to understand the importance of citizenship and its application to Singapore” (DC-4).

Leong often set up scenarios to challenge students in their responses to different conditions. His objective was to help students understand how different decisions affected societal development. Simulation activities such as housing planning, election of class committee were used in some of the lessons observed. Both Leong and Carolyn’s approach focusing on issues and decision-making were consistent with their understandings of the subject matter as conceptual and open to multiple perspectives. While they listened to different perspectives, it was clear that the final decisions often rested on the pre-established content and values. They subtly persuaded and argued why certain decision was more ‘right’ for Singapore than others. This was “informed decision-making where students arrive at the decisions understanding the reasons for them. They understand why Singapore cannot do
certain things, and focus on how they can help make it better by working within the circumstances" (2/7-18). Unlike the conservative teachers, they convinced rather than enforced their views on students.

They made the subject matter familiar to students by relating to students’ experiences. For example, Carolyn encouraged students who did work attachment to share their experiences. She used students’ experiences to launch into the topic on education with a focus on the challenges of developing resources, social mobility and so forth. On the topic of housing and population, she incorporated students’ service-learning experiences. Similarly, Leong brought students for a parliamentary session for the topic of good governance. He wanted students to see how common issues affecting the public, such as the increase in public transportation fares, were debated and decided: “Good governance matters because they make decisions on the things that affect us everyday” (23/6-32). Opportunities were given to students to think and rationalise how good governance had served them well. Students constructed their understandings of issues in Singapore within limits. Their perspectives were treated with respect by both teachers and used as integral components of their teaching. Clearly, the teachers cared what their pupils thought and felt.

Values featured strongly in Leong and Carolyn’s classes. They seamlessly integrated the core societal values into their teaching. In one of Leong’s simulation activity on class committee election, the students applied the principles of good governance. To help students value respect and cooperation, Leong and Carolyn commonly used cooperative learning structures. Group membership was regularly changed to ensure students interacted with one another. Carolyn explained to students her objective:

You are in groups to learn to respect and to work with one another. When you go out to work, you can’t choose the people to work with. If you don’t learn to interact with different people, it will be difficult later. The base for work is not Singapore only, but overseas where you work with diverse people with different value systems (C-O1).

Essentially, she was inculcating and socialising students into the societal values of multiracialism, harmony and cooperation. As well, this would enhance students’ understanding of the issues in Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland.

Both teachers also engaged in values inculcation by modeling. Respect and cooperation underlay the classroom climate in contrast to Peter and Vind’s discipline and competition. Leong and Carolyn were not condescending towards their students.
They never talked down at students, but respected every student as an individual. For Carolyn, she believed that “everyone is important, every statement can contribute” (15/3-51). They made it a point to thank students for answering questions, raising issues or in trying. Equity was also emphasised by treating students fairly and giving every student opportunity to participate in class. By doing so habitually helped students to imbibe the values. They created a trusting classroom climate for social studies lessons, where students were able to express their views openly and responsibly, learning to respect points of views that were different from theirs.

Values inculcation was consistent with their understanding of the subject matter as enduring and necessary for socialising students into the society. Because the subject matter on the Singapore Story was not recognised to be problematic, the teachers did not challenge the set of values but sought to transmit them as truths. But in line with the progressive stance, their pedagogical preference was to persuade through reasoning, rationalising, and modeling. This recognised that the subject matter was opened to multiple perspectives but only one was true and correct. Leong reasoned with students on the necessity of loyalty and patriotism on the topic of defence. In another lesson, he engaged students in questioning the NE messages to justify the value of self-reliance. Inculcation was unlike indoctrination, it was less didactic where the learner had the choice to accept or reject the offered viewpoint (Marsh, 2004).

Although citizenship education was located within social studies, Leong and Carolyn tried to make it a meaningful learning process through engaging students in their learning. The mixed approach aptly described their practice, where they used transmission in combination with more thinking and reflective pedagogies. The tendencies were conformist yet also reformist as Leong and Carolyn focused on developing the rational individual capable of independent thought and self-discipline, but grounded in the predetermined set of knowledge and values defined by the state. It is a constructive-technical citizenship education (Cornbleth, 1982). The constructive aspects were prominent in that students were engaged in a variety of activities, where comprehension was sought and content integrated and related to students’ experiences. The student’s role was an active one, where they were expected to demonstrate independence and initiative. However, the technical aspect was clearest in how knowledge was not regarded as tentative, but predetermined and fixed. Their mixed approaches were consistent with their understandings of the subject matter.
6.6 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of a group of four teachers - Peter, Vind, Leong and Carolyn, characterised as nationalistic in stance. The nation was the primary referent of teachers' understandings and practice of citizenship education and social studies. The nationalistic stance was dominantly conformist, but the four teachers were not homogenously nationalistic in their approach to social studies teaching. Peter and Vind were both conservative with Peter characterised as enforcing and Vind, constraining. Leong and Carolyn were progressive.

All four teachers conceptualised social studies as primarily a vehicle for citizenship transmission, with a secondary conceptualisation of social studies as a school subject. This implied an understanding of the subject matter as stable and enduring national facts, underpinned by a set of core societal values to be learnt and adhered to for maintaining the status quo. Teachers did not see the subject matter, particularly the Singapore Story to be problematic. The teachers generally understood the subject matter to be more utilitarian than disciplinary in nature. The good and competent citizen within the nationalistic framework was the conception upon which a more minimalist interpretation of citizenship education was predicated on. Consequently, citizenship education through social studies was often a process of socialisation.

The conservative teachers were conforming and doctrinaire, using an expository and highly structured approach to direct students' learning. On the other hand, reforming tendencies were present in the approach of the progressive teachers. They used a mixed approach of developing thinking in combination of transmission. Consequently, there were positive moments of a citizenship education extending beyond the minimalist interpretation. Overall, because the nationalistic teachers' understandings of social studies and citizenship education rested on a set of pre-established knowledge and values, they were dominantly conforming in nature. The following chapter presents a contrasting group of teachers who held the society or community rather than the nation as their reference for understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education.
CHAPTER 7: TEACHERS AS SOCIALLY CONCERNED EDUCATORS

This chapter discusses the findings and analyses related to a pair of social studies teachers – Marcus and Frida, who were characterised as socially concerned in stance.

7.1 The Socially Concerned Characterisation

Marcus and Frida sought to engage students socially and communally in their classrooms and beyond. Society was the primary referent, defined as a group of people with mutual concerns, a network of relationships, shared institutions and a common culture. Two features were distinct in both teachers’ reference to the Singapore society: the connections and interdependence among members of a heterogeneous society, and the idea of ownership and belonging. In other words, it was about social capital (Print & Coleman, 2003; Putnam, 2000). The terms society and community were used interchangeably. The socially concerned teachers’ reference to the society de-emphasised the political basis, unlike that of the nationalistic teachers’ reference to the nation that was grounded in the ideological consensus with the state.

Social concern characteristics were consistently reflected in Marcus and Frida’s understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education. These included a concern for fellow members of the community, respect for differences, building up common spaces and active participation in the community. The rationale was that “the more you participate in the community, the more you feel belonged” (23/4-38). It was important to participate actively at both the local and national levels. But in practice, participation was preponderantly locally conceived. Social concerns were those related to social relationships, responsibilities, and involvement. The language of care, cooperation, and respect gave substance to these social concerns.

The belief was that society can be reformed by developing the potential for good and reason within every student. This implies moving towards a society characterised by trustworthiness, care, initiative, and reciprocity among its members (Print & Coleman, 2003; Putnam, 2000). Social awareness was basic to nurturing social responsibility, where citizens stayed informed of social issues and recognised they have the responsibility and right to redress them to improve society. Both teachers emphasised active citizenship and took seriously the responsibility to model it with examples of
their own individual efforts. This distinguished them from the nationalistic teachers who referred to participation with little lived experiences.

From this perspective, the socially concerned teachers' key focus had been to enhance the individual's social competence. Saxe (1991) defined the social individual as a person aware of and engaged in the needs of the group as opposed to the promotion of self-interest. Such an individual would be conscious of the welfare of others and the wider society, acting accordingly to further the common good. Marcus and Frida were concerned that for society to progress, the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that students possess must be guided by sensitivity to the welfare of others and the common good. Thus, the moral dimension of citizenship was emphasised, that there was more to being a citizen than satisfying the requirements of personal morality.

Marcus and Frida's references to the common good and social awareness did not indicate a nationalistic commitment. Instead, they were expressions of obligations and responsibilities towards others for their own sake, because they argued that was how people should behave one towards the other. Consequently, references to communities within which lives were passed, participation in local causes and concerns, emphases on cooperation and reciprocity, and the pursuit of the common good, characterised the socially concerned stance.

Marcus and Frida were more homogenous in their manifestations of the socially concerned stance than the nationalistic teachers. They were similarly concerned about engaging students socially and communally, which may be attributed to a critical understanding of the government-people relationship in Singapore. Both teachers shared similar concerns that people were indifferent towards social issues, and were detached from their community, a result of pragmatic policies adopted by the paternalistic and authoritarian government. Marcus highlighted:

The government has always decided for us. This breeds the mentality to defer to it. We are reluctant to take responsibility for issues affecting us. The government will take care of the problems, we don't see them as our issues. We have become disengaged. But can't blame us, we are always told, bread-and-butter issues are what matters - your job, family, house, car, leave the rest to the state. So, focus on things that will help you get your next promotion (27/4-54).

Frida concurred, “All policies are made by the government. We simply accept and don't question. We are dormant, disinterestedly accepting. It's easier to allow someone to decide for you, just blame him if things go wrong. But this gives the
government a free hand" (23/3-21). Thus, the socially concerned stance was grounded in the desire to re-engage people back to their community.

They attributed their conviction to the enduring influence of the social science training they received in their undergraduate studies. Frida shared, “I want to teach social studies. It's like what I studied at the university. When social studies was introduced, I was so excited, finally, there is a social science subject in the schools” (9/7-6). Marcus asked to teach social studies. He did what was not done before in his school. He was trained to teach math and had taught it for the past eight years, but he gave it up to teach social studies which he had no professional training in. He reasoned:

I've always wanted to teach social science. When I realised there was social studies, I jumped at it. I did economics and sociology. Now there is a platform for social science. I feel every student must know how societies are organised, scarcity of resources and so on. My social science training at the university drives me to take this bold step (13/1-5).

Marcus and Frida's socially concerned stance gave attention to a more holistic and applied citizenship education through social studies. Both teachers traced this to their roles as the Civics and Moral Education (CME), Community Involvement Project (CIP) and Pastoral and Career Guidance (PCCG) coordinators of their respective schools. They saw that citizenship education cut across these programmes, and tried to integrate aspects of the different programmes to deliver a more holistic, and applied citizenship education. Marcus explained:

Citizenship education should be more applied. Link healthcare to helping out in an elderly home, where students learn basic first aid related to elderly, or learn how to talk to them. Or it can be integrated with volunteer work in the hospital. Students learn not only about healthcare, but also learn to empathise by putting themselves in the situation (27/4-44).

Marcus could clearly be characterised as social and participatory. He was enthusiastic and convinced of the potential of active citizenship in “creating more value to the community, making it a better place” (27/4-37). His enthusiasm was in part reinforced by teaching social studies, and also a reaction against how mathematics was rigidly taught to the examination. Teaching social studies was a refreshing change, giving him the opportunity to actively engage in and keep abreast of current issues, attend in-service courses, and interact with like-minded teachers from other schools. This led him to be more reflective of his citizenship: “It's pathetic if my students end up like me. I feel guilty, there are many things I could have done, yet I am not doing” (21/7-2). This stirred him to action, for “teaching social studies is tantamount to a new lease
of life” (27/4-19). Consequently, Marcus encouraged students to be more participative and concerned about the people and issues in the community, beyond the examination:

I don't want students to do badly for the exams, but we also don't need to be always drilling them for it. We need to think of the long haul, develop their awareness in social issues, let them negotiate over different views, work on problems together. It is the disposition of concern, participating in the common good that I am getting at (27/4-22).

Marcus linked social studies to civic action. He taught by example, participating in the Feedback Unit, and encouraging students to do likewise. He also organised a symposium to engage social studies teachers in dialogue with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO). He encouraged his students to be more active, engaged and participative in their community, “We have been passive, but your generation must be different. Go out and try” (30/8-9). His enthusiasm felt as if he was making up for his lost years of passivity.

Somewhat differently, Frida was characterised as social and empowering. Her social science training had developed in her the disposition to play a more active role in society: “The political science and sociological theories and concepts have helped me look more critically at the society, its gaps and roles. This knowledge is empowering, I am more informed and analytical, and know how I can be involved” (23/3-10). Her social science training had raised her consciousness of societal issues. Her concern was for people to speak up on matters affecting them:

In political science, I learnt about feedback and participation in policy making, such as debates on matters affecting the public. There must be a loop, where the government considers people's feedback, and this can effect changes to policies. Policies affect us, and we must have a part to play in their making, we cannot simply let others decide our lives. I learn that we have a say, it’s our right and responsibility (23/3-21).

As a social studies educator, she wanted to instill in her students the passion for social studies, and to empower them to be more actively involved in their own community:

The best thing about teaching social studies is to bring out the passion I have for social science. I want my students to feel they can take initiative, by being informed and knowing how. This will make a difference to the way they live as members of the community (23/3-10).

Like Marcus, Frida encouraged students to be proactive and take initiatives on matters concerning their community. Her concern was that:

A lot of Singaporeans don’t do, don’t know, don’t voice. When asked questions, they keep quiet. We must start from the school, provide structures and opportunities to engage
students, get them interested in their school community. Give them real responsibilities. We want to make concern and engagement habits of the mind” (23/3-12).

Frida saw the school as a microcosm of society, a safe environment for learning to participate. She shared an example of her students’ proactivism with pride, knowing she had influenced them to an extent:

A group of students petitioned, and said they were influenced by my social studies lessons. They didn’t want to have more than two tests a day, it was stressful. Sometimes, teachers are not aware that another teacher has also set one on the same day, so they end up with three tests a day. So the students wrote a petition, expressing their views, giving suggestions, collected signatures and gave it to the principal. That’s what addressing means. We can’t assume the management knows everything, so students must tell how they are affected. They must take responsibility for their own lives (23/3-20).

Frida also modeled active participation. She led her department on an action research into improving social studies teaching. Action research was a form of activism reflective of the social science influence.

Frida was described as empowering. The focus had been her own enabling, as well as her goal of enabling others through social studies. She frequently used the terms ‘empower’ and ‘enable’ in interviews and practice. Empowerment suggests a deliberate action to capacitate students and Frida’s activism was located at the school community. In contrast, Marcus’ characterisation of participatory was akin to a burst of enthusiasm. It was a state of activism or participation. Since teaching social studies, Marcus had been participating more actively within and beyond the school community, and encouraging students to do likewise. It was significant that the socially concerned stance was grounded in the teachers’ own practice.

7.1.1 A Dominant Reforming Position

The socially concerned stance reflected a dominantly reforming curriculum position by these teachers (MacNaughton, 2003). The emphasis of the reforming position was on social and personal development where the focus of education is on social needs. These needs related to the human society, the interaction of the individual and the group, and the welfare of individuals as members of society. Marcus illustrated it as:

The social needs arise from people living together as a community. It includes the problems the community faces, it can mean coming together to create a better place for everybody else in terms of interpersonal relationships, interdependence and working together to improve the community (21/7-7).
The salient idea in teachers' understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education was that education was a reflection of life, and social studies prepares students to participate actively in community life as Frida elaborated:

Social studies deals with societal issues. When I teach, I make the skills applicable to the issues they confront. The skill of assessing reliability is applied to an issue in the school to extend their learning. It is to prepare students to play an active role in the community by enhancing their capacity to tackle problems (23/3-12).

Fundamentally the reforming position seeks to improve and renew society. Marcus noted, “Participating, questioning, and problem solving can generate new ideas to renew and remake our society to be a better place for everyone to live” (27/4-8). Improvements and renewal of society through moderate and incremental changes were sought within system confirming ways while structural issues or questions of systemic injustices were not considered. The teachers’ understandings and practice suggested improving society based on the existing power structure, focused on “the betterment of what we already have” (27/4-10), “building on the core values that bind the society” (23/3-20). They sought more reciprocative relationships, freedom and opportunities to be self-governing within the community as Marcus explained:

It's fine that people question, as long as they don't end up destroying the system. If you need to speed up, slow down, or make a U-turn, that's fine. The idea is to make it better. Whether you question or accept, the outcome is that society improves, and not to overthrow the system and create chaos (27/4-46).

The reforming position was child-centred, with attention to the holistic development of the individual rather than the piecemeal acquisition of pre-specified knowledge and skills. Frida would like her social studies lessons to be more authentic and sensory, reminiscing on a literature lesson she experienced as a student:

I remember my literature lesson. My teacher brought us to the field, there was a little drain beside a banyan tree, with water trickling down. She made us sit on the grass under the tree. We read ‘As You Like It’, and imagined ourselves in the forest (laughs). It was a great learning experience for me (9/1-14).

For Marcus, “it’s important to move away from the grades, let the students relate to one another, discuss issues, express their views, and ask questions. This is a more natural process of learning. Students learn to communicate and question, understand different views, as they would in real life” (27/4-18). Essentially, education should develop individuals to their full potential to be rational individuals capable of
independent thought and self-discipline, and able to participate in the social world (MacNaughton, 2003). Marcus explained:

I facilitate discussions of difficult issues. I'm keen on students' development. This is the most precious part of social studies. I want students to be well adjusted, get along with others and thoughtful. I want them to be open to different perspectives, and able to handle tentativeness. Learn to weigh the evidence of what others are saying, and then take a stand. The logic and rational process must be there (27/4-22).

From this view, values such as individual participation, the common good and morality were upheld within the socio-political milieu.

Aspects of the socially concerned teachers' understandings and practice were identified as nationalistic and conforming. For example, Marcus said:

That the country must come first is deeply ingrained in me. My teacher told us, 'mai guo huo' (buy national goods). She said if anyone were to make money from the things that we buy, it should be our own citizens. We should benefit our country, not outsiders. It left a deep impression. I can never forget that in Singapore the nation always comes first (25/6-35).

But they were taken-for-granted, as Marcus highlighted, "Maybe I am overly socialised, I am so much a part of the system, sometimes I don’t even know it" (27/4-56). Instead, their understandings and practice turned towards the social and the communal, where the potential for citizens to participate more actively to bring about changes, was given dominance.

Elements of critical influences that were transforming in nature were also present. An emphasis on the moral dimension of citizenship would inevitably be concerned, to varying extents, with the political expression of the values of self-fulfillment, self-determination and equality. For example, an emasculated citizenship that violated the morality of citizenship was alluded to by Frida:

The root of the problem is we have been shut up too long, we have not been allowed to speak our minds. We have been made to think it is Asian culture not to question adults and authority. Policies are top-down, we just accept, don’t questioned. It’s a dormant and unequal citizenship (3/3-21).

Similarly, Marcus agreed, "We are locked in by the historical baggage, where you just remain docile and conformist. Citizenship is not in our consciousness. Circumstances have changed, but we are still lagging" (30/8-10). However, these critical elements were not sustainable as teachers were still entrapped within a taken-for-granted, conforming nationalistic theme. This limited the scope for collaborative interrogation of current discourse and practice of social studies and citizenship education.
Consequently, a dominantly reforming stance was reflected. If individuals were actively participating, they were not participating under conditions of their own choosing but within the socio-political milieu (MacNaughton, 2003).

7.2 Teachers' Conceptualisations of Social Studies

This section discusses the findings of the socially concerned teachers' conceptualisations of social studies. The conceptualisation that emerged as the primary theme of the socially concerned teachers could best be described as social education. The subsidiary theme was social studies as simplified social science. While the two themes were related, they would be discussed separately as the latter theme was sufficiently differentiated.

7.2.1 Social Studies as Social Education

The socially concerned teachers conceptualised social studies as social education. Marcus said, “As a subject, it is social education” (27/4-6); “Definitely social education” (23/3-23), Frida echoed. As social education, three features were distinct. Firstly, social education focused on the preparation for life; secondly, the focus on issues; and thirdly, multiple perspectives were emphasised.

7.2.1.1 Social Education as Preparation for Life

The idea that social education was to educate students for life underpinned both teachers’ conceptualisations. This was a common perception of all eight teachers, but the socially concerned teachers were the most consistent and explicit in adhering to this view in their understandings and practice. Their reference was the community in which teachers sought to prepare students to be concerned for and actively participate in the life of the community.

The term ‘lifeskil’ was frequently used with social education. Frida said, “My purpose in social studies is to teach lifeskills that goes beyond the school years” (23/3-11). Both teachers focused on the social aspects of lifeskills, including the development of skills and attitudes related to the welfare of the community, network of relationships and active participation. For Marcus, “a key lifeskill is to learn to be open to different views” (27/4-19). Frida elaborated, “We require the knowledge, skills and values to create the common space, where you have a common past, future, and destiny together. In social studies, we are not learning about individual races,
cultures or religions, but acquiring the social skills to build the common space in the communities we live in’ (23/3-4). Their focus on lifeskills was traced to their roles as PCCG and CME coordinators of their respective schools. Frida highlighted, “PCCG, has a lifeskills package, and many of the lifeskills are similar to the skills in social studies, such as evaluating usefulness, assessing reliability” (23/3-24).

A main focus of social education was respect for differences, particularly in handling differences among persons and groups in the community. Marcus explained:

It’s being open to different points of views and interests. We come from different backgrounds, naturally, we see things differently. It’s a skill, an attitude to be able to handle differences. Learn to negotiate and compromise, learn to handle differences, live cooperatively in the community (27/4-20).

This was basic to Marcus’ participatory stance, in which he felt there should be willingness to recognise differences of views, give-and-take among people in thinking of the common good:

There is no right or wrong in some issues. It depends on contexts. When people are so absolute about things, they fail to see that another view may be equally valid. I don’t want students to be so adamant about things. They must be open, there can be two different views, neither are right or wrong. Over time, when new evidence presents itself, maybe both are right or are wrong. Learn to consider viewpoints for the common good (27/4-23).

Another main focus was the cognitive aspect of social skills such as information handling. This was basic to Frida’s empowerment, resting on the ability to make independent judgments of what was presented: “Skills such as evaluating, assessing reliability, usefulness, taking perspectives, supporting arguments. We learn to read and ask questions, and accept things at face value but be able to make a judgment of what is presented” (23/3-43).

Both teachers did not narrowly teach to the examination. Frida integrated the social goals with preparation for the examination. She saw the examination as a platform for honing a positive attitude towards life: “There are work pressures and deadlines, and the exam is a mock-up of these”. Further, “the focus is on source handling skills. As students prepare well for the exam, they become competent in these skills that are very useful in this time where we are bombarded with so much information on media and advertisements” (23/3-11). In contrast, Marcus often got carried away in engaging students on social issues and “consequently, I do last minute teaching for the exam. It’s a bad habit, but I don’t focus on exam skills until it’s nearer to the exam, then I
drill them" (27/4-5). This was in part due to his lack of experience in teaching social studies, and also a reaction against teaching to the examination.

Unlike the nationalistic teachers who were less able to articulate the link between social studies and citizenship education, the clarity of social education to the socially concerned teachers was evident. This was because social education was more demarcated compared to citizenship education that was more encompassing. Marcus emphasised the participatory aspect of social education:

It's a study of things to do with our society. I see it in terms of the community expanding outwards. The immediate community is the school, then the neighbourhood. It has to do with the processes and issues affecting the community, and are likely to be controversial. It's encouraging people to be proactive and responsible in participating in their community, getting them to be concerned about issues that matter (27/4-6).

Frida emphasised the outcome of empowerment through social education:

Social education enhances awareness of social issues and develops concerned citizens. Some students get involved, like speaking up on issues in the school. Let's hope it progresses beyond the school. It's both their right and responsibility to be concerned about things in their community (23/3-23).

7.2.1.2 A Focus on Issues

The socially concerned teachers understood the crux of social education to be social issues. In this, they believed that agency rested with the individuals but to be used with reference to the common good. Unlike the nationalistic teachers who were single-mindedly focused on the nation, the socially concerned teachers struggled to find the balance between individual needs and the good of the whole society in negotiating issues. They were more humanistic in their approach to social issues, where consequences affecting individuals were considered. While the common good was inclusive of the nation, the nation however, was not the primary reference of the socially concerned stance. The community, which embodied the networks of ties, in expanding environment approach was the reference. Hence, people have a more familiar and tangible sense of ownership in relationship to their communities. In contrast, the nationalistic teachers focused on the needs of an abstract nation, in which Benedict (1991) argued to be an imagined community.

Social issues constituted the subject matter of social education. Frida defined social issues as "human issues that inform our human condition. These are problems of living together as a community" (23/3-6), while for Marcus, "it's educating students
on issues affecting us. Issues are not abstract, we confront them daily. In education, streaming, mother tongue policy, are issues that affect us. When we look at healthcare, affordability is an issue of concern” (27/4-55). Social and public issues were used interchangeably. When asked if there was a difference, Frida answered, “Public issues emerged specifically from policies, social issues need not relate to policies” (23/3-7).

Frida used public issues while Marcus preferred social issues. This reflected Frida’s understanding of the subject matter as policy related: “Social studies is a study of policies. Policies constitute a large part of the syllabus. Policies affect the public, yet many are unaware” (23/3-10). In using empowering with public issues, Frida saw social education as reacting against top-down policies. Empowering was understood in terms of participating in structures and processes such as policy making and feedback process, exerting one’s right to be jointly responsible for formulating policies that affect the people. In contrast, the nature of social issues was understood to be more generic by Marcus. Coupling participatory with social issues suggested spontaneity and a grassroot response to concerns of the community, where people organised themselves to address and solve the issues affecting their community. These need not be related to policies.

Notwithstanding the differences, both teachers understood the subject matter of social education to include national issues. Frida focused on rationales, and issues of equity and alternatives: “My interpretation of the subject matter is it should focus on the rationale and fairness of policies, whether there are alternatives, how they affect various groups in society” (23/3-19). In contrast, Marcus emphasised the practical and local aspects of national issues, that is, their impact on ordinary community lives: “I am concerned how students are coping with the streaming policies? How are we supporting them, what are we doing for them” (27/4-47)?

Distinctly socially concerned in characterisation, the subject matter was understood as authentic to people’s lives for they were societal issues. The focus was on the current, practical and real world matters. Frida emphasised the dynamic quality of such an understanding of the subject matter, “The subject matter is not static, but current and changes. It is so real, you can pull a lesson out of the newspapers” (23/3-10). Meanwhile, Marcus took a more tentative view towards the subject matter: “Knowledge is tentative not absolute, facts are incomplete. Over time, new evidence emerge, and this may change our views of things” (27/4-28). In consensus with Engle
and Ochoa (1988), Marcus and Frida considered that all claims to knowledge raise questions and foster skepticism, given their dynamic and incomplete nature. Compared to the nationalistic teachers, the socially concerned teachers were more inclined towards increasingly complex interrogations of the constructions of knowledge.

Both teachers’ understood that social issues were “complex, controversial and raise more questions than resolve” (23/3-6). This was because people have opposing views on social issues, yet supported by reasoned arguments grounded in legitimate values. These issues included those on race, religion, and political participation. Frida shared:

Let’s look at the constitution where Malays are given free education. There are opposing views. The Malays say it’s not enough, but the other races say it’s a privilege to have free education. Dwelling deeper into the issue raises difficult questions - is it a crutch? What about the poor but not Malays (23/3-5)?

Marcus explained that students “have to get used to the fact that issues have no clear answers. People can respond differently depending on the circumstances and criteria used. Issues have got to do with values and points of views” (27/4-37). Both teachers believed handling such subject matter required a level of maturity, that was why social studies was introduced only at the upper secondary level. However, what both teachers understood as controversial was treated as “a national truth or fact” (23/3-5) by the syllabus.

Both teachers understood the subject matter to be propagandistic due to the biases in the selection and presentation. Marcus’ highlighted that “there are countries that have done alright, like the U.S. or Sweden, but they were not chosen. Chosen examples accentuated Singapore’s achievements” (27/4-9). While the national agenda was important, they also felt strongly the need for multiple perspectives to the issues:

The government is portrayed as brilliant and successful, but what about the failures. National agenda is important, just as important is also to understand the realities and shortcomings. If the government seriously wants to engage citizens, they need to be more upfront, or it might put some people off, while others become complacent (27/4-9).

Marcus was more open to the subject matter than Frida, he continued to teach Switzerland though the topic was taken out of the syllabus. He saw the value of learning about Switzerland in its own right:

The Swiss always make high-tech products of top quality. It is their work ethic. They are very meticulous, but we don’t mention it because it is not in the syllabus. There is also value in understanding why direct democracy and referendum work in Switzerland
though we may not subscribe to them. Broaden students’ awareness, don’t limit it to what’s-in-it for Singapore mentality (27/4-29).

On the other hand, Frida was more focused on Singapore in her understanding of the subject matter, as she saw it in terms of “a study of our policies” (23/3-10).

The socially concerned teachers did not over emphasise the role of the Singapore Story in their understanding of the subject matter. They acknowledged the importance of Singapore history in developing the national identity. But for them, the issues arising from how Singapore history had been constructed were the substance of social education. Frida explained:

To know our Singapore Story, our constraints and achievements, is important. We are a multiracial society, with four official races Chinese, Malays, Indians and Others, and that has been the history we fought against Malaysia for. More importantly are the implications. What are the consequences of such an organisation? Does it develop racial harmony (23/3-16)?

Marcus was more tentative in his treatment of the Singapore Story, particularly on the topics of the merger and separation of Singapore. He emphasised the validity of multiple understandings of the events:

We should learn about the Malaysian version too. To be convinced, one needs to see both sides of the issue. Whether we feel we deserve to be kicked out or we chose out, allow us to see a more thorough picture, this will help us appreciate the circumstances. Trust us to decide wisely and rationally (27/4-10).

7.2.2 Social Studies as Simplified Social Science

The teachers also presented a subsidiary theme in their teaching - social studies as simplified social science. Frida encapsulated, “It is actually a simpler version of social science for secondary schools, the sources are the social sciences” (23/3-7). Marcus concurred, “It’s the social science cascaded down to the students and simplified” (13/1-15). While the nationalistic teachers’ understandings of the subject matter were tactical and utilitarian, the socially concerned teachers understood the subject matter to have a disciplinary base. In this, two features stood out; firstly, the emphasis on disciplines other than history and geography; secondly, the focus on the structures of the discipline.

7.2.2.1 The Other Disciplines

The understandings of the socially concerned teachers suggested an endorsement of Hirst’s (1974) position on the disciplines of knowledge that should form the
foundation of the school curriculum. Particularly, the academic disciplines of the social sciences are the touchstones of social studies. Traditionally, history and geography have given social studies a major portion of its identity (Marsh, 2004; Martorella et al., 2005). But for the socially concerned teachers, history and geography did not dominate. Instead, Marcus and Frida gave attention to political science, sociology, economics and English language, adopting more of a structure of the disciplines approach (Bruner, 1969, 1977). Their emphases on the social science disciplines correlated to their social science training in their undergraduate studies. Marcus majored in economics and sociology, and in conceptualising social studies as simplified social science, he often referred to economics. Frida majored in political science and sociology, and she admitted, “I am influenced by political science. I refer to it, draw insights from it to help me understand and teach social studies” (23/3-45).

7.2.2.2 Structures of the Disciplines

While both teachers maintained the importance of the disciplines, they emphasised the processes of inquiry related to the discipline’s structure rather than specific content. It was in this regard that both teachers understood social studies to be “a higher order thinking subject, focusing on processes and inquiring into issues” (23/3-42). The subject matter was also understood to be interdisciplinary, including concepts and generalisations from political science, sociology, economics, history and geography. The interdisciplinary base was necessary to adequately address the complexities of social issues. Nonetheless, a core discipline provided the structure and mode of inquiry which organised the major concepts and generalisations from the other disciplines. For Frida, “political science provides the structure for identifying the problem, collecting evidence, and justifying decisions” (23/3-42). For Marcus, the core discipline was economics, and his understanding of what the subject matter included was broader:

It’s a bit of every discipline, economics, political science, sociology, history, geography, English and math. I am teaching English, I see social studies lends well to teaching language skills. It can integrate with math, there is value in the precision, rational and logical thinking of math (27/4-16).

Significantly, both teachers felt it was difficult to teach social studies without some structural comprehension of the knowledge and modes of inquiry of the various social science disciplines. This was in contrast to the nationalistic teachers who understood the subject matter to be non-disciplinary.
Both agreed on the importance of a social science disciplinary base to the subject matter of social studies. Social science provided the intellectual structure on which students organise and think about relationships among the various issues. Marcus illustrated this clearly:

Understanding basic social science is important, it’s a set of tools to make sense of society. It’s because people have no understanding of why things occur that they are disgruntled. If one knows economics, then he will understand inflation and recession, and why particular measures are taken, why certain theories are subscribed to (13/1-15).

This means acquiring the concepts, generalisations, and processes, for understanding and acting on societal issues, to the end that they become effective as citizens (Barr et al., 1977; Martorella et al., 2005). Frida’s excerpt best illustrates this understanding:

This sets them thinking about the system of government. I teach them some concepts I learnt in political science. We discussed good governance, how the government has been a dominant power, the limitations and implications of a one-party system. Where is the check and balance? And the students said, “We never thought about that.” Basic political science can help students think more analytically, which hopefully stimulate more active citizenship (23/3-43).

Frida’s consciousness of how knowledge was constructed to protect the interests of the elites was attributed to political science. Such construction was not apparent unless trained to see due to the powerful saturation of consciousness, by the hegemony of the daily life and experience of being in school and receiving its messages (Apple, 2004; Smith & Lovat, 2003). Her argument had been that focused social science knowledge was enabling, providing students with a set of tools to analyse existing practices. However, as she failed to link existing practices to power relations and action, she worked within the system. Ultimately, it was to develop a sense of ownership and initiative among citizens within their community.

Finally, as simplified social science, Marcus and Frida felt that social studies should be organised around issues or conditions, and not simply events and policies. Too much focus on the latter can quickly degenerate into dry and dreary chronicling with little educative value. Instead, the interpretive analysis informed by the social sciences, of conditions underlying events and policies provoked questions among students about the way the society had developed. This complemented the conceptualisation of social studies as social education.
7.3 Teachers’ Understandings of Citizenship and Citizenship Education

This section discusses the findings of the socially concerned teachers’ understandings of citizenship and citizenship education. The active and concerned citizen was the overarching conception of citizenship, upon which a generally maximal interpretation of citizenship education was based.

7.3.1 The Active and Concerned Citizen

The active citizen was the prevalent image in the socially concerned teachers’ understandings of citizenship. Marcus and Frida’s active citizenship shared similarities with Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) participatory citizenship. Active citizens were active agents and not compliant members in society and as Frida noted, “They don’t just obey laws or stay away from crimes, but take initiatives to do something for society” (23/3-37). It is developing students to participate actively in the civic affairs and social life of the community. Marcus elaborated, “It’s people coming together proactively to do things for the community. They organise themselves to work on improving and bonding their community” (27/4-55).

The assumption was that citizens were active participants within the given social order rather than active agents of social change. The understanding of active citizenship did not encompass structural critique, but in cooperation with and support of the system. Marcus highlighted, “We are not to destroy the political and social fabric. Active citizenship is about more space for participation. It is progressive, as with all things in Singapore, it cannot be a radical political process” (30/8-2). In this way active citizenship was framed from a reforming position to improve and renew society based on existing structures (MacNaughton, 2003).

Both teachers understood that active citizenship in Singapore was “not of the western liberal individualist democratic type, where it is the government for the people, by the people” (30/8-2). Active citizenship did not exist independently of time and space, but must be understood within the context of Singapore and its historical and socio-political developments. As Singapore moved towards a developed nation status, it gradually became more open to the idea of citizens participating in the political process. Marcus noted globalisation as a catalyst to the opening process, but did not elaborate on how it led to active citizenship:
Recently, there is cautious opening up to encourage citizenship participation, but still controlled by the government. The political process is nevertheless more open than before. Previously, it was very closed and authoritarian. This could be a result of people being more educated, affluent, the country more developed. Globalisation gives that push too (30/8-3).

In this sense, teachers understood active citizenship to be evolutionary and both teachers often used terms such as “evolved”, “progressive”, “gradual”, and “developmental”:

It is based on trust, confidence, and the maturity of our society. There is greater trust in the government to look out for the people. It is not that we distrusted the government before, but there is more interaction and mutual trust as we become a more developed and educated country. Hence, there’s more space for active citizenship (21/7-3).

Both teachers also understood active citizenship to be in a state of negotiation with an authoritarian government. Ultimately, the government wielded the regulatory powers:

The process of political opening is still controlled by the government. Previously, only a select group of people participated. Now, the government appears to want all citizens to take more active roles. But it is with the understanding that it’s me who is giving you the privilege to be active. Now I am not going to slap you when you say something wrong. We know who calls the shot (30/8-3).

Hence, Marcus and Frida knew that for active citizenship to be viable, it had to be practised within system confirming ways. The focus was to improve society, adding to the progress and stability. This did not include addressing issues of power relations and injustices. If the latter happened, the alternative to the present form of active citizenship was none at all. In the scheme of things, both teachers preferred the “half a loaf than none at all” (23/3-13) mentality to active citizenship: “In that sense, we have to be clever about it, and work within the system, otherwise the space for participation will be lost. This is how we have evolved and it has maintained progress and stability” (30/8-3). Both teachers were doubtful if a radical form of active citizenship was useful in Singapore.

The teachers noted two dimensions to active citizenship – being informed and concerned: “Active citizens are concerned citizens. They are informed and engaged in societal issues. They voice their thoughts about issues and take action where necessary. They are not bystanders to the issues affecting their community” (23/3-12). The assumption held was that citizens who were informed and concerned would participate in the civic and social life of the community. The teachers delineated three areas in relation to being informed. Firstly, there must be awareness of key societal issues and current events. Frida focused on local issues: “Knowledge of our history,
key issues and policies in Singapore where the newspaper is a good source. These issues are dynamic and can be re-interpreted" (23/3-4). Marcus also focused on global issues, "examples are environmental issues that cuts across countries like the haze problem, technological advancements in countries like Finland, Switzerland and the U.S." (27/4-8). Secondly, citizens must have knowledge of the political process. The socially concerned teachers were clearer about the democratic process than the nationalistic teachers. They even grounded understandings in practice of their own and that of their students. For example, Frida invoked the use of petitions, while Marcus organised efforts to care for students in need. Thirdly, citizens must know how to think and reason to participate effectively in the society, otherwise feedbacks, decisions and debates on issues would deteriorate into an exchange of groundless opinions. Thinking includes knowing how to define an issue, respect multiple viewpoints, and assess evidence in determining solutions. Frida elaborated:

Be skeptical and question what you read, ask what the underlying message is. Study the issues, assess the reliability and trustworthiness. Are there alternatives, and if these were pursued, how would they affect various groups in the society? It's important for students to think and make up their own minds based on reasons (23/3-19).

Knowledge was seen as the causal link to developing concern in students. Frida’s logic was typical of the empowering characterisation:

Being aware of the problems in their backyard would beget concern. They will realise their community are affected, so are they. Having the know-how to participate hopefully would motivate them to take actions. People are indifferent not because they are not concerned, but they don’t have the know-how or are not aware of the issues (23/3-20).

Marcus emphasised the moral aspect of being concerned: “As fellow members living in the same community, naturally we develop care and concern for one another. It’s not a calculated move, but comes out of empathy, a sense of morality and social consciousness for fellow members” (27/4-15). Unlike Frida who suggested a linear causal relationship between being informed and concerned, Marcus highlighted the interaction of knowledge, concern and active participation, each augmenting one another. The relationship was more complicated. Overall, a major focus of teachers’ understandings and practice was the meaning of being an active and concerned citizen.

7.3.2 A Sense of Overlapping Identities

For both the socially concerned and nationalistic teachers, citizenship had to do with issues of identity. The former were more confident in articulating their personal
identity vis-à-vis their national identity as Singaporeans. Nonetheless, Marcus and Frida understood national identity to be an essential attribute of citizenship. It was a cohesive force, as a common identity moderated the divisiveness of other identities. Frida explained, “It’s important to know who we are as Singaporeans and what is distinct about us. Be proud to be a Singaporean, be confident to identify with the nation’s aspirations, successes and even failures. These bring us closer in a pluralistic society” (23/3-4).

However, citizenship was not exclusively understood as national identity. The socially concerned teachers acknowledged multiple and overlapping identities unlike the nationalistic teachers who held an overriding sense of national identity:

We have our own racial identities, but each racial group is part of Singapore. We are each Chinese, Malay, Indian or Eurasian, yet we are also Singaporeans. There are the unique and common spaces for Singaporeans. The communities overlap, so we have overlapping identities (23/3-37).

Marcus and Frida emphasised the multiplicity of identities rather than a singular identity. Particularly in a multiracial society, Marcus and Frida understood that citizens necessarily possessed attachments to more than one identity. As such, who is a Singaporean was not defined solely in national terms. Frida was an example:

I’m a Singaporean of mixed parentage. My parents are part Chinese, part Indian. My Chinese grandmothers were not Muslims till they were adopted by Muslim families. Then my grandfathers spoke only Tamil when they came to Singapore. But in Singapore they learnt Malay, and I grew up learning Malay in school, offering it as mother tongue. So what is my identity? I have multiple (23/3-45)!

It was evident that identity was formed in relation to difference. Consequently, this had led to the recognition of race, class, ethnicity, gender, language, local community as constitutive of identities (Isin & Wood, 1999). Friedman (1989) called this the emergence of new identities as opposed to national identities, and to an extent, it was reflective of Frida’s empowering focus. In contrast, Marcus saw identity in geographical terms, based on attachment to the physical, social, political space that individuals inhabit (Morgan, 2001):

We are members of many communities. The basic one is the class, then the school. You hear students say, “I am from Secondary 3C not 3E”. Look further, we can identify which schools students come from, in the way they talk and behave. If your school is located in Holland Road, you will be different from those who come from schools in Redhill. Ultimately, we are all Singaporean. As you can see, we identify ourselves with where we are and from (30/8-4).
He referred to communities from an expanding environment approach: "It's like a concentric circle, from the inner to the outer, from the school to country" (27/4-35). But "the basic is to identify, be committed and feel belonged to your most immediate community. This anchors you as you move to less familiar ones" (30/8-5). Overall, the socially concerned teachers moved away from the traditional models of citizenship based only on a notion of national identity. Yet, neither teacher addressed identity in relation to the global context but within the nation only.

The socially concerned teachers' understandings of citizenship were modeled on the civic republican tradition. Citizens derived their identities in relation to and participating in the civic affairs and social life of the communities:

Citizenship is more the doing of things in the community. Being involved and doing things together in the community can develop greater sense of community and bonding. What the community stands for will become clearer, they will also have a better idea of who and what they are as members of the community (21/7-10).

Two ideas in the teachers' understandings resonated with civic republicanism. Firstly, the importance of practice upon which citizens derived their identities. Secondly, identity was seen in relation to a community (Hill & Lian, 1995; Oldfied, 1998). While both teachers referred to practice in relation to the national and local communities, the implementation was however located in the immediate communities of the school and neighbourhood.

7.3.3 Rights and Responsibilities

While the socially concerned teachers understood citizenship from the civic republican tradition they also regarded both rights and responsibilities to be central to the discussion of active citizenship as Frida argued, “Active participation is a citizenship responsibility. Within that, we have basic rights, such as voting, protection, equality, freedom of religion, and so on. These rights must be used responsibly to engage the community, and to exercise our responsibilities” (23/3-26). However, findings revealed that rights and responsibilities were unequally yoked, with responsibilities receiving greater emphasis than rights. Both teachers attributed this to the nation’s historical and political circumstances, as Marcus explained:

As Singaporeans, we don’t dwell on rights, we are not taught to exercise them. We have voting rights as citizens. But in our one dominant party system, whether you have another two or three opposition isn’t going to make a difference. Perhaps, that’s why we don’t feel that voting is a sacred, so rights aren’t in the forefront of people’s minds (30/8-9).
However, Marcus noticed that the minorities were more aware and concerned about their rights than the majority Singaporean-Chinese:

The importance of rights is not in our psyche. We are not really concerned about it. But I noticed that the minority races are more concerned about their rights. They are conscious of their rights, especially of fairness and equality, and they are vocal about them. In my social studies lessons, I see that the minority students were concerned they did not have a Speak Malay Campaign, just as there is a Speak Mandarin Campaign, or that they should be entitled to a full TV channel devoted to their language. Maybe in a society where Chinese are dominant, the minorities feel threatened, and thus they are more assertive of their rights (27/4-26).

Nonetheless, Marcus and Frida understood that rights are basic and essential to citizenship: “Rights are our entitlements, inherent to citizenship. It’s what we have and can demand from the authorities by default of our citizenship” (30/8-9). For Marcus, characterised as participatory, rights were referred to in the context of organising and participating in collective activities, such as non-governmental organisations and voluntary help. Typical of Frida’s empowering characterisation, the rights were often discussed in relation to their infringement or the lack of:

When I was in university, there were petitions for a prayer room for the Muslims. It is an issue of rights. In the recent JI incident, Muslim leaders were questioned about their work, teaching, philosophy and thinking. It was a difficult period. Some wondered about their right to practise the religion the way they saw fit. They were questioned about their lessons, asked to follow a certain direction in their teaching. It’s like being watched, where some felt their rights were infringed (23/3-28).

The point was stressed that individuals have a degree of autonomy that must be exercised with respect to the welfare of others as well as in meeting community interests: “At the end, in exercising your rights or responsibilities, it must be carried out for the good of your fellowmen”. Further, “there is a lot more to citizenship, it’s not just for the sake of the country” (27/4-34). This distinctly contrasted with the nationalistic teachers who only focused on responsibilities, obligations and duties to the nation to the disregard of rights.

Both teachers considered participation in the community as a key responsibility of citizens. They put into practice by providing structures and opportunities for students to participate in. For Frida:

Participation is a responsibility. Realistically, students can’t participate in national issues yet. They can’t vote, they are not in the workforce. But they can participate in the school. It’s safe and familiar. We provide opportunities and structures for students to take on more active roles in schools - council, committees, dialogue sessions, suggestion schemes, open door policy, to encourage participation. These experiences can build confidence and the predisposition to participate in the larger society (23/4-36).
This participation need not be collective in nature as her focus was in empowering individuals to exercise their responsibility of speaking up, questioning, dialoguing and so on. In contrast, Marcus was more participatory in engaging students in collective, community-based efforts. The active and concerned citizen exercised the responsibility of contributing back to the community:

A good citizen is an active citizen, he participates by contributing to the society. Examples are voluntary work, through your jobs, speaking up on policies, feedback and suggesting changes to policies and so on. Even if it is making some suggestions through the forum page about increasing some subsidies, do it, because it indicates your concern for the community (23/3-37).

The socially concerned teachers, as with the progressive nationalistic teachers, used contribution to mean participation. This reflected a thoughtful action and a task focused form of participation. While participation occurred mainly in the social domain, the political process was not deliberately avoided. Frida, in particular, chose to tackle rather than avoid the political issues as they occurred, but was always conscious of participating within system confirming ways.

### 7.3.4 Communitarian Outlook

The socially concerned teachers' conception of citizenship was communitarian in nature. A central tenet of communitarianism, according to the teachers' understandings, was placing the interests of the community above those of the individual. References were made to the Shared Values (1991): Nation before community and society before self; Family as the basic unit of society; Community support and respect for the individual; Consensus, not conflict; Racial and religious harmony. Both teachers saw *The Shared Values* embodied communitarianism. They suggested an Asian perspective to the communitarian nature of citizenship, where Frida noted that "the focus on group can be attributed to our Asian culture, particularly Confucianism that Singapore subscribes to" (23/3-21).

The communitarian nature of citizenship emerged largely out of teachers' understandings of the pluralistic context of Singapore society:

It's a mélange of people of different races, religions, languages and customs. It's multiracial and multireligious. As a result, there will be diverse views, different values. No doubt diversity is good, but it also increases the occurrence of friction and conflicts, surely people don't agree on everything (30/8-4).
Marcus and Frida were concerned about inter-ethnic relations in the community. Frida saw communitarianism "as a feasible way for the different ethnic groups to co-exist in a heterogeneous society" (23/3-38). She emphasised values such as "tolerance of diversity", "seeking consensus", "emphasising commonalities", "expanding the common space" (23/3-39). She also "stressed the commonalities and not the differences to expand the common ground among citizens" (23/3-38). On the other hand, Marcus understood communitarian values to mean understanding perspectives to issues, and be willing to negotiate and be open to different viewpoints for the common good: "At the end of the day, we may not agree with the other person, but be willing to accept the difference, agree to disagree for the sake of the community" (27/4-37). In practice, Marcus moved beyond mere tolerance of diversity. In stressing perspectives and negotiation, he came closer to understanding and appreciating the diversity. Frida swept the differences among the ethnic groups under the carpet of common space. Hence, what was achieved might only be a fragile unity. Teachers’ understandings of communitarian values and diversity focused almost exclusively on race and religion.

The socially concerned teachers drew a tight connection between citizenship and the community, as Frida said, “Citizenship is membership in a bigger body, interacting with the state and fellow members” (23/3-32). Both teachers understood that communitarianism adhered to a strong view of community, where members were bound by the sense of community, and also defined their identity with reference to it. From this perspective, communitarianism was complementary to the civic republican tradition of citizenship, as the community was the reference for both communitarian values and civic republican citizenship, albeit with different assumptions regarding the individual and the polity (Isin & Wood, 1999). Both teachers knew that the assumptions were different, but were not able to elaborate on them, as Frida asked in a tongue-in-cheek manner, “Do the assumptions matter? What matters is that we focus on community interests over that of the individual. The difference is theoretical” (23/3-20).

The focus in teachers’ understandings had been on the group rather than individual because they felt that the community outlook was lacking. Frida noted, “Somehow, the community spirit is lacking in Singapore. Singaporeans are generally self-centred, and care only for themselves” (23/3-32). Marcus agreed:
Basically we are not a very community people, we are loosely tied and focused on taking care of our own. I take care of my family, you take care of your family, and we are fine. It has been so ingrained in us, just mind your own business, focus on bread-and-butter issues (21/7-10).

The communitarian nature was reflected in teachers’ references to the society, community, networks, the idea of common spaces, and the common good. In this, teachers understood that the individual was important as part of a group or society, rather than the notion that the individual was the centrepiece of society.

7.4 A Maximal Interpretation of Citizenship Education

The socially concerned teachers’ understandings and practice of citizenship education suggested a more maximalist interpretation (Kerr, 2003; MacLaughlin, 1992). Marcus and Frida focused on developing the informed and concerned students actively engaged in addressing issues. Citizenship education went beyond knowledge acquisition and conceptual understanding, to focus on meaningfully using the knowledge to participate in the life and concerns of the communities. Frida explained, “Now that students have the knowledge of possible causes of conflicts and what people do, they should extend the knowledge. How can it be used to further society by participating in public debates or collective action” (23/3-19). Thus, the primary aim of citizenship education was not only to inform, but also to use the information to help students understand and enhance their capacity to participate. Marcus described that “citizenship education is more the doing” (27/4-35).

For the socially concerned teachers, participation was a critical component of their understandings of citizenship education. If citizenship education was to enhance students’ capacity to participate in adult lives, then students should be provided with these sorts of learning experiences in the school. Marcus elaborated:

The school is a microcosm of our society. For students, it is the most immediate and accessible community. What it means to be part of the school community is reflective, on a smaller scale, of what is expected of them as adults, by the larger community. If we want citizens to be active and participate, we begin at the school (27/4-34).

In other words, students should be provided with the educative experiences that develop participatory skills and dispositions for active citizenship in the schools.

Marcus and Frida understood that citizenship education should logically proceed in an expanding environment approach, moving from the most to the least familiar. Both teachers felt that the school, being the most familiar environment to students, and the
place where they spend most of their time in, should provide students with a safe training ground to develop skills and ideas. This would develop greater confidence in doing so outside of the school and, in the larger community. Frida elaborated:

There is no need to think too far about how to teach participation. The school is the most convenient place, like my students who used petition. Social studies is a first step in developing students, get them to articulate their opinions. If they learn how to speak up in class, and the teacher encouraged by providing opportunities, the students will develop the skills, attitudes and confidence to do so. They build on these experiences, and gain enough confidence to move outwards into less familiar grounds (23/3-19).

Within the expanding environment approach was the idea that the smallest and most intimate community should serve to anchor and provide roots for the students. According to both teachers, citizenship education must emotionally root citizens to the home even as they moved into other environments to live and work. For Marcus, “one of the very basics of citizenship education is to develop the sense of belonging. Citizens need to feel passionate about their immediate community” (30/8-5). In this way, both teachers believed citizenship education provided the bearings, by anchoring students in the foundational set of values and identity. Frida illustrated what this meant in practice, “Citizenship education should instill the feeling of home and attachment. Wherever I go, I know where I am from, the place I was born and nurtured me, given me the confidence to venture out. That’s home” (23/3-26). Noteworthy, that the basic unit of society in the socially concerned teachers’ understandings on citizenship education had been the group rather than the individual, characteristic of the communitarian nature of citizenship. This accounted for the focus on local communities rather than at the national level.

The socially concerned teachers emphasised preparing students to participate and engage in collective, community-based efforts and with governmental agencies. Students were taught how governmental and community-based organisations worked, such as the town councils, residents’ committees. They were also trained for skills to plan and participate in organised efforts, like how to run a meeting, care for people in need, and to promote specific causes. Marcus gave attention to NGOs in citizenship education. He reasoned that globalisation had thrown up many problems not within the scope of the government to pursue. NGOs thus provided alternative avenues for citizenship participation, such as in humanitarian and relief work. On the other hand, Frida focused on educating students for the democratic processes. This included speaking up on issues, petitions, debates and public decision-making.
It was evident the socially concerned teachers were more politically and socially aware than the nationalistic teachers. Marcus’ focus on NGOs was influenced by his involvement in Red Cross. He joined the Red Cross for co-curricular activity as a student in school and now was the teacher in-charge of Red Cross. Frida’s activism was attributed to her own school experience which developed her to be independent and self-governing. She recollected:

A lot of programmes in my school were run by the students. We were taught independence and given opportunities to do so. I remember we organised a school musical. We had to decide what we wanted - singing, dancing or drama. We also co-ran competitions and games with teachers. We staged a strike once at the basketball court because the principal disbanded the school military band, she wanted us to merge with the band in the neighbouring school, but we wanted to keep our own band (9/1-12).

Although the nation was not the dominant reference for the socially concerned teachers’ understandings of citizenship education, they recognised it as an important component in citizenship education. Frida recalled, “I learnt in political science that citizenship is about being a member of a nation-state. The nation is thus an inevitable aspect of citizenship education” (23/3-33). The nationalistic elements were discernible where both teachers highlighted the necessity of teaching the nation’s history, that is, the Singapore Story. Frida said, “Although citizenship education is more than NE, NE is a key aspect of citizenship education” (23/3-38). The difference between the socially concerned and the nationalistic teachers was that the nation was not an abstract idea, but located in the proximity of the community, together with the tangible relationships and ties among fellow members. This suggested that the nation was not at the forefront, but embedded in their understandings of citizenship education.

The socially concerned teachers felt it was important to understand the possibility of different takes and perspectives to events. Marcus put it succinctly in the context of science, but just as applicable to citizenship education, “Knowledge is tentative, when new discoveries are made, and more evidence unfold, existing theories will have to be re-examined” (27/4-28). Hence, the socially concerned teachers offered alongside the official version of history, personal voices, family history and the experiences of ordinary folks. For example, Frida shared about her grandmother’s experiences in parallel with the Singapore Story. This was clearly distinct from the nationalistic teachers who saw the official interpretation as unquestionable and objective.
Issues were essential to Marcus and Frida's understandings of citizenship education. Both teachers focused on the issues rather than facts and content as the subject matter of citizenship education. Even in the context of national history, both teachers felt that knowing the chronology was not as significant as understanding the implications of the events on the lives of people and communities. These implications were the substance of the issues. The use of issues connotes a more tentative and contested nature of the subject matter of citizenship education.

The more maximalist interpretation of citizenship education was more holistic, indicative by the importance of participation. Citizenship education, as both Marcus and Frida agreed, should not be subject-bound. While both teachers saw social studies as a vehicle for citizenship education, they also believed that students should learn about citizenship outside the subject. This was a significant difference between the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers; while the former generally equated social studies with citizenship education, the latter saw social studies as a springboard for citizenship education. While social studies introduced students to citizenship, its practice should be extended beyond the subject and class. Citizenship education should be school-wide, as this would be “more authentic learning, more aligned to the community setting of the society” (23/3-19).

Both teachers were unanimous that the school should provide structures and opportunities for students to organise events and participate in, such as students' council, dialogue sessions, open-door policy of the senior management. Essentially, what the socially concerned teachers referred to was like what Kerr (2003) identified as to educate for citizenship. Further, there was emphasis on streamlining and integrating the different citizenship related subjects to provide a more holistic and applied experience to students. Their understandings of citizenship education in this case were more alike those of the reformist nationalistic teachers.

7.4.1 A Thinking Citizenship Education

A secondary theme in the socially concerned teachers' understandings of citizenship education focused on developing thinking citizens. Marcus shared that “for me, it is to encourage students to take a more active part in the community. But the basic is to understand the issues, be able to think through possibilities, and reach informed decisions” (27/4-28). Frida concurred:
It's so important for citizens to think. There are many arguments to issues, and people need to know how to access and assess them. They must seek the rationales behind the things that are done, and know how to weigh the options. When we talk about active citizenship, we start from the basis of thinking, the fact that they are to question things like education, housing, population policies that are evolving (23/3-34).

They believed the key to a more active and concerned citizenship was through enhancing the thinking skills in citizens. A citizen who had a repertoire of thinking skills would feel reasonably confident to "take the initiative to question, reason and search for alternatives, and not accept given information passively" (23/3-6). Their understanding was that the active citizen had to be a thoughtful citizen. This was the hallmark of the social orientation. Citizenship participation was not reckless, but informed, responsible and with considered purpose.

In this, both teachers' understandings of citizenship education favoured not only a participatory emphasis, but also a more process oriented one. Marcus and Frida saw the process orientation as appropriate to developing thinking in students. Examples of such process oriented activities included values clarification, perspective taking, source handling skills and reflection. Values clarification was often used in relation to sensitive and contested issues, such as those pertaining to race and religion in Singapore. Source handling skills related to the need to evaluate messages underlying documents, consider biases in materials, and the necessity to rely on one's own thinking skills. Both teachers saw social studies as a platform in developing this aspect, given the focus on source-based case study in the syllabus.

Both Marcus and Frida noted that citizenship was a relationship between the state and the people, and essentially political in nature. Unlike the nationalistic teachers, they did not avoid straying into the political dimension, but felt that when equipped with thinking skills, citizens would be able to participate in the political process in an informed and responsible manner: "We question and critique the policies, ask for explanations, suggest improvements. The people can be trusted with the ability to evaluate and decide. If one has a differing view, speak up but back with reasons. These inputs can be insightful for the political process" (23/3-35). Clearly, the socially concerned teachers took counter-socialising a step further than the nationalistic teachers (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). Finally, Marcus and Frida also understood thinking to be an important tool to counter propaganda. Frida highlighted:

While the subject matter of social studies or citizenship education may be propaganda, if students actively think through issues, evaluate the pros and cons, question ideas and
understand that answers are tentative, this can combat the propaganda effect. In other words, thinking combats propaganda because you have the tools to dissect and assess the validity and reliability of the claims (23/3-6).

7.5 Teachers' Practice of Social Studies and Citizenship Education

Among the eight teachers in the study, the socially concerned teachers were most concerned with the process of teaching and learning of citizenship education. This implied that the process was integral to educating for citizenship. Consequently, they gave a central place not just to what was taught but how it was taught. Marcus said:

I don’t want the students to do badly for the exams, but some things they can do on their own, like learning the content. I use lesson time to focus on the process of teaching and learning, facilitate discussions, debates and questioning them. These are the most precious parts of social studies, it’s citizenship education in action (27/4-22).

This was different from the nationalistic teachers who focused more on the transmission of knowledge. As such, the practice of the socially concerned teachers drew more from the transformative tradition (Jackson, 1985).

Three features of their practice were distinct: emphasis on active learning, issues-centred, and attention to the structures of the disciplines. These emphases were related to how the subject matter was understood as dynamic and complex. In this, the subject matter was taught not only for its academic rigour but to enhance students’ capacity to participate. Framed by the understanding that social studies was the preparation for life, both teachers also extended it beyond the classroom whenever possible.

7.5.1 The Interactive and Participative Approach

The socially concerned teachers were conscious of the citizenship education aims in their teaching of social studies. They seamlessly integrated citizenship education into social studies, but what looked like naturally occurring in their teaching was actually carefully considered. This was unlike Carolyn, the reformist nationalistic teacher, who taught citizenship education without her actual realisation. For example, Frida was seen encouraging students to stand up to present a given issue. Students hesitated, but Frida waited patiently for them to speak up. She probed and scaffolded them, even allowing students to read from the textbook:

I want students to present their points. It’s not just knowing the healthcare issue, the issue is a platform to learn to speak up. Students are not confident, and feel they have nothing to say. Even if they are merely reading from the textbook, I still want them to stand up and read, because I want them to experience speaking up. It’s experiencing having a voice, in a topic they are studying (F-O3).
The socially concerned teachers dominantly taught citizenship education through social studies using an interactive and participative approach where active, participatory-focused strategies were commonly employed. These included discussions, role play, cooperative learning, group work and presentations, values clarification, and the use of multimedia. In Marcus and Frida’s lesson plans, activities were carefully and deliberately planned to develop active citizenship by using specific strategies to cultivate a more interactive and participative classroom culture. Print (2005; Print & Smith, 2003) argued that the use of such pedagogies have the potential to engage students in meaningful and active learning that will encourage them to become active citizens in the future.

In particular, Marcus and Frida were keen for students to learn from one another. This was to facilitate interaction and interdependence within the class community, fostering skills of communication, listening, negotiating, valuing and respecting diverse viewpoints. For this reason, both teachers frequently used group work. In seven out of the ten lessons observed, Frida used cooperative learning strategies to structure group activities. In the fifth lesson, Frida used think-pair-share for students to discuss the basic needs of a child, in introducing the new series of topics on education, healthcare and housing. She explained her choice of strategy, “I wanted everyone to have an overview of the topics. Think-pair-share gives all students the opportunity to discuss and activate prior knowledge. It’s important they learn to actively share their ideas with their classmates” (F-O5). In another lesson on Sustaining Singapore’s Development, she used the jigsaw cooperative learning technique (Aronson & Patnoe, 1997) to facilitate students in teaching and learning from one another about the internal and external factors affecting Singapore. Typical of her empowering characterisation, Frida referred to how cooperative learning enabled greater fairness in giving every student the opportunity and responsibility to participate in his/her own learning.

In contrast, Marcus preferred less structured group work as his purpose was for students to ‘open up’: “I want you all to shed your inhibition, get up and participate in your class with people you know. We are here to learn” (M-O1). He described his group work as “free flow discussions” (27/4-27), “I have been more liberal in letting go, even in discussing issues not directly related to the content, such as the feasibility of direct democracy” (27/4-21). Such fluidity was frowned by other teachers in the
school, as the common teaching approaches were teacher-centred using expository strategies, where students learnt passively. Thus, Marcus' “free flow discussions” were radical. He was convinced that in a context that required students to sit through many hours of teacher-centred lessons, this form of discussion was a refreshing change. The relatively relaxed atmosphere encouraged students to open up and participate. Active learning was important as he believed the accumulated experiences of participation build confidence and cultivate proactivism necessary for active citizenship.

Marcus and Frida often posed difficult issues for students to deliberate in group settings to facilitate the development of a range of social and cognitive skills:

I challenge students with difficult issues. They have to work hard to think, argue, negotiate on the issues. I can see them struggling to communicate their views and argue with reasons, or to disagree respectfully. In the process, they learn to deal with the issues socially and cognitively. It's hard but they are actively learning to work with others on issues (27/4-22).

In a lesson on the causes of conflict in Northern Ireland, students were given the issue on how Singapore avoided race and religious conflicts:

The students sat in groups of four. Marcus explained, “Yesterday we talked about the factors for the conflict between the Protestants and Catholics - divided loyalties, the education system, housing, they are in your textbook. I don’t need to go into the details in class. Read this at home.”

He continued, “Now compare Singapore with Northern Ireland. How did we avoid the conflicts between the different races and religions? Have we been successful? I’ll leave it open to you, discuss among yourselves and decide. There are many views, but you must work towards a consensus in your group, and have evidence to substantiate what you say. Let’s start the discussion, 25 minutes” (M-O3).

Because both teachers conceptualised social studies as about lifeskills, they were keen to give students opportunities to deliberate on issues, as this way of teaching citizenship education was the most naturalistic to how people deal with complex problems in life. Marcus explained:

I do the natural thing when a group of people are faced with a problem – let them talk, clarify and sort out the differences. I see value in it, because it is how we go about with life. It’s messy, but it is the process of understanding the multifaceted nature of issues. This is as real to life as it can get (27/4-18).

In light of the understanding that knowledge was tentative and problematic, Marcus and Frida emphasised multiple perspectives. For example, in a lesson on the separation of Singapore, Frida encouraged students to take different perspectives to the issue. She reminded students, “Do you think the Malaysian textbook would say
we kicked Singapore out” (F-02)? Given the tendency for students to accept the textbook as the truth, she wanted students to realise that knowledge was constructed. Consequently, Marcus and Frida seldom forced fed closures to issues and were accepting of the views students came up with. Marcus explained:

Because we don’t have complete knowledge of issues, so there are no fixed answers. I think students need to learn to handle tentativeness, that’s the way things are. As long as what you say is logical, and can be substantiated, it is alright. We have different views on things due to the different perspectives, the incompleteness of knowledge, leading to varying interpretations (27/4-23).

Hence, they also encouraged students to be skeptical and adopt a more questioning, open-minded and exploratory attitude towards the subject matter.

It was characteristic of Marcus and Frida to introduce alternative views on issues to push students to think divergently. Advice Frida gave to her students was “always to look at what is given from two sides” (23/3-22), such as in a lesson on healthcare, Frida was explaining to the students the idea of self-reliance in healthcare, in relation to Medisave and Medishield as presented in the textbook. Students were agreeing her that “to be independent is good, that’s not being a parasite”. As students were becoming too accepting of the view, she threw in the spanner, “But not everyone is able to be self-reliant. Are there people who aren’t? Are they parasites” (F-07)? Similarly, Marcus would broach a difficult perspective on the issue, as in the fifth lesson on Switzerland, where the minority students in the class were arguing for a full television channel:

A student said, “There is a Romansch channel in Switzerland for a very small group of people. But in Singapore, the minority channel must be shared with many other languages, with limited airtime for each. That’s not fair.” Marcus acknowledged her point, and asked “Let’s think, if one whole channel is dedicated to a minority language, and the people who don’t watch it, like the other ethnic groups, are also paying for it. Is that a problem? The population is paying for something that very few are watching. Is that fair” (M-05)?

It was noteworthy that Marcus often introduced an economic perspective to issues, suggesting the influence of his economics training on his teaching.

Given the understanding of the close relationship between social education and educating for life, both teachers took a more holistic approach to social studies:

In life, things don’t come piecemeal but all at once, taken as whole interrelating the different aspects. So, I go for a more holistic approach, not just the academic grades. As their social studies teacher, I care about them as persons, whether they are comfortable with my teaching, their attitude, confidence, ability to speak up and so on (23/3-10).
They emphasised not only the knowledge and skills, but importantly, the values and attitudes, embodied and integrated in social studies, and linking it closely to students’ experiences. As Marcus opined, “I believe in making social education relevant to their lives. Whether it’s the knowledge, skills, or attitude, how can these help understand our communities better? How can they be related to the students’ experiences as members of the community” (13/1-33)?

However, both teachers noted the limitations of social studies in providing a holistic approach because of the importance given to the cognitive aspects and the ever-present examination. Nevertheless, both teachers attempted to bridge this gap by using multimedia and dramatic techniques. For example, on the topic of Northern Ireland, Marcus showed U2’s *Bloody Sunday* music video. He wanted students to hear the feelings of anger and injustice of discrimination to help students appreciate the angst and frustrations of the Catholics in Northern Ireland. He said to the students, “See and feel the anger when Bono (the lead singer) speaks, look at his expression, listen to the protest in the language. Listen to the lyrics. What feelings did it stir” (M-O4)? Similarly, Frida used role play to help students develop empathy. She scripted four scenes depicting how different principles of good governance would play out in the daily lives of citizens, but left the endings open for students to decide as they role played. For example, the first scene was about the choice of good leadership, and how the Prime Minister had to decide between two candidates. The other students watching the role play were then asked to evaluate the choices made by the ‘actors’ in light of the principles of good governance. The ‘actors’ were to defend their choices.

It was also significant that both teachers tried to extend social studies beyond the confines of the given period and subject, integrating it into the lived experiences of the school community. Marcus integrated aspects of social studies into the community involvement programme of his school. On the topic of Singapore’s ‘Aging Population’, for example, he organised a few projects around the neighbourhood senior citizens’ corners. Frida often referred students to what they had learnt in social studies as cases of how they could tackle issues in the school, such as petitioning to the principal. She advised and helped vet students’ petitions.

As well, this was influenced by how teachers understood what social education meant in developing active and concerned citizens for the communities. Frida elaborated that active and concerned citizens:
Do not simply accept passively. Neither do they criticise as complaints only. Rather, they look at what is given from different perspectives, and ask, is this the best way to go about it? Do I have an alternative? Put forth the idea. It is caring that the community move forward. Be skeptical and constructive for this purpose (23/3-24).

For extending learning beyond the classroom, both teachers also taught from their own examples. Frida shared with students how she was involved in an action research project to develop active citizens through social studies. Further, both teachers were open in their professional relationships with their students, they did not talk down at them, nor assume a superior position over them. Instead, they were open to students’ questions on their practice too. Frida highlighted:

Students should be allowed to question things they read constructively. I don’t mind if students questioning why I interpret issues in certain ways. When you question me, it sets me thinking in ways I probably would not. It helps me be a better teacher too. Because students have different ideas, backgrounds, and experiences, they can provide me with new perspectives on how to relate to them (23/3-23).

Frida often motivated students by using herself as the example: “I am also learning, and learning from you too. Sometimes, you teach me by the things that you say and ask. So, you have to speak up, and help one another in the class” (F-O4). Similarly, Marcus tried to walk his talk. When discussing about poverty in a lesson observed, he brought to the attention of the class, a group of students in the school who came from lower income families, and discussed how they could set up a needy fund or loan scheme to help this group of students. He followed up by working with the students on a proposal to set up an interest free loan scheme to the school management. This proposal was finally presented to the principal and was pending approval.

More than the other groups of teachers, the disciplinary lens influenced the socially concerned teachers’ practice. Marcus paid attention to economic concepts, where he was inclined to explain his decisions to problems in terms of the ideas of limited resources and opportunity costs. For example, with the issue of introducing full television channels devoted to the different ethnic languages, Marcus explained the non-feasibility of the option in terms of costs. Further, as he was also trained to teach English language, he was concerned with their language skills in writing:

I consciously do more reading skills, strategies, writing, tone, different registers in speech. There are connotations and implications with choice of words used. When teaching social studies, I’m more conscious of the need for all these compared to my colleagues (21/7-15).

Similarly, Frida often injected a more political science perspective to issues discussed in class, focusing on civic competencies such as speaking up and fairness. Her mantra
in her social studies lessons was, “Speak up, it’s your right” (23/3-15). Frida was more enthusiastic in teaching the political science topic on good governance than the historical ones such as the merger and separation of Singapore. In two lessons observed on governance, she guided students to compare the political system in Singapore vis-à-vis the American, Russian and Chinese political systems.

Finally, in teaching citizenship education through social studies, both teachers were not overly concerned that students learnt the official version of the history of Singapore, in terms of “the key events and the messages that underlie them” (21/7-2). Rather, both teachers believed that learning about the nation’s history must be made relevant and meaningful, and this was done by understanding that there can be different perspectives to the issue. For example, in two lessons on housing in Singapore and the role of the Housing Development Board (HDB), Frida shared with students photographs and memories of the kampong she grew up in. She then showed a video interview she did with her grandmother on her sentiments about having to move from the kampong to the modern HDB flats. As students read about the transformation of Singapore through the years 1930s to 2004 from the textbook, Frida and her grandmother’s narratives provided a personal perspectives to the issue of transformation. She humanised history through the eyes of two ordinary Singapore citizens, as she reflected after the lesson:

By overlaying the voice of the ordinary persons on the official version of the transformation of Singapore, I hope students see there can be different perspectives to the same issue. By putting in the personal narrative, I hope they realise that it is our community that is changing, and when it changes, it affects our lives. So we mustn’t be indifferent about it, but take an active part in shaping our community, and participating in the developments that will affect us (F-O8).

The interactive and participative approach is more akin to a constructive citizenship education (Cornbleth, 1982). The constructive aspect was prominent in that the student’s role was an active one. They were often engaged in deliberating issues, and encouraged to make sense of and take a stance towards complex issues. In this, multiple perspectives were sought as knowledge was understood as constructed, tentative and incomplete. Wherever possible, knowledge and skills were applied to real issues outside of the classroom. Citizenship education through social studies was meaningfully integrated into students’ experiences.
This chapter discussed the findings of a pair of teachers – Marcus and Frida, characterised as socially concerned in their teaching. The society or community was the primary referent of their understandings and practice of citizenship education and social studies, with the emphasis on the common good. The socially concerned stance was dominantly reformist as the focus was to improve and renew society through making moderate and incremental changes within system confirming ways. The social dimension was given attention such as the interdependence among members of a heterogeneous society, and the idea of ownership and belonging.

Both teachers conceptualised social studies as primarily social education and in terms of preparation for life. The secondary conceptualisation was that of simplified social science. Their understandings of the subject matter were drawn from the logic of the disciplines where the structures of the social science discipline were emphasised. These disciplines included political science, sociology, economics and English language. Yet social issues constituted the main subject matter of social education. These issues were controversial and complex, where both teachers saw the need to adopt a more tentative approach and multiple perspectives. The active and concerned citizen was the conception upon which a more maximalist interpretation of citizenship education was predicated on. Both teachers used an interactive and participative approach to encourage students to learn actively. Their goal was to develop citizens who were proactive and concerned in engaging with the issues, and participating to improve the communities in which they were members of.

The following chapter presents the final group of teachers whose reference for understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education was the personal, in contrast to the nation and society of the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers respectively.
Two teachers in this study were found to be dominantly person oriented in their approach to their teaching. Their understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education consistently focused on personal development. This chapter discusses the findings and analyses of these two teachers – David and Ying.

8.1 The Person Oriented Characterisation

In this study, teachers characterised as person oriented were concerned with developing students to their full potential as individuals. At the heart of this characterisation, the teachers believed, is the individual who should be nurtured in his/her natural growth. The individual was the primary referent for the teachers, he/she was viewed as the source of content in social studies and citizenship education, with both curriculum and instruction based on his/her nature, needs and interests. This has been described as the student-centred tradition and the personal development approach (Brubaker et al., 1977; Martorella et al., 2005) where the focus was child-centred to develop each child to achieve his/her full potential as a self-governing, rational being.

David and Ying constantly addressed their students’ personal needs within the instructional setting. They focused on developing “the whole person, not just the academic needs, and it’s lifelong” (23/6-5). The attention to holistic education, albeit in varying degree, was the common thread across the person oriented, socially concerned and nationalistic progressive teachers. The distinction lay with the reference. For the person oriented teachers, developing the individual was the emphasis in itself. But for the socially concerned and nationalistic progressive teachers, the development of the individual was to serve the larger purpose of the community and nation respectively.

In this regard, developing citizenship was not a priority for the person oriented teachers. It was incidental and more a by-product of developing the well adjusted, self-governing person, resting on strong, positive values. Good citizenship, if it occurred, was a payoff from being a good person, one who has a good character. The idea of the good person rather than the good citizen was consistently emphasised.
Two aspects, personal responsibility and character development, recurred in what constituted the good person, as exemplified by Ying’s excerpt:

What is lacking today among the youths is personal responsibility. They are keen on having a good time and many live their lives with abandon. Look at drunk driving. If you don’t want to be arrested or endanger another person’s life, be personally responsible (29/6-10).

Yet both teachers also felt the tension between academic achievement and good character. For example, David argued, “Even without academic qualification, you can still be a good person” (23/6-5). In a context where society and schools prized academic achievements, they were concerned about the impact of the ‘paper chase’ on character.

Values were emphasised, where the person oriented teachers believed that the good person must be anchored in strong and positive values. Ying said, “Values are very important to me, they anchor my thoughts and actions” (29/6-26). Values operate at different levels within every social structure - the personal, group and societal levels. David and Ying emphasised values at the basic and personal level. The values frequently referred to were love, compassion, kindness, integrity, honesty, responsibility, gratefulness, respect and filial piety. These were also desirable character traits, personal in nature and with little reference to the collective. One’s personal values were expressed through the person’s conduct and behavior. Often cited were examples of ‘right’ behaviors motivated by positive values. Among the three categories of social studies teachers, it was the person oriented teachers who firmly acknowledged their personal values in public settings of the classes. However, they did not impose their values on others, acknowledging the personal nature of values, though they believed these values were important.

Individuals are influenced by the shared values of the groups and society of which they are members. The person oriented teachers emphasised the family in values formation and less of the school and other organisations. Unlike the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers, they focused on the private and personal than public dimension. Hence, they maintained a specific orientation, focusing on the individual than the common society. This meant personal development rather than the common good was the focus. In not discounting the common good, the person oriented teachers saw the development of the person as a basis to attain the common good.
Consequently, the person oriented teachers felt tensions from opposing pulls between the personal and societal. While the inclination was to focus on the personal, the individual was inevitably a member of the larger society, which had different sets of needs and expectations that were sometimes not the priority of the individual. For example, David shared about the strain he felt due to his inability to fit into the defined Singaporean-Chinese. He was not appropriately bilingual as he could not speak Chinese, but spoke Malay instead. These sorts of tensions were common in the understandings and practice of the person oriented teachers, as they struggled between personal development, and fulfilling societal needs and expectations. Oftentimes, it resulted in feelings of disillusionment and a sense of detachment from the society. Subsequently, they retreated into the more private dimension.

The tensions resulted in the gap between understandings and practice. Among the three groups of teachers, the person oriented teachers were least aligned in what they said and practised. This suggested that David and Ying may not be operationalising their true understandings of social studies and citizenship education. Hence, it was tricky to gauge the extent their practice reflected their understandings. For example, David and Ying did not acknowledge any ideological commitment. Liberal democracy, which emphasises the individual, based on the idea that the individual is both moral and rational, was seldom used to justify their person orientation publicly. Their non-ideological commitment cannot be discounted either, for in practice both teachers often highlighted the lack of individual rights in Singapore. Through prolonged engagement and persistent observation, it was recognised that both teachers eventually taught in accordance with their dominant inclinations. As such, their understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education were clearly person oriented in characterisation.

While David and Ying shared the basic characterisation as person oriented educators, they also manifested clear differences. David’s personal nature is best described as liberalising. His liberalising stance also suggested a somewhat liberating meaning. But liberalising not liberating was a more apt characterisation as David’s overall intention was broadmindedness and recognition of difference. Accordingly, he was open to new ideas for progress, and respected those of others. He felt that the notion of success in Singapore was too narrowly defined by scholastic achievements, as he said, “In my time, if you are not academic, you are a failure” (30/8-7).
constrained talent and potential. His personal history was influential in his outlook. The curriculum, he felt, must be directed at learning in the broadest possible sense. David sought to break out of conventions and not be limited by established views. This he did with thoughtfulness, mindful of the multiple intelligences of different students, focused on developing the potential of all students. Thus, he used different modes of teaching and learning to ensure that diverse student interests and abilities were accommodated.

Characteristic of the person orientation, David wanted to develop in students an attitude to life, the nub was, “we must choose our own yardsticks of success” (31/1-5):

Have a positive attitude. What you have done wrong, learn from it and move on. That’s what I want students to learn. If I can help them develop a positive ‘can do’ attitude, no matter what happens, they will be alright (23/6-7).

He emphasised personal perspective as a way to transcend the constraints faced within given contexts. The connotations in this were liberalisation as well as liberation, that is, not to be held down by narrow conventions within given system. Instead, be independent and self-governing. Rather than confronting and challenging the system, the reference was turned inwards to the self. This located the locus of control within the person. Further, David’s person orientation drew its source from his life experiences, as he frequently drew on his personal narrative to encourage students, adding to it the sense of realism:

In life you have to keep learning. If you don’t do well in school, get outside, find something you like and learn it. I wasn’t academic but I didn’t give up, I tried other things outside the school. If I can do it, you can too (23/6-5).

David’s personal and liberalising characterisation was also responsive to educational constraints in Singapore. It was a reaction against the narrowly focused scholastic achievements, in which he was keen to broaden the recognition of diverse talents in students. He did not advocate it, but turned the focus on the self, on what he could do to develop his students. Further, it was also a reaction against the ‘homogenising’ effect of fitting into a constraining and conforming society. For example, he frequently talked about the difficulty he felt trying to fit in to the predetermined ethnic identity in Singapore:

I feel that I am not welcomed, not part of this society due to my language disability. I don’t fit into what society thinks Chinese should be or the criteria of the successful Singaporean. If you go to the market, you don’t speak Chinese or the dialects, and you speak Malay but you are a Chinese, you get snapped at (30/8-9).
His person orientation was a detachment from the constraining society. However, what was operationalised was a more liberal and broadening practice. His reactions were positively used to guide a more inclusive practice, and to enhance students' awareness and broaden their perspectives. Consequently, he was more open to ideas than the other seven teachers.

Ying is characterised as personal and enriching. She differed from David in that her focus was to enrich students' lives rather than liberalise their perspectives. By enrichment, she meant helping students live fuller, more meaningful and rewarding lives. She wanted to help them be more informed, competent and thinking, anchored in good and strong values and attitudes: "I want to widen their knowledge of things around them, not as citizens but people, like knowing the usefulness of Medisave. I want social studies to enrich them, help them understand what's going" (14/9-23). This was unlike the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers whose focus was to build up the individual for the sake of the nation and community, Ying's focus was to add value to the person for his/her own sake.

Ying's personal stance was also characteristic of youthful skepticism, particularly towards the government. She often talked about the burdens associated with being a young Singapore citizen:

This country is a pressure cooker. It's competitive, results oriented and materialistic. The PAP stands for "Pay and Pay". It's frustrating, I'm just starting out in my job, but so many responsibilities and expectations, you have to do this, do that, do a lot of things. I feel the burden of being a Singaporean (5/5-45).

She felt disillusioned and skeptical about giving feedback: "I am not saying our government doesn't treat our feedback seriously, I'm sure they do, but not equally" (5/5-28). She related an incident of reckless driving that almost caused several accidents:

We reported to the Neighbourhood Police, took down the number and location of the car, so they can check. Instead of acting on the information, the policemen shrugged it off. They told us to call up traffic police instead. It's not that Singaporeans don't speak up, but the authorities are bureaucratic and powerless to act when the need arises. It does not encourage participation (5/5-33).

In this case, she felt disempowered as a citizen. She said, "I spoke up, but it didn't lead to anything. I don't think this will change. I'm powerless, and don't feel I can make a difference" (5/5-33). These were but a few examples that could explain her personal and enriching stance. Like David, her person orientation was seen as
dissociating from the society. To counteract the sense of powerlessness as a citizen, she turned towards developing personal efficacy, “it is an area I can be effective, take control, and make the changes” (5/5-12).

Further, as a beginning teacher, the pull towards the personal was inevitable. A reason was Ying’s desire to be an effective teacher, yet still lacking the experiences and strategies to manage the subject matter and students. Characteristically, she experienced difficulties in developing an appropriate distance in the teacher-student relationship. Thus, her person oriented stance was not attributed to any single factor, but an amalgam of factors ranging from personal disillusionment, youthful indifference, circumstantial, and a stage in her professional development.

8.1.1 A Dominant Reforming Position

The person oriented stance was more complex than the nationalistic and socially concerned ones. It was more difficult to interpret the data as they were less consistent in understandings and practice, due to the tension between the personal and societal needs as discussed earlier. But with prolonged engagement and through triangulation of the data, it was found that David and Ying’s person oriented stances were often reforming in position.

The reforming position drew on Dewey’s idea of child-centred education in reacting against the narrowness in education. Dewey believed that education could best contribute to society by producing self-governing individuals capable of independent thought, and able to question the social world of which they are part. The main concern was the development of the competent individual to prepare him/her to participate in community life. Thus, it was vital that education must not be the teaching of dead facts, but the knowledge and skills students learned need to be integrated fully into their lives as persons (Dewey, 1929, 1938).

The kind of education advocated by Dewey sought to connect feeling, thinking and doing. Two aspects were key; firstly, the child’s interests should drive education, and secondly, education should arise in and through the everyday events of life. By this, Dewey meant that the child’s interest should be seen as the leverage they afford, rather than “as something finally significant in themselves” (1902, p. 280). Therefore, the interests of the child are the ‘raw materials’, to be used by the teacher in order to guide the child toward understanding of the subject matter or valuable results
Here the distinction must be made between Dewey and those more romantic reformers who advocated a child-centred pedagogy, such as G. Stanley Hall. The latter argued that instruction in subject matter should be subordinated to the natural, uninhibited growth of the child. But Dewey (1926) did not support simply allowing children to follow their untutored inclination. Indeed, Dewey’s critique of the advocates of child-centred education for their failure to connect the interests and activities of the child to the curriculum, is often overlooked (Westbrook, 1999).

In this way, the person orientation was inherently child-centred in Deweyan terms, for both teachers saw the goal of education as providing the environment and leveraging on students’ interests in producing the self-governing child, emphasising “self-realisation, autonomy, individual growth and development” (MacNaughton, 2003, p. 155). Consequently, Dewey’s pedagogy should be seen as far less child-centred and more teacher-centred than is often supposed, for he places heavy demands on teachers to create the environment and activities that would facilitate students’ learning of the subject matter, rather than in the “spontaneous and crude capacities of the child” (Dewey, 1897, p. 94). Likewise, David and Ying often began lessons with the personal experiences of the students that were springboards into the issues to be learnt. They worked around individual interests and capabilities. By virtue of Deweyan child-centredness, the person orientation was reforming and progressive in allowing the individual to flourish and have wider currency. It was liberal in favouring individual freedoms typical of David and Ying’s understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education (Dynneson & Gross, 1995; Evans, 2004).

Dewey also emphasised experiential learning and community life, where the individual was a meaningful concept to the extent that he/she was an inextricable part of his/her society. At the same time, the society derived its meaning from its realisation in the lives of its individual members. Consequently, he believed in the importance of the subjective experience of individuals in introducing new ideas to reform society (Dewey, 1958). Similarly, the person oriented teachers emphasised experience in their teaching and learning. For example, David often used fieldtrips and hands-on activities in his lessons to help students connect to the society:

Experiential learning is the most precious of my social studies lessons, it's my pet thing. Like fieldtrips, if you have visited the parliament, you bring the experience to bear upon...
Historically, child-centred education had grown out of the progressive education movement, in response to the problems brought by industrialisation and excessively formal, teacher-centred schooling. Broadly speaking, it sought to position the school as the nucleus of social and political regeneration (Evans, 2004). But David and Ying were short on talking about the collective effort or reforming society. It was implied than stated directly. For example, David encouraged students to work cooperatively as "doing so helps the individual student develop confidence by enhancing interpersonal skills and understanding of differences" (15/10-17). Noteworthy, the focus on cooperation was to enhance personal efficacy. That cooperation was a way to advance collective decision-making was implied. The community aspect was implied rather than foregrounded.

The person oriented stance sought not an overthrow of the existing status quo, but cooperation, understanding and appreciating differences to bring about a better society. To the extent that this was successful, was largely determined by personal efficacy rather than collective efforts. By developing individual students to their potential, to be self-governing, was inevitably beneficial to society, as it would encourage more enlightened members in society. Like osmosis, the ideas and actions of these members would permeate society, and lead to its regeneration. David and Ying looked inward to improve and develop the person, instead of looking outwards to change the society. It was progressive and liberal, an action to gradually improve social conditions through focusing on developing the individual without radical changes to society.

However, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) claimed that the person orientation was conservative in terms of democratic participation. This suggested a conforming position, and David and Ying’s understandings and practice displayed evidence of this. Reforming the society was not referred to, rather, personal development was the focus, and any benefits accruing to the society were often an afterthought. The lack of concern for the state of the society implied maintaining the status quo. But what was consistent and dominant in the person orientation were the progressive ideas related to Deweyan child-centredness, which was essentially reforming in nature.
8.2 Teachers’ Conceptualisations of Social Studies

Among the three groups of teachers, the conceptualisation that emerged as the main theme of the person oriented teachers was the broadest in scope. The person oriented teachers conceptualised social studies as general education, with a subsidiary theme of social studies as history.

8.2.1 Social Studies as General Education

For this theme, three features were noted. Firstly, the encompassing nature of general education; secondly the focus on experience; and thirdly, the emphasis on the ordinary and common appeal of social studies.

8.2.1.1 Encompassing Nature of General Education

To the person oriented teachers, social studies was all encompassing, as David said, “Practically anything or topic can fit under social studies” (7/4-2). Social studies was defined so broadly and loosely that it was difficult to describe their conceptualisations precisely. Ying added, “I can’t put it down, there is no fixed definition. It includes many things and covers a wide area” (29/1-23). David summed it up:

I see social studies as learning about everyday life affecting people, the daily functions of life and what’s happening. Social studies is everywhere, when you walk across the road, you stop at the traffic light, that’s already social studies. We can link it to law and order. We can see almost everything as social studies (7/4-3).

What emerged that was sufficiently inclusive to capture the essence of what both teachers were saying about social studies was the conceptualisation as general education. Social studies conceptualised as general education was more embracing than the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers’ conceptualisations, which were defined and focused. This was not surprising as breadth was inherent to the person oriented stance. Characteristically, David and Ying viewed social studies from a constructivist perspective, regarding knowledge as personally meaningful, constructed through experience and reasoning. Personal knowledge was subjective and individualised, diverse across teachers, which explained the breadth.

8.2.1.2 The Focus on Experience

Despite the particularity of personal knowledge, David and Ying’s conceptualisations of social studies as general education shared commonalities. The idea of “the human
experience" (7/4-2) recurred in both teachers’ understandings and practice. Only the person oriented teachers among the three groups described social studies as experience. The notion of experience was Deweyan (1929, 1938) where both teachers emphasised the lived quality and the sensory aspect of social studies. In this, social studies was understood to be an event or a series of events that must be participated in or lived through. Essentially, social studies was to be a lived curriculum.

Inherent in the understanding of general education as “the human experience” (7/4-2), the person oriented teachers acknowledged the validity of a multitude of perspectives and experiences. But unlike the socially concerned teachers who referred to perspectives mainly in cognitive terms, the person oriented teachers emphasised the experiential nature of perspectives. For David and Ying, understanding knowledge as personal, coupled with the significance accorded to experience, led naturally to the understanding that a key focus of general education was the development of empathy for people of other times and places. Giving students “a sense of what it is like, and understand and feel how they would feel” (19/7-12) was important in David and Ying’s understandings of social studies.

Subjective experience was highlighted by David and Ying, which meant that students’ experiences must be incorporated into the social studies curriculum. For example, David emphasised students’ own meaning-making: “I tell them, whatever you have experienced that come to your mind, and you can make the linkages, explain them reasonably, it is acceptable” (15/10-3). True to his liberalising stance, David was encouraging of a diversity of meanings and understandings as he broadened the acceptability of the range of responses. Ying also made social studies resonate with students’ lives. She wanted students to draw personal relevance to what was studied, so she often asked students for their “personal take” (5/10-18) on issues. Somewhat different from David’s emphasis on liberalising answers, Ying enriched students by helping them apply their understandings to their own lives. For her, general education should not just be evaluated on how well it contributed to students’ academic understanding but also to their own lives.

8.2.1.3 The Ordinary and Common Appeal of Social Studies

As general education and human experience, both teachers were concerned with common and mass applicability. Social studies was about the ordinary and commonplace seen and experienced by all. The omnipresence was captured in
David's image of social studies as the person walking down the road, and waiting at the traffic light. He highlighted, "It is the daily happenings and is everywhere" (7/4-2). Similarly, Ying understood social studies to be a contemporary subject, comprising "current affairs or issues" (5/5-11). She contrasted the contemporariness with history, a subject about the past. The term relevance was frequently used in relation to how she thought about social studies. She always said, "Social studies is so relevant to students' lives" (5/5-11). By relevance, she meant useful and familiar to students, with ordinary and common applicability: "There is an everyday feel to social studies" (5/5-11). It must also have an immediate applicability to interest students: "To students, social studies is interesting as it bears direct and immediate relevance to their lives. They like topics on education and streaming, because they can relate as they are affected by streaming" (5/5-11). This implied an understanding that what was contemporary had more value than what was long-lasting. Marsh and Willis (2003) argued that such an understanding of the curriculum encouraged students to accommodate themselves to the society as it exists rather than to improve it. It leaves open the question that if useful practical knowledge is emphasised, what then becomes of intellectual development?

The ordinary and mass appeal of the subject was a reaction against the narrow scope of disciplinary knowledge, seen to be gatekeeping and accentuating success by scholastic achievements. It liberalised and made the subject accessible to all students, as everyone was familiar with and had experienced social studies issues in his/her daily living. The subject matter was lived by all students, and not exclusive to only certain groups. In this way, the subject facilitated students' construction of meaning and encouraged the drawing of personal relevance. This was unlike subjects that were more defined, methodical, guided by established canons of knowledge. David noted, "It is not like physics, there are formulae and theories that must be learnt and applied. In social studies, it is what you see and do everyday, and you bring your own understanding and experience to it" (7/4-6).

Specifically, David and Ying understood the subject matter to be the daily functions and issues of life. The subject matter was "everyday life", "the daily functions of life and what's happening", "it's everywhere" (7/4-2). While ordinary and familiar, the subject matter was not straightforward, but complex as with any life issue. Ying claimed, "It is hard to say this is correct and that is wrong. Take streaming, it's
complex, there are pros and cons. The textbook supports it, it doesn’t mean that if you
don’t you are wrong. You experienced it and are entitled to your views” (29/1-20).
The multifaceted nature of the subject matter was implied.

The person oriented teachers’ understandings of the subject matter as daily functions
and issues of life were substantially different from that of the socially concerned
teachers’ understandings. The former clearly differentiated objective from personal
knowledge. While both objective and personal knowledge were considered “the stuff
of social studies” (7/4-2), the person oriented teachers prioritised personal knowledge.
This meant that the subject matter in the textbook remained as objective knowledge,
and only became meaningful in the living, experiencing and understanding of them in
society. These teachers personalised the issues in bringing a personal perspective to
bear on them. To a large extent, they understood the subject matter to be subjective.

The element of subjectivity suggested that David and Ying did not regard knowledge
as fixed and unchanging. They emphasised multiple perspectives to issues, where
there was not just one truth as might be presented in the subject matter of a textbook,
but many truths in the way that the subject matter could be understood. For example,
the textbooks portrayed one desired version of truth and reality, but David recognised
that other versions were equally valid:

Bilingualism is good for everyone, says the government. I don’t deny it, I can see the
benefits. But bilingualism can also hurt. Like me, I cannot cope with learning two
languages. It is possible for different understandings. The textbook presents one
perspective, there is also my experience which is real (19/7-2).

Ying was more skeptical in her approach to the subject matter, describing the subject
matter of social studies in the syllabus as “one-sided, too much on the government”
(29/1-30). The subject matter was propagandistic: “I’m sorry to say that I think it’s
propaganda. It’s like we are doing this thing for the government” (29/1-25). Ying’s
skepticism was different from Vind’s. Hers was youthful skepticism. To a large extent,
she was influenced by her peers, for every time she talked about social studies, she
cited her peers. It felt as if she was generalising her understanding. Her skepticism
was based more on influence and perceptions than actual encounters, given she was a
beginning teacher. On the other hand, Vind’s skepticism was a result of personal
constraints experienced in teaching. While David and Ying understood the subject
matter in similar ways, the former articulated it in a less provocative manner. Ying’s
response was characteristic of the vocal and skeptical younger generation.
The daily functions and issues of life were not discrete facts and linear in effect. Such knowledge was understood to be holistic and integrated in nature. The subject matter was a complex and simultaneous mix and integration of facts, issues, skills, values, together with the experiences and feelings interacting with one another in a state of co-construction. Hence, the subject matter was dynamic and in the process of becoming, which required students in actively questioning and constructing meaning. This also implied that knowledge was problematic. David and Ying also did not see the subject matter in compartmentalised disciplinary terms. David said, “Reducing the subject matter to mere disciplines would be theoretical and academic, and locks one in the way they look at things” (7/4-30). Instead, the subject matter was understood to be applied and practical in nature, requiring a broader outlook, as David added, “It’s real to life, not bookish” (7/4-5).

Nonetheless, if it had to be understood as disciplinary, then the subject matter was necessarily multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. This meant drawing upon a variety of disciplines. Ying described it as a “potpourri subject”, “it’s like social science, a bit of everything. There is history, political science, sociology, current affairs, geography” (5/5-5). While Ying referred to the more traditional social science disciplines, David associated the subject matter with newer interdisciplinary studies such as Asian and multicultural studies.

8.2.2 Social Studies as History

The idea that social studies had to do with history also emerged from the data and was sufficiently prevalent to constitute a subsidiary theme. In this, three features stood out; firstly, history was regarded as the organising core discipline; secondly, the focus on personal history; thirdly, the role of stories.

8.2.2.1 History as Organising Discipline

With the earlier discussion on the interdisciplinary nature of social studies, conceptualising social studies as history appeared somewhat contradictory. But David and Ying were at ease in understanding the subject matter of social studies as interdisciplinary, yet also history concurrently. On further analysis of the data, together with member checking, several reasons were found to explain this apparently contradictory phenomenon.
There was a common basis in the two apparently differing conceptualisations of social studies. David and Ying understood social studies to be a disciplinary field rather than a convenient collection of information. In this, the person oriented teachers were more like the socially concerned teachers than the nationalistic teachers. Like the former, David and Ying understood the subject matter should be located in the disciplines. This was why both teachers also saw social studies as specific disciplines, as David said, “It is also about history” (7/4-2). Ying concurred, “Something like history and political science” (29/1-23). As with Hirst and Peters (1974), they felt that the disciplines encouraged efficient learning in providing ways to investigate with systematic attention to the progressive mastery of concepts and patterns of reasoning. Ying’s explanation is illustrative:

Although it is about current issues, it must be learnt through some structure. It’s like history and political science, they are disciplines. So social studies must have some disciplinary basis to give shape to the things to be learnt. Yes, it shapes how we make sense of things and guides how it is to be taught (14/9-25).

However, both teachers did not adopt a narrow disciplinary view towards the subject matter. They actively searched for linkages between the disciplines which added a multifaceted perspective to the subject matter. For example, what was brought to bear on the issues, such as the religious conflict in Northern Ireland was a more holistic perspective. The religious conflict was taught with an eye to the historical developments, politics and geography of the region, the cultural aspects, values, and arts rather than sticking to only one disciplinary focus. The issue was understood through a perspective that pulled together relevant concepts and methods learnt from the different disciplines. Hence, the disciplinary base was the reconciliatory factor enabling two seemingly differing conceptualisations to coexist.

David and Ying often associated social studies with history. David claimed that “social studies is about the same as history, it has similar subject matter, but different approaches. I teach history and they overlap” (7/4-9). Both teachers felt that history underlined all human experiences. David, with a liberalising perspective said:

Whatever issues, it must always be seen in their historical context. We all have historical backgrounds. Everything is part of history, because history is about time and the passing of time, so everything is history in the making. History binds our existence, nothing escapes it (7/4-9).

Ying saw the significance of history in contributing towards one’s individual identity. Typical of the enriching characterisation, she sought meaning for the self. She called
this, "knowing your roots", "I always believe in knowing your roots, where you are from, your place of birth and how it changes over the years. This gives one a sense of identity" (5/5-3). Whelan (2001, p. 55) argued that "human existence is essentially historical", thus social studies as life issues is historical.

Ying’s understanding that history was core to social studies gave another perspective to the coexistence of the disciplines with the interdisciplines. Both teachers understood history to be the organising discipline interrelating the other disciplines and perspectives. This suggested a history-centred social studies (Whelan, 2001). They did not see history as “discrete facts and information about the past to be memorised” (31/1-16). Instead, the subject matter was “more like principles and enduring ideas that students should understand” (5/5-11). History-centred social studies was not the study of an isolated past, but an inquiry into causation where teachers understood that the past and present were inextricably linked. An inquiry into the past was to enlighten the present. Therein lay the significance of history in social studies as understood by David and Ying. David explained, “We learn about the past because it can happen again, and it affects what is going on now. The past helps us understand why things are now” (31/1-18). Consequently, both teachers alternated between talking about the past and the present. Ying also called history in social studies “current history” (5/5-14).

It was in this light that David and Ying understood the significance of national history. David highlighted the importance of knowing about Singapore’s past, “It is basic to know our past. Students must be aware that we have reached this stage through hardwork. We had a difficult beginning, and went through a difficult period of building up, and we must appreciate that” (7/4-14). But the person oriented teachers did not favour a single official version of national history, predicated only on NE and the Singapore Story. David argued for the need to consider the historical phenomenon from more than one point of view.

8.2.2.2 Personal Histories

History was not seen as fixed and absolute, but multifaceted. The person oriented teachers recognised multiple versions of the past, particularly ones that were personally meaningful. Personal histories were emphasised alongside the official ones, where David and Ying often brought up their personal and family histories in
explaining the larger picture in society. This implied that both teachers saw students not as mere consumers of the conclusions of others, but also producers of knowledge and meanings for themselves.

David favoured a broader curriculum, in which history in social studies should open up opportunities for learning non-traditional topics such as ethnicity and cultures, gender, and biographies. He found that national history often focused on traditional areas of politics, military and economics which were “determined by the government, and not issues close to people’s lives”. It was from this perspective that he believed in the significance of personal knowledge or “life histories” (7/4-21). Further, they were supportive of including histories of countries whose issues were studied in social studies, such as Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Japan and Switzerland. They believed the issues can be more sensitively understood within their historical contexts.

8.2.2.3 Role of Stories

History in social studies was understood to be “more narrative, story-like” (5/5-11) rather than a list of chronologically-linked facts. For Ying, “history is made up of stories, and stories make history or social studies memorable. Stories are what students can relate to” (29/1-33). Similarly, David understood history to comprise two constituents, “there are facts which can be boring, and there are stories which are interesting” (31/1-15). The understanding of history as stories rather than discrete facts was consistent with the person oriented stance, where knowledge was understood to be personal, and the reader should make sense of the subject matter for themselves. History as stories gave scope for a constructive perspective of history, as David said, “Everyone has a story, a personal one within the shared history of our nation” (31/1-16).

Accordingly, stories were narrative accounts about persons and events written to interest and relate to readers. This was consistent with the ordinariness of general education as Ying noted, “Everyone has a story and can relate to them” (29/1-24). Stories comprised ‘big ideas’ that could generalise to different life situations. Hence, “students can identify with the actions, issues and characters, and extend the meanings into their own lives” (31/1-16). Ying added, “Stories embody ideas and make the subject matter less abstract” (29/1-34). Thus, stories made the subject matter more accessible and personal.
8.3 Teachers' Understandings of Citizenship and Citizenship Education

The passive and personally responsible citizen was the dominant theme that emerged from the findings of the person oriented teachers. This was distinct from that of the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers. Unlike the two groups whose conceptions of citizenship suggested a high degree of national and societal engagement, David and Ying's understandings of citizenship reflected a degree of disengagement. Their understandings of citizenship education were not always predicated on the conception of citizenship. Sometimes their understandings of citizenship education referred to their ideal state, and the understandings of citizenship were reactions against the status quo.

8.3.1 The Passive and Personally Responsible Citizen

The dominant image of the person oriented teachers' understandings of citizenship was the passive and personally responsible citizen. David and Ying’s understandings of citizenship were differentiated, more complex than that of the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers. At one level was a more objective response reflective of the official line and socialisation. This cannot be dismissed as the responses represented a facet of how both teachers understood citizenship as members of the larger community, shaped by the historical and political circumstances in Singapore. At another level was the subjective one where teachers made sense of citizenship through the lens of their personal experiences. Ying found “this is more impactful when we understand through the effects on us, like how we feel when things are done to us” (5/5-28). For the person oriented teachers, the subjective was more meaningful as the understandings were embodied in their lives in contrast to abstract ideas. The differentiation reflected the tensions of the person orientation in a context largely nationalistic and communitarian in outlook. However, the understandings were not distinct facets, but complex differences that were sometimes indistinguishable, and other times conflicting, characteristic of the person oriented teachers' multifaceted understandings of citizenship.

Two aspects of David and Ying’s conception of citizenship were closely linked, acting on and reinforcing one another. First is the understanding that citizenship in Singapore was passive: “Singaporeans are very passive, they do not participate and are indifferent” (5/5-34). Typically, the person oriented teachers did not just adopt a
generalised view, but also included themselves. Neither of the two teachers were actively involved citizens. Ying said of herself, “I am a passive citizen. I have always just know, but haven’t done anything, not spoken or written about issues. It’s either I have no time or too lazy” (14/9-31). By passivity, both teachers held a narrow and functional view of citizenship that focused on voting and law abidingness. Ying added, “Citizenship is the duty to vote, but I’ve never got a chance to vote yet” (5/5-41).

David highlighted the law abiding aspect of citizenship, “I have been brought up to understand that if you stick out your tongue, you will get knocked, so don’t” (23/6-19).

David’s quote illustrated a dominant view of both teachers’ understandings of passive citizenship, that it was restrictive and controlling. Similarly, Ying frequently talked about citizenship in terms of the restrictions and controls:

I won’t say I have freedom of speech, because our government controls things that we say and how we think. But these are my guaranteed rights and there shouldn’t be any restrictions. If I have the right to do something, I shouldn’t have to go through all that red tape and processes to do it (14/9-27).

They felt that citizens were reduced to a state of passivity and disempowerment, as Ying explained, “I may be willing to be more active, but no point. Time again, I see so much red tape and restrictions” (14/9-6). She continued, “When we are passive, it’s not because we do not have opinions, but it’s the system. Some spoke up, yet nothing was done. It’s discouraging, so leave it” (5/5-34).

The state of passivity was worsened by a perception that citizenship was elitist. Both teachers understood citizenship to be polarised, where active citizenship was exclusive to the selected elites, the rest were to “listen and follow what they tell you” (5/5-47). Ying clearly stated:

We, the general Singaporeans think it is only the few they listen to. We are just the masses, not the elites. The government only listens to the few elites and the rest are just followers. Not everybody’s feedback is valued, maybe the ones from the clever people are more valued. Mine certainly wasn’t (5/5-29).

An unequal relationship between citizens and the state also underscored the passivity:

Very paternalistic and authoritarian, it means I’m right, you listen to me, I know what is happening, you follow, it’s good for you. We are like wayward kids growing up, needing discipline. The government is always controlling you. It’s for our good, they say, to ensure that we have economic stability (30/8-4).

The state was conceived as paternalistic and authoritarian, constantly disciplining its citizens through its harsh laws and strict rules. Consequently, citizens were taught to
obey and follow the ‘omniscient’ state. The context, as both teachers alluded, did not facilitate citizens to be active participants in the political process, rather it was intended to socialise citizens to be accepting and acquiescent.

Although both teachers expressed a passive conception of citizenship, they were not apathetic. They were concerned about many issues in society, as David said, in a tone that was almost pleading, “I really hope for broader criteria, that society is more tolerant and accepting of differences and not use a single yardstick of success to judge everyone. Whether one speaks the right mother tongue, he has a right to be accepted, to play a part in society” (30/8-15). There was a raw honesty in what they said and did, because the concerns sprang from personal experiences. They felt it was important to be active within the society, and they would be inclined to participate more actively in society. The immediate constraints for them were simply workload and time. Ying explained, “The normal work takes a toll on you, and you don’t have time and energy to do these things” (14/9-31).

Second is the conception of a personally responsible citizenship. Such a conception focused on the person, and not on the society and its problems. The understanding was that if a person contributed to society, it was attributed to individual good character and behaviour, not collective initiative nor efforts. David and Ying understood that such a citizen should be self-responsible, including acting responsibly in his/her community. He/she should be of good character, self-disciplined, law-abiding and volunteer when asked to as David elaborated:

> When they come to school it is already citizenship. As long as they walk on the streets, they cross the traffic lights, and obey the traffic laws, it’s citizenship. In the school, you don’t fight, don’t cause racial tension, observe the values, uphold multiracialism, respect other religions, don’t steal, don’t litter deliberately, that’s good citizenship (23/6-10).

The personally responsible citizen also participated in volunteer and/or charity work, as Ying said, “One who does volunteer work, makes positive contribution” (5/5-38). Both teachers understood such volunteer work to be carried out at the local level, such as the neighbourhood or church activities. They gave personal examples: David taught catechism classes in his church, and Ying helped in food distribution to needy families in her church. They did not associate citizenship with political involvement, nor referred to it at the national level. It was not because they were unaware, but steered away from the more public sphere.
Both teachers understood such a citizenship to be a quiet form of citizenship, one operating on an 'existing' or 'life as usual' mode. The focus was to simply continue living ordinarily as a good person, as per normal. David elaborated, "I think everyday living is citizenship. By coming to school, studying and getting good grades, they are already good citizens as they are preparing to be future workers. They are already playing their part as citizens" (23/6-11).

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) have argued that such a citizenship had its limits in developing a more democratic society, as the individualist orientation often worked against the kind of reflection and action essential in a democratic society. This was seen in David and Ying’s understandings and practice where the personally responsible aspect was linked to passivity. One acted on the other to reinforce a citizenship that shied away from proactive and collective participation for the common good. The relationship was a dynamic and complex cause-effect between the two aspects. The circumstances leading to an understanding of passive citizenship, consequently led both teachers to withdraw into a more individualised understanding and vice versa. The subsequent sub-sections would look more closely at the teachers’ understandings of passive and personal responsible citizenship.

8.3.2 A Lack of National and Communal Identities

A sense of disengagement from the society was stark in the person oriented teachers’ understandings of citizenship. The consequence was a lack of a sense of national and communal identity. For a Singaporean identity to develop, David and Ying believed it must be grounded in an emotional attachment to the country, to start with a feeling of belonging. Citizens should feel bonded, through commonality and shared vision. Ying explained, "Citizenship means feeling at home, all hearts beat as one kind of thing" (5/5-3).

Unlike the nationalistic teachers, David and Ying showed little attachment to the country. David did not associate citizenship with belonging: "When I hear citizenship, it’s about duty, belonging and attachment have not crossed my mind" (7/4-20). Instead, "I felt very stifled in this system. It’s a feeling that the country does not welcome me, I don’t belong, and don’t feel a part of it" (30/8-7). He reflected on how he did not fit into the narrow Singaporean-Chinese identity due to his inability to speak his Chinese mother tongue. David saw himself a victim of his own citizenship,
as he said, “When you are a Chinese in Singapore and you don’t speak Chinese, it is a sting. These stringent criteria are stumbling blocks. When I was younger, I wanted to leave the country at every opportunity” (30-8-7). This explained why he felt little in way of national identity and adopted a liberalising stance, recognising a more diverse and flexible citizenship: “I wish Singapore citizenship is more flexible, more accepting of its own people and their differences” (30/8-10).

For Ying, there were two types of identity; firstly the official status where a Singaporean was defined by his official status, such as “holding a pink identity card, and traveling on a Singapore passport”. But this was insufficient to sustain citizenship as she elaborated, “Honestly, citizenship should not be just that, but feeling for and doing something for the country. It’s feeling a part of the country, there is a sense of belonging, and you identify with it. But I don’t feel that” (29/6-23). Secondly, there must be “a real and deeper sense of identity” (29/6-24) invested in emotional commitment. The metaphor of the home, with feelings of warmth, love, care and belonging, was used to ground such an identity. Unfortunately, Singapore citizenship lacked the identification with the home. Ying shared, “I won’t call Singapore my home. I don’t feel the warmth of a home in Singapore. Maybe that’s why I don’t feel that sense of national identity” (5/5-46). Instead, Singapore citizenship was about “clinical security, safe streets, clean environment, efficient system”. She could “appreciate Singapore where we can jog safely in the parks, and we don’t have natural disasters. Somehow, I can’t identify with Singapore emotionally” (5/5-45).

David conflated national and communal identities as he saw the nation and community in Singapore as one and the same thing. While Ying lacked the larger Singaporean identity, she could identify herself with local groups such as church and peer groups. These groups she identified with were personal and not publicly organised ones. In a typically personal and enriching way, she would talk about how her friends made her life more meaningful.

Among the three groups of teachers, the person oriented teachers were the only group who briefly referred to a global dimension of citizenship. David said, “We are also a world community. When you travel, you will notice people in different countries share many similar concerns. We need to see ourselves as one global community, especially because of terrorism and diseases” (30/8-18). McIntosh (2005) associated global citizenship with several capacities of the mind, which were observed in David
and Ying's understandings and practice. Importantly, both teachers were sensitive to the world around them, and able to compare and contrast Singapore with others. Hence, they were able to appreciate plurality as a result. Their ease with the idea of global identity was evident because David had lived abroad and traveled widely. Ying also traveled a fair bit after her undergraduate studies. Identifying with the world was a move to transcend the narrowness of the Singapore identity. The Asian identity was often invoked by both teachers, as David explained that "being Asian is more encompassing. Asia is diverse" (30/8-14). Similarly, Ying shared, "I still hold very Asian values. I won't say these values are only held by Singaporeans" (29/1-33).

8.3.3 Responsibilities and Duties

More than the other six teachers, David and Ying were clearest in their understandings that citizenship included both rights and responsibilities. Rights were understood to be inherent and inalienable entitlements, "things which the citizen has a just claim". Ying said, "Because I am a citizen, I get these things. It is not taken for granted that I should have them, but they are justly and rightfully mine by virtue of my citizenship" (14/9-27). It was natural that both teachers were keenly aware of, and fairly vocal about their lack of individual rights. David often drew comparisons between the U.S. and Singapore. For him, thoughts of Singapore citizenship never threw up the concept of rights: "Citizenship? Rights? No, I've never got it as your rights, that's sad. It's like I know rights are essential to citizenship, yet they don't spring to mind" (7/4-21). While both teachers were critical about their lack of rights, they were nevertheless fair in their appraisal of Singapore citizenship. Ying stated, "If you compare Singapore with other countries, it's true, we don't emphasise rights. But in many other ways, we are in a better shape, we have peace and stability, it's a safe environment and we feel protected" (5/5-28). David supported, "Things work here. In the U.S., the government can shut down. Then you appreciate that you live in Singapore. While we lack some rights, we are not oppressed. We enjoy an efficient system here" (19/7-3).

For these teachers, citizenship in Singapore was synonymous with duties, obligations and responsibilities. Ying described it as "burdensome and demanding" (5/5-45), and this was supported by David's experience with the mother tongue and National Service: "It's an imposition, the stringent requirement they put on you to pass mother tongue, and then the National Service" (19/7-2). Consequently, citizenship meant duty
bearing. David’s annual military obligation served as a constant reminder of his duties to the nation, and precisely because he was a citizen that he had such duties:

When I hear citizenship, I think of duty. Because you are a citizen, it is your duty to do these things. We have to do National Service, after that, the yearly reservist obligation. Because you are a citizen of Singapore, that’s why you have to do these things (7/4-21).

Duties came in a string for David, felt to be an imposition on the freedom to act and live. It was a course of action imposed by law, where he had no recourse, because of his status. Duty was equated with burden and the connotation of compulsion. He shared, “When I was younger, I felt so constrained”. But in a dutiful manner, he too had come to accept the duty bound nature of his citizenship, as he said, “Perhaps now I am older, I have accepted it and more well trained” (30/8-7).

In contrast, Ying saw citizenship to be more about responsibilities than duties. Responsibilities suggested accountability and trustworthiness, while the latter was obligatory. The softened image was a result of an understanding of citizenship, based more on what she heard and less on what she experienced. For example, she often prefixed her statements such as, “I speak from what the teachers were saying, what I have heard from the principal….And what I heard yesterday, from the teacher in-charge of music” (14/9-3), and “we say we want to migrate, but I read this article, that when people migrate, then they start to appreciate Singapore” (5/5-45). Such an understanding was common among the younger Singaporeans. She saw the responsibilities as diminishing rather than enriching the quality of her life.

In understandings, both teachers held their ideal conception of citizenship that was somewhat more akin to the liberal democratic tradition, emphasising individual rights. But what was operationalised in practice was the civic republican tradition of citizenship that prevailed, with the focus on duties, obligations and responsibilities.

8.3.4 Multicultural Outlook

The issue of diversity was a key concern in David and Ying’s understandings of citizenship. They cared about the basis of citizenship identity and felt that a key criterion, multiracialism, built on the five official races - Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian and others (CMIEO) - was limiting and insufficient to sustain Singapore in an increasingly global society. David explained:
The world is now very globalised. We see more diversity – American-Chinese who cannot speak Chinese, Indians who speak Chinese, China-Chinese who speak with American accent. They bring different cultures, values and beliefs. These things are happening, so open up and embrace diversity (19/7-6).

While the CMIEO framework provided for efficient management of plural Singapore, plurality was defined to mean CMIEO. It forced fed identities on citizens according to their race where citizens “are constantly reminded of it through our birth certificates identity cards and death certificates. It locks you in to see things through those lens. But how much of me is because of my race” (19/7-10)? David was to painfully learn that “I am a misfit. Am I a Singaporean-Chinese? I can’t speak Chinese or dialect. I can speak Malay, but it’s not the right language for my race” (19/7-5).

Accordingly, slotting people into racial categories entrapped as it did not allow for deviation. As cultural ballast, the classification accentuated racial identities to reinforce Singapore’s Asianess (Ang & Stratton, 1996). Ying cited the example of Racial Harmony Day held every 21 July, to remind students of the 1964 race riots, and therefore the importance of racial harmony. Students were encouraged to dress in ethnic costumes, often culminating in a concert where cultural dances were presented, based on the CMIEO classification. Benjamin (1976) identified that Singapore’s multiracialism pressurised Chinese to become more Chinese, Indians more Indian, and Malays more Malay, in their behaviour. For example, Ying highlighted how the classification landed well to racial stereotyping, “When classes put up skits, the Indians always run round the tree, and the Sikhs wear turbans” (29/6-18). This suggested an insular attitude towards differences, which did not augur well in an increasingly global context.

Both teachers felt that multiracialism must be broadened where race should not be the main criterion of citizenship identity. There was a need to be more inclusive of “different abilities, classes, social backgrounds, gender, religion, cultures” (19/7-9). Although they did not use the term multicultural, in effect they were suggesting such an outlook. David and Ying preferred that citizenship identity be based on ethnicity to race, with culture as the reference. To them, culture meant a shared way of life practiced by a group of people. Both teachers understood that within the larger societal culture, there could co-exist many sub-cultures from which “we can also derive our identity and our unique way of life” (7/4-30). Recognising these sub-cultures would make citizenship more inclusive and flexible. Noteworthy, the value of respect for differences was dominant in teachers’ understandings and practice, as
David explained, “There must be respect for one another in race and religion, and across abilities, social and economic statuses, for society to function” (19/7-5). Similarly, Ying said, “We are all different, the way to live together is mutual respect. There is room for difference in an open society. Disagree respectfully” (29/6-18).

Typical of both liberalising and enriching characterisations, a multicultural outlook of citizenship would be more personally fulfilling and meaningful because it allowed for scope and choice. In David’s words, “It’s letting us customise our way of life” (7/4-34). But most of all, Ying elaborated that it was a respect for individuality and personal autonomy, “At least, it is a recognition that we have a mind of our own, we have individuality, creativity, and freedom to express how we feel and think” (14/9-28). These were typical of responses that were reforming in nature.

The person oriented teachers’ understandings of multicultural citizenship was also typically less politicised and critical (Banks, 1991; Hursh, 2001). While they problematised the CMIEO classification, they failed to link it to structural issues. They wanted to broaden the basis for citizenship through recognising ethnic alternatives as possible sources. But in disregarding the structural questions, they left existing power relations that undergird practices intact. For example, David mentioned the need to include gender and class in developing a more inclusive citizenship, yet nowhere did he elaborate on it. Neither did he raise issues of social inequality. Consequently, the ability to construct alternative meanings was limited because existing power relations got in the way.

It was noteworthy that their understandings stemmed from personal experiences rather than collective actions that were ideologically and politically motivated. Clearly, a limitation of the passive and personally responsible citizenship was its inability to transform understandings to collective and public sector initiatives (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Understandings and practices were kept personal, and not purposefully used to analyse social and structural patterns in society which would bring about a more multicultural citizenship. It was not in the character of the personal orientation to focus on society. It did not seek to transform society. On the contrary, it shied away from society, retreating back to the individual.
8.4 A Maximal Interpretation of Citizenship Education

The person oriented teachers' understandings and practice of citizenship education were characterised by a broader definition of citizenship that was more inclusive of different interests in society. This suggests a more maximalist interpretation of citizenship education (Kerr, 2003; McLaughlin, 1992). Among the three groups of teachers, the person oriented teachers' understandings of citizenship education were the least straightforward. David and Ying's responses often oscillated between reacting against the status quo and offering an ideal state. David confessed, "I sometimes get confused, am I talking about what citizenship education should be, or reacting against my condition? It's hard to separate, I'm teaching it and I have my views about it" (7/4-27).

It was in citizenship education that David and Ying's struggles between the personal and the societal response were most evident. Although inclined to a personal orientation, they also recognised that citizenship education had a public slant, as Ying said, "There is a directed national purpose - preparing students to be useful citizens to participate effectively in society. I learnt in politics that societies engage in it for their own survival" (5/5-38). In this, both teachers agreed the school and teacher play key roles. Ying regarded citizenship education as "the teacher's responsibility" (5/5-36). Unlike the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers who did not see it as problematic, the person oriented teachers did. David felt uncomfortable teaching citizenship education, as it was against his personal and liberalising character to impose a singular point of view:

I do believe it, if we don't do what we are supposed to do, then Singapore would not progress, and we'll all be affected. On one hand, yes, we have to teach it for the sake of the country, but on the other hand I find it difficult. What bugs me is I'm imposing some standard views on others. But if I don't do it, what will happen (7/4-22).

Ying remarked, "Am I implicated in the government's propaganda" (5/5-8)? The remark indicated her understanding that citizenship education was problematic.

Generally, citizenship education was viewed as problematic due to what both teachers found to be a "misplaced focus" (7/4-31). They thought citizenship education was focused on developing students. In reality, citizenship education was dominated by the focus on the government. The focus and its attendant narrow selection and presentation of the subject matter were thus problematic. This contradicted the
emphasis on meaning-making, the hallmark of the personal orientation. Agency and difference were disregarded. David’s point was illustrative:

Actually developing students isn’t the focus. It’s about the government. Too much on the Housing Development Board (HDB), and how good it has been. After that, it’s good governance. Then industrialisation, the government does all the right moves. The message is our government is so good and clever, not a squeak otherwise. It’s telling, telling and telling, as if people have no eyes to see and cannot judge for themselves. People become cynical. Yes, the government has done well, but if you force it down day in day out, it is off-putting (7/4-31).

The person oriented teachers problematised citizenship education, particularly the conflation of the government with Singapore, the nation-state. The government was equated to Singapore, with the terms used interchangeably. The implication was that any criticism against the government was seen as criticism of Singapore, or disloyalty to Singapore. Citizenship education was thus seen to be controlling in nature. But in practice, both teachers tried to liberalise citizenship education beyond the government’s agenda, to incorporate other interests. For example, David introduced the cultural aspects of ethnic groups referred to in the textbooks to help students transcend the superficial knowledge of conflicts.

All three groups of teachers had a common understanding that citizenship education comprised knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The difference, however, was in the respective emphases and purposes. The person oriented teachers integrated all three aspects as whole, to be developed through experience in the individual. They felt strongly that citizenship education should not be confined to particular subjects, but a school-wide approach and beyond the school. Nonetheless, like the others, they saw social studies as the main vehicle of citizenship education, as Ying said, “I do consider social studies as citizenship education” (5/5-39).

However, the person oriented teachers were primarily concerned with opportunities for individual growth and self-fulfillment, the societal or national interests were secondary. They placed emphasis on the personal character of curriculum. This should not be mistaken for self-seeking, rather it was a different approach to citizenship education, the basis of which was the development of positive self-concept and personal efficacy (Martorella et al., 2005). Ying explained, “To me, it’s very simple, I just want everyone of my student to reach his potential” (29/6-8). Besides, the scope of citizenship experiences were without borders: “To be optimistic because the world is your oyster” (23/6-7). They felt that society would be better served with
people who were more capable of independent thought, self-discipline and of good character.

In this, citizenship education was not only to inform but to enhance capacity of individuals. It focused on providing students opportunities for meaning-making, and less the content to be conveyed. The belief was that knowledge was to be meaningfully constructed by individuals through experience. Citizenship education was to be learner-centred, and was essentially learning through citizenship (Kerr, 2003). Characteristically, this meant an experiential approach that involved learning by doing, and through active, participative experiences in different situations. For example, David highlighted an example:

The students organised the prom night, the teacher held the money and signed the letters. I briefed them on the protocol, like don’t go to the hotel and say you want to speak to the manager, you have to make an appointment. It develops confidence, communication and negotiation skills. They learn it on-the-job (23/3-13).

Citizenship education was clearly value-laden. Unlike the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers who emphasised shared and communitarian values, the person oriented teachers grounded citizenship education in universal values that were not tied to particular communities. Respect for diversity, as discussed earlier, was the key common value emphasised by both, in line with the multicultural outlook of citizenship. Ying focused on “love, respect, compassion, responsibility, these are universal values and the criteria for goodness across all societies” (5/5-15). David highlighted values of equality, resilience and broadmindedness, and those related to autonomy and coping strategies. Their objective was not on using these values to strengthen society or the nation, instead the focus was personal development. It was concerned with nurturing the good person universally. The benefits to society were but positive by-products.

8.4.1  A Thinking Citizenship Education

Developing thinking skills was frequently mentioned in the person oriented teachers’ understandings and practice of citizenship education. For David and Ying, thinking included the ability to use a range of skills to question, reflect, form opinions and make wise decisions. David warned that “we have to question, and can’t just accept, accept and accept without questioning, otherwise you can fall prey to lies and be easily fooled” (7/4-30). Similarly, Ying explained:
If you are able to analyse when given something like a policy, you can evaluate the pros and cons and then decide. It’s important to have your own opinions about things. It’s sad when you don’t have a view and is easily swayed by what others say. So you must know the facts, how to evaluate and use it to form your view (5/5-42).

Unlike the other two groups of teachers who talked about developing thinking citizens, David and Ying used ‘persons’, ‘students’, ‘folks’ and ‘adults’, rather than ‘citizens’ in association with thinking. This reflected a different orientation towards citizenship, with the focus on developing students to be good persons, leading fulfilling lives. Citizens, on the other hand, suggested training students for a public life. Noteworthy, David and Ying seldom linked thinking to formal citizenship activities such as collective participation for causes. Instead, the aim of developing thinking skills was to help “ordinary folks” be more informed “about things around them so they can lead more fulfilling lives. It’s important for them to know more about the society, so they won’t always complain or follow what others say” (5/5-22). It is also to help “ordinary folks” be savvy in their daily transactions, as David elaborated:

They should question the products they buy. Take handphones, there are many brands, which to buy? Or financial products that banks tell you can yield high returns. You have to think about the things not said, the risks, costs, then make your decisions on an evaluation of what is and not said (19/7-21).

True to the person orientation, with respective liberalising and enriching characterisations, the aim was to enhance the capacities of people, people who were quietly thinking individuals, and not public spirited ones. Nonetheless, they were not discouraging of thinking that would lead to collective action, except that it was not their focus.

8.4.2 Non-Participative Citizenship Education

Although David and Ying’s inclination was to shy away from public and collective participation, they were not adverse to it as David explained, “If it happens, good. Otherwise, it is also ok. What’s important is the students learn the skills, and know how to use them in making choices in their lives” (19/7-21). Both teachers gave an insight into why they did not focus on participation. None of the other teachers except for David and Ying saw it this way. Four reasons were suggested, a lack of knowledge, time, skepticism and complacency. Ying reflected that “the lack of knowledge of how things are done stopped me. Because I am not clear how I can be
involved, so I don’t” (29/6-26). Similarly, David said he did not know what democracy and participation actually meant until he studied in the U.S. Another obstacle was time, with both saying that the biggest constraint was the pressure of work, “I don’t have time. When I get home, it’s late and I have to prepare the next day’s lessons, plus the marking, that’s why I don’t participate” (29/6-27).

In addition, both teachers were concerned if their participation would be valued. This point was discussed earlier, but it is worth mentioning again that a sense of skepticism often underlined the person oriented teachers’ understandings. Finally, as both teachers confessed, it was their own complacency. David admitted, “From what I see, my peers and colleagues, we don’t really care about the policies, politics and governing, as long as everything is ok, it’s fine. There is no impetus to participate” (30/8-5). Ying concurred, “Maybe I am so comfortable with my state, which is what every Singaporean is, I don’t feel the need to participate” (29/6-25).

8.5 Teachers’ Practice of Social Studies and Citizenship Education

The person oriented teachers evidenced more deliberate consciousness of their teaching than the other two groups of teachers. They were careful not to dominate and impose on students’ learning. The guiding principle was “create the opportunities, give them the ABCs, then help them to discover on their own. As long as they can explain logically, that’s fine. There is no need to nitpick and insist on a single way of understanding” (30/8-10).

David and Ying’s practice was characterised by a broad mix of teaching approaches, often interactive, both inside and outside the classroom, as well as formal and informal. They were nearer to the socially concerned teachers in emphasising interactivity. Yet, they were also distinct in emphasising constructivism, particularly in providing sufficient scope and space for individuals to explore, within the constraints of an examination subject. Consequently, their practice drew more from the transformative tradition (Jackson, 1986).

Three aspects were dominant in these teachers’ practice of social studies and citizenship education – multiple pathways to learning, emphasis on experiences and opportunities for meaning-making. The three aspects were held together by a child-centred focus emphasising self-realisation, autonomy, individual growth and development (MacNaughton, 2003). Ying’s excerpt is illustrative:
I give my students a fair bit of freedom to take charge of their own learning. I adopt an open door, come forward and share. I train my class to be independent. I don’t believe in dictating what they should do, I give them chances, and help them along (29/6-15).

Both teachers saw social studies as the main vehicle for citizenship education. As such, these constructive and experiential approaches provided the opportunities for students to explore and make sense of their citizenship. In a progression in aims from knowledge to citizenship (Walkington & Wilkins, 2000), David and Ying’s practice was described as developing one’s own citizenship. These approaches were directly related to how social studies was conceptualised as general education, and the subject matter understood to be as embracing and ordinary as human experience. Naturally, such an encompassing subject matter could only be grappled by a flexible approach. To avoid being lost when the subject matter was so wide, teaching was also grounded in the disciplines, described as “the ABCs” (30/8-10), or the building blocks.

8.5.1 The Constructive and Experiential Approach

David and Ying’s lessons were noticeably less structured and nosier than that of the other two groups of teachers. An entry on David’s first lesson observation noted:

The class was noisy. During group work, students walked around to talk with others on what they were doing. Some laughed as they discussed. Another group was putting their ideas into a rap. Then they decided to practise it outside the class. They got up and walked out. The class looked messy as students moved about. Some students sat on the floor, others outside, dancing and rapping, yet another group was tucked in a corner of the class talking. David was tolerant of the fluidity and the noise (D-O1).

Similarly, Ying reflected about her class:

I encourage students to be vocal. Some teachers said my class was noisy. Others said they were rude, as students always had something to say. It’s good they aren’t afraid to speak up. I encourage them to speak up confidently, assure them it doesn’t matter that their ideas are wrong. There is more talking in my class. Sure, they need to learn how to say things constructively. They may not know how at first and it may appear rude, so we need to help them when they speak up (29/6-15).

The fluidity and noise in the lessons of the person oriented teachers were characteristic of the greater freedom that David and Ying gave, compared to the other two groups of teachers. Ying saw it as adopting “an open door policy” (29/6-14) in teaching, and David as “creating opportunities and facilitating the conditions” (30/8-3). Both teachers saw the objective was to develop greater independence, initiative and self-discipline in students particularly for their own learning. David added this would “train them to be more independent adults, able to take control of their own lives, and adapt to circumstances” (30/8-4).
The person orientation, which conceptualised social studies as general education, embracing in its subject matter, suggested a flexible view of citizenship. Accordingly, the ideal citizen was one who was adaptable and optimistic, able to cope with changing circumstances, and “be less reliant on being told by the government”. David explained, “How else to do so but to give them more freedom and choices in learning, than always telling them what to do. Guide and trust them, be more open to what they come up with” (30/8-3). For example, in the fifth lesson, David divided students into groups, and they chose aspects of international diplomacy to work on. In the next lesson, the groups came together and taught their respective parts to the class. David reflected on students’ ability to learn independently after the lesson:

They came back and joined everything together. They summarised what they read and added relevant information from their little research. They found pictures to illustrate. Their slides and explanations were better than mine. Really, I don’t have to do so much, they can learn by themselves. That was so satisfying. I wasn’t sure if they could cope with the freedom, but they did, and did well (D-04).

In a context of an encompassing subject matter that emphasised freedom and choice in learning, it suggested a view of social studies knowledge as an ongoing process of understanding and thus incomplete. Citizenship education was thus a process of continuous learning as Ying said, “Citizenship education is not one off, I think it is lifelong learning” (5/5-12). The ongoing process of constructing meanings allowed the teacher to share ownership of meaning-making with the students. Students were co-opted into the process of co-construction of meanings and understandings with the teachers. This flattened the relationship between the teacher and students which was characteristic of the person orientation that emphasised autonomy and equality between individuals. It involved valuing students for their experiences and knowledge, listening to them openly as they attempted to make sense of the world and believing in their ability to be successful (Belensky et al., 1986).

Diversity was characteristic of the person oriented teachers’ practice. The teachers recognised individuality, and appreciated that there were different ways of knowing. For example, David explained, “Reading the textbook is not the only way to learn. They can equally understand through acting, drawing, or singing it out,” (31/1-8). As David noted, developing one’s citizenship was essentially a unique experience, “There isn’t a fixed and single version of citizenship. Students got to work it out for
themselves what it means to be citizens. They need to develop the relationship on their own, and through their daily experiences” (30/8-8).

Consequently, both teachers stressed multiple intelligences in their teaching. Over several lessons, David was encouraging students to express their ideas and understandings in a variety of ways such as through visual representation, poetry or skits. In one lesson observed, David got students to role play different forms of discrimination as prelude to the conflicts in Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland. Through role play, he encouraged students to put themselves in someone else’s shoes, to have a sense of how it was like to discriminate and to be discriminated. On another lesson, he recollected:

In that lesson, those who were good in math went one side, the ones who liked drama another side. You could really see how they shone, and how they translated a paragraph to life. Very enjoyable! As soon as they need not read, but acting or drawing it out, using what helped them learn best, they really understood. Through their drawings, they could explain the topic (31/1-8)

Similarly, Ying tried various methods to help her students learn. She preferred storytelling, describing her lessons as dramatic:

I like telling stories. When I teach, I tell a lot of stories. I dramatise with my voice, expressions and movements. I inject life into it. The students enjoy my lessons. When I was teaching how Singapore industrialised from 60s to 80s, I would raise my voice, and my expression would be so fierce and demanding just like Goh Keng Swee (29/1-13).

She explained why:

Through it, I engage them, and also help them imagine the situation. Stories make the issues lifelike, the personification helps students relate. Like tv drama, they can identify with the characters faced with problems. I hope to make it like that for them (29/1-13).

It was not possible for any one method to capture the multifaceted nature of citizenship education, given that citizenship was complex and comprised an encompassing subject matter. The generality of social studies and citizenship education necessitated a broad range of expressions and methods.

Teachers' understandings that the subject matter of social studies was arbitrary and not deterministic dominantly influenced their practice. In the lesson on the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, for example, Ying weaved in personal stories of Lee Kuan Yew and Tunku. Her pedagogical choice was characteristic of the person orientation towards the subject matter, because her stories focused on how individual personalities affected events. Similarly, David also emphasised individual agency in
his teaching, giving students the autonomy to construct their own understandings of the topics. In a lesson observed, David got his students to brainstorm their understandings on the topic of education:

"On this sheet of paper, come up with your understandings of what education is. Do a mindmap on education." He wrote education on the whiteboard and drew some branches. "Do the links, use the branches, what is education for, purpose, importance." He wrote the word "arts" on one branch, and said, "Education can be for the arts, and what is the arts for?" Students got the idea, and started to contribute ideas related to the arts, "Arts as in painting. For sculpture, fashion, photography" (D-O1).

In this exercise, he emphasised students’ creation of meanings and understandings, rather than for them to passively receive the facts from the textbook or teacher. He practised what he understood about giving space to students, and being open to their answers. Both teachers were fond of mindmapping, because it facilitated the generation of ideas, and also sought linkages among them, thus providing opportunities for developing independence and rationality. They held a constructivist perspective of the subject matter and learning. David was more liberal than Ying, giving his students more control over their learning. Ying was still relatively hesitant, in storytelling, she remained the dispenser of information.

Historical development was a key focus in their teaching. This was because social studies was also conceptualised as history, and David and Ying regarded it as an important constituent of one’s identity. Both teachers treated historical events as issues and from multiple perspectives. While the textbook presented the subject matter from the official perspective, they believed that citizenship goals were better served by focusing on the common person’s role in history. For example, when discussing Singapore’s population policies, David shared that his mother was from the generation affected by the ‘Stop at Two’ policy. He even interviewed his mother on her experience of that policy and played the interview in class. Students were fascinated to learn the important role of the ordinary people in contributing to the success of the policy. In a post-observation interview, he shared that:

Textbook always presents government policies as successful. Why they were successful is not fairly explained. It’s always attributed to the wisdom of the government. But without the will of the people to carry the policy through, it’s not possible. We’ve got to show students that ordinary people, like you and me, have a role in the success of policies, like my mother in playing her part (D-O5).

Typically, he was enlarging the scope of history to include the ordinary voices. Similarly, Ying often presented divergent stories about the collective past. For
example, on the issue of streaming in education, she not only explained the
government’s stand as in the textbook, but also showed students articles from the
opposition members that countered the stand. She believed that history should include
the conflicts and controversy that surrounded the society, as citizenship education was
understood to help students cope more effectively with life’s complexities.

Again, emphasis was placed on including students in the construction of knowledge
by presenting different perspectives to events. Through this, students learnt that
circumstances could be viewed in a variety of ways, besides the official version of
history which support dominant social values. Ultimately, it was for them to learn that
if common men and women have been involved in social change, then they, as
students were important agents in society. In this case, citizenship education
encouraged agency and recognised individuals within the society.

Sensory and experiential learning aptly described most of David and Ying’s practice.
This dovetailed with their understandings of social studies as “the human experience”,
and the subject matter to be ordinary and commonplace. Child-centred and Deweyan
in influence, experiential learning was related to the main ideas of meaning-making,
and the recognition of subjective realities. Further, through meaning-making, the
individual child also realises his/her self. Consequently, both teachers often engaged
students in authentic experiences whenever possible. The purpose was for students to
discover and experiment with knowledge themselves, instead of hearing and reading
about the experiences of others. It was not easy given the packed examination focused
syllabus. As experiential learning occupied an important place in both teachers’
understandings of the nature of social studies and citizenship education, David shared
how he tried “to squeeze time for it. We went to the parliament, churches and temples,
after school. I don’t make it compulsory, but the response is good. I really believe in
having the experience” (15/10-14).

David’s pedagogical preference was learning in the field, he took students on two
overseas and four local fieldtrips in a year. He reflected on the Korean fieldtrip:

Students saw divided Korea, guards carrying guns, patrolling the border, one country but
separated. The reality sunk in. They realised the consequences of ideological differences.
Pieces clicked. On the way back, they asked many questions. This is not something that is
easily realisable, living in Singapore that is so pragmatic. Going there, talking to the
people, seeing how people live and hearing how they speak all add up to a realistic
impression. I’m sure that has deepened their understanding (15/10-17).
Accordingly, by reflecting on these experiences, students constructed their own understandings, developing new ways of thinking, attitudes and understandings. Experiential learning such as fieldtrips therefore added an important sensory dimension to learning, making it more authentic and lifelike.

The authenticity in learning would enhance personal efficacy in coping with life’s vagaries. As well, it facilitated the transfer of learning such as the knowledge and skills. In this way, it focused on enhancing personal efficacy. For example, Ying got students to study several hospital bills to understand which items could be claimed through Medisave and/or covered by Medishield. Students had to call up the Central Provident Fund (CPF) or the hospital to enquire. Ying explained the rationale:

I wanted them to do something real, not just read about it. They have to use what they know about CPF when they look at the bills and call the hospital up. They got to know what to ask. Through this, they know what is available to them as citizens. You’ll be surprised, a lot of people don’t know, so they never get to enjoy the benefits (14/9-10).

The generality of social studies led both teachers to seize opportunities to develop students’ citizenship through school-wide and informal events as well. For example, Ying and her class volunteered to plan for the school’s Total Defence Day. Through organising a mini exhibition, students not only learnt about the importance of defence, but also how best to portray the realities of war to fellow schoolmates. Ying reflected:

It was a good experience, they learnt more about defence than listening to me talk about it. I’m sure what they learnt will stick because it was hands-on, where they had to do research, piece the information together, put the ideas across. They decided on a mock-up underground tunnel, where students would have to crawl through to experience the difficulty. They constructed it themselves (29/6-21).

Similarly, David encouraged students to apply for permission from the principal to set up stalls during recess and after school hours to sell festive goodies:

They set up student stalls, they learnt how to buy and sell. We took advantage of festivals like Chinese New Year, they sold festive goodies. They sourced it from outside, and then resell it here at a higher price. Whatever they earned, part of it went to the student fund (31/1-11).

The objective was for students to pick up economic literacy, a concept in the social studies syllabus, in the process of buying and selling in the school. These activities were followed up with class discussions and reflection facilitated by David.

Through experiential learning in and out of the class, both teachers were developing students’ sense of citizenship. Citizenship education was integrative in nature and
holistic in approach, where learning did not only focus on the acquisition of knowledge, but also developed skills such as communication and evaluation as students selected and organised information, and learn to value respect for diversity in authentic situations. In Ying’s reflective session following the Total Defence Day exhibition, it was observed that her focus was on what individuals had learnt. She was concerned with how the experience had enriched individual student’s understanding, and not in what the group as a whole learnt. David and Ying’s idea of experiential learning was tied to the understanding that the subject matter of social studies was real life and commonplace in nature.

It was evident that David and Ying’s understandings of social studies influenced the way they taught for citizenship. The generality of social studies, the commonplace nature of its subject matter, built on the idea that it had to be experienced suggested a similarly encompassing notion of citizenship education. Teaching citizenship education through social studies necessarily required pedagogies that were inclusive, diverse and experiential. This was characteristic of the person orientation which saw the focus of citizenship education as best served by personal development. Personal development was essentially broad in scope, for anything could be the subject matter used for such learning, as well, in its scope of application. Unobtrusively, a confident and competent person would lend well to good citizenship, so the person oriented teachers believed.

8.6 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of two teachers – David and Ying - characterised as person oriented in stance. The individual was the primary referent of their understandings and practice of citizenship education and social studies. The person orientation was dominantly reformist because it was child-centred, progressive and liberal. Both teachers sought to improve the situation by looking inward to develop the person, instead of looking outwards to change the society. Personal development and efficacy were the foci.

The person oriented teachers conceptualised social studies as primarily general education. The secondary conceptualisation was that of history, seen as the main organising discipline that interrelated other disciplines and perspectives. History was seen as an inquiry into causation, with the past inextricably linked to the present,
rather than factual in nature. Life issues and experiences constituted the subject matter of social studies, and both teachers understood that all human existence was historical in nature. In this, personal knowledge and meaning-making were emphasised. While the passive and personally responsible citizen was the conception of citizenship, citizenship education was more maximalist in interpretation, as both teachers broadened the definition of citizenship to be more inclusive of diversity. Both teachers used a constructive and experiential approach to encourage construction of understandings and meaning-making. Their goal was to develop individuals to their potential as self-governing, self-realised, autonomous persons. Developing citizenship was more a by-product of developing the good person, resting on strong, positive values. Noteworthy, contradictions were familiar to the understandings and practice of the person oriented teachers, given that both teachers often struggled between opposing priorities of the personal versus the societal, interpreted as self-fulfillment versus fulfillment of societal responsibilities.

The person oriented teachers is the third and final chapter that discussed the findings and analyses of the eight teachers. The previous two chapters discussed the findings and analyses of the nationalistic and socially concerned teachers. The following chapter summarises and concludes the study, and discusses the study's contribution and implications for future research.
CHAPTER 9: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

9.1 Summary of the Study

This study is about citizenship education through the subject of social studies in Singapore. The focus is teacher knowledge and practice from a curriculum perspective, and was framed within the Singapore context of:

- the introduction of social studies as a new, compulsory and examinable subject;
- a significant nation-building initiative (National Education);
- a shift in government policy towards ability-driven education;
- globalisation impact and renewed interest in citizenship issues worldwide;
- concerns within the literature about teachers' knowledge and pedagogy of social studies and citizenship education;
- and the contested nature of the social studies and citizenship education curricular.

Thornton (1989, 1991, 2005a) has claimed successfully that the teacher is the "curricular-instructional gatekeeper". The conceptual frame of gatekeeping was an effective way to explore teachers' understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education given teacher agency and the contested nature of the curricular. It moves away from the idea of "teacher-as-curriculum conduit", and re-situates the teacher as "curriculum agents", whose practice "is intellectual, moral and inventive" (Parker, 1987, p. 7). This is particularly salient for social studies where too much attention has been devoted to the model to which social studies should adhere, to the neglect of teacher knowledge and the influence on practice (Thornton, 2005a). Concomitantly, the study subscribed to a constructivist view of knowledge, where knowledge is actively and socially constructed by the cognising subject. Five research questions guided the study. They were:

- How do teachers' conceptualise social studies in Singapore secondary schools?
- What are teachers' understandings of the subject matter of social studies?
- What do teachers understand about citizenship and citizenship education?
- In what ways do teachers teach citizenship education through the vehicle of social studies?
- How do teachers' understandings of the subject matter of social studies influence their teaching of citizenship education?
The methodological choice of qualitative research using the case study approach facilitated the exploration of teachers’ meaning-making. This led to a thick description of teachers’ understandings and practice. Data collection methods included, over a sustained period, extensive interviews of teachers, observations of their classroom teaching and analysis of a range of related school documents. Data were constantly compared, and analysis was an iterative, recursive process of simultaneous data collection and data analysis. From these data sources, patterns were constructed through the analysis and re-synthesis of the teachers’ words and actions. Methodological trustworthiness was established through the use of multiple methods of data collection, enabling the triangulation of data sources and findings, prolonged engagement in the field, and member checks.

9.2 Major Findings

In this study, teachers' understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education were found to be naturally located in three distinct groups, not a single group as might be stereotyped. Further, each group comprised themes characterised by nationalistic, socially concerned and person oriented teacher stances respectively. The nation was the primary reference for the nationalistic stance with nationalism dominant in teachers’ understandings and practice. The community was the primary reference of the socially concerned stance where community obligation was dominant. The individual was the primary reference of the person oriented stance, where personal development was dominant. Among the eight social studies teachers, four could be characterised as nationalistic, two were essentially socially concerned, and another two were person oriented. The next section highlights the findings according to the research questions, followed by summative comments on the overall findings.

9.2.1 A Summary of the Findings according to Research Questions

Table 9.1 on page 237 summarises the study’s findings and illustrates them compactly. The following sections need to be seen in terms of the data in Table 9.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Nationalistic Teachers</th>
<th>Socially Concerned Teachers</th>
<th>Person Oriented Teachers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Reference</strong></td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Leong</td>
<td>Carolyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Conceptualisations of social studies</td>
<td>Citizenship transmission</td>
<td>Citizenship transmission</td>
<td>Citizenship transmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understandings of subject matter of social studies</td>
<td>National information Utilitarian Knowledge static, answers predetermined Objective perspective</td>
<td>National information Utilitarian Knowledge static, answers predetermined Objective perspective</td>
<td>National information Utilitarian Knowledge static, answers predetermined Objective perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Ways citizenship education taught through social studies</td>
<td>Expository &amp; highly structured transmission</td>
<td>Mixed approach, reflective, persuasive transmission</td>
<td>Mixed approach, reflective, persuasive transmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Influence of subject matter on teaching of citizenship education</td>
<td>Uncritical acceptance &amp; transmission of knowledge as truth to be learnt Teaching about citizenship, illusory</td>
<td>Rationalised acceptance of knowledge to be convinced Teaching about citizenship, technical</td>
<td>Rationalised acceptance of knowledge to be convinced Teaching about citizenship, technical</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The nationalistic teachers conceptualised social studies as a vehicle for citizenship transmission instrumental to the survival of the nation. Social studies was dedicated to transmitting to students a precise image of the ideal citizenship, by which salient knowledge of Singapore, the national values and attitudes were to be explicitly transmitted and instilled in students to commit them to national loyalties. The purpose of social studies was nationalistic and conforming. The conservative nationalistic teachers intertwined social studies with NE, while the more progressive nationalistic teachers differentiated the two.

The socially concerned teachers conceptualised social studies as social education for the common good. The nation was too abstract, and government authoritarian. Social studies in the context of NE was seen as propaganda and social control. Instead, social education must foster individual initiative by facilitating greater engagement with and a concern for the community at the most basic level where one lives, and then extending out. Both teachers saw social studies as developing the rational individual capable of independent thought and self-discipline to actively participate in the life of the community. The purpose of social studies was social, moral and reforming.

The person oriented teachers conceptualised social studies as general education grounded in the human experience. Their understandings were encompassing yet individualised as experience was subjective. The focus was to develop individuals to be well adjusted and effective persons. Different understandings of social studies co-existed; while teachers recognised social studies for its national agenda, it was also a basis for personal development, and integral to everyday living. There were multiple purposes of social studies reflective of the multiple realities of personal meaning-making, and they were reforming.

**What are teachers' understandings of the subject matter of social studies?**

The nationalistic teachers understood social studies as a purposeful and nationalistic school subject and not an academic discipline. The subject matter was utilitarian and eclectic, drawn not from the logic of the disciplines, but with events deliberately put together to constitute a set of national information. The Singapore Story was a critical component of the subject matter. But the discursive use of history was not seen as problematic. As an examinable subject, teachers also understood it to comprise a fixed
set of content and skills to be learnt. Overall, the assumption was that knowledge was static with predetermined ‘right’ answers. The key difference between the conservative and progressive teachers was the former adhered to the prescribed subject matter, while the latter were more selective of the subject matter and emphases.

For the socially concerned teachers, social studies was conceptualised as simplified social science for school teaching. The subject matter was understood from the structures of the disciplines with perspectives taken from political science, sociology and economics, as these were related to the teachers’ disciplinary backgrounds. Teachers understood the subject matter to comprise complex and controversial social issues. The teachers acknowledged the significance of the Singapore Story but also problematised its construction. They saw gaps in the selection and presentation of the subject matter, and thus alternative perspectives must be considered. Overall, knowledge was assumed to be tentative and incomplete.

By contrast, for the person oriented teachers, the subject matter of social studies comprised the daily occurrences. These were omnipresent and ordinary, and accessible to all. The subject matter was dynamic as it incorporated on-going meaning-making. Personal knowledge was an important component, with the subject matter co-constructed by individual learners and the text. The subject matter was history-centred, as human existence was historical with the present affected by the past. Yet it was flexible to involve a range of topics and interdisciplinary analysis. Overall, knowledge was subjective, constructivist and tentative.

What do teachers understand about citizenship and citizenship education?

It is this understanding that will significantly impact upon how teaching is undertaken in social studies within Singapore. For the nationalistic teachers, the basis of citizenship was the nation. Citizenship was defined as national identity premised on national consciousness, including knowledge of and affection for the nation, acceptance of societal values, and responsibility towards the nation. Citizenship was a practice for citizens were to participate actively in nation-building. Similarly, a thinking citizenry was an investment on human capital and the basis for a creative and adaptive workforce. The good and competent citizen within the nationalistic framework was the overarching conception of citizenship. Citizenship education was to develop dutiful, skillful and proactive citizens in serving the nation. Citizenship
education was minimal in interpretation, emphasising the transmission of knowledge and skills, inculcation and shaping of particular values and attitudes. It was knowledge driven and cognitive in nature.

In stark contrast, the socially concerned teachers understood citizenship in terms of multiple and overlapping identities, as citizens invariably belong to several communities by which they identify themselves with. The basic tenet was the sense of ownership of one's community through involvement. Citizenship was about stakes and ties, and must be nurtured at the basic level, the community where one lives and works, extending outwards to the nation. Citizenship was a practice for citizens were to be responsible and actively engaged in their communities. Participation required a thinking citizenry for their ability to reason in addressing issues. Citizenship was communitarian, where both responsibilities and rights were important. The active and concerned citizen was the overarching conception of citizenship. Citizenship education was maximal in interpretation with emphasis on empowering citizens to participate in collective efforts. Citizenship education was process driven, and participative in nature.

Similarly different, the person oriented teachers saw citizenship as integrative with their personal experiences, thus reflecting disengagement and disillusionment. Citizenship ought to be inclusive, flexible and embracing of diversity, not exclusive and elitist, and narrowly defined. Teachers' experiences led them to believe active citizenship was exclusive to the elites, and restrictive for the rest. Consequently, citizenship was experienced as obligatory when it should be liberal emphasising rights as well. The passive and personally responsible citizen was the experienced conception of citizenship. But this did not result in apathy. Instead, citizenship education was refocused to personal development. In this light, citizenship education was maximal in interpretation, emphasising meaning-making, experience and diversity. Citizenship education was holistic and constructive in nature, integrating knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

*In what ways do teachers teach citizenship education through the vehicle of social studies?*

This is a critical question in the context of recent developments in Singapore identified earlier. The nationalistic teachers gave a central place to transmission of salient knowledge, skills and values related to Singapore. But there were distinct ways
that citizenship education was taught through social studies between the conservative and the progressive teachers. The former combined expository and highly structured approaches, focused on simplifying information into discrete points and templates, reducing skills to routinised steps to be learnt. Lessons were teacher-centred with a predetermined set of information presented top-down to students to be learnt. Teachers believed that these approaches helped structure and discipline students’ thinking, so that they would be well-trained and master sufficient knowledge and skills for later use as citizens.

In contrast, the progressive teachers adopted a mixed approach where they built reflection onto transmission. They also modeled good values they wanted students to learn, such as respect, trust and cooperation. Teachers organised their teaching around issues for students to rationalise and understand the various arguments. Lessons were student-centred with teachers guiding the discussions and activities. While issues were opened to multiple understandings, teachers persuaded to convince students that only one was ‘right’. Teachers believed that these approaches reinforced students’ conviction for the nation based on reasoned judgments.

The socially concerned teachers focused on what and how citizenship education was taught through social studies, where the teaching and learning process was integral to citizenship education. Teachers adopted an interactive and participative approach to facilitate participatory learning. They posed challenging issues for students to deliberate, encouraging multiple perspectives. Group work was used as a platform for students to interact and address issues together. Pedagogies aimed at fostering interdependence and collective efforts, negotiating and valuing diverse viewpoints. They extended citizenship education beyond the classroom wherever possible. Teachers believed that participative-active approaches had the potential to engage students in meaningful learning activities that would develop a proactive disposition for active citizenship.

The person oriented teachers were careful not to dominate students’ learning. They created opportunities for students to construct their own understandings. Teachers were open to students’ responses and adopted a constructive and experiential approach to nurture independence, confidence and self-realisation in students. Multiple pathways of knowing were recognised where teachers used a mix of teaching approaches, including didactic and interactive, inside and outside the classroom,
formal and informal. Typically, teachers made lessons experiential through hands-on activities and fieldtrips for authenticity, and to facilitate transference of learning. Pedagogies were directed at enhancing personal efficacy in coping with life’s vagaries. Teachers believed that these approaches helped students develop confidence in themselves as citizens in everyday settings.

*How do teachers’ understandings of the subject matter of social studies influence their teaching of citizenship education?*

The nationalistic teachers saw social studies as citizenship transmission to socialise students into the mainstream knowledge and core values, beliefs and convictions to ensure continuity of the nation. The subject matter was a defined body of content believed to be critical to the practice of good citizenship. The content remained constant and was determined by the authorities. Consequently, teachers knew precisely the defined conception of citizenship and teaching related to an uncritical transmission of the content to students to be learnt and believed. Knowledge was treated as self-evident truth to be accepted at face value for the conservative teachers, and rationalised for the progressive teachers. The former used expository and highly structured approaches, while the latter used a mix of techniques to persuade and convince students to believe in the set of truths. It is dominantly teaching about citizenship. Citizenship education is illusory for the conservative teachers and technical for the progressive teachers.

The socially concerned teachers saw social studies as simplified social science to develop a concern for the common good. The subject matter was value-laden social issues. Consequently, citizenship education focused on the processes of addressing issues involving negotiations and collective effort. However, it was not adequate for concern to be thoughts only, but should beget action. Thus the interactive and participative approach was emphasised to facilitate participatory learning within group settings. Citizenship education through social studies sought participation in issues concerning one’s community. Hence, teachers engaged students in the issues concerning the school, and also led by example in being involved themselves. It is teaching for citizenship, where citizenship education is constructive.

The person oriented teachers saw social studies as enhancing personal efficacy for meaningful living. The subject matter was life’s occurrences. The generality of social studies, coupled with the commonplace and accessibility of its subject matter defied a
single objective truth. The sheer breadth and dynamism of the subject matter can only be meaningfully apprehended by an individualised and personal perspective. This necessitated multiple pathways to learning that considered the multiple intelligences of learners. Consequently, teachers adopted a range of teaching strategies to facilitate meaningful learning. The constructivist and experiential approach was emphasised to give play to meaning-making and mimic real life. Similarly, history was the disciplinary base of the subject matter, regarded as an inquiry into causation of human experiences, with the past and present inextricably linked, and relevant to daily living. It is teaching through citizenship, where citizenship education is constructive.

Finally, it must be noted that while distinct differences exist between the characterisations, they are not as great as would be in a decentralised educational system. In Singapore, the centralised educational system, the national social studies curriculum and examination together exert a homogenising effect on teaching and teachers despite personal differences. Further, characterising teachers is an artifice, a construct, based on categories and dimensions dominant in the teachers' conceptualisations and understandings. No one category can really be isolated, as connections and influences between and amongst categories occurred. Consequently, the characterisations appeared to be more rigid and stereotypical than was the reality.

Particularly within the nationalistic oriented teachers, the differences between the conservative and progressive teachers are subtle, not as substantive as may appear in the differentiated characterisations. This is expected given that within characterisation, the teachers are fundamentally and intrinsically more similar than different. In this sense, the differences are more secondary in nature. Nonetheless, there are still distinct differences. The main difference between the nationalistic conservative and progressive teachers occurred in the teaching of citizenship education through social studies. The conservative teachers were more didactic and imposing in the way they taught citizenship education and social studies. They assumed they knew better and held the correct body of knowledge that must be unambiguously transmitted to the students to be learnt. In contrast, the progressive teachers were more flexible in their teaching approach, using a range of strategies, including group discussions, questioning and simulations. Students were given opportunities to rationalise the importance of particular policies rather than to passively accept, as had been the case.
of the conservative teachers. The progressive teachers were more thoughtful and persuasive in this respect.

9.2.2 Concluding Statements on Overall Findings

On Characterising

This study found three dominant characterisations of teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship education - nationalistic, socially concerned and person oriented as seen in Table 9.1 on page 237. Characterising teachers based on the patterns that emerged from their understandings and practice enables one to see the dominant themes and uniqueness of each type. It allows one to meaningfully distinguish and analyse each type of teacher knowledge and practice in light of the aims and objectives of the social studies curriculum. It suggests what the teacher of that particular type may do in another situation at another time.

However, categorising may also blind one to the subtleties and complexities inherent in human understanding and teaching (Adler, 1982). Characterising is but a shorthand for a variety of dimensions dominant within teacher understandings and practice. At best, Peter, Vind, Leong, Carolyn, Marcus, Frida, David and Ying fit these characterisations only imperfectly. They brought their own backgrounds, beliefs, disciplinary training and so on to bear upon their understandings and practice of the subject, the results of which were sometimes too complicated to be extricated. Eventually, it is the dominant themes and shared assumptions that were categorised. This was demonstrated, for example, with the progressive nationalistic teacher, Leong. Though Leong understood social studies from the structures of the discipline, what was dominant and consistently displayed in his practice was a nationalistic stance. Categorising him meant capturing the dominant nationalistic themes and dropping that which did not fit. This implied that variations within types must be acknowledged as they may be important in explaining the practice of the teacher. As such, these types are not entirely predictive.

On Curricular-Instructional Gatekeeping

The study’s findings operationalised Thornton’s (1989, 1991, 2005a) concept of the teacher as the curricular-instructional gatekeeper within the social studies curriculum even in a tightly controlled education system such as the case of Singapore. Despite this image, teachers were not mere transmitters of external knowledge (Clandinin,
1986), but were as Lee and Fouts (2005) said, key figures in putting the curriculum into classroom practice, where what they saw as important got taught. This was despite stated aims, purposes and objectives of the social studies curriculum, prescribed subject matter, the MOE developed instructional materials to ensure fidelity of use. Surprisingly, teachers conceptualised social studies and understood citizenship education from varied frames of reference.

Their gatekeeping decisions were facilitated by the lack of definition, coupled with the fluidity and breadth, of social studies as a school subject (Thornton, 1991, 2005a; Whitsun, 2004). The findings suggested that a subject without a consensual definition within its community of scholars and practitioners lacks intrinsic identity and legitimacy (Barth 1996; Nelson, 2001) to serve as a beacon to practitioners. Consequently, the socially concerned and person oriented teachers who felt uncomfortable with the overbearing nationalistic focus in the social studies curriculum, had little in way of principles for guidance. Conversely, there were fewer rules or established canons of knowledge to check their thoughts and actions.

Gatekeeping was also augmented by the difficulty of organising citizenship around how each discipline contributed to it when social studies is integrated (Goodson, 1987). Among other factors, teachers also retreated to their disciplinary backgrounds, in helping them understand and teach citizenship education through social studies. Examples were the socially concerned teachers, Marcus and Frida, and the progressive nationalistic teacher, Carolyn, whose emphasis on interdependence suggested a geographical slant. Together these factors gave the teachers greater latitude for meaning-making in social studies and citizenship education.

Teachers took a stand on what knowledge was of most worth in social studies and for citizenship education. Their selection of subject matter was not apolitical, dispassionate, or divorced from the world outside the classroom. Rather, teachers were actively engaged in deciding the subject matter, and how they tended the gates hinged on how they understood social studies and citizenship education. As a result, varying understandings of what social studies and citizenship education were, what the subject matter comprised, and how they were taught, were manifested by the teachers. Different emphases were placed on the foundations for curricular decisions, namely the concerns for nation, community and individual, resulting in contrasting
approaches such as transmission and participatory learning. Consequently the enacted curriculum looked more varied than the official one.

Nevertheless, there are limits to teachers’ curricular-instructional gatekeeping in a centralised system of education, where teachers are employees of the government in a paternalistic and authoritarian political context. This was demonstrated with the conservative nationalistic teacher, Vind, whose critical awareness was mitigated by a perceived climate of restraint and decorum expected of a civil servant. Surprisingly, the influential, external examination was not a key constraint on the understandings and practice for most of the teachers, contradictory to Tan (2005) and Yeo’s (2002) findings. Only the conservative nationalistic teachers, Peter and Vind explicitly taught to the examination. The other teachers felt that citizenship aims were as important to social studies than passing the examination. As such, they had thoughtfully integrated various forms of participative pedagogy into their social studies classes.

On Citizenship in Social Studies

All eight teachers understood citizenship to be the mainstay of social studies, albeit from different perspectives. Regardless of conceptualisations, teachers’ understandings of citizenship shared a civic republican tradition, highlighting responsibilities, duties and obligations and not rights. The nationalistic and socially concerned teachers used responsibility which connotes an act of trustworthiness consistent with the teachers’ commitment to the nation and communities. In contrast, the person oriented teachers used duties and obligations which connote an act demanded by force, and felt to be burdensome. This was consistent with the teachers’ disengagement from society. The lack of rights was highlighted by the socially concerned and person oriented teachers, but was absent in the nationalistic teachers’ conception of citizenship. The latter talked about benefits bestowed by a benevolent government rather than inherent rights.

Citizenship was seen as a practice, but teachers held different notions of participation. The disengaged person oriented teachers held a passive notion of citizenship, followed by the conservative nationalistic teachers with a knowledge driven one. This meant a citizen who was informed and had an opinion on issues was considered a form of participation. On the more active side was the progressive nationalistic
teachers' notion of contribution through community and voluntary service, followed by the socially concerned teachers' involvement in addressing social issues.

Teachers' notions of participation related to how they taught citizenship education. The less active conservative nationalistic teachers used expository and highly structured transmission, while the more active progressive nationalistic teachers used mixed approaches, and the most active socially concerned teachers used interactive and participative learning. The person oriented teachers used constructive and experiential learning despite holding a passive conception of citizenship, but focused on personal meaning-making. Participation was not seen as a political skill, but only from the economics and social dimensions, supporting Fouts and Lee's (2005) findings on social citizenship. Overall, active citizenship served the status quo by encouraging participation in the established social order.

Thinking was a key theme in teachers' understandings and practice of citizenship in social studies. It was not sufficient for the citizens to obey and blindly follow. Ordinary citizens who form the bedrock of society must be able to think through issues and the impact of their actions. The rationales for thinking however differed among the characterisations. The logic for the nationalistic teachers was to reinforce the national consciousness, while thinking was the basis for informed participation in issues for the socially oriented teachers. For the person oriented teachers, thinking enhanced personal capacity for thoughtfulness and living more fulfilling lives.

Despite Singapore's global connectedness (Aggarwal, 2005), it has little impact on the way teachers understood citizenship. While teachers talked about the subject matter of social studies as broadening because it introduced students to issues beyond Singapore, the objective was nevertheless national interest and inward looking to derive lessons for Singapore.

On the Role of the Personal

It was the interaction of many factors including biography, disciplinary backgrounds, perceived climates, social studies courses and teaching experiences that influenced teachers' knowledge and practice. Nonetheless, the contribution of the personal and particularly through biography was significant, for why and how teachers came to understand and teach social studies and citizenship education were often traced to the events in their lives. Such life experiences shaped a set of perceptions and beliefs, and
different sets of life experiences produced equally different ways of interpreting a wide range of actions and events in the social studies curriculum (Branneman, 1997; Coughlin, 2003; Fickel, 2000; Johnston, 1990). Thus, the personal was a foundational thought construct, serving as a filter through which the social studies is understood, and the possible and feasible are interpreted.

Lortie (1975) argued that biographical experiences strongly influenced teaching because of weak socialisation within the profession. This was true for the social studies teachers as they lacked strong professional socialisation. Inevitably, teachers turned to personal knowledge to help make sense of the subject they taught, evident across all three characterisations. For example, Peter’s gratitude for the equal and fair treatment of all races in Singapore, together with personal ambitions, drove the perspective that championed the nation and government; and Marcus’ encounters with workers’ illiteracy led him to focus on developing skills and interest in learning.

This was not to discount other influential factors, particularly disciplinary backgrounds. While agreeing with the argument that teachers were influenced by their disciplinary training in how they understood and taught social studies (Wilson, 1988; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988), evident across the three characterisations, such training was of lesser significance in the Singaporean context where the curriculum was highly prescriptive in its subject matter, coupled with a powerful systemic examination. Significantly, the relationship was not generalisable, but “person-specific and circumstancial” (Ayers, p. 149). Drawing on the personal was common despite a highly prescribed curriculum, because the personal was regarded more as style than substance of the curriculum. For example, Vind, Leong, Frida and Ying had political science backgrounds, yet they responded differently to social studies and citizenship education. The four teachers were from three different characterisations, and their conceptualisations of social studies ranged from specific citizenship transmission to broad general education. Further, Leong and Vind understood the subject matter as utilitarian, but Frida and Ying understood it in disciplinary terms. How they taught citizenship education was also dissimilar, with Vind and Leong leaning towards transmission, while Frida and Ying using participatory learning. Such differences despite similar disciplinary backgrounds were attributed to the personal factor. Thus, an over focusing on the disciplinary impact on teacher knowledge and practice might
blind the researcher to the possibility of a fuller understanding of the teacher’s dialectic expression of theory into practice (Clandinin, 1986; Schubert, 1991).

Although the personal filter is not specific to social studies and citizenship education, social studies teachers may be acutely influenced because of the latitude, contestations, and the value-laden nature of the subject. Further, citizenship tends to elicit very personal responses because it concerns the status and identity of persons within the society, inseparably intertwined with the political and moral contexts. Their understandings thus operated out of a form that was personal and strongly influenced by one’s life experiences (Brenneman, 1997; Clandinin, 1986; Grossman, 1995). This implied that teacher knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education was complex, and often relative rather than objective.

*On Understandings and Practice*

This study found a strong relationship existed between the teachers’ understandings of social studies and citizenship education, and how it was taught. Figure 9.1 on page 252 is an outcome of the study and represents the relationships among teachers’ understandings of social studies, citizenship, citizenship education and the teaching of citizenship education. The representation of the findings is a way of thinking about the relationships, which can become powerful explanations and hypotheses about knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education for future study.

The subsequent section explains the representation. The features are as follows:

- Teachers’ understandings of social studies, citizenship, citizenship education and the teaching of citizenship education are portrayed on respective continua A-D. The right half of each continuum takes the view towards the right; the nearer to the end point, the stronger the view, and vice versa.
Figure 9.1: Representation of the relationship among teachers' understandings of social studies, citizenship, citizenship education and the teaching of citizenship education through social studies.

N = Nationalistic (P = Progressive; C = Conservative); SC = Socially Concerned; PO = Person Oriented

- Continuum A portrays teachers' understandings of social studies and its subject matter in terms of the treatment of knowledge. The right end views knowledge as fixed, the left end views knowledge as tentative. The nationalistic (N) teachers' understandings of social studies and its subject matter emphasised knowledge as
fixed and certain, where answers were predetermined. They are placed on the right half, with the conservative (C) teachers more doctrinaire than the progressive (P) teachers. In contrast, the socially concerned (SC) and person oriented (PO) teachers' understandings emphasised knowledge as tentative and incomplete, where meanings were constructed from multiple realities. They are placed on the left half. Emphasising personal knowledge and meaning-making, the person oriented teachers' view of knowledge was more idiosyncratic and less circumscribed by the collective. They are placed nearer to the left end.

- Continuum B portrays teachers' understandings of citizenship. The right end views citizenship as narrow and exclusive, the left end is broad and inclusive. The nationalistic teachers' understandings of citizenship were narrow and exclusive, defining it as national identity and nation-building. They are placed on the right half, marked by N, with no clear difference between the conservative and progressive teachers. In contrast, the socially concerned and person oriented teachers' understandings were broad and inclusive, embracing diversity, multiple and overlapping identities that transcended the nation. Citizenship was engaging in social issues, taking actions and initiatives, and enhancing personal efficacy. They are placed on the left half. The person oriented teachers were less circumscribed by the collective and are placed nearer to the left end.

- Continuum C portrays teachers' understandings of citizenship education. The right end indicates a minimal interpretation of citizenship education, the left end, a maximal interpretation. The nationalistic teachers' understandings of citizenship education were towards minimal interpretation and knowledge driven. They are placed on the right half, with no clear difference between conservative and progressive teachers. In contrast, the socially concerned and person oriented teachers' understandings of citizenship education were towards the maximal interpretation, process driven and holistic. They are placed on the left half. The person oriented teachers were less circumscribed by the collective and are placed nearer to the left end.

- Continuum D portrays approaches to citizenship education. The right end is explicit transmission, and the left end is participatory learning. The nationalistic teachers' approach to citizenship education was dominantly transmission. They are placed on the right half, with the conservative teachers more doctrinaire than
the progressive teachers. In contrast, the socially concerned and person oriented teachers approaches to citizenship education were dominantly participatory learning. They are placed on the left half. The person oriented teachers were less circumscribed by the collective and are placed nearer to the left end.

- The representation shows how the relationship among teachers’ understandings of social studies, citizenship, citizenship education and the approach to citizenship education operated at each level.

- Nationalistic teachers saw social studies and its subject matter as utilitarian and not problematic, comprising national information defined by the authorities. Knowledge was treated as fixed and certain. Corollary to the conceptualisation of social studies, citizenship was narrowly defined with the nation as the basis. Predicated on the understanding of citizenship and social studies, citizenship education was minimally interpreted, knowledge driven and inclined towards transmission. The conservative teachers were more doctrinaire than the progressive teachers. Nationalistic teachers taught about citizenship, and were consistent in understandings and practice.

- Socially concerned teachers saw social studies and its subject matter from a disciplinary perspective, comprising complex and problematic social issues. Knowledge was treated as tentative and incomplete. Corollary to the conceptualisation of social studies, citizenship was broadly defined, recognising multiple and overlapping identities. Predicated on the understanding of citizenship and social studies, citizenship education was maximally interpreted, process driven, and inclined towards participatory learning. Socially concerned teachers taught for citizenship, and were consistent in understandings and practice.

- Person oriented teachers saw social studies and its subject matter from an evolving perspective, comprising everyday occurrences. Knowledge was treated as subjective and personal. Corollary to the conceptualisation of social studies, citizenship was broadly defined and inclusive of diversities. Predicated on the understanding of citizenship and social studies, citizenship education was maximally interpreted, holistic and inclined towards experiential and participatory learning. The person oriented teachers enmeshed their understandings with subjective experiences that were integral to their conceptualisations of citizenship and citizenship education. Their understandings were not only corollary to their
view of social studies, but were also a reaction against a narrow and constraining citizenship. This ‘reaction’ is indicated by the arrow with an asterisk, leading to a broader understanding of citizenship, and this augmented a more maximal interpretation of citizenship education. Person oriented teachers taught through citizenship. They were often dilemmatic initially, caught between personal versus public interests, but eventually showed consistency in understandings and practice.

- Overall, there was general consistency between understandings and practice. But it was not a simple relationship of linear causality between teachers’ understandings and practice. The relationship was complex and often mediated by the role of the personal.

**On Curriculum Positions**

Teachers’ understandings and practice of social studies and citizenship can be summarised as largely conforming and reforming curriculum positions (MacNaughton, 2003). Table 9.2 encapsulates the breakdown among the three characterisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characterisations</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Dominant Curriculum Position</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationalistic</td>
<td>Peter Vind</td>
<td>Conforming</td>
<td>Achieve national social goals defined by government, Control how things happen, Reproduce skills needed to achieve economic, social &amp; political goals, Reproduce understanding &amp; values that enable continuity of society, Socialisation, induction into common sets of experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carolyn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially Concerned</td>
<td>Marcus</td>
<td>Reforming</td>
<td>Improve &amp; renew society, Reform within status quo for moderate &amp; incremental changes, No address of structural issues or questions of systemic injustices, Develop rational individual capable of independent thought &amp; self-discipline, Child-centred emphasis on self-realisation, autonomy, individual growth &amp; development, Focus on interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frida</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Oriented</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>Reforming</td>
<td>Enhance personal growth, develop individuals to their potential, Child-centred, holistic education, Significance of experiences, Cooperate &amp; recognise differences within &amp; not overthrow status quo, By-product is to bring about a better society, Focus on constructivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All four nationalistic teachers displayed a dominantly conforming position in their knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education. Teachers understood nationalism to be support for the nation and nation-building. Citizenship education through social studies was a process of socialisation that emphasised social and cultural reproduction (Apple, 2004; Engle & Ochoa, 1988). The four socially concerned and person oriented teachers displayed a dominantly reforming position. The socially concerned teachers focused on improving and renewing society by developing rational individuals capable of independent thought, while the person oriented teachers focused on personal growth, the by-product of which was the betterment of the society. The reforming position was unlikely to challenge the status quo. Typically, such a position worked towards incremental changes within the socio-political milieu rather than seek transformational changes.

It was not surprising that none held a transforming position. Given the social and political development of Singapore, policies have always sought incremental and not radical changes. While the government has been authoritarian, it has not been repressive in many ways. The government has been rather enlightened, and has taken care of what it sees as the needs of the people. It has transformed the material conditions of the population, by delivering material returns and raising the standard of living of Singaporeans since independence in 1965. The acceptability of authoritarianism by the people is argued by Chua (1995, p. 10) to be through “the presence of an ideological hegemony or consensus”. People were not unduly against the government, but were generally supportive of the government’s vision of progress for the nation.

The teachers were reluctant to question the meaning of citizenship in ways that were critical of the system. This was due to a perceived climate of constraint and restraint (Cornbleth, 2001), and also teachers did not have the skills and experience of responsible social criticism. Consequently, teachers understood and enacted the curriculum in relatively ‘safe’ approaches within the status quo. This acted as a constraint to teacher curricular-instructional gatekeeping, as what was played out was within two system confirming positions, rather than to confront structural issues or questions of systemic injustices.
9.3 Contribution to Knowledge and Implications

9.3.1 Citizenship Education in the Asian Context

This study contributes to the knowledge and understanding of citizenship education, particularly in the Asian region. Research in citizenship education has indicated that Asian countries were known to be highly prescriptive in their citizenship education programmes (Cogan & Derricott, 1998; Cogan et al., 2002; Lee & Fouts, 2005; Print & Smith, 2000). In Singapore, close attention has been given to citizenship education in the form of NE at the highest political levels, with additional concern that the social studies curriculum is perceived to be high-stakes learning (Gopinathan & Sharpe, 2004; Han, 1997, 2000; Rossi & Ryan, 2006; Sim & Print, 2005). Yet this study did not identify a homogenous understanding and practice of citizenship education through a prescribed social studies curriculum. Rather, three characterisations – the nationalistic, socially concerned and person oriented – co-existed alongside one another even within a highly prescriptive and controlled social studies curriculum. The findings from the eight teachers reflected a citizenship education landscape in Singapore that was not as rigid, prescriptive and homogenous as previous research on the Asian region had suggested.

While the nationalistic understandings and practice conformed to the prescribed social studies curriculum, both the socially concerned and person oriented understandings and practice were reformist in position. They were not in conflict nor worked against the intended curriculum, given that the reforming position worked within the status quo. Some scholars (Giroux, 1980; Popkewitz, 1977; Rossi & Ryan, 2006) may criticise teachers for being entrapped within the status quo that silence alternative possibilities as envisaged by the transformative position. But Hahn’s (1998) point that the forms citizenship education take reflects the distinct set of values of a particular culture must be remembered. Therefore, approaches to citizenship education in Singapore classrooms must be sensitive to the discursive framework and salient discourses that structure the political and material conditions of Singapore. The progressive nationalistic, socially concerned and person oriented varieties of citizenship education were divergent and increased the meanings that students acquired. They were workable alternatives that were progressive, emphasising thinking and participation, yet sensitive to the conditions in Singapore. They provided, to varying degrees, positive moments and possibilities for personal growth, active
citizenship, and worked towards incremental changes through reforms and renewal. This is important because overall, they contributed to a less parochial view of citizenship in Singapore.

This study also debunks the myth that teachers in schools in an Asian country exclusively use traditional expository and passive approaches to teaching social studies and citizenship that stressed transmission of knowledge (Cogan et al., 2002; Print & Smith, 2000). Among the eight teachers, the understandings and practice of citizenship education varied, with different views of citizenship, contrasting understandings of the subject matter as problematic and non-problematic, which begot approaches ranging from highly structured transmission to participatory, experiential and constructivist learning. It contradicted the perception of an indifferent citizenry, and showed that Singapore teachers were well disposed towards citizenship education even in the context of a powerful systemic examination. Teachers were neither disinterested nor dispassionate citizenship educators. Despite social studies being a high stake examination subject, a majority of the teachers in this study continued to understand that citizenship aims were integral to social studies, and sought to translate them into practice.

9.3.2 Conception of the Curriculum

Another key contribution of this study is the documentation of several crucial aspects of the curriculum process within social studies, ones not adequately explored in the literature, and particularly in the Singapore context. The study substantiated the significance of teacher knowledge and illustrated the relationship between knowledge and classroom practice even in a tightly controlled system of education with a prescribed curriculum. Figure 9.1 on page 252 is a representation of the relationships among social studies, citizenship and citizenship education and was discussed earlier. It suggested that when the teacher understood the subject matter of social studies to be problematic, it begot a broader conception of citizenship, leading to teaching for or through citizenship. The socially concerned and person oriented teachers were examples. On the other hand, when the teacher understood the subject matter of social studies not to be problematic, it begot a narrow conception of citizenship, leading to teaching about citizenship. The nationalistic teachers were good examples.

The representation presented “lessons to be learnt” from the study, where “the reader should carefully note that these lessons are not generalisations but ‘working
hypotheses' that relate to an understanding of the site" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 362). Nonetheless, the elucidation of this relationship makes conscious the otherwise unconscious mental process, representing the first step down the road to better understanding the reality of how teachers approach citizenship education through the social studies curriculum.

Teachers were not passive implementers of the curriculum but exercised agency in enacting citizenship education in ways that did not threaten the official social studies curriculum. The eight teachers showed that their knowledge of the subject and subject matter of social studies and citizenship education were integral to an understanding of what they did in the name of citizenship education within social studies. Teacher knowledge varied, influenced by a myriad of factors underlay by the personal. Significantly, teacher knowledge mattered because it influenced the approaches to citizenship education, the experiences students would be exposed to, the types of skills they would develop, the kinds of messages they would receive about the collective lives, the ways in which they would interact with others to address social issues, and the understandings they would develop about citizenship. Understanding the ways in which teacher knowledge can influence social studies practice is essential to the implications to be drawn from this study.

In Singapore, the mainstream conception of curriculum is a technocratic one that views curriculum as a tangible product, with variations on this theme, such as a plan for instruction in social studies developed by curriculum specialists in the MOE (Cornbleth, 1990; Tan, 1997). The curriculum includes clear procedures to be followed such as learning objectives, selection and arrangement of the subject matter, assessment objectives and examination format. Once produced, it is then disseminated to teachers to be followed, the assumption is that procedures are value neutral. Such a curriculum is intended to provide efficient management and control, and treats teachers as curriculum conduits. This study raised questions about the viability of the technocratic conception of curriculum, because it obscures the critical role of the teacher, particularly his/her agency in relation to knowledge and practice. The findings operationalised the concept of the teacher as the curricular-instructional gatekeeper (Thornton, 1989, 1991, 2005a) in the social studies curriculum in Singapore.
In Singapore, the social studies curriculum needs to broaden its scope to address questions of values and knowledge. This means addressing the conservative values inherent in the technocratic model itself. To do so helps one be aware of the rationales for why things are done. Not to do so is likely to breed misgivings towards the curriculum. The nationalistic goals and objectives of the social studies curriculum are important, as most countries in the world with a citizenship education programme might reasonably be expected to have similar goals and objectives (Rossi & Ryan, 2006). But the findings revealed a definite broadening perspective of citizenship and citizenship education superseding national loyalty. This challenges social studies to go beyond a nationalistic perspective, yet not to dismiss this vital aspect. Not to recognise the other perspectives in the social studies curriculum risks reducing the meanings that students acquire, ignoring civic realities, and alienating otherwise engaged and passionate citizenship educators. The social studies curriculum becomes parochial, breeding insular citizens when the globalised context urgently calls for citizens to understand and recognise diversities, alternative visions of the world and multiliteracies (Kennedy, 1997; Rossi & Ryan, 2006).

This study has important and direct implications for social studies teacher education. Reforming the social studies curriculum alone may not be enough to bring about a fundamental shift in the teaching of citizenship, necessary in light of the existence of different conceptualisations and types of knowledge in relation to social studies and citizenship education. Social studies teacher education is important as it can facilitate the knowledge necessary to transform the subject matter into effective citizenship education pedagogy. Currently, social studies teacher education focuses more on assessment, source handling skills and content knowledge, all emphasising academic not citizenship education objectives. Wineburg (1998, p. 237) said, “But teachers cannot teach that which they do not know. They cannot choose that of which they are ignorant”. If social studies is a vehicle of NE, and a key subject for citizenship education in Singapore, then teachers both pre-service and experienced must be provided with the collective knowledge to reason soundly and prepare them as citizenship educators. This implies that citizenship education must be integral to social studies teacher education. Only when citizenship education is understood as integral to the social studies teacher’s educative mission, and when they have had opportunities in their courses to work through what they see as necessary for students,
can citizenship education be internalised as the teacher’s personal educational philosophy. Then teachers will be less likely to abandon citizenship education in social studies in the face of school pressures.

Further, for integrated social studies, it is not feasible for citizenship to be organised around the manner in which each discipline contributes to this goal, as suggested by Goodson (1987). Instead, social studies teacher education programmes should be repositioned as citizenship-centred, emphasising civic competence (Stanley & Nelson, 1994). This means that developing teachers as decision-makers who can cultivate PCK around citizenship education is essential within social studies. Silva and Mason (2003) noted that two questions need to be asked: What types of PCK do pre-service and in-service teachers need to teach citizenship? How do we develop a PCK for citizenship education?

At the basic level, it calls for the reorganisation of the social studies teacher education programme. It was mentioned in the previous paragraph that social studies teacher education emphasised the academic objectives of assessment, source handling skills and content knowledge. These knowledge and skills were taught to the examination, with little or no relation to citizenship. If teachers did the latter, it was more ad hoc and a result of the individual teacher’s philosophy. A reason highlighted was that citizenship education was not a key component in the social studies teacher education programme. Consequently, there was little discussion on it, and teachers were unclear what and how to teach citizenship within social studies.

Hence, citizenship education needs to be firmly integrated into the social studies teacher education programme. As citizenship is contested, a clear definition or model must be taken for the programme in the context of Singapore. This facilitates the delineation of the subject matter for citizenship education, and the effective pedagogy for developing the model of citizenship (Silva & Mason, 2003; Torney-Putrtta, Richardson & Barber, 2005). Accordingly, citizenship education aims to develop young people’s capability for thoughtful and responsible participation as democratic citizens in the political, economic, social and cultural life. What are the core knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for civic competency?

Citizenship knowledge includes helping students understand the role of citizenship and government in a democracy. For these, the concepts of rights and responsibilities,
rules and fairness, equality, tolerance and respect are core. The skills of citizenship are two-fold – intellectual and participatory. Intellectual skills include helping students identify issues, analyse, explain, evaluate and defend their own positions; and participatory skills include deliberating on issues, implementing decisions, and working with others toward action. Citizenship dispositions include helping students care about the common good of the community, respect for each person, and the significance of participating responsibly and effectively in the life of the community. Parker and Hess (2001) recommended discussions and seminars as vehicles for cultivating these skills and dispositions of citizenship. Wolk (2001) suggests that inquiry experiences are also useful tools to help students define, explore and experience citizenship questions.

At the implementation level, for citizenship-centred PCK to be developed, the connections between the content, skills, dispositions that students will need as citizens, and the social studies curriculum, and the pedagogy teachers learn must be made explicit. This means that citizenship concepts need to be labeled and articulated as they are introduced, and linked to the kinds of teaching practices that they imply. Beyond engaging in experiences and activities, it is more significant to elaborate on the rationale for pedagogical choices and critical reflection on those choices in relation to citizenship education. It must also go beyond conceptual understanding to real opportunities for action and the development of the relevant citizenship commitments and values both inside and outside of the classroom. Creating democratically organised classrooms, especially in the social studies teacher education classrooms would offer teachers opportunities to experience such participation first-hand, and these experiences can serve as model for how to structure their own classrooms as teachers. Only then can the eclectic and encompassing subject matter of social studies be meaningfully understood and effectively taught about, for and through citizenship.

In addition, to address the problem of indoctrination that may arise as a consequence of the model of citizenship taken, Silva and Mason (2003) suggested that at the programme level, the values and assumptions about the nature of citizenship must be clearly articulated. Further, it must provide a context that encourages teachers to deliberate over ideological questions. Similarly, Burbules (1997) emphasised that
citizenship-centred PCK should include the element of perspectivism, that belief claims can be evaluated differently given varying background assumptions.

Noteworthy that while integrated social studies is a legitimate type within the social studies curriculum discourse, little has been discussed on actual practice. Precisely because of that lack of discussion on this aspect, social studies teacher education needs to address issues such as: What are the pedagogical grounds for teaching an integrated social studies? What are the problems likely to be? An awareness of these issues is a prerequisite for effective teaching.

Teachers held varied understandings and practice of citizenship and citizenship education, and a number of them defined citizenship in ways different from the official discourse. They often did not follow dictionary definitions, nor did they explicitly articulate and express how curricular purposes were bundled. Further, teachers’ understandings were rooted in their biographies and their students’ needs. This implied the need to be careful not to limit the scope of citizenship to semantics. Rather than to align these understandings with the official discourse, social studies teacher education may do better to admit the variations and complexities in teachers’ understandings of citizenship, and help them handle such variations meaningfully.

The existence of different conceptualisations and types of knowledge in relation to social studies and citizenship education are significant because they represent the reality of the classroom. But more importantly, they provide teachers with insights into their practice that may otherwise elude examination. Teachers need to be aware of alternative representations of social studies and citizenship education, and be exposed to possibilities for social studies within the reality of the classroom. Showing what teachers believe are the purposes for social studies and citizenship education, and what it means to organise to teach citizenship through social studies provide a fruitful knowledge base or PCK about how social studies subject matter is made pedagogically effective. This has the potential to empower citizenship educators because it provides a broader knowledge base for informed actions. Particularly for the contentious social studies and citizenship education curricular, teachers need to develop a more tentative approach to knowledge and be open to possibilities. They must be helped to see the complexities of their subject, rather than limit social studies to a simple to follow curriculum, through reductive labels and simple procedures.
Teachers referred to the goal of the social studies curriculum, and the knowledge and skills as factors which had shaped their understanding of social studies and citizenship. Thus, it is important that social studies teacher education develop a thorough knowledge of the prescribed curriculum, but without neglecting the debates and contentions among the community of scholars and practitioners. This would empower teachers to use knowledge of the prescribed curriculum as a way to think about the purpose for social studies education and how they can be complemented with the practice of social studies and citizenship education. Grossman (1990) reiterated that teachers need explicit knowledge about the purposes and strategies in teaching particular subject matter. Similarly, Wilson and Wineburg (1988) echoed that the acquisition of knowledge requires teachers to examine their conceptions of the subject, as how a subject is taught is directly related to teachers’ understandings including the purpose of the subject.

Consequently, this implies examining assumptions that lie at the heart of social studies, including a teachers’ own role within it. It involves teachers critically examining the curriculum and pedagogy, taking political discussions out of the closet, and emphasising personal, philosophical and political reflection. Opportunities should be given for teachers to examine definitions of citizenship and citizenship education in official policy and curricular documents, and to develop their personal points of views. Subsequently, teachers should learn how to teach citizenship using different conceptual frames to represent the complex ideas of citizenship to students and to reflect on the implications. When teachers can critically examine the curricular and the freedom to embrace or reject the ideas presented will they learn to decide for themselves what values, issues, and concepts are important to address in their classrooms.

What it means to teach citizenship education through social studies curriculum is not simply following a set of prescribed procedures in the intended curriculum, but it depends on how the teacher understands the curriculum and thereby select the subject matter and approaches. This study suggested that there is no easy separation between the professional and personal knowledge and actions. Reflection therefore needs to be personal in order to be relevant. It is important that teachers reflect on their values, visions of what a good citizen and society can mean, and ideas about and response to social problems. It implies that teachers should be encouraged to find their own ways
of understanding the subject and subject matter, and of teaching. Overall, social studies teacher education must involve teaching teachers to design the curriculum to reflect many perspectives, and teaching methods to effectively support the goals and perspectives, as well as to connect with students in meaningful ways. This becomes critical with the emphasis on curricular-instructional gatekeeping.

The outcomes of this study may suggest even wider implications for teachers and schools. This study found a strong relationship existed between an understanding of knowledge and teaching in social studies and citizenship education. Does this relationship hold in other subject areas? Would teachers of other subject areas be influenced in their teaching in the same way as social studies teachers? Is understanding of knowledge subject specific or generic? Findings to these sorts of questions are significant in providing insights to the influence of conceptions of knowledge, disciplinary or otherwise, on pedagogy. This study also found the personal factor to be highly salient. Are personal factors more significant than the understanding of issues? More needs to be inquired of this area, for at the heart of the educational process resides the life options of future generations. The personal is essentially idiosyncratic in nature, and this bears implication on how teachers enact the curriculum, and therefore the kinds of experiences that students will have access to. This is an important issue as we try to move teaching towards a more socially just and equitable pedagogy. Finally, this study found three characterisations of social studies teachers, but are these characterisations particular to social studies, or do they transcend the subject boundaries? What groupings of teachers can be found in the other subjects?

9.4 Limitations of the Study

Qualitative research using a case study approach as employed in this study may be criticised on the grounds that it is difficult to generalise. Because of the qualitative nature of this study, only a small sample of teachers were interviewed and observed. This study aimed for a deeper look at social studies teachers’ knowledge and practice and was not intended to yield generalisations that described social studies teachers as a group. But the researcher had provided a rich description of the teachers’ knowledge and practice of social studies and citizenship education in a form readily recognisable to readers. This facilitates the reader to draw on his/her knowledge and experiences to derive meaningful naturalistic generalisations from the study and transfer them to
familiar situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995). Having said that, the importance of the implemented curriculum, which is “the unique set of events that transpire within a classroom”, needs to be acknowledged, and this can defy transferability (Eisner, 2002, p. 33). Nonetheless, this study serves as the basis for generating hypotheses for future study, and shedding light on how eight social studies understood and practised citizenship education through social studies in four secondary schools. This may be useful in stimulating reflective practice elsewhere.

There are potential limitations to the findings related to the choice of teachers and schools for investigation. This involves trade-offs and time limitations. It was intended that eight teachers from four schools were chosen, grounded in the interest in understanding categories and features of commonalities or differences across cases than what individuals were saying by themselves. While this decision should lend strength to the conclusion, the findings related to these teachers and schools only. Further, time and detail with all eight teachers were limited by the need to spend time with the other.

This is a doctoral study conducted within the timeframe of graduate work. Situational constraints were placed upon the researcher by the university’s Human Research Ethics and the MOE’s guidelines. The latter stated that the researcher could only conduct her research in the school during certain periods in the academic year. There is always a possibility that teachers’ behaviour did not occur frequently enough to be observed in a reliable manner within that period. However, numerous steps were taken to overcome this limitation. Within that period, the researcher spread out the interviews and observations to capture a good range of the topics covered, as well as not to cause inconvenience to teachers. Further, the research was carried out by one person and limited in scope. The data was limited to only what the researcher observed and what teachers explicitly shared with her. There was possibility of the influence of the researcher on the teachers and the settings. The researcher’s presence could lead to certain expectations or reactions on the part of the teachers and the classes that could distort the findings.

Finally, another possible limitation relates to the organisation of social studies in schools. The ideal situation is for teachers to be teaching similar topics within the stated timeframe. But what is intended to happen is often not what actually happens, and this is due to a variety of factors, including school contexts, physical or cultural,
needs of students and judgement of the teachers (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Here again, the importance of the implemented curriculum must be acknowledged. This was the case, as one school operated on the modular system, while the others did not. Besides, schools and teachers were free to rearrange the topics to meet the needs of their students over two years. This meant that not all teachers taught the same topics at any one time. It was possible then that lessons that were observed were ones where the topics did not lend themselves to citizenship issues or to particular approaches. This could distort the findings.

9.5 Directions for Future Research

The most obvious research possibility is to determine if the characterisations derived from the study are similar to a broader base of social studies teachers, if there are comparable constituent components and to what extent they represent effective pedagogical practice. Clearly, further research is necessary to verify the characterisations and the constituent components.

The findings have also raised important questions that constitute areas for future research. One such possibility pertains to gender and race. While teachers of both gender participated in this study, gender differences in teacher knowledge and practice in social studies and citizenship education was not a focus. Nonetheless, findings threw up differences in perspectives relating to the effects of national service for male citizens. It would be interesting to study how powerful gender as a factor is on social studies teachers’ understandings of citizenship and citizenship education, and the pedagogical implications on social studies.

Similarly with the race factor, for three of the teachers in the study were of minority races. Findings also indicated that the minority teachers were conscious of their race in the way they talked about citizenship. It would also be interesting to study the extent race plays in the minority social studies teachers’ understandings of citizenship and citizenship education and the pedagogical implications. This would be salient as multiracialism is a key tenet of Singapore society, and race has been perceived to be related to citizenship. This could be extended to compare the understandings of citizenship and citizenship education across social studies teachers of both the minority and Chinese social studies teachers.
Interestingly, there was little focus on globalisation in teachers’ understandings and practice of citizenship and social studies. References were made to multiple identities, and the broadening nature of social studies, but none related it to global citizenship in a meticulous way. The idea of multiple identities were geographically bound to Singapore. Given Singapore’s globalised society, it suggests a study of new meanings of citizenship and citizenship education in the context of globalisation at a policy and curriculum level, as well as teachers’ understandings and practice.

Teacher knowledge and practice gave an insight into social studies and citizenship education from the practitioners’ perspective, but that of the other curriculum players have not been documented. Curriculum specialists who develop the curriculum materials may well view citizenship education differently from teachers. Determining the perspectives of those away from the classroom is another area to be addressed. Finally, more research needs to be done on the impact of the integrated nature of social studies on teacher knowledge and pedagogy. One aspect that emerged from this study was to identify the citizenship concepts in the integrated social studies curriculum, thereafter, to conceptualise a citizenship-centred PCK in relation to teaching an integrated social studies as distinct from discipline-based subjects.

9.6 Final Comments

This study demonstrated that despite a highly prescribed and examinable social studies curriculum, knowledge and control resided with the teachers, those closest to learners in classrooms. Teachers transformed what they understood of the subject matter of social studies into a form that students can understand (Grossman et al., 1991; Gudmundsdottir, 1988, 1991). They are, as this study found, the person who enact the curriculum, whose professional role is to span the gaps between what was planned in the curriculum and what was actually experienced by their students. In spanning this gap they are influenced powerfully by their knowledge – what they know and how they know of social studies and citizenship education are fundamental in how they enact the curriculum.

Lee and Fouts (2005, p. 10) rightly stated that teacher understanding, “helps to cast light on how and why the emphases of some government or policies are implemented or not”. If teacher understandings are largely conforming and show a political disconnect, then citizenship education through social studies is likely to be minimal in
interpretation. However, the challenges posed by the changing global and local landscapes necessitate a maximal approach to citizenship education that develops young people's capability for thoughtful and responsible participation as democratic citizens in the political, economic, social and cultural life. Useful pedagogies for developing such citizens focus upon engaging students in active learning experiences, stimulating an understanding of values and encouraging reflective, critical thinking (Crick, 2000; Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Cogan et al., 2002; Gopinathan & Sharp, 2004; Print & Smith, 2000; Print, 2005). The way citizenship education is taught through social studies in schools will have an important impact on the ability of individuals to fully function in society. It is hoped that this study has conveyed that in the social studies curriculum, the role of individual teacher's knowledge in shaping the curriculum must be an important focus in teaching citizenship education.
References


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Appendices
Appendix 1

Details of the Knowledge, Skills and Values in the Upper Secondary Social Studies Syllabus

Knowledge:
This includes the recent history and the key issues central to Singapore’s survival and success, such as the principles of governance, the strategies that have brought Singapore to the present, the role of key institutions and the future challenges.

Skills:
Generally, these include the skills needed to understand, explain, analyse, compare, infer, interpret and evaluate given information, and to gather information.

Values:
These include the core values that underlie the way of life in Singapore such as meritocracy, multi-racial and multi-religious harmony, honest and competent government that will ensure Singapore’s continued success.

Specifically, the section ‘Assessment Objectives’ in the social studies syllabus gives details of the knowledge and skills related to the social studies assessment. The following is taken from the syllabus (MOE, 2006):

Objective 1: Knowledge
Candidates should be able to:
• demonstrate relevant factual knowledge.

Objective 2: Constructing Explanations
Candidates should be able to:
• demonstrate an understanding of concepts and terms appropriate to the syllabus;
• select, organise and apply the concepts, terms and facts learnt;
• make judgements, recommendations and decisions.

Objective 3: Interpreting and Evaluating Sources/Given Information
Using previously unseen materials, candidates should be able to:
• comprehend and extract relevant information;
• draw inferences from given information;
• analyse and evaluate evidence;
• compare and contrast different views;
• distinguish between fact, opinion and judgement;
• recognise values and detect bias;
• draw conclusions based on a reasoned consideration of evidence and arguments.
SOCIAL STUDIES AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE IN SINGAPORE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET – TEACHER

You are invited to take part in a research study titled: Social studies and citizenship education: Teacher knowledge and practice in Singapore secondary schools. The goal of this study is to explore how teachers understand and give purpose to citizenship education in the social studies curriculum.

In Singapore, social studies is a key subject for citizenship education in the context of National Education. Findings from this study will help develop among teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum developers, a better sense of the viable instances of citizenship education through the teaching of social studies.

This is a PhD study and is being conducted by Ms Jasmine Sim, under the supervision of Professor Murray Print from the Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be involved in the following from around January to August 2004:

(i) **Interviews:** You will participate in five interviews over six months. These interviews will be held in privacy. Each interview, which takes about an hour will be audiotaped.

(ii) **Observations of teaching:** This involves the presence of the researcher in at least five social studies lessons over six months.

All tapes and transcripts will be securely maintained. Specific information about individuals will be kept strictly confidential. The persons involved will not be identifiable by name or by institution, as pseudonyms will be used. The information obtained will be used in a PhD. thesis and subsequent academic publications. The results that are published publicly will not reference any individual nor institution.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and – if you do participate – you can withdraw at any time.

If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Ms Jasmine Sim, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney, phone (in Singapore): 62866422, 67903401. This information sheet is for you to keep.

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager for Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811.
PARTICIPANT (TEACHER) CONSENT FORM

SOCIAL STUDIES AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE IN SINGAPORE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

I freely choose to participate in the study, titled: Social studies and citizenship education: Teacher knowledge and practice in Singapore secondary schools. I have read and understood the information for participants. I understand that my privacy will be maintained and that I may withdraw from the project at any time without penalty or prejudice. I also understand that the research is strictly confidential.

I hereby agree to participate in this research study.

Name: _______________________ Date: ______________________
Signature: _______________________
School: _______________________
Address: _______________________
Postcode ( )
Tel: _________________________ (H)
__________________________ (O)
Email: _______________________

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager for Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811.
Appendix 3

Interview Guide 1: Teacher Background and Profile

Current teaching context:
1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. How many years have you taught in this school?
3. What classes do you teach?
4. What are your aspirations as a teacher?
5. Did you choose to teach social studies?
6. What are your goals for your social studies classes

Educational Background/Experience:

Experience as learner:
1. Thinking back to your school days, were there memorable classes that you recall?
2. What made the classes memorable?
3. What subject/s did you like in school? Why?
4. How was the subject/s taught?
5. What sorts of things helped you learnt?
6. What sorts of things made up ‘a good teacher’ when you were a student?

University:
1. What did you study in the university?
2. How was it taught?
3. Do you draw on these subjects in teaching social studies?

Teacher Education:
1. What subjects were you trained to teach?
2. How does teacher education influence your teaching?
3. Were you trained to teach social studies?
4. How much of the social studies course at teacher education influenced your teaching of social studies?

Professional background:
1. Why did you become a teacher?
2. Why do you want to teach social studies?
3. What do you think of the current curriculum change, i.e. the Combined Humanities and compulsory social studies?
4. Have you attended any social studies in-service courses? Can you tell me more about them?
5. How have these courses helped in your teaching of social studies?

Teaching philosophy:
1. How would you describe yourself as a teacher?
2. What are important to you as a teacher?
3. Why do you see yourself in these ways?
4. How would you describe yourself as a social studies teacher?
External involvement:

1. Do you volunteer or participate in any activities outside of school?

Interview Guide 2: Teacher’s Understandings of Social Studies and Citizenship Education

Teacher’s Conceptualisation of Social Studies

1. What comes to your mind when you think about social studies?
2. How would you define social studies?
3. Why do you define it in these ways?
4. What do you think is the purpose for teaching social studies?
5. How would you describe the subject matter of social studies?
6. Is it more important for our students to learn the important facts in social studies or for them to learn how to think critically about our society?
7. Should we be asking questions in social studies for which there are no definite answers?
8. How do your lessons reflect what you think is the purpose of teaching social studies?
9. How does the national examination affect your teaching of social studies?

Teacher’s Understanding of Citizenship and Citizenship Education

1. What does citizenship mean to you?
2. What has led you to think of citizenship in this way?
3. What does citizenship education mean to you?
4. What is the purpose of teaching citizenship education?
5. Is citizenship education important for students?
6. What has led you to think about citizenship education in this way?
7. Do you see citizenship education related to any particular subjects?
8. What are some important issues in teaching citizenship education?
9. What should be the subject matter for citizenship education?
10. What sorts of classroom activities would be helpful in developing a student’s citizenship?

Social Studies as Citizenship Education

1. What are you trying to achieve when you teach social studies?
2. How is social studies related to citizenship education?
3. How much citizenship education do you teach through social studies?
4. Can you briefly describe a lesson/learning activity in which you teach citizenship education through social studies?
5. What difficulties do you encounter in teaching citizenship education through social studies?
6. How does your understanding of the subject matter of social studies influence your teaching of citizenship?
Interview Guide 3: School Factors

Characteristics of the school:

1. What is the school like?
2. What are the key focus areas of the school?
3. Are there particular reasons why these areas are selected?

Citizenship in the school:

1. What structures and opportunities are in schools that seek to develop citizenship in students?
2. Do you think citizenship is an important priority in the school? Why?
3. How could citizenship become more important in the school curriculum?
4. How does social studies contribute towards developing citizenship in the school?

Interview Guide 4: Clarifying Questions

Clarifying questions on citizenship education and social studies:

1. In terms of the subject matter of citizenship education, what is essential for students to know?
2. How similar would it be with that of social studies education?
3. Typically, how do you teach social studies?
4. Would citizenship education be an objective in your teaching?
5. Can I just get you to reflect on how citizenship education and social studies are related?

Subsequent to the generic clarifying questions, there were others related to specific classroom observations so far. There were also issues to be followed up from the previous two interviews. Different teachers had different questions. These specific questions are not reflected in Interview Guide 3.

Interview Guide 5: Conclusion - Tying Up Loose Ends

1. Can you describe the things you actively enjoy in your social studies lessons?
2. What do you prize most in your social studies teaching and would defend at all cost?
3. What is your preferred approach to teaching social studies?
4. Do you always teach the way you prefer?
5. With respect to the construction of social studies course – if you had to place knowledge and understanding, values, cognitive skills and social skills into a priority ranking, what would this be?
6. Overall, how would you describe your teaching of citizenship education through the vehicle of social studies - do you teach it purposefully or coincidentally, consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or embedded in the teaching of social studies?
7. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about social studies/citizenship/citizenship education/this study?
### Overview: Cross-Cases, All Research Questions

#### Appendix 4

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4. In what ways do trs teach CE thru vehicle of SS?

I: Citizenship transmission + personal development - experiential learning - implicit, embedded CE

O/D: Personal development - experiential learning - implicit, embedded CE

I: Reflective inquiry + > critical - develop capacity for active participation - explicit, deliberate CE

O/D: Citizenship transmission + reflective inquiry - develop capacity for active participation - explicit, deliberate CE

I: Citizenship transmission - self censorship - implicit, embedded CE

O/D: Citizenship transmission - mastery learning - implicit, embedded CE

I: Reflective inquiry + critical - capacity for tentativeness - explicit, deliberate CE

I: Citizenship transmission + personal development - applicability - implicit, embedded CE

O/D: Reflective inquiry + critical - capacity for tentativeness - explicit, deliberate CE

O/D: Personal development - applicability - implicit, embedded CE

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