

Breaking news: Examining teachers' perceptions and pedagogy of global current events

by

James Scott Brown

B.S.Ed., Bowling Green State University, 2005  
M.Ed., Bowling Green State University, 2006  
Ed.S., Indiana University, 2018

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

2025

## **Abstract**

In today's classrooms, teachers and students can use global current events to constantly reexamine the world and their place within it, and address complex issues such as international relations, economic inequality, and effects of globalization. However, while these topics are discussed in many classes in the United States, the specific practices utilized, and global current events topics chosen remain largely a teacher's personal choice. Though there has been advocacy centering on the ways in which teachers may approach global current events, answers to important questions, including how teachers approach the teaching of global current events topics, how global current events can serve as a means for promoting elements of global education, and what factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events topics in their respective classrooms remain unknown. This study aimed to address each of these questions and explore the goals of global current events education within the larger framework of global education and social justice by using a qualitative approach in the conduct of interviews, classroom observations and an elicitation task. As a result of this study, three themes emerged regarding the teaching of global current events: implementation, positionality, and self-selection. Findings from this study indicate that while each of the teachers viewed themselves as global educators and advocated for the teaching of global current events in their social studies classrooms, these lessons were often limited to use as procedural tasks due to constraints of time, administrative oversight, and external pressures. Furthermore, when seen through lens of two theoretical frameworks, the findings of this study suggest that the teaching of global current events can potentially serve as a means to actualize global competence or social justice, but need additional resources, time, and training to do so. The dissertation concludes with a set of curricular implications and suggestions, citing the importance of balancing the teaching of global

current events with the scripted curriculum and highlighting individual strategies teachers can use to support visions of global competence and social justice in the classroom.

*Keywords:* global current events, global competence, social justice, secondary education, social studies, teacher perception

Breaking news: Examining teachers' perceptions and pedagogy of global current events

by

James Scott Brown

B.S.Ed., Bowling Green State University, 2005  
M.Ed., Bowling Green State University, 2006  
Ed.S., Indiana University, 2018

A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

2025

Approved by:  
Co-Major Professor  
J. Spencer Clark

Approved by:  
Co-Major Professor  
Thomas Vontz

# Copyright

© James Scott Brown 2025.

## **Abstract**

In today's classrooms, teachers and students can use global current events to constantly reexamine the world and their place within it, and address complex issues such as international relations, economic inequality, and effects of globalization. However, while these topics are discussed in many classes in the United States, the specific practices utilized, and global current events topics chosen remain largely a teacher's personal choice. Though there has been advocacy centering on the ways in which teachers may approach global current events, answers to important questions, including how teachers approach the teaching of global current events topics, how global current events can serve as a means for promoting elements of global education, and what factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events topics in their respective classrooms remain unknown. This study aimed to address each of these questions and explore the goals of global current events education within the larger framework of global education and social justice by using a qualitative approach in the conduct of interviews, classroom observations and an elicitation task. As a result of this study, three themes emerged regarding the teaching of global current events: implementation, positionality, and self-selection. Findings from this study indicate that while each of the teachers viewed themselves as global educators and advocated for the teaching of global current events in their social studies classrooms, these lessons were often limited to use as procedural tasks due to constraints of time, administrative oversight, and external pressures. Furthermore, when seen through lens of two theoretical frameworks, the findings of this study suggest that the teaching of global current events can potentially serve as a means to actualize global competence or social justice, but need additional resources, time, and training to do so. The dissertation concludes with a set of curricular implications and suggestions, citing the importance of balancing the teaching of global

current events with the scripted curriculum and highlighting individual strategies teachers can use to support visions of global competence and social justice in the classroom.

*Keywords:* global current events, global competence, social justice, secondary education, social studies, teacher perception

# Table of Contents

List of Figures .....	xii
List of Tables .....	xiii
Acknowledgements .....	xiv
Dedication .....	xvi
Chapter 1 - Introduction.....	1
Background.....	1
Problem Statement & Purpose .....	4
Research Questions, Rationale, & Significance.....	4
Nature of the Study .....	5
Definition of Terms.....	6
<i>Global Education</i> .....	6
<i>Global Current Event</i> .....	6
<i>Global Competence</i> .....	6
<i>Contextual Social Justice</i> .....	6
<i>Positional Objectivity</i> .....	6
<i>Pedagogical Content Knowledge</i> .....	7
Summary and Organization of Remainder of Dissertation.....	7
Chapter 2 - Review of the Literature .....	8
Introduction.....	8
Global Education .....	8
<i>Hanvey's Five Dimensions</i> .....	9
<i>Global Perspectives</i> .....	11
<i>Global Competence</i> .....	13
Global Current Events.....	16
<i>Approaches</i> .....	17
Teacher Beliefs .....	20
<i>Pedagogical Content Knowledge</i> .....	21
The Curriculum Struggle .....	22
Theoretical Framework – Contextual Social Justice.....	26



<i>Comparative</i> .....	27
<i>Identity</i> .....	29
<i>Public Reasoning</i> .....	31
Connecting Sen to the Social Studies .....	33
<i>Justice Tensions</i> .....	33
<i>Deliberative Pedagogy</i> .....	35
<i>Additional Curricular Implications</i> .....	38
Summary.....	43
Chapter 3 - Methodology .....	44
Introduction.....	44
Research Questions .....	44
Positionality Statement .....	46
Research Design & Methodology .....	51
Epistemology .....	52
Population and Sample Selection.....	53
Setting .....	54
Qualitative Data Collection.....	55
<i>Semi-Structured Interviews</i> .....	55
<i>Elicitation Task</i> .....	57
<i>Classroom Observations</i> .....	58
Qualitative Data Analysis .....	58
Ethical Considerations .....	60
Establishing Trustworthiness .....	62
<i>Credibility</i> .....	63
<i>Transferability</i> .....	63
<i>Dependability</i> .....	64
<i>Confirmability</i> .....	65
Limitations & Delimitations .....	65
Timeline .....	69
Chapter 4 - Findings.....	70
Introduction.....	70

Participant Overview .....	72
Participant Profiles .....	73
<i>P1 – Mrs. Grayson</i> .....	74
<i>P2 – Mrs. Wayne</i> .....	74
<i>P3 – Mr. Todd</i> .....	75
<i>P4 – Mrs. Kelley</i> .....	75
<i>P5 – Mr. Drake</i> .....	76
Participant Profiles Overview .....	76
Initial Codes .....	77
<i>Topic Domain 1: Understanding the Role of Global Current Events</i> .....	77
<i>Topic Domain 2: Understanding Teachers’ Beliefs</i> .....	81
<i>Topic Domain 3: Understanding Pedagogical Choices</i> .....	83
Elicitation Task .....	87
Results .....	91
Emergent Themes .....	95
<i>Implementation</i> .....	96
<i>Positionality</i> .....	97
<i>Self-Selection</i> .....	98
Summary .....	98
Chapter 5 - Discussion .....	100
Introduction: Global Current Events Pedagogy .....	100
Applying Theory .....	102
From Comparative to Implementation .....	106
From Identity to Positionality .....	107
From Public Reasoning to Self-Selection .....	108
Extending Theory .....	109
Summary .....	111
Chapter 6 - Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations .....	112
Introduction: Summary of Study .....	112
Research Questions Revisited .....	113
Implications .....	116

Practitioner Takeaways .....	119
Curricular Application .....	120
Personal Relevance .....	121
Topic Selection .....	122
Leadership Modeling .....	123
Limitations & Suggestions for Further Research.....	124
Conclusion .....	125
References.....	127
Appendix A - Interview Protocol.....	143
Appendix B - Elicitation Task Questions .....	146
Appendix C - Elicitation Task Headlines .....	147
Appendix D - Initial Email & Survey.....	154

## List of Figures

Figure 3-1 Data Collection & Analysis Procedure .....	60
Figure 4-1 Two Countries in Europe Scramble Military Aircraft Over a Disputed Territory .....	87
Figure 4-2 A Massive Earthquake Occurs in Central Asia.....	88
Figure 4-3 Hundreds Are Killed in Religious Violence in an African Nation .....	88
Figure 4-4 A Political Coup Takes Place in a South American Country.....	89
Figure 4-5 A Developing Country Passes a Law Criminalizing Homosexuality .....	89
Figure 4-6 The First Female Head of State is Elected in a European Country.....	90
Figure 4-7 The United State Boycotts the Olympic Games for Political Reasons .....	90

## List of Tables

Table 4-1 Participant Overview .....	73
Table 4-2 Initial Codes – Topic Domain 1 .....	78
Table 4-3 Initial Codes - Topic Domain 2 .....	81
Table 4-4 Initial Codes - Topic Domain 3 .....	83
Table 4-5 Elicitation Task Results .....	91
Table 4-6 Emergent Themes .....	96
Table 6-1 Research Questions Revisited .....	113
Table 6-2 Practitioner Takeaways .....	120

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge, first and foremost, my esteemed committee, led by both Dr. J. Spencer Clark and Dr. Tom Vontz. I owe each of you more than I can express for welcoming me to Kansas State University with open arms and giving me the ability to pursue this degree and learn from you both along the way. I also thank Dr. Bradley Burenheide and Dr. Susan Yelich-Biniecki for their input and guidance throughout this process, and for helping me navigate competing conceptions of social studies and social justice education. I am forever indebted to all of you for helping me achieve this goal and I know it could not have been completed without you.

I also want to thank two of my greatest academic mentors, Dr. Keith C. Barton at Indiana University and Dr. Alden W. Craddock at Maryville University. Each of you helped mold me into the person I am today, and without your support, love, criticism (some of it even warranted), and wisdom, I would not have been able to accomplish anything in academia. I look forward to always learning from you both and apologize in advance for what is sure to be another slew of questions in the coming years.

Additionally, I want to give special recognition to my family members who have supported me throughout this journey, most notably Aunt Dee, Aunt Sandy, Uncle Craig, Uncle Dave, Uncle Rich, Frank, my brother Jerry and all my extended cousins, nieces, and nephews. From providing me space to work and learn, to showing up at all my plays, performances, and concerts, I could not be more grateful to have such a loving and supportive family and I thank you (to the moon and back).

To my students, thank you for always having an open mind to my approach to classroom education. It has been my honor and privilege to work with you over the past two decades and

you are the reason I continue to fight for what I believe is needed in education today. I find no greater pride in my life than hearing of your successes and I know, without a shadow of a doubt, that you will continue to change the world for the better in the future.

Finally, last but certainly not least, I want to thank my incredible, supportive, loving, brilliant wife Vanessa. You are not only my wife, but also the single greatest colleague, dog co-parent, and friend I have ever been blessed with. I am thankful every day to have you in my life and still marvel at the kismet that brought us to the same school, on the same day, at the same time, in rooms right next to each other. I cannot wait to see you join me in finishing this journey and I am thrilled at what our future still holds.

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the memories of my parents, Gerald R. Brown, Sr. and Barbara Jean Guthrie.

My Father, Jerry Brown, was a tireless advocate for democratic civic engagement and social justice throughout his life. From his organization of a public bus for citizens from Toledo to attend the March on Washington to his time as the Legislative Aide to Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum, he always worked to improve the lives and world of the people around him. I can only hope that this work carries on his legacy. And Dad? I know you have read this over and over by now, and trust me, I have seen all the edits you have made. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement of my work.

To my beautiful Mother, Barb Guthrie, you have been my inspiration and my educational icon my whole life. From the time I stepped foot in your first-grade classroom, to the many times I had the pleasure of hearing you on the morning announcements as an award-winning Elementary Principal, I have never once stopped trying to follow the incredible impact you have made on your students, teachers, and community. Everything I do in education I owe to you, and I thank you for the (countless) times I have needed you in my corner. I love you and I know this would have brought you joy, because it would not exist without you.



# Chapter 1 - Introduction

## Background

A 2023 report released by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement noted that students are more interested than ever in political activity but lack the necessary support and opportunities to participate civically (Booth, 2023). Previous reports found similar results and concluded that students in classrooms focused on current events issues were more likely to be civically engaged at home and in the community (CIRCLE, 2013). These findings, based on surveys and interviews with nearly 6,000 young Americans, 720 civics or government teachers, and a number of nonprofit youth advocacy groups, found that, despite this linkage, teachers often avoid global current events topics in the classroom, and cited a lack of support from both their administration and students' parents or their own unwillingness to delve into international topics that may be viewed as contentious. Furthermore, the report lamented the lack of current events as a focus in state testing and accountability measures and recognized that without increased attention to the impact of such education on students' civic participation, little incentive exists for teachers to facilitate these discussions.

Scholars have long advocated the use of current events as important for teaching democratic values and participation (Hunt & Metcalf, 1955; Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Engle & Ochoa, 1988). Building on this advocacy, studies have highlighted the advantages of using current events topics in classrooms and have described the various approaches that could prove useful in addressing these issues (Clark et al., 2008; Camicia & Dobson, 2010; Boyle-Baise & Zevin, 2009; Jacobowitz & Onore, 2004) and more recent studies have expanded such approaches in the digital dimensions (Bowyer & Kahne, 2019; Kahne, Hodgin & Eidman-Aadahl, 2016; Gleason & von Gillern, 2018; Zhang & Chen, 2023). Discussions on current

events topics can range from interpreting the reasons for actions seen in international relations to identifying the causes and effects of globalization (Szente, 2023; Merryfield & Wilson, 2005). These discussions can serve to become connecting threads between learned historical content and the lived experiences of students, and often require a range of cognitive, affective, research, critical thinking, and communicative skills (Howard, 2018; Haas & Laughlin, 2000).

Similarly, a variety of frameworks have been created to understand the many purposes and uses of global education and how each can be incorporated into the existing curricula of high school courses (Parker et al., 1998; Falk, 1994; Sassen, 1996; Boulding, 1988; Castles & Davidson, 2000; Vontz & Leming, 2005; Soysal, 1994). Though multiple definitions have been offered to understand what global education could, and perhaps should, entail (Goren & Yemini, 2017; Gaudelli, 2011) global education has been argued as a necessity in a world that is being rapidly changed by the forces of globalization (Parreira do Amaral & Fossum, 2021; Kubow & Fossum, 2007; Hanvey, 1976; Merryfield, 1997; Pike & Selby, 2000). To this end, empirical studies of global education have asked practitioners to reflect upon their practices and guiding principles concerning the role of global education in their classrooms (Menon et al., 2021; Howard, 2018; Pike, 1997; Merryfield, 1998; Gaudelli, 2011).

Despite this, and even in instances where global education and current events issues are used in classroom curricula, teachers often face uncertainty on how best to teach the content and often report to be lacking the support and training needed to better handle global education issues (Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2017; Majewska, 2022; Hahn, 1983; Tye & Tye, 1993; Merryfield, 1994; Gaudelli, 2011). Perhaps more importantly, there is still a lack of research concerning how practicing educators think about, and teach, global education and current events in the classroom (Booth, 2023; Gaudelli, 2011). While empirical studies on each of these topics

are undoubtedly important, little research has been conducted on the ways in which social educators approach the teaching of current events issues of a global nature. Ideally, current events and news from around the world, including international relations and issues of globalization would be discussed while representing many of the aims and goals of global education.

One potential goal of thinking, teaching, and learning about global current events in the classroom is the potential advance of contextual social justice. Largely based off the work of economist Amartya Sen (2009), this view of social justice differs from previous philosophical works such as Rawls (1971) in calling for increased inductive and comparative methods be used to advance social justice while simultaneously causing the retreat of known injustices both locally and globally. Studies have long supported pedagogical methods in classrooms that increase opportunities for deliberation, discussion, and dialogue (Parker, 2003; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Hess, 2009; Kunzman, 2006; Clark et al., 2010; Barton & Ho, 2022) as practice for development of students' civic skills and "public voice" (Levine, 2008). When seen through Sen's theoretical lens of social justice, the teaching of global current events through methods such as structured academic controversy and discussion (Burenheide, 2017; Johnson & Johnson, 1988), civic engagement (Clark et al., 2010; Makler, 1999; Newmann, 1989), or democratic participation (Vontz & Leming, 2005; Hess, 2012) may serve to provide students and teachers the opportunities to think about, and potentially retreat, injustices seen in their schools and communities, and ultimately achieve many of the goals of social studies education at the high school levels.

## **Problem Statement & Purpose**

Given this understanding, additional research was needed to understand what leads teachers who *do teach global current events* to do so and the pedagogical approaches they use to teach them in the classroom. Merely connecting the goals of global and current events education is not enough; educators must better understand the processes by which these global education issues can be developed in the classroom, the ways in which teachers are approaching these critical areas, and the obstacles they encounter in doing so.

By understanding the characteristics of these teachers and the choices they make in the classroom, we may better understand how to create a framework for teachers to begin to incorporate global current events elements into their own curricula. Furthermore, the ways in which teachers in this study act to maintain or challenge particular visions of global competence or social justice education are important as it may reveal important connections between their teacher beliefs and perceptions and their choices of content and pedagogy.

## **Research Questions, Rationale, & Significance**

This study addressed the following questions:

- 1) How does a select sample of teachers conduct global current events education content?
- 2) How is the choice of instructional approaches related to teachers' beliefs concerning global current events and their importance in the curriculum?
- 3) What factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events topics in their classroom?
- 4) How do the teachers in this study act to maintain or challenge particular visions of global competence and/or social justice education?

The questions presented in this dissertation focus on the experience of teaching global current events in the high school context and explore how teachers' perceptions of this content are reflected in the actions and decisions made in their respective classrooms. The research methods therefore must have engaged the lived experiences of teachers as they made choices concerning the application of global current events into their curricula and attempted to form an understanding of how their perception of global education has impacted their teaching.

In examining these questions, I investigated how the teachers in this study implemented teaching strategies that promoted critical engagement of complex, diverse information through the exploration of contemporary events with visible global significance. In doing so, essential elements regarding these teachers' beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge of global current events issues in their respective curricula were examined through the ways they conducted themselves when such topics were raised within their classrooms. Ultimately, the resultant answers to these questions helped to clarify whether such a focus on global current events education can serve to promote global competence and be useful a useful curricular addition for all educators interested in incorporating global current events education in their own classrooms.

### **Nature of the Study**

This study employed a qualitative multisite descriptive case study research design. A qualitative approach was chosen for this study due to the nature of this study attempting to discover how people gave meaning to the events that they experienced (Merriam, 1998). In this instance, the lived experiences of five secondary social studies teachers and the ways in which they utilized strategies that encouraged understanding of global current events topics was of interest and as such, a qualitative methodology provided the best opportunity to learn and understand the way in which each experienced the adaptations they had to make in their

respective classrooms. A case study methodology was selected for this research due to the opportunity to make sense of context-dependent knowledge within particular settings as a descriptive case study design can “illustrate or explain key features of a phenomenon within its context” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). In this case, the ways in which a group of high school teachers within a single school district approached the teaching of global current events was of interest and to understand these practices and the choices made in their classrooms, semi-structured interviews with an elicitation task were used as well as observation of teachers’ classrooms and teaching practices. Data analysis was an iterative, reflexive process and provided a clear understanding of the experiences of each participant as it related to their classroom pedagogy regarding the teaching of global current events and the choices they actively made in selecting and teaching the content to their students.

### **Definition of Terms**

***Global Education*** A diverse curriculum which focuses on the interconnectivity of human values and experiences using a wide range of pedagogical methods and aims.

***Global Current Event*** An unfolding contemporary happening, portrayed through the media, and containing visible global significance.

***Global Competence*** The capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.

***Contextual Social Justice*** An inductive, comparative process that focuses on the realities of those involved in the quest for justice.

***Positional Objectivity*** A facet of contextual social justice that implies that recognizing how the world looks depends very much on where one is standing in it.

***Pedagogical Content Knowledge*** The intersection of content, pedagogy, and student understanding to achieve particular visions, goals, and aims within a classroom.

### **Summary and Organization of Remainder of Dissertation**

This dissertation covers the relevant information regarding the background for, and conduct of, a study into the pedagogy and practice of a limited sample of secondary social studies teachers engaged in the teaching of global current events. Chapter two will present a review of current research on a number of topics, including an overview of global education, global current events, teacher beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge as well as an introduction to the theoretical framework that will guide the study and resultant analysis. Chapter three will then describe the methodology used throughout this study, including all instruments for data collection and analysis, research design, ethical and trust considerations, and collection and analysis timeline. Chapter four provides a full analysis of the findings of the data, including participant profiles, results from both the semi-structured interviews and elicitation task, and an explanation of the emergent themes that arose from the data collection. Chapter five will then provide a discussion of the findings of this study through the theoretical lens of two different frameworks: the Asia Society's Global Competence Model and Amartya Sen's view of contextual social justice, each of which provide valuable insights into the limits and potential for global current event usage in the classroom. Finally, chapter six will focus on a revisiting of the guiding research questions and ultimately provide implications and recommendations for further research into this important field of study. Following these chapters, a full reference list and several appendices can be found, including questions and materials used in both the conduct of semi-structured interviews and the elicitation task, each of which were central to this study.

## **Chapter 2 - Review of the Literature**

### **Introduction**

The following literature review will attempt to focus on the concept of global education and its many applications into today's classrooms, with specific attention given to a brief history of global education initiatives in the classroom. First, the potential applications in traditional curricula will then be examined as well as relevant pedagogy, theories, and aims of global education. Following this, the more recent emergence of global current events as a curricular goal will be discussed as well as the framework for global competence. Additionally, as teachers' perception and pedagogical choices are of interest in this study, both teacher beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge will be examined in an attempt to better understand how teachers' backgrounds and communities shape their chosen classroom curricula. Finally, the theoretical lens of Amartya Sen's (2009) contextual social justice will be explained, including the purposes and goals of a curriculum that incorporates a particular vision of an inductive, comparative social justice. This theory may serve as a lens through which both the aims of global education and global current events can be realized while also understanding the aspirations and beliefs guiding teachers to make specific pedagogical choices. In doing so, hopefully the importance and need for the research proposed in this study will be made clear and understood as a vital step for the advancement of similar curricula to be utilized in a variety of classrooms.

### **Global Education**

Global education, as a field, incorporates a plethora of seemingly divergent goals and intentions (Anderson, 1982; Gallie, 1964; Becker, 1979; Case, 1993; Kirkwood, 2001; Kniep, 1986; Lamy, 1987; Tye, 1990). To find practical measures to implement global education in the classroom, it is necessary to decipher the terminology and begin to establish a useable



framework for global education, as too often teachers “value global education, but [are] mired in its linguistic confusion” (Popkewitz, 1980, p. 303). In Gaudelli’s (2011) study of three schools whose teachers regularly employed global education topics in the classroom, he observed that global education is too often seen “as an amalgamation, a new field emerging from various loci (e.g., international relations, cultural studies, environmental studies, economics)” (p. 6). Thus, the more amalgamated the field of global education becomes, he argued, the more obtuse its definition and purpose becomes in the literature. Unsurprisingly, we therefore have scholars who argued for a variety of approaches to future global education scholarship, including calls for greater uniformity (Kniep, 1986; Lamy, 1990), looser conceptualizations (Case, 1993; Tye, 1990), and some semblance of a middle ground between the two (Becker, 1979; Kirkwood, 2001; Gallie, 1964).

### ***Hanvey’s Five Dimensions***

One pervasive framework used in many studies of global education has been Hanvey’s (1976) five dimensions of global education. Hanvey’s dimensions, including “perspective consciousness, “state of the planet” awareness, cross-cultural awareness, knowledge of global dynamics, and awareness of human choices” (p. 162) have long been seen necessary for students, as they “need to acquire the ability to be participating citizens within the global system by becoming competent decision makers and being able to identify and effectively pursue alternative routes to action” (Anderson, 1982, p. 172). To attain the first dimension, perspective consciousness, students need an understanding of the multiple perspectives held by people and notions about the world. The second-dimension concerns state of the planet awareness, and requires comprehension of world conditions, developments, trends, and problems confronting the world community. Hanvey’s third dimension, cross-cultural awareness, is informed by the

diversity of ideas and practices in human societies and how the ideas and ways of one's own culture are perceived from other vantage points. These ideas are then integral in achieving his fourth dimension, knowledge of global dynamics, in which students must develop an understanding of the world as an interconnected system of complex traits and mechanisms. Finally, Hanvey challenged global thinkers to realize the problems of choice confronting individuals and nations in his final dimension for global education and recognize their own place and purpose within the world.

While many scholars have adapted and added to Hanvey's dimensions in the last several decades (Lamy, 1987; Kniep, 1986; Tye, 1990; Case, 1993; Tucker, 1990; Pike, 2000), his framework for global education through these five dimensions remains a valuable starting point to understand how global education is defined in the literature. Merryfield (1997) combined many of these elements advanced by global scholars into eight elements of global education: human beliefs and values, global systems, global issues and problems, cross-cultural understanding, awareness of human choices, global history, acquisition of Indigenous knowledge, and development of analytical, evaluative, and participatory skills. Merryfield's work contributes significantly to reducing, if not eliminating, the definitional ambiguities that still linger in the field.

For many practicing teachers however, this continued amalgamation and linguistic confusion with what global education means, and should encompass, constitutes a major conceptual challenge (Pike, 1997). To address what is happening in the classroom, some scholars have argued that the meaning of global education should come not just from these theoretical understandings, but rather from the active involvement in its implementation and reflection upon its effectiveness in the classroom (Merryfield, 1993). Tucker (1990) argued that "teachers, not

textbooks, appear to be primary carriers of the global education culture” (p. 114) and insights into teacher thinking has long suggested that teachers’ meanings ascribed to ideas such as global education can shape classroom practice (Calderhead, 1987; Olson, 1988; Clark & Yinger, 1987). While examining the many conceptualizations and definitions of a given field may be useful in establishing a common linguistic understanding, global education takes shape in the real world of classrooms in the lives of teachers (Becker, 1982).

### ***Global Perspectives***

Studies by Pike (1997), Merryfield (1998) and Gaudelli (2011) explored how global education was approached by teachers and asked them to reflect upon their practices and guiding principles concerning the role of global education in the curriculum. Pike (1997) examined the developing field of global education in three countries: Canada, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. and interviewed classroom practitioners on their visions and implementation of global education. Pike noted that from the perspective of the classroom practitioners in his study, characterizations of global education generally encompass three broad concepts: 1) Interdependence of all people within a social system; 2) Connectedness, or the shared universal attributes of humankind; and 3) Perspective, which is often interpreted to mean the provision of insights, ideas, and information that enable students to look beyond the confines of the local and national boundaries in their thinking and aspirations. Moreover, Pike argued that the lack of clarity and consensus around the meaning of global education is a central problem for the field and has led to insufficient development of meaning for practicing educators. As a result, the practitioners in each of the three countries demonstrated pedagogy that was not strongly influenced by prevalent theory, but rather a combination of school culture, their personal and professional experiences, and their own beliefs.

Merryfield (1998) examined teacher implementation of global perspectives in a comprehensive study of experienced, novice, and preservice global teachers. She sought to examine how teachers and students engage in global education topics, for while “there has been considerable rhetoric about the need for global education, little attention has been paid to how teachers are actually teaching about the world, its people, and global issues... We know very little about what actually happens in globally oriented classrooms” (p. 345). Teachers in all three groups were found to use multiple perspectives when instructing students about their own culture and diverse cultures, as well as consistently connecting global knowledge and skills to their students’ lives. Teachers who had been in the classroom longer however, identified as ‘master-level- teachers’ in the study, spent more time than their counterparts devoting their curricula to lessons involving local and global inequities and cross-cultural learning, and demonstrated more of Hanvey’s dimensions and Merryfield’s elements to their global pedagogy.

Gaudelli’s (2011) study reiterated the lack of a firm, empirical foundation for the teaching of global education, and thus attempted to better understand the ways in which teachers in several New Jersey high schools were utilizing global education. He framed his study using his own definition of global education, which borrowed both from Hanvey’s framework for global education and Merryfield’s comprehensive listing of common global education elements:

“I define global education as a curriculum that seeks to prepare students to live in a progressively interconnected world where the study of human values, institutions, and behaviors, are contextually examined through a pedagogical style that promotes critical engagement of complex, diverse information toward socially meaningful action” (p. 11).

Gaudelli concluded that understanding how global educators come to know the world in their own lives is an essential element in determining how they approach global education and teach

students about the interconnected nature of world cultures, technologies, economics, and political relationships. Specifically, Gaudelli (2011) saw three elements of global education, nationalism, cultural relativism, and identity, as critical areas that global educators must “rethink” through a normative “process of reflection and revision” (p. 138). How to address each of these elements, according to Gaudelli, “represent significant challenges that raise more fundamental questions about global pedagogy” (p. 138).

The research of Hanvey (1976), Pike (1997), Merryfield (1998), Gaudelli (2011), and many of the other global education scholars referenced here provide a foundation for understanding what global education can, and should, entail. Underlying the difference of the nature and purpose of these views on global education however, it would seem, are significant ideological variances. This echoes the work of Pike and Selby (2000) who argued that global education is less a matter of content as it is a style of pedagogy and a way of viewing the world. Despite similarities in the general goals and rhetorical belief statements, what global education actually looks like in the classroom is a crucial step as global educators seek to understand and interpret their roles and their craft.

### ***Global Competence***

One organization that has sought to support the teaching of global education, mobilize new participants and initiatives, and widen the global education movement is the Asia Society. A non-profit organization focused mainly on fostering understanding between Americans and the peoples of Asia, the Asia Society also works with a network of public schools throughout the United States to prepare students to be ready for the global innovation age through the identification of four dimensions of global competence (Asia Society, 2014). According to the framework provided by the Asia Society (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011), global competence is

defined as “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance” (p. xiii) and a globally competent student must have the knowledge and skills to: 1) investigate the world; 2) weigh perspectives; 3) communicate ideas; and 4) take action (p. 11). While clearly sharing similarities with many of the theoretical frameworks provided by global educators highlighted above, most notably Hanvey, these competencies can serve as a powerful, and possibly defining, social context for global education in U.S. schools and classrooms today.

In the Asia Society model (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011), global competence begins through students’ investigation of the world through the asking and researching of critical questions and researchable problems. Students involved in these investigations are often tasked with connecting the local to the global and asking questions that address important events and phenomena that are relevant worldwide. After identifying these globally significant issues, students demonstrate the second competency by recognizing their own particular perspective before exploring and articulating the perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought. Their understanding of others’ perspectives is informed by a combination of contemporary events and historical knowledge of other cultures and systems around the world and can be compared with their own perspective as they weigh the possible viewpoints to a specific issue. Both initial competencies echo the work of Hanvey (1976) and Merryfield (1998) in the creation of a body of knowledge and awareness of globally significant issues, with specific recognition paid to their own perspective and the potentially differing perspective of others.

The next two global competencies highlighted by Mansilla and Jackson (2011) however, communicating ideas and acting, involve a much more dynamic process, requiring students to not simply identify issues of global importance, but act upon them as well. A globally competent student must not only understand the multitude of factors influencing a global issue but also

situate themselves in a variety of cultural contexts and be able to organize and participate in diverse groups, while working effectively toward a common goal. Though a lofty ideal, this is an integral step in the Asia Society's framework as globally competent students must "view themselves as players in the world" and participate effectively to improve conditions worldwide (p. 11). These opportunities to communicate and act, both personally and collaboratively, serve to advocate for, and contribute to, improvement of the world through focus on key issues and trends shaping the world today including "environmental sustainability, population growth, economic development, global conflict and cooperation, health and human development human rights, cultural identity, and diversity" (p. 13). As a result of this process, global competence in this framework can be seen not simply as a collection of independent skills, but rather an integrated outlook on the world requiring substantive, developmentally appropriate engagement over time with the world's complexities. This framework for global competence can thus serve to embrace many of the traditions of global education while encouraging students to understand and act on prevailing world conditions, issues, and trends.

Recent studies have built upon the work of the Asia Society, with global competence becoming a key term in the discussion of global education (Doerr, 2018; Ndubuisi et al., 2022; Mansilla & Wilson, 2020; Majewska, 2022; Han & Zhu, 2022; Auld & Morris, 2019; Yaccob et al., 2022). Global competence has even been identified as a core educational aim for 21<sup>st</sup> century education, as a way for students to embark on a lifelong process of understanding the world, the political choices that govern its people, and their unique role as citizens in communicating across differences (OECD, 2017). In this study, the ways in which teachers think about and themselves define many of the characteristics that encompass these global competencies will be examined, with specific consideration given to the teaching of strategies focused on global current events.

## **Global Current Events**

While the foundational elements of global education are important pieces to this study, I am choosing to focus on one set of teaching strategies which may promote the development of global competence: the teaching of global current events. For the purpose of this study, a global current event can be seen as an unfolding contemporary happening, portrayed through the media, and containing visible global significance. This conception of a global current event borrows elements from the global competency framework provided by Mansilla and Jackson (2011), as they argue such an event can be seen as globally significant due to their “breadth, uniqueness, immediacy, consequence, urgency, or ethical implications” (p. 56). While the media daily covers many events, not all can be seen as having such global significance, or the potential to highlight larger global issues such as international relations, large-scale aid and relief efforts, or even worldwide environmental concerns. In this light, a global current event can be viewed as having temporal and spatial boundaries through its portrayal in the media and has the potential to lead to substantive understanding of problems of global import. The following section serves to briefly examine the literature supporting the use of current events education, as well as highlight studies that explore the perceptions and practices of teachers using current events pedagogy.

Much like the arguments of Merryfield and Gaudelli regarding the teaching of global education, there are few empirical studies regarding how teachers approach the teaching of global current events in the classroom. There are, however, a number of scholars who have argued for various approaches to the integration of current events topics in the curriculum. Hunt and Metcalf (1955) described current events education as having the ability to introduce fresh content into the curriculum but warned that there might be a tendency to focus on the trivial or emphasize reporting of the news rather than the more difficult analysis and interpretation needed



to link current events to the curriculum (p. 223). For teachers to approach current events topics in a more analytical manner, they advocated that teachers stay abreast of what is happening in both their communities and nation, while making ample resources available to students to promote further inquiry. These prescriptions of teacher familiarity with current events and news have been echoed by several other scholars, each identifying skills teachers need to obtain and interpret information about current events (Merryfield & Wilson, 2005; Sunal & Haas, 1993; Laughlin & Hartoonian, 1995; Vontz & Leming, 2005).

### *Approaches*

Some studies have demonstrated several approaches to teaching that may be helpful in developing strategies for incorporating global current events into the classroom. Jacobowitz and Onore's (2004) narrative method argued for the use of news articles as individual case studies as a means to promote inductive reasoning. The authors encouraged teachers to select news media that involved complex situations with no clear approach for resolution. In doing so, the students would be required to interpret the information presented to them, critically analyze the elements of the story (including the author, publication, and location, among others), and, as a class, negotiate towards some settlement of the situation. Similar to this approach is Boyle-Baise and Zevin's (2009) inquiry method, where elementary students utilize news articles to develop an understanding and appreciation for larger ideas and issues in society. In using this method, students would begin by identifying an overarching question related to a current event and construct a deeper understanding of the issue by exploring a variety of news media sources that, presumably, took differing views on the events and their implications, and thus introduced the idea of multiple perspectives. Yelich-Biniecki's (2014) concept-mapping method argued for the use of concept maps with adult learners as a way to facilitate critical analysis, which may lead to

both perspective transformation and consensus solutions to community problems. Concept mapping argued Yelich-Biniecki (2014), “provides a visual representation of conceptual meanings used to develop shared meaning” (p. 609) and may serve to encourage students to find new ways to explore current events through gathered and shared information. Finally, Camicia and Dobson’s (2010) reflective method studied the use of current events in partner journaling exercises with both elementary and preservice teaching candidates. Camicia and Dobson found both sets of students to be highly engaged in corresponding about current events as a shared space for communication and that their reflective method allowed for students to learn to read and write about current events while developing informed positions on public issues.

Research data concerning the teaching of current events in the classroom, though scarce, show that while teachers often agree that such content is important, they often do not apply these topics into their teaching sufficiently (Barton & Ho, 2022; Haas & Laughlin, 2000; Wilson et al., 1999; Evans & Saxe, 1996; Soley, 1996; Houser, 1995). Although the mediums used to teach current events in each of these studies varied, including newspapers, television, social media, and the Internet, generally the teaching of current events was reported to be a procedural task, only completed at the beginning of a class period (Haas & Laughlin, 2000; Wilson et al., 1999). Vontz et al. (2010) argued that middle school teachers often “relegate social studies to a second class subject – to be taught when time and circumstances permit” (p. 254) and Haas and Laughlin (2000) argued that such insufficient use of current events was due to restrictions such as the scarcity of time and mandate to include content drawn from state and local curriculum guidelines or standards for their grade level. Additionally, high school teachers in Haas and Laughlin’s study indicated that the rapidly changing nature of on-going events and complexity of international relations were barriers to including current events topics in their classrooms. Haas

and Laughlin (2000) concluded by calling for additional research concerning the “participation, perceptions, and experiences” of teachers who use current events in the classroom and further investigation into the constraints impacting the teaching of complicated current events topics (p. 33).

In 2019, a special themed issue of the *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education* (JECTE) addressed the need for additional strategies to support teachers in the teaching of developing current events, with two key themes emerging: teachers felt unprepared to assist their students in situations of developing crises and teachers and teacher candidates wished for additional resources to help support their pedagogy and curriculum in such circumstances (Szente, 2019). Some of these resources, including videoconferencing (Edelman, 2020; Clark & Brown, 2013; Clark & Brown, 2011), the Google suite of software (including classroom, meet, etc.), Skype, and Zoom have been advocated for use in the field of global education for some time, and, with the recent switch to digital instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic, have become even more integral to teaching in K-12 schools today (Baran & AlZoubi, 2020; Christensen & Alexander, 2020; Roman, 2020; Safi et al., 2020; Szente, 2020). Yet, while many of these studies provide an important foundation for research into the teaching of current events, few of them directly address such topics with a global focus and even fewer define just what current events are or should be. The studies previously highlighted all avoid distinctly defining current events, instead using the term to cover a wide variety of topics, including controversial issues, unfolding national and international news, and civic participation opportunities for students in their community and school. What is common among these studies, however, is that a focus on current events topics can promote critical engagement of complex, diverse information through analysis of up-to-date print, visual, and social media sources. If viewed as a particular

set of teaching strategies used to promote the goals of global competency, global current events can be seen to promote similar critical engagement while focusing on contemporary events with visible global significance. This may provide social educators with a framework to see global current events education as not merely trivial or a news report, but as a teaching strategy to promote analysis of global issues from interdisciplinary perspectives.

### **Teacher Beliefs**

In addition to exploring the role of global current events within the larger framework of global education, this study also sought to highlight the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and the use of such strategies in their respective classrooms. Studies have long focused on the role of teacher beliefs and attitudes in enacted classroom curricula (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Peck & Tucker, 1973). Richardson (1996) described the history of attitudes and beliefs in education literature and pointed out important distinctions between the two and their respective effectiveness in creating useful research and analysis. Teachers' *attitudes*, according to Richardson, were the focus of the literature from the 1950s through the early 1970s, and often centered on behavior, rather than mental processes. Such focus resulted in studies Richardson argued as having little depth, a sentiment echoed by Getzels and Jackson (1963) as they claimed "not much that is especially useful has been revealed" through conduct of attitude research (p. 579). This led to a shift to teacher *beliefs* in the literature in the late 1980's and early 1990's and resulted in studies exploring the "complex relationship between teachers' beliefs and actions" (Richardson, 1996, p. 104). These studies eschewed the predictive nature of research focused on attitudes and behavior and instead explored the complexities of the contexts of teaching and of teachers' thinking processes and actions within those contexts (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Doyle, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992). Research on the intersection of practice and

perception, referred to by Doyle (1993) as curriculum processes, examined how teachers draw on resources like curriculum guides, textbooks, and standards, but with significant respect to the beliefs that they hold resultant from a complex combination of personal experience, training, and context (Doyle, 1993; Ernest, 1989; Tobin & LaMaster, 1992; Torrf, 2006).

Ross et al. (1992) distinguished three types of teacher thinking in the literature focused on teacher beliefs: 1) pre-instruction thinking during planning; 2) interactive thinking and decision-making during instruction; and 3) underlying theories and beliefs. They emphasized the importance of understanding teacher thinking and the need for further development of knowledge about teacher thinking as it relates to actions enacted in classrooms, arguing “The research on teacher thinking generally agrees that teachers’ theories and beliefs serve as the basis for classroom practice and curriculum decision making, yet the nature of this relationship is not well understood” (p. 3). In examining the global pedagogy of the select group of teachers in this study, it is important that this relationship be explored, with particular attention paid to the last type of teacher thinking as portrayed in the literature: underlying theories and beliefs, as they may provide further insight into the ways in which global current events content and pedagogy is selected and implemented in each classroom.

### ***Pedagogical Content Knowledge***

One framework that may assist in understanding the interconnected nature between teacher beliefs and the enacted curriculum is Shulman’s (1987) view of pedagogical content knowledge. Seen as a type of knowledge unique to teachers, Shulman argued, “it represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners and presented for instruction” (p. 8). Vontz and Leming (2005) echoed the importance of

pedagogical content knowledge as a key component in the teaching of civic education, blending “content-specific instructional strategies” with “understanding how students relate to and learn a particular subject” (p. 73). Subsequent studies utilizing Shulman’s framework have shown that pedagogical content knowledge is highly specific to the concepts being taught (Cochran et al., 1993; Wilson & Wineburg, 1998), is much more than just subject matter knowledge alone (Grossman et al., 1989; Feinman-Nemser & Parker, 1990), and develops over time as a result of teaching experience (Morine-Dersheimer & Kent, 1999). Each of these studies highlighted that the teaching process is unique in that it requires teachers to transform their subject matter knowledge for the purpose of teaching, an act that occurs as the teacher critically reflects on, and interprets, the subject matter. Gudmundsdottir and Shulman (1987) described this transformation process as a continual restructuring of subject matter knowledge, as teachers find multiple ways to represent the information, adapt the materials, and tailor the instruction of these materials depending on the needs and abilities of the students. The teaching of a global current event, seen as an unfolding, media portrayed happening with global significance, would seemingly require a great deal of pedagogical content knowledge, as teachers would need to demonstrate flexible understanding of their subject knowledge in relation to the influx of this new information.

### **The Curriculum Struggle**

One important element to understanding the ways in which global current events are used in the classroom is the recognition that they simply *do not exist* in the curriculum and thus, their usage is often at the discretion of the educators themselves. Due to their unfolding, real-time nature, it is virtually impossible for pre-written or created curricula to include as-of-yet unknown global current events, leaving teachers the sole decision-makers as to the scope and sequence of their inclusion. Yet, since the creation of National Common Core Standards in 2010, and

specifically their subsequent adoption by many Midwest states in the years thereafter, educators have been pushed towards a “more consistent and rigorous national curriculum” (Timberlake, Thomas, & Barrett, p. 1, 2017) and have consistently worked to both make sense of, and successfully implement, these new standards (Barrett et al., 2018). This is nothing new in the U.S. education – long have there been attempts to create a scripted curriculum that streamline classroom tasks by organizing “the elements of that task in the most efficient sequence” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 82). Stosich (2016) argued that often, standards such as those seen with the Common Core are generally met with favorable opinions by educators as they can provide a common target or expectation while not explicitly demanding particular pedagogical methods. Other research however has indicated that the scripts provided through Common Core can serve to negatively impact teacher autonomy and choice (Barrett et al., 2018; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Ainsworth et al., 2012; Eisenbach, 2012; Parks & Bridges-Rhoads, 2012) and potentially even result in a failure to meet the explicit needs of their students (Carl, 2014; Owen, 2010).

In light of this curricular struggle, Remillard and Heck (2014) viewed curriculum as a divided entity, and drew a distinction between what they dubbed “the official curriculum” and the “operational curriculum” (p. 705). In Remillard and Heck’s argument, while often these may have overlapping elements, the goals and objectives of each can be very different. In the official curriculum, the goals and objectives include “expectations for student learning or performance and, in some cases, the instructional or curricular resources and pathways for learning to be employed” (p. 798). These resources include Common Core Standards and typically end with assessments to evaluate content effectiveness and classroom delivery. Conversely, the operational curriculum, according to Remillard and Heck focuses more on the lessons actually designed by teachers and, as argued by Remillard (2005) involves a transformative process from

the operational curriculum to the enacted curriculum that factors in characteristics of the educator, experiences of students in the classroom, and the environment in which the lessons occur. In other words, while the official curriculum may be mandated by a governing body such as a Department of Education or District Office, it may vary wildly when actually taught in the classroom. Barrett et al. (2018) later argued while sometimes these decisions are made in the classroom by the teachers themselves, often districts will encourage teachers to either adopt (i.e., teach the script without modification) or adapt (i.e., use the curriculum as a resource to be supplemented with additional materials) the curriculum. Timberlake et al. (2017) argued that this decision between adopting or adapting the curriculum can have a substantial impact on teachers' perceptions of what they are able to accomplish in the classroom, with those forced to adopt feeling a similar lack of autonomy as cited in the studies above.

In many ways, these views on the scripted curriculum echo the work of Elliott Eisner (1995) and his categorization of three curricula that all schools teach: the explicit, the implicit, and the null. The explicit curriculum, as articulated by Eisner, represents the specific objectives and goals of school itself, and includes the basic tenants of education including the cultivation of reading and writing skills, critical thinking, and reflections on historical events. These goals are not only made explicit through the use of curriculum guidelines, maps, and resources, but also in their transparency to all involved, including teachers, stakeholders, administrators, and the general public. Eisner referred to the options available to students as “an educational menu of sorts” and claimed that from this menu, “students have, at least in principle, an array of options from which to choose” (p. 88).

Eisner's implicit curriculum however encompasses all that occurs in school that is unarticulated and often seen as “hidden” both in nature and scope. Such curricula can serve to



inculcate intangible concepts such as compliance or socialization, and through these implicit curricula, students are often taught the rules and procedures for proper behavior both in school and in the greater community. Eisner (1995) argued that in many ways, “these lessons are among the most important ones that children learn” and that when viewed in this manner, the role of the school is to “prepare most people for positions and contexts that in many respects are quite similar to what they experienced in school as students” (p. 91). Perhaps most importantly, the implicit curriculum seen in schools can often affect “students’ perceptions of what counts in school” and these perceptions can be heavily influenced by decisions made “when various subjects will be taught and how much time will be devoted to them” (p. 92). In other words, when considering the teaching of global current events, or similar issues not found in the scripted curriculum, the choices made by teachers to approach or ignore particular topics can have an effect on students’ perceptions of their relative importance.

This inevitably leads to Eisner’s third curriculum position: the null curriculum. In this, Eisner claimed that educators should “consider not only the explicit and implicit curricula of schools but also what schools do not teach” and argued that it is “not simply a neutral void; it has important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider...and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or problem” (p. 97). For Eisner, the null curriculum represented those spaces of avoidance, and cited economics, law, and vernacular arts all as subjects that are traditionally paid far less attention than other core subjects. Eisner argued, “such problems and the subject matters within which they appear seldom receive attention within schools” (p. 103) and instead, “subjects that are now taught are part of a tradition, and traditions create expectations, they create predictability, and they sustain stability” (p. 105). In Eisner’s view, the null curriculum represents as much of a choice as the explicit or implicit in that by specifically

avoiding certain topics or issues, messages are being sent to students regarding their relative importance, complexity, and place among school itself.

What all these views lead to is an understanding that teachers today are faced with a difficult crossroads when deciding what to teach in their respective classrooms and the materials chosen to carry out these lessons. Further emphasis on Common Core State Standards, as those seen in states throughout the Midwest, have served to address the explicit or official curriculum needs of social studies teachers, but as has been seen by the studies above, many other lessons are taught through the operational or null curricula that can be just as impactful on student understanding, if not more so, particularly when considering topics or events that are purposefully omitted. Parks and Bridges-Rhoades (2012) argued that the presence of scripted curricula changes the very nature of how teachers engage with particular subjects and topics and that it can often lead “teachers to interact in more automatic and less thoughtful ways with their children” (p. 321). Ultimately this can prove to not only erase the teaching of global current events in today’s classrooms, but also remove what Dewey (1987) believed to be integral in education, teachers’ firsthand knowledge of their students, the problems they face, and the most appropriate solutions they may find for them.

### **Theoretical Framework – Contextual Social Justice**

In an attempt to address the ultimate aims of pedagogy which includes the teaching of global current events, I used Amartya Sen’s (2009) vision of contextual social justice as a theoretical lens. In *The Idea of Justice*, Sen (2009) offered a theory of justice that served as a counter to previous philosophical works on social justice. Sen’s theory of contextual social justice is an inductive, comparative process that focuses on the realities of those involved in the quest for justice. This method of determining justice eschews pre-determined, universal

definitions in favor of bottom-up flexibility that respects context and participants. Sen's argument has three central elements: 1) justice-thinking must be comparative in nature; 2) the recognition of one's identity is vital in the determination of what is just or unjust; and 3) public reasoning can serve as a tool to both advance justice and/or retreat injustices.

### *Comparative*

First, Sen argued throughout his work for a new way to advance justice and reduce injustices. As a result, he rejected many of his philosophical predecessors, including John Rawls. In Rawls' (1971) *Theory of Justice*, he presented a theory of social justice grounded in the traditions of transcendental institutionalism. Rawls used a deductive process that theorized that social justice needed a predetermined, universal definition of justice. Rawls began his theory of justice from an assumption of equality. Per Rawls' theory of social justice, if humanity assumes perfect equality, elements of justice could be predetermined and agreed upon to form a just, utopian society. Sen rejected Rawls' view, positing that justice should be viewed as "comparative" in nature. This comparative theory of justice allows individuals to determine the most just resolution to conflicts without a singular, monolithic definition of perfect justice. Sen repeatedly referred to Rawls' method (and similar philosophies) as a transcendental approach, concerned solely with the a priori or intuitive basis of knowledge as independent of experience. Sen countered with his own comparative viewpoint as a way to address what he sees as a more realistic and inclusive form of justice-thinking.

In arguing for the superiority of a comparative view, Sen noted the immense difficulties in reaching universal agreement on an identifiable, perfectly just social arrangement. As a result, Sen argued that the creation of a comprehensive set of principles to guide matters of justice and injustice may prove to be an impossible task. Individuals involved in matters of justice,

according to Sen, have little time to fret over the concerns of creating a utopian ideal of a perfectly just society, and given the natural existence of clashing principles, would often fail to agree upon any one set of guidelines. Sen argued there is no reason to believe that the individuals who hold such contrary positions would accept a singular set of just principles, and thus he finds little reason to attempt to create a universally just framework for society.

Instead, Sen's more inductive approach to justice accommodates the co-survival of competing principles that "do not speak in any one voice" (p. 46). Actual realizations of society dictate shifting ideas of what is just, or unjust, and conflicts regarding basic liberties, distribution of resources, and other matters of justice can be solved through a political process rather than turning to a concrete set of institutions and laws to guide determination of just resolutions. Sen referred to this as a "realization-focused comparison" (p. 10) and claims that demands for justice cannot ignore the lives that people actually lead and must account for. What is needed in society, in this light, is not a set of rules, but rather the space to hear and voice competing principles and viewpoints before deliberating on a just resolution.

But what makes this comparative? Central to Sen's argument is that a contextual theory of justice must not be concerned only with advancing justice but with curtailing injustice, and that this can be realized by comparing circumstances to identify which is more just, or less unjust. For Sen, a contextual theory of justice must have the retreat of injustice as a departure point, and he routinely cites the histories of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the storming of the Bastille, among others, to illustrate his ideas. Sen contended that the retreat of injustice in each of these cases was not the creation of a perfectly just world, but rather the recognition and destruction of patent injustices. Sen repeatedly recognized the tendency for justice to be defined as the absence of injustice and argues for increased efforts to seek removal of current injustices

in society as a way to remedy and prevent future injustices. Few expect the world to be perfectly just, Sen contended, but all should recognize clearly remediable injustices in the world that can, and should, be eliminated.

### ***Identity***

The second central element of Sen's theory of context-dependent social justice is its recognition of the importance of identity. For Sen's comparative approach to justice to be successful, determinations on justice must ultimately be decided by individuals rather than institutions. Sen argued that prior justice theories' insistence upon creating a universal set of ideals and principles often rely on institutions to determine matters of justice and tend to overlook the importance of diverse opinions and worldviews. Sen posited that justice cannot ignore such plurality and instead determinations of what is just or unjust must consider the number of potentially viable and relevant identities individuals may access when making subjective validity claims. In doing so, Sen claimed that position-relative stances can be achieved which can serve to remove obstacles that inhibit people's freedoms and potential and increase the potential for injustice to occur.

Much of Sen's argument regarding the understanding of one's own identity as a central facet of justice-thinking revolves around his concept of positional objectivity. Positional objectivity involves recognizing how the world looks depends very much on where one is standing in it. Deep moral, philosophical, and religious beliefs (among others) impact one's own view of what is just or unjust in society and hoping for complete objectivity in these matters is not possible. Instead, Sen argued that objective observations are position-dependent, grounded in what an individual is "able to see from a given position" (p. 158). For example, the social background of a person, rooted in the community and culture in which the person was raised,

will determine patterns of reasoning and ethics available to them in the determination of what is just. The social circumstances, religious environment, and cultural-philosophical context in which an individual is raised creates their identity. In such an instance, the identity of the person, including affiliations to particular groups, naturally influences justice-thinking and makes determinations of justice relative to their context.

As a result of this position-relative stance, Sen argued it is not possible to completely remove oneself, to become objective from one's identity. But Sen also recognized multiple possibilities that result in the formation of one's identity. The variety of groups to which one may claim affiliation and adopt as part of their identity has the potential to result in conflicting justice-related values. According to Sen, sole identification by one's dominant identity (e.g., one's duty as an American) would not only constitute an external and arbitrary imposition, but "also the denial of an important liberty of a person who can decide on their respective loyalties to different groups" (p. 247). As a result, Sen's justice-thinking requires individuals to understand their own identities, including their guiding beliefs, values, and inclinations among multiple group identifications in order to better address issues of justice and injustice.

Through such recognition of identity, Sen urged that people's choices and justice-thinking extend past the single-minded pursuit of discernable personal goals to the consideration of the well-being of others. To Sen, individuals in a society can be seen simultaneously as patients, whose needs deserve consideration, and as agent-individuals, capable of deciding what to value and how to pursue such values in ways that extend beyond the self. From this perspective, individuals must be made aware of the beliefs, values, and views that constitute their identity. An increasingly comparative view on justice can enable people to accomplish this task, as well as analyze and criticize the goals of others, and in this way, work to solve issues of

injustice. It is no doubt a lofty ideal, but one which Sen held central to his theory, and inevitably led to his eventual argument in favor of enlightened public reasoning as a method to achieve just resolutions.

### ***Public Reasoning***

Finally, perhaps the most important facet of Sen's argument is his method for achieving global justice. Unlike his philosophical predecessors, Sen argued that a theory alone, especially an idealistic one, does little if not supported by a plan capable of being implemented. Grounding his argument in the importance of achieving a kind of global democracy, Sen posited that the demands of comparative justice can be assessed only with the use of public reasoning. Informed deliberation and discourse can be the methods through which injustices around the world are realized and prevented, and Sen's model embraces public reasoning by placing the determinations of justice in the hands and minds of individuals acting as agents rather than institutions.

In order to achieve such agency, Sen argued, a theory of justice must guide public reasoning on policies, strategies, and institutions, rather than operate from a static set of rules or principles guided by institutions. The act of public reasoning, in Sen's model, serves as a way to identify and clarify both the position-relative values at stake in a given situation as well as the consequences of the justice-determination. The mere act of engaging in public reasoning directly contributes to free speech between agents. Hence, it also serves a protective function, in giving a voice to the neglected and disadvantaged, which can often be silenced if matters of justice are left solely to the governing institutions within a society that they did not create. The institutions themselves must be guided by reasoned and well-thought-out arguments by the people for whom the institutions serve. Therefore, Sen's institutions for conducting public reasoning are not only

inductive, but regenerative. By regenerating their purpose through public reasoning, they better serve all constituencies, including those silenced by closed, deductively driven institutions.

Sen highlighted the importance of public reasoning by arguing that the success of democratic institutions throughout history has depended upon the activities of agents in utilizing opportunities for reasoned discourse. Sen claimed the historical cornerstones of a democracy and its institutions are “political participation, dialogue, and public interaction” (p. 326). Methods such as informed deliberation on an issue of justice are vital in bringing about reflection on values and priorities. Informed deliberation can also serve to eliminate injustices through the uncovering of “denials, subjugations, and humiliations from which human beings suffer across the world” (p. 413) because all agents are given a voice to question. Sen posited that through public reasoning, new standards and priorities often emerge (such as the need for gender equity), and that public discussion can lead to the spread of new norms across different regions. Democratic, regenerative institutions can thus bring about advancements in the retreat of injustice in society, but only if the agents within a democracy are able to engage in reasoned public discourse on such issues.

Finally, Sen argued that public reasoning is central to justice because “there is a clear connection between the objectivity of a judgment and its ability to withstand public scrutiny” (p. 394). Often, in cases of justice, while consensus may be untenable due to a diversity of competing views (a situation in which acceptance is referred to by Sen as a last resort), much can be gleaned from the process of open impartiality undertaken by those involved in the deliberation. Ultimately, Sen concluded that while people may respond to injustice with anger and indignation, his theory of justice requires reasoned public scrutiny of these sentiments in order to arrive upon just resolutions.



## **Connecting Sen to the Social Studies**

In *Teaching democracy: Unity and diversity in public life*, Parker (2003) argued for a classroom rooted in social realities and democratic possibilities, and presented the basis for a curriculum which, in many ways, would seemingly support Sen's vision of justice. Parker addressed the issue of justice, specifically the tension between two conceptual approaches to justice, psychological and sociological, before offering his approach to deliberation procedures in the classroom. Parker's call for increased deliberation on societal issues built upon Barr et al.'s (1977) reflective inquiry tradition, and emphasized participatory citizenship, shared living, and pluralism. In order to assess whether Parker's argument fully reflects Sen's view of justice, each of these elements in Parker's work must be more closely examined.

### ***Justice Tensions***

The advanced citizen, according to Parker, is what citizenship curricula in today's schools should actively foster. Participatory in nature, curricula focused on the development of an advanced citizen would emphasize forms of public agency beyond voting and require, in turn, a kind of democratic education that would form, or at least inform, such activity. Parker argued that popular sovereignty is not a spectator sport or something one contemplates but does not actually do; it is an active process, requiring an understanding of shifting contexts and ever-present worldviews. Parker emphasized that democracy must be viewed as a project, not an accomplishment, and the advanced citizen must be able to effectively engage in the process of shared living with others in the democratic state. Thus pluralism, in Parker's argument, becomes the critical juncture of democracy and diversity, a citizenship that embraces individual differences, multiple group identities, and a unifying political community all at once. Within the classroom, Parker encouraged the development of the advanced citizen and thus encouraged

students to develop an understanding of the politics of recognition and the inherent tensions between pluralism and assimilation.

Parker presented his view of justice as a tension between two conceptions and approaches: psychological and sociological. The psychological conception of justice, according to Parker, focuses on individual cognition and evolves towards the more complex operations needed for principled thinking and the capacity for taking others' perspectives in dialogues about mutual problems. As a result, it is a conception oriented towards enlightenment and the cultivation of the just individual. Parker argued this view of justice exists in tension with the sociological conception, which focuses on social institutions rather than individuals. Individuals, he argued, relate to one another within institutions and thus their moral development can be viewed as a corollary to the way society itself is organized. Justice seen from this perspective becomes specifically oriented towards engagement through Socratic seminar, deliberation, and other similar structured academic controversies, each of which is concerned with the moral conditions of whole societies. Parker continued by arguing specific cases from each conception, including Kohlberg et al.'s (1984) moral-justice developmental theory as a way to represent the psychological, and Marx's (1867/1990) historical-materialist theory, representing the sociological.

In discussing each of these cases, Parker correctly highlighted the inherent tensions between two dominant views on justice. Parker argued that each view "has a blind spot" (p. 56) and though he clearly stated he is not concerned with drawing an alternative or additional criticism, he concluded by arguing: "justice is at best a trivial concern and at worst dangerous ideology that obscures rather than discloses real justice" (p. 69). Despite the value in recognizing the differences between each conception and the inherent complexity of justice, Parker offered

little resolution to addressing issues of injustice. Instead, Parker melded the essential arguments of each conception, offering a view of justice that combined the arguments of Marx and Kohlberg and would serve as the foundation upon which he builds his argument for increased opportunities for deliberation in the classroom.

### *Deliberative Pedagogy*

The resultant deliberation model Parker offered focused on the forging of decisions through reasoned discourse, the generation and consideration of alternatives, and the cultivation of a democratic public culture. Similar to Sen, Parker viewed deliberation as reasoned discourse, which, when employed more frequently and with increased variety, can serve to assist the decisions of which policies would be most suitable for all concerned and affected parties. Parker encouraged such decisions be made through the consideration of students' own social perspectives, thus potentially bringing the voices of the previously unheard into the conversation in ways that may impact societal change. Perhaps most importantly, Parker argued that the act of deliberation itself reflects the cultivation of a democratic public culture and the forging of new decisions rather than only defending previously held positions. From this perspective, deliberation can be seen as "the basic labor of democratic life" (p. 148) and the means through which a more informed and civically minded populous may be cultivated.

While Parker provided a strong basis for the use of deliberation as a means to cultivate civically minded advanced student-citizens, there are elements in Sen's work that can serve to strengthen the core of Parker's argument and ultimately guide the methodological choices within today's classrooms. The idea of the advanced citizen, as presented by Parker, encourages students to develop an understanding of the politics of recognition and the inherent tensions between pluralism and assimilation. However, Sen's work provides us with the ability to push

such a conception beyond simple recognition and towards justice-oriented activism. Students should not merely seek to achieve justice, but rather to seek out instances of injustice as a platform from which larger societal ills, such as bigotry, racism, classism, and others can be discussed, and ultimately, changed.

Where perhaps Sen and Parker most closely align is in Parker's call for increased opportunities for deliberation. Similar to Sen's rationale for public reasoning, Parker's deliberation model encouraged active participation in critical inquiry of societal issues, thus fostering the creation of advanced student-citizens. Parker furthermore contended that deliberation is not merely a forum in which competing interests are thrown against one another in an often-futile attempt to get one side to bend to pressure. As seen earlier, Parker's deliberation model emphasized the forging of decisions as a necessary function for the cultivation of an informed, democratic public culture. In order to achieve Sen's vision of justice, however, such deliberation must rely upon the encouraging of students to gather to advocate and defend rather than to decide upon a 'correct' conclusion and then subsequently gather evidence. There are always competing, uncompromising positions but the goal of a deliberation seen in light of Sen's theory of justice would not be the creation of a product (the action/consensus result) but the process through which these competing issues are raised, discussed, and adopted or reversed. Sen's notion of justice encouraged deliberation procedures that not only focus on students' constructions of identity and civic literacy skills but also encouraged active consideration on multiple perspectives and contrary frames of mind as a means to both uncover *and retreat* injustices.

Ultimately, Sen's vision of justice echoed Parker in expecting, teaching, and modeling competent, inclusive deliberations in the classroom. Discussion in educational settings can

provide beneficial opportunities for students to learn about different perspectives (Burenheide, 2017; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Hess, 2009; Kunzman, 2006; Vontz & Leming, 2005), and even “improve students’ abilities to dialogue across difference” (Hess, 2004, p. 153). Practicing discussion in classrooms is a good exercise in civic skills, exercising what Levine (2008) called “public voice” and often involves the creation of “questions that promote higher order thought” (Burenheide, 2017). One problem that Levine (2008) argued, however, is that students’ most immediate audience, their classmates, often ignore the public voices of one another unless given the proper setting to discuss their own views and opinions. Similarly, while Barton & Levstik (2004) argued for a humanistic history education in which students deliberate with their peers over matters of mutual concern in the hopes of improving society, they recognized the difficulty in achieving such a lofty goal. Motivating students to engage in reasoned judgment over controversial issues is not a simple task, and yet this motivation is vitally important to today’s curriculum. In order for a school to be a community that promotes critical student dialogue, the curriculum must provide students with opportunities to deliberate with an audience that evokes their public voices.

One method of deliberation that can serve to facilitate such reflexivity is the structured academic controversy model (Johnson & Johnson, 1988). This approach promotes opportunities for students to engage with peers by providing common problems to deliberate and encouraging reflection on all sides of a particular issue before potentially reaching consensus. The use of structured academic controversies can provide classrooms with the framework for public reasoning suggested by Sen’s idea of justice, and, perhaps most importantly, gives students the opportunity to practice open impartiality while addressing their own inherent values, ideals, and identities. In order to fully achieve Sen’s vision of justice, educators must find outlets for these

interactions and controversies and utilize resources that both foster the genuine openness of the modeled deliberation while also giving students opportunities to share their voice.

Additionally, by focusing the curriculum on issues of justice, and particularly the uncovering of potential injustices, frequent and purposeful discussions on controversial issues must be encouraged. Scholars have long argued for the potential of discussions to influence students' understanding and commitment to values such as tolerance, equity, and diversity while improving critical thinking on difficult issues (Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Griffin, 1942). Hunt and Metcalf (1968) argued for not only the discussion of important political issues, but oft-avoided ones as well, including racism and sexuality. More recent scholarship has advocated for similar controversial issues discussion, with the purposeful task of initiating deliberations on topics that may "spark significant disagreement" (Hess, 2009, p. 37). Sen's vision of justice, particularly his advocacy for public reasoning, seemingly demands such discussion of controversial issues in the classroom, as giving consideration to distinct and contrary arguments is seen by Sen as a participatory process central to the functioning of a healthy democracy. Dialogue and public interaction on controversial issues such as terrorism, civil liberties, and global warming can all serve to highlight various justice-issues, and, in doing so, students can be given the opportunity to demonstrate Sen's idea of reasoned public scrutiny on important social and political topics. Hess (2009) argued schools are prime locations for such discussions and deliberations, and with additional emphasis on structured academic controversies and engagement in controversial issues, the curricula in many of today's classrooms can be as well.

### ***Additional Curricular Implications***

Throughout his work, Sen highlighted a number of justice issues which may have a variety of additional curricular implications beyond public reasoning and deliberation. History,

according to Sen, provides us the opportunity to intellectually probe issues of reasoning and morality, an action that often results in the re-examination of grounds for respect and tolerance. Sen particularly encouraged examination of human-caused traumatic historical events such as famines that have resulted in calamitous effects on society. In a previous work, Sen (1981) argued that famines, left unchecked, could result in the death of hundreds of thousands through a combination of inaction and unreasoned fatalism disguised as composure based on realism and common sense. One example of such a disaster is the Holodomor in 1932, in which millions of Ukrainians lost their lives as the result of famine brought about by radical economic changes during Soviet Industrialization (Serbyn, 2008). Scholars have even argued the famine was a form of genocide, caused by the intentional, and deliberate starvation of Ukrainian farmers (Lemkin, 1944; Serbyn, 2008). Studying a topic such as the Holodomor, and perhaps the global current events in which teachers in this study have engaged in, may provide opportunities in the classroom to explore how traumatic historical events have been influenced by, and have themselves influenced, physical and social factors relating to justice as well as the ways in which similar crises in the future may be averted.

Economic factors such as the redistribution of existing food, emergency employment creation, and the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities can also be explored through such a focus on historical crises. Sen stressed the importance of recognizing justice issues contributing to all of these factors, particularly in traumatic instances such as famine, as each issue may serve to explain both the contributing causes of the event as well as uncover potential solutions and prevention. Additionally, Sen's vision of justice would seemingly encourage economic curricula to consider other critical issues, including the costs and benefits to society of allocating goods through private and public sectors and the comparison of the

influence of values and beliefs over economic decisions in different societies. For Sen, these topics are deeply contingent upon the characteristics of people and the social environment in which they live and require considerations of inductive justice-thinking to fully understand and explore their connected causes and effects.

Sen's vision of justice may also serve to address natural-world issues in the discussion of global current events. Sen argued that it is increasingly clear that the neglect and deterioration of the environment is a grave concern, and one that is closely linked with the negative effects of human behavior. Sen expressed concern that through lack of reasoned engagement and action, the present actions of society may be doing irreparable harm to the planet and future generations. When viewing unfolding global current events through Sen's lens, the classroom must provide the space for students to propose, compare, and evaluate alternative policies for the use of resources and land, both locally and globally. Additionally, in order for students to develop the dispositions required of Sen's justice, opportunities must be provided in the curriculum for the practice of critical environmental scrutiny. This would entail encouraging students to reflect on their own behavior when considering issues concerning the natural world and provide supportive reasoning for their current, and future, environmental practices.

Engaging students in such self-reflective practice is one pedagogical task that may serve to enhance students' own ideas not only on justice regarding the natural world, but on their roles as citizens as well. Recent studies have argued for increased opportunities for students to explore their emergent identities and citizenship roles, with recognition of the varied discourses framing their development (Barton, 2012; Youdell, 2006; Rubin, 2007; Yelich-Biniecki & Donley, 2016). Clark et al. (2010) argued that "our goal" as civic educators, "should be to develop citizens who can look carefully at society, ask critical questions about issues, and use democratic means to



solve public problems” (p. 52). Similarly, Craddock (2007) stated that “like democracy itself, education for democracy around the world should take on many forms and be informed by multiple actors” (p. 139). Achieving Sen’s vision of justice would require input from multiple actors in the curricular space of today’s schools, with particular emphasis placed on exploration of his idea of positional objectivity. This can be accomplished by assisting students in exploring their own social circumstances, including the analysis of the perceptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs held by themselves and others in their community and classroom. Methods and activities that apply issues of religion, gender, and ethnicity to lessons in history, economy, and geography, should have a more prominent place in the curriculum and students should be encouraged to examine the justice of their own interactions in specific situations or unfolding global current events. Additionally, increasing the variety and frequency of interaction among students who are linguistically, culturally, and racially different from one another may also serve as the curricular foundation for exploring Sen’s view of identity-construction. In addressing their own guiding beliefs and inclinations with respect to multiple groups, students may be able to better understand their role as a citizen while also clarifying the dispositions regarding justice held by themselves and others.

Sen provided a variety of global current events topics through which students may consider their own identities as well as the positions of others. One such topic introduced by Sen involved the engagement of a feminist activist in the United States in issues of women’s disadvantages in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this example, Sen argued that in order to remedy the particular features of the uncovered disadvantages, the U.S. woman would draw upon a sense of affinity that need not work through the sympathies of her own nation. Instead, the concerns of the American as a fellow woman, or simply as a person moved by feminist issues, might prove

more important than those concerns related to her American citizenship. As a result, the feminist perspective exemplified in this example would not be seen as being subsequent to national identity, but rather one of many identities which can provide different, or even competing, perspectives on national and global issues. By addressing a current event topic such as this in the classroom, including the factors leading up to, and, as a result of the American woman's actions, students' viewpoints on their own identities may be broadened through recognition of the potential tensions which may result from their membership in collectivities such as nations and communities.

Finally, in encouraging Sen's view of justice, students must be given ample opportunities to engage civically in their communities. Newmann (1989) and Makler (1999) both argued for an increase in students' participatory roles by "engaging more citizens more fully in a broader range of community life (Makler, p. 270) and by structuring "roles within schools, community service, and social advocacy projects so that students confront the kinds of issues faced by public citizens" (Newmann, p. 357). In order for students to demonstrate Sen's comparative vision of justice with such involvement, students must be given opportunities to evaluate the degree to which public policies and behaviors reflect the stated ideals of their government as well as the effectiveness of public opinion in influencing and shaping public policy and decision-making. One way in which this may be achieved is by encouraging voter participation through increased political education pedagogy and the use of mock elections and campaigning, both of which can be a focus with global current events. Lessons with such a focus have proven to be one way in which students may better understand the electoral process, and consequently, their own role as democratic participants (Hess, 2012). By incorporating increased opportunities in the curriculum for such civic engagement with public policy, students may become able to more fully

understand the purposes and procedures demanded of them as public citizens, and thus, better equipped to assess the improvements or declines of justice in society.

### **Summary**

The literature review presented was intended to provide an overview of global education, global current events, teacher beliefs, and a particular vision for social justice, as well as opportunities within the existing social studies curriculum to achieve the aims of each framework. Specifically, by focusing on the aims of both the global competence model presented by Mansilla and Jackson (2011) as well as Sen's (2009) view of contextual social justice, the advantages of teaching about, and focusing upon, global current events in today's classroom may be seen. When seen through Sen's theoretical lens of social justice, the teaching of global current events through methods such as structured academic controversy and discussion (Burenheide, 2017; Johnson & Johnson, 1988), civic engagement (Clark et al., 2010; Makler, 1999; Newmann, 1989), or democratic participation (Vontz & Leming, 2005; Hess, 2012) may be uncovered as well as teachers' unique rationale behind each method and topic. In connecting Sen's theory of social justice to the current or enacted curriculum, teachers in this study may showcase opportunities provided to their students to think about, and potentially retreat, injustices seen in their schools and communities, and ultimately achieve many of the goals of social studies education at the high school levels.

## Chapter 3 - Methodology

### Introduction

The questions presented in this study focus on the experience of teaching global current events in the high school context and explored how teachers' perceptions of this content are reflected in the actions and decisions made in their respective classrooms. The research methods therefore must engage the lived experiences of teachers as they make choices concerning the application of global current events into their curricula and attempt to form an understanding of how their perception of global education impacts their teaching. For this reason, the research methods selected for this study were qualitative in nature. This section seeks to explain each of the research questions and provides a brief description of the chosen methods by identifying the specific design of the study as well as the data collection and analysis techniques selected.

### Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions:

**1) How does a select sample of teachers conduct global current events education content?** This question aimed to establish the vision of global current events as conducted by the participating teachers in their respective classrooms. As documented briefly in this introduction, the definitions of global education and the approaches for the teaching of global current events vary greatly and their place in the curriculum is often questioned. Establishing the type of global current events issues taught and how they are being addressed in the classroom was important for understanding how they relate to elements of global education.

**2) How is the choice of instructional approaches related to teachers' beliefs concerning global current events and their importance in the curriculum?** This question explored the beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge held by the teachers in this study and sought to understand how these ideologies related to the use of global events issues into their respective curricula. Examining how these teachers' decision-making maintained or challenged their vision of the purpose of global current events education led to a greater understanding of the pedagogical choices and technology available to approach such topics and provided a more complete understanding of the role of global current events in the classroom.

**3) What factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events topics in their classroom?** As mentioned earlier, and to be further discussed in the literature review, inclusion of global current events issues is often avoided in classrooms, with practicing teachers citing lack of preparedness (training, comfort, knowledge), inadequate resources (technology, media, access), or failure to receive administrative support (building-level, district-level, community). The selection of the teachers in this study allowed for the opportunity to explore how constraints such as these were either avoided or successfully navigated, as well as the obstacles they may continue to work under when focusing on global current events topics.

**4) How do the teachers in this study act to maintain or challenge particular visions of global competence and/or social justice education?** Teaching for global education, or global competence, means taking curriculum content, usually set forth in learning standards, and using it to examine broader global issues. Teaching for social justice, particularly Sen's contextual vision of social justice, involves the use of pedagogy that is

comparative in nature with a focus on the development of students' identities and the deliberative public reasoning. Understanding the approaches utilized by teachers successfully incorporating global current events issues into their classrooms may lead to important conclusions regarding whether the use of such approaches can promote elements of certain frameworks for global competence and/or social justice.

By asking these questions, I investigated how the teachers in this study implemented teaching strategies that promoted critical engagement of complex, diverse information through the exploration of contemporary events with visible global significance. In doing so, crucial elements regarding these teachers' beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge of global current events issues in their respective curricula were examined through the ways they conduct themselves when such topics are raised within their classrooms. Ultimately, answers to these questions provide clarification on whether such a focus on global current events education can serve to promote global competence and is hopefully useful to all educators interested in incorporating global current events education in their own classrooms.

### **Positionality Statement**

*Thursday, February 24, 2022. I woke up that morning as I had many others, ready to start the day as an English and AVID teacher at an inner-city high school in Northern Ohio. Coffee brewing, I turned on the television to see a barrage of breaking news flashes: Russian forces invade Ukraine; Peace in Europe 'shattered' as Russia invades Ukraine; Understanding Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Having worked with policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in Ukraine nearly two decades prior (Craddock, 2007), I found myself simultaneously heartbroken and stunned by what I was seeing. Immediately my thoughts went to the colleagues and friends I had made in years past, as I desperately scrambled to make sense of what was unfolding in real*

*time. The attack in Ukraine was taking place as I watched details stream across the bottom of my screen, both on the ground and in the air, and seemed centered around a town in which I had stayed and enjoyed during my time overseas, Kyiv.*

*The following moments exist as a blur in my memory. Panicked text messages. A professional yet clearly concerned email. Wide-sweeping Google searches to gather as much information as possible, even if scattered and impartial. I continued to prepare for my day as normally as I could, but there was little normal about that moment, and I knew that any carefully laid lesson plans for my classes were to be scrapped. This took precedence.*

Over the past two decades, I have devoted my time, energy, academic scholarship, and degree paths to the field of education. Currently, as a high school educator for the last eight years, I have worked directly with hundreds of students to help develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to become civically active participants in society. I have also taught at the university level for nearly a decade, at Kansas State University, Bowling Green State University, and Indiana University, assisting preservice educators to develop their pedagogical methods and civic thinking. Throughout my time in these positions, I have also presented, published, and professionally developed scholarship that has reflected many of my current interests in education.

One particular focus of my scholarship has been in the field of civic education, which is commonly thought of as the subset of knowledge and skills needed for effective participation in community, government, and politics. Perhaps the binding quality of these three concentrations is that each holds adaptable procedures and frameworks and thus requires recognition of their continuous interplay. In my travels, both overseas and domestic, I have found that civic education, at its core, is a framework built within the school curriculum, but largely practiced

outside this domain. Town meetings, voting procedures and community activism are examples of a participatory democracy, whose impacts can be widespread among society and schools in the hands of empowered students. Yet to achieve such aims, educators must be increasingly aware of their influence and seek to foster both the education in the formal (school) setting as much as the informal (civic organizations, families, mass media, etc.) setting. Civic education, in the light of social reconstruction, may be seen as the organization of schooling that aims, as one of its primary purposes, to prepare future citizens for participation in public life.

*As soon as I stepped foot into my classroom on February 22, I pulled up as many articles as I could find and projected them on the board. One site, CNBC (2022) seemed to be providing up-to-the-minute updates, and my eyes were drawn to several key words I knew would need to be defined: demilitarization, sanctions, coalition. I quickly made a slide with each of these terms before realizing that I should provide a map of Europe, showing how Ukraine and Russia are geographically linked and pulled that up as well. As students began to stream into the classroom, I changed my “Question of the Day” from the planned question about Jurassic Park (the novel my classes were currently reading) to one regarding the unfolding conflict and asking students, generally, what they knew about the events that had transpired in the early morning hours overseas.*

*Throughout the day, discussion over the Ukraine-Russia conflict was the only task in which my students engaged. I tried, as best as I could, to explain the tumultuous history of the region, provide the definitions for terms they would most likely be exposed to in the coming hours and days, and arguably most importantly, allow the space for questions and comments from each and every student. Confusion abounded, and as each class proceeded, I attempted to make sense out of a situation that truly did not make sense to me. But it needed to be done. It needed to be*



*discussed, and I was steadfast in my resolve to provide the space for students to unpack what they were reading and hearing.*

Another categorization of my own practice and scholarship that must be addressed is my advocacy for civic education as political action. In this sense, my ideology mirrors much of Dewey (1900) and Freire (1970), as a ‘service-learning’ approach to education is addressed both inside the classroom and in the greater community. Finding linkages between students’ own experiences and conceptualizations and allowing thoughtful deliberation and reflection on said experiences in terms of a larger social context is integral to my philosophy. My particular classroom ideology therefore is one of political activism, built through the child’s own community and society and used as a force of social uplift, change or even simply democratic participation. Educators should not overlook that activism need not be inherently negative or used to combat inequity but can be simply the active role taken by the student to shape his or her own learning and intelligence.

*“Ok Mr. Brown, but so what? It’s not like I am ever going over there or anything.”*

*“Wait, where is this happening again?”*

*“What’s the point?”*

*The questions were endless. Over the following two days, my students and I engaged in a host of discussions and deliberations on the breaking news. Students were given the task to research more information and present their findings to the class. We tried to make sense of the relevance to their own lives and consider the potential ramifications of what seemed to be happening a million miles away from Northern Ohio. While not everything was answered fully over the course of those fateful days, students were in an environment where their questions could be heard and discussed, and emotions, good, bad, or indifferent, were respected by all.*

*In the following weeks, word had gotten out that my classes had discussed the Ukraine-Russia conflict. Three social studies educators, all whom I had known since beginning my career at this high school, came to me to ask similar questions. Why had I decided to discuss the conflict in my classes, particularly English? What had we talked about? How did I know what to say? At first, I was perplexed by the questions they were asking and had trouble making sense of why they seemed so curious in my classroom when, prior to this moment, they never had been. What I eventually came to understand was that none of them, purposefully, had discussed the conflict at all. Instead, they avoided the topic altogether citing a host of reasons: confusion or uncertainty about what had happened; unwillingness to delve into a potentially “controversial” issue; or lack of relevance to our students’ lives; and lack of connection to the planned curriculum. In short, the breaking news of the Ukraine-Russia conflict was simply ignored by these teachers, their students none the wiser.*

As a result of these moments, and others similar before and after this particular conflict, I have long remained steadfast in the importance of many of the pedagogical methods intended to be studied with this research. In each of my classes, at every level, I have utilized deliberative methods to engage students in the discussion of global current events and provided multiple opportunities for students to explore the world in which they live. This has included the participation in, and professional support of, many civic education curricula, including *Project Citizen* and *We the People* as well as aided in the development of similar materials in over a half-dozen developing democracies worldwide (Craddock, 2007). While it pained me to see the unwillingness of some teachers to engage in topics of breaking news, it also emboldened me to further study the teaching of global current events, and the decisions teachers make when approaching such topics in the classroom. These experiences and beliefs have guided the

research interests presented here and I hope that through the eventual findings of this study, additional efforts in the teaching of global current events may be understood and realized.

### **Research Design & Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive case study research design. A qualitative approach was chosen for this study due to the nature of this study attempting to discover how people give meaning to the events that they experience (Merriam, 1998). In this instance, the lived experiences of teachers and the ways in which they utilized strategies that encouraged understanding of global current events topics is of interest and as such, a qualitative methodology provides the best opportunity to learn and understand the way in which each experienced the adaptations they had to make in their respective classrooms. A case study methodology was selected for this research due to the opportunity to make sense of context-dependent knowledge within a particular setting and a descriptive case study design can “illustrate or explain key features of a phenomenon within its context” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Moreover, case studies can provide in-depth exploration of the richness and complexity of a bounded social phenomena, or multiple phenomena from multiple perspectives (Yin, 2018). Given that multiple sites were chosen for the data collection in this study, collective, or multiple case study methodology was employed so that all perspectives regarding the teaching of global current events could be effectively compared, contrasted, and synthesized (Yin, 2018). The specific pathway this research followed is one that aligns with a constructivist philosophy in that the expressed goal is to explain and describe how everyday classroom practices were connected to larger processes (Schwandt & Gates, 2018). In this case, the ways in which a select group of teachers within a single school district approached the teaching of global current events was of interest and to understand these practices and the choices made in their classrooms, semi-

structured interviews with an elicitation task were used as well as observation of teachers' classrooms and teaching practices.

### **Epistemology**

Epistemology is a “theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective” (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). More specifically, epistemology can be “especially relevant when we raise the question of how to justify a particular conception of education or program of education” (Walker & Evers, 1982, p. 213). When conducting research such as this, it is vital that researchers develop what Kojó-Ljunberg et al. (2009) referred to as a sense of epistemological awareness, or realization of positions taken by the researcher with regard to knowledge and truths present within the scope of the project. This awareness, when realized, can lead to self-reflection that assists researchers in choosing methods that instantiate and support their knowledge building (Carter & Little, 2007). I have conceptualized my own epistemological position in this study as one of social constructivism and have developed procedures, questions, and methods that align with this perspective.

Social constructivism states that realities are historically, culturally, and socially constructed and any attempt to understand phenomena must respect context-specific multiple perspectives (Neuman, 2000; Schwandt, 2000). In order for me to fully understand the ways in which teachers approach their own teaching, I needed to directly interact with them in meaningful ways and ask questions that appreciate their unique perspectives and beliefs. In doing so, I intended to not simply understand the lived experiences of the participants in regard to their classroom pedagogy and ideology, but also the potential societal constraints, both internal and external, that may have led to their specific decisions. Additionally, I also recognized and acknowledged the ways my own background and experiences could have influenced

interpretation and attempted to function as a “passionate participant” or a facilitator in the reconstruction of multiple perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The research questions, methods chosen, and the specific instrumentation tools used within this study reflect these epistemological beliefs and understandings.

### **Population and Sample Selection**

This study aimed to explore the teaching of global current events in high school social studies classrooms and to understand the instructional choices made by those teachers who have elected to tackle the challenging and sometimes controversial issues that arise when teaching global current events. To investigate this problem, I first employed a convenience sampling strategy (Patton, 1990) to identify a select group of teachers at the high school levels who were actively engaged in the teaching of global current events within a particular school district. All teachers studied were actively employed at a large urban school district located in a mid-size Midwestern town. Surveys were first sent to social studies chairs and/or teachers at each high school within the district and asked simply whether they actively teach current events in their classrooms and attempted to gauge their interest in participating in a dissertation study regarding their pedagogy and choices. Teachers were then contacted with a follow-up email to inquire about availability, from which the final participants were randomly selected. All teachers are identified by pseudonym only throughout this study and provided an active role throughout the interview protocol. All transcripts are, and will continue to be, kept confidential, and participants had the ability to review the data throughout the study.

The use of convenience sampling in this particular study was purposefully chosen for several reasons. First and foremost, as the study was focused on the ways in which teachers actively approach the teaching of global current events, it was important that the participants

were both aware of this unique pedagogy as well as their tendency to use it in the classroom. As such, it was important to not simply identify a group of social studies teachers at the high school level, but specifically those who already share a value for global current events and their place within the curriculum. Additionally, given the nature of the data collected, notably the use of classroom observations and an in-person elicitation task, it was important the teachers were both accessible and easily available at various points throughout the school year. This contained the sample to a single district, and in some cases, to a singular school to ensure a comprehensive data set could be collected. Due to the limited population of this study, it was critical that the final participants be chosen through a random selection process after teachers self-identified as active global current events teachers. In doing so, both representativeness and statistical validity were increased, and ultimately resulted in five high school social studies teachers being selected for this research.

### **Setting**

The district selected for use in this study has an active enrollment of nearly 22,049 students with 11 active high schools and 43 middle schools. It has a minority enrollment of 70%, with 45.8% identifying as Black, 13.2% as Hispanic, and 11.6% as two or more races (U.S. News, 2023). The teaching staff is well-qualified across the district with 98.8% of teachers holding a license and 83.3% having at least three years of teaching experience. Graduation rates across the district however are significantly below the state average, with only a 68.3% graduation rate compared to the state average of 87% (Woolard, 2023). Additionally, the district has been plagued by a number of scandals in recent years including a data scrubbing incident that resulted in state sanctions as well as a U.S. Department of Justice-led investigation into allegations of race and disability discrimination in student discipline (U.S. Department of Justice,

2020; WTOL Newsroom, 2018). Despite these hardships, the district has implemented several initiatives in recent years to assist students in their subject areas, including the creation of socio-emotional wellness committees in all buildings, additional academic supports classes at the high school levels, and the adoption of AVID school-wide strategies to encourage students to become college and career-ready. This makes this context particularly ripe for research into the ways teachers select and teach global current events topics, particularly those that are unfolding and thus not in any approved curriculum guides or maps. These decisions provided valuable insights into new ways to reach students in this district and allowed teachers the ability to consider their own beliefs and willingness to approach difficult or controversial topics.

### **Qualitative Data Collection**

The interviews used in this study were intended to consist of non-leading questions that allowed the interviewee to discuss topics of interest to them as they arose, while attempting to guide the conversation to the phenomena of interest. The elicitation task provided additional insight into the thought processes of the participants and led to further questions regarding the real-time choices they made in selecting topics and the ways in which they would introduce them to their respective classrooms.

### ***Semi-Structured Interviews***

The research began with semi-structured interviews of an extreme case sample (Patton, 1990) of high school social studies educators who have routinely engaged their students with global current events content. Identifying an extreme case sample is a type of purposive sampling strategy in which participants selected are not only likely to give the most insight into the phenomenon but provide excellent examples of the phenomenon as well (Patton, 1990). In this instance, each of the teachers selected for this study were not only interested in the teaching

of global current events, but routinely focused on these issues in their respective classrooms as well as engaged in professional development workshops to further improve their abilities to deliver this content. To understand these practices and the choices made in their selection, semi-structured interviews were used “with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (p. 278). In semi-structured interviews, the researcher identifies a set of themes or discussion prompts, and flexibly conducts each interview guided by these issues (Merriam, 1998; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interviews used in this study were intended to consist of non-leading questions that would allow the interviewee to discuss topics of interest to them as they arose, while attempting to guide the conversation to the phenomena of interest. These initial semi-structured interviews established a baseline for the first three questions: how global current events are addressed in each classroom, the ways in which these teachers view the purpose of global current events content in their classrooms, and the choices they made within the context of their school and community when choosing to engage their students in global current events topics.

Additionally, these semi-structured interviews were designed to allow participants the opportunity to discuss specific pedagogical choices they made when focusing on global current events content in their respective classrooms. This served to not only reveal insights into the overall methods chosen by each teacher, but also specifically highlight pedagogy that may serve to reinforce concepts of social justice or encourage the retreat of injustices. Questions regarding the teaching of controversial events, the impact of potential community benefits, and potential complications were also discussed to further understand the extent to which aims of global competence and social justice were maintained or challenged.



### *Elicitation Task*

Another element of the semi-structured interviews that was conducted as part of this study was the use of an elicitation technique (see Appendices B & C). While qualitative interviews may be effective in establishing the various elements of a phenomenon a participant is comfortable discussing, many factors can influence the complexity and quality of their responses (Johnson & Weller, 2002; Whyte, 1984). An elicitation task, including the sorting of distinct items, sentence completion activities, or even the creation of concept maps and drawings, can be useful when attempting to produce rich data involving “participants’ ideas about teaching, learning, and school structure” (Barton, 2011, p. 3). For this study, the use of a ranking task was an important element of the interview process, as participants were given a set of five hypothetical, yet realistic, current events and asked to rank which they would be most likely to include in their classroom and why, as well as how they would go about including it and what would be their focus or connection to the rest of the studied curriculum. Barton (2011) argued that tasks such as this can be useful in “determining which features people consider central to particular concepts or practices” (p. 4), and through the completion of ranking these hypothetical events, and more importantly, justifying their selections, the participants were able to better explain their classroom decision-making processes and habits, while revealing important insights into the perceived role global current events played in their respective classrooms.

This task also served to help understand the ways in which the participants within this study either acted to maintain or challenge particular visions of global competence (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011) and social justice (Sen, 2009). As participants sorted the headlines (Appendix C) I took notes on the thought processes that were being verbalized and encouraged participants to talk about the ways in which they are making their decisions. The follow-up questions continued

to develop an understanding of their thinking and beliefs, with respect to their current classrooms, students, and school. These answers served to highlight pedagogy that may have supported Sen's view of contextual social justice and/or the Asia Society's framework for global competence and ultimately led to suggestions for future educators who wish to similarly incorporate global current events in their own curricula.

### ***Classroom Observations***

In addition to these interviews, I conducted a series of classroom observations of each teacher. Observations in qualitative research are critical as they can serve to describe the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in those activities, and the meanings of what was observed from the perspective of those observed (Patton, 1990; Merriam, 1998). These observations helped to expand my understanding of the first three research questions and also began to answer the fourth research question by examining how the curriculum was enacted within each classroom and the resources provided to each teacher to assist in their instruction of global education content. The observations were audio-recorded and combined with extensive field notes to create a thick record of the classroom setting, behavior, and interactions.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Data in this study were analyzed through a constant, iterative process. Berkowitz (1997) argued that qualitative analysis be “a loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data as additional questions emerge” and through this process, “more complex formulations may be developed.” This process is described by scholars as highly reflexive (Bruce, 2007; Harper, 2003; Mauthner, 2003) and is “at the heart of visiting and revisiting the data and connecting them with emerging insights, progressively leading to refined focus and understandings”

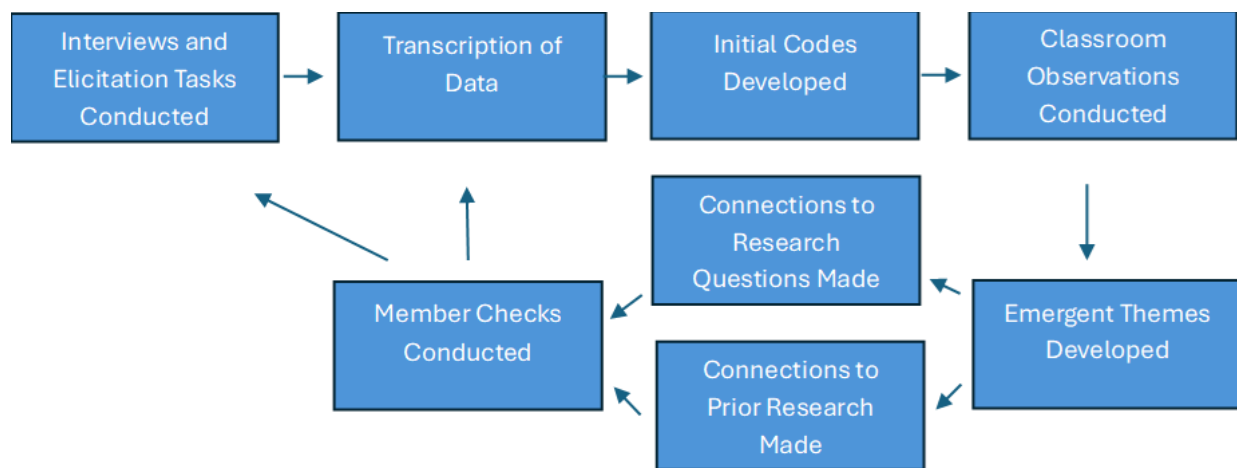
(Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009, p. 77). Srivastava & Hopwood (2009) further elaborated on this process by identifying three questions researchers should ask themselves when analyzing data iteratively: 1) what are the data telling me?; 2) what is it I want to know; and 3) what is the dialectical relationship between what the data are telling me and what I want to know? The last of these, the identification of the dialectical relationship, concerns the constant and ongoing reflective practice of connecting the data to the original research questions and drawing important conclusions throughout the process of analysis.

In accordance with this approach, data were analyzed by first searching for “recurring regularities” (Merriam, 1998, p. 180) and highlighting common quotes or topics within each interview. Data analysis in qualitative research can be characterized as a process of “preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 251). This thematic analysis began with all transcripts being read, and the most common ideas being highlighted until clear patterns emerged from the data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The emergence of these patterns allowed for the development of codes, after which the codes diverged/expanded, converged/reduced, and became organized into smaller groups of similar codes called categories (Hancock & Alhazzine, 2017; Saldaña, 2021; Xu & Storr, 2012). These categories eventually led to the creation of overarching themes that connected the collected data to the case being studied and were used to answer the research questions presented earlier (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Rossman & Rallis, 2017; Saldaña, 2021). In order to visualize the data throughout these processes, flowcharts and code mapping were utilized to illustrate the connections to previously

discussed literature as well as further evidence to support the themes that emerged from the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldaña, 2021).

While not all themes were discussed within the findings section found below, the data gathered provided a clear understanding of the experiences of each participant as it related to their classroom pedagogy regarding the teaching of global current events and the choices they actively made in selecting each and teaching the content to their students. Each step in the research collection process, from the conduct of initial semi-structured interviews with an elicitation task, to the classroom observations were analyzed throughout the study and involved discussions among peers and participants. These strategies, referred to as member-checking or peer-debriefing, served to improve the validity of the results as well as provided a sense of ownership to the participants regarding the collected data and eventual findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Overview of the collection and analysis process can be seen below:

**Figure 3-1 Data Collection & Analysis Procedure**



**Ethical Considerations**

As an educator at the district intended to be studied, it is vital that I address any potential bias with this study in order to improve the credibility of the data (Merriam, 1998; Rose & Johnson, 2020). According to Lahman (2022), “grappling with bias, instead of trying to control

bias, is actually a hallmark and strength of qualitative research” (p. 130) and this forces me to think about the many ways in which there are potential areas of bias inherent in this study that may affect the resultant findings. I have taught in this district for nearly nine years now and have been an integral part in the creation of multiple programs designed to improve student retention, academic success, and general well-being. As such, I have actively encouraged fellow colleagues and peers to broaden their pedagogical strategies, many of which may have included the teaching of global current events. Additionally, I routinely engage in such lessons, and, while my classroom will obviously not be studied, I have promoted and supported similar activities and lessons from fellow educators. With these experiences in mind, I had to be aware how my own positionality may have influenced participants in this study and have attempted to report data and findings with these considerations in mind.

In order to combat these potential biases, I first received permission from my administration to conduct this study, with an email detailing the goals of the research, a proposed timeline, and examples of the interview protocol and elicitation task materials. Upon receipt of this permission, I then sent a survey to all faculty and staff asking for voluntary participation in this study as well as provided an overview of the time commitments and requirements from participants so that a clear understanding of what was being asked was achieved. Each of these forms and communications received IRB approval from Kansas State University prior to use. Additionally, the anonymity of all participants, the schools in which they teach, and the district itself were ensured to maintain confidentiality. In all cases, the school or district being studied has been referred to only through pseudonyms or generalities, and while the grade level or subject taught may be relevant to the study, it contains little indication as to the participant’s current school assignment. The collected data has been, and continues to be, stored on a private

computer and is only accessible by me through password encryption. Upon completion of this study, all data, including transcripts, audio recordings, or relevant participant information will be destroyed so that anonymity and confidentiality may be maintained.

Participants in this study, once selected, were provided with informed consent forms, detailing their agreement to be interviewed, observed, and recorded over the entirety of the study. These forms also included information regarding their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and for any reason, as a means to ensure that participants were comfortable with both the data collection processes as well as the classroom observations that occurred throughout. Additionally, member-checking procedures were used throughout the data collection and analysis process in order to share initial findings and interpretations with all participants. Teachers were sent copies of their interview transcripts to review after each interview as well as a recording of their elicitation task rankings and rationale. In doing so, feedback regarding the initial findings were able to be collected as well as clarification on the lived experiences shared throughout the interview process. In incorporating these additional insights, I was not only able to strengthen the research findings as a whole, but also further establish a sense of collaboration between myself and the participants by providing them with an active role in the final analysis.

### **Establishing Trustworthiness**

In an attempt to demonstrate rigor within qualitative research, Guba and Lincoln (1989) determined four criteria for establishing trustworthiness in a study: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These each represent a departure from the more traditional criteria for trustworthiness seen more commonly in quantitative research: truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. Each of these qualitative criteria are explained below in

greater detail with specific aspects of the research highlighted to ensure trustworthiness throughout the process.

### ***Credibility***

Credibility, according to Guba and Lincoln (1989) ensures that what is measured in a study is intended and represents a true reflection of participants' reality. In order to achieve this, I involved all participants in the process of this study throughout and made clear that their participation in the study was both voluntary and anonymous. Perhaps more importantly, from the initial email correspondence to the final observation, participants were given the freedom to leave the study or refusal to participate in particular aspects of the study should they so wish. This was important as it hopefully provided a sense of agency within the participants and provided the environment through which their decisions in the classroom could be comfortably and safely shared during the interviews. Finally, I involved participants in several member checks throughout the data collection and analysis process so that the participants' views and responses were reflected accurately in the reported data.

To further corroborate the findings, the data were triangulated through the use of a variety of data collection methods, including the use of semi-structured interviews, a self-guided and reflected-upon elicitation task, and the conduct of several classroom observations. This was all to ensure that the credibility of findings was maintained and throughout this process, and I took extensive notes and reflective journaling in order to review and make sense of context and interpretations.

### ***Transferability***

Guba and Lincoln (1989) determined transferability to be the extent to which research findings may be used in other settings/contexts. Unlike the other elements of trustworthiness,

transferability is determined not by the researcher, but by those who read and engage with the study. In this study, I have attempted to be clear about all methods, procedures, and processes, including detailed descriptions of the setting and participant selection. As a result, I believe that this dissertation study could be utilized in other settings similar to the district in which this work is situated. Additionally, thick description, through the use of reflexive journaling and note-taking, helped to ensure that the reader be able to determine whether the findings are applicable to their unique settings (Geertz, 1973). These considerations all helped to ensure the transferability of this study.

### ***Dependability***

Dependability within qualitative research is measured through the ability of the research to be replicated by others due to the amount of detail given in the initial study (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). To ensure this, I kept a clear “audit trail” (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) in the form of detailed field notes, transcripts, and journals that may be reviewed if needed by other researchers. These documents have been kept with me throughout the data collection and analysis process and contributed to the iterative and reflexive data analysis procedures discussed in the section above. I also provided a detailed description of all chosen methods and procedures as well as a series of appendices that provide the reader with any and all instrumentation used. This includes a full set of the interview protocols (Appendix A), the elicitation task procedure and materials (Appendix B), and the initial email/recruitment information used in the initial participant selection. Finally, I utilized peer review opportunities throughout the process, as additional insight from colleagues and peers served to illuminate areas of the research that needed additional attention or revision. All of these details served to reinforce the dependability of the study.



### ***Confirmability***

The final criteria Guba and Lincoln (1989) used to confirm rigor in qualitative research is confirmability of the study, or the acknowledgment of researcher predispositions and bias. Throughout this study I have attempted to be transparent about my own positionality and epistemological stance as well as clearly defining my own research interests and biases. This has included the rationale for all methods chosen for this proposal as well as detailed descriptions of the particular ideologies and frameworks seen throughout the literature review. Additionally, I utilized checks and balances throughout my data collection and analysis, including but not limited to peer reviews, member checks, and a detailed audit trail to make sure all gathered information was being correctly stored, used, and analyzed. Each of these elements served to ensure the confirmability of the proposed study.

### **Limitations & Delimitations**

Limitations in qualitative research can be seen as weaknesses in the study due to the overall research design and specific methodological choices made by the researcher (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). These limitations “may affect the study design, results, and ultimately, conclusions and should therefore be acknowledged clearly” (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018, p. 156). While these limitations are not under control of the researcher, they represent the potential for data produced to be inaccurate or misleading. There are a number of limitations present in this study including the use of particular instruments to collect data, potential researcher bias due to a distinct positionality, and the lack of student data to measure success of the pedagogical methods discussed and observed over the course of these study. Each of these may have served to constrain the research in this study and will be discussed briefly below.

One limitation of this study is instrumentation. Each of the instruments used in this study, from the semi-structured interview protocols to the elicitation task, have not been used in a pilot study or elsewhere, and thus, may not have fully captured the data intended. Furthermore, the selection of each of the seven headline topics in the elicitation task, as seen in Appendix C, does not fully represent the breadth of all potential global current events, and instead were inspired by the studied literature in global education and comparative social justice. Additionally, while interviews and observations elicited important data, many other instruments, including the use of surveys, testing data, and teaching data may have returned a more complete picture of the cases being studied. With these limitations to the instruments used in this study, both the reliability and dependability may be questioned, and efforts will be made to note any instances in which additional questions or resources were used to mitigate such limitations.

Additionally, there may be limitations present within this study due to my own positionality in regard to both the nature of the study as well as my employment within the district being studied. The topic of study, in this case the teaching of global current events and its connections to the advancement of social justice, is of particular interest to me, as was stated previously in the positionality section of this proposal. As a result, the questions asked within this study are of particular interest to me, whether purposefully or not, may have shaped the way the research was conducted, and influence the ways in which data is collected and analyzed, and how the eventual findings were reported. Additionally, due to my position within the district being studied, participants may have felt compelled to answer the questions, or share their experiences in certain ways to either align with either: a) the school or district missions and aims; the community in which the district is situated; and/or c) my own perceived ideology and pedagogy. This is commonly referred to as “participant reactivity” (Maxwell, 2013) and may

have caused participants to either be overly cooperative (i.e. responding in ways they believe I wished) or less candid (i.e. guarded) in their responses. In order to mitigate these limitations, I took detailed care to ensure that participants felt comfortable in sharing their true experiences and were not “led” by any of my questions or comments throughout the process.

Finally, the lack of student data studied within this research did not allow the academic success of these pedagogical methods and approaches to be measured. While the study of teacher practice is no doubt an important aspect to qualitative research in the education field, the findings of this study may have been enhanced by additional efforts to the longitudinal effects on student learning and assessment. Additional research into this area may not only show the ways in which the teaching of global current events can assist teachers in the delivery of important content and public reasoning, it can also serve to alleviate concerns regarding the balance between global current events and the scripted curriculum of the school or district.

Delimitations in qualitative research represent boundaries that have been set consciously set by the researcher that may serve to regulate the scope, size, or breadth of the study (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). By their very nature, delimitations “are not positive or negative, but rather a detailed account of reasoning which enlightens the scope of the study’s core interest as it relates to the research design and the underpinning philosophical framework” (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018, p. 157). Delimitations for this study included the narrow scope of the research location and sample, the focused nature of the participants chosen to interview and observe, the shortened time frame for data collection and analysis, and the consideration, and ultimate rejection of, alternate views of global education, current events, and/or social justice positions.

One delimitation present in this study resides with the selection process and breadth of the participants. Due to my current location, all teachers who were studied are all currently

employed in the same Midwest urban school district. By collecting data from only a singular district, findings from this study may not be transferable to other districts or communities, and thus may provide little assistance to educators wishing to replicate the pedagogical methods and choices shared by the participants. This district was chosen specifically due to geographical considerations as the conduct of interviews, the elicitation task, and observations all will ideally be done in person and are easily accessible to me. Additionally, the target population for this study were high school teachers within the district in which I currently teach, a decision largely made as a result of access to the teachers and administrators.

Another delimiting factor in this research is that I implemented respect for the time of all participants, thus limiting the scope of the research to only collect data through the least-invasive means possible. While I believe a longitudinal study may yield fascinating results on the nature of teaching global current events, I was also cognizant that the participants of this study were willingly donating their time and resources to engage with the questions and activities posed, and thus, I needed to respect their time accordingly. This may have purposefully limited the amount of follow-up questions or my ability to fully engage with the elicitation task and was accounted for when journaling during data collection and analysis.

Finally, the purposeful choice of the research presented in the literature review on global education, current events education, teacher beliefs, and social justice serves as a delimitation to the study. I acknowledge that while many competing ideas exist on relevant pedagogy, methodological and theoretical approaches, and possible frameworks, the sources chosen in this study represent what I believe to be integral views in the field today. In some cases, such as Hanvey's (1976) five dimensions or Shulman's (1987) pedagogical content knowledge, the literature chosen in this study is quite old, and may be looked upon as outdated in 2024. These

frameworks, however, were purposefully chosen as they not only represent the ways in which I view and approach the topics of teacher beliefs and global education but would argue are fundamental platforms upon which much of today's research has been built. Additionally, while there are a number of important frameworks for social justice, the work of Amartya Sen (2009) was chosen due to its comparative nature and natural connection to the social studies. Recent scholars in the field of social studies education (Barton & Ho, 2022) have argued for increased attention to the work of Sen and, by incorporating his framework for social justice into this study as a theoretical lens, important connections to the field and literature may be made.

### **Timeline**

Data collection and analysis procedures for this study began in spring 2024 with initial teacher interviews and classroom observations and extended until the end of the 2024 school year. Due to the relatively short amount of time between the starting date and the end of the school year, the entire sample of teachers were not interviewed and observed at that time. Instead, a few of the teachers from the sample were researched in order to provide me with additional ideas, concerns, and potential modifications to the data collection instruments, analysis procedures, and time requirements of each stage. Following each of these initial interviews and observations, transcripts were created, and data analysis began and continued to occur throughout the duration of the data collection. This process then continued into the fall of 2024 at the onset of the school year, with data collected from the remainder of the research sample through the end of the calendar year, concluding with follow-up interviews with all participants. This timeline allowed for each teacher's schedule to be respected and for them to have passed other obligations that may come from either the beginning or end of the semester.

## **Chapter 4 - Findings**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to determine how participants implemented global current events topics in their respective classrooms and how this may have contributed to an awareness and/or development of attitudes and actions consistent with the goals of a globally competent curriculum. When utilized in the classroom, teachers and students can use global current events to constantly reexamine the world and their place within it, address complex issues such as international relations, economic inequality, and the effects of globalization and social justice initiatives. Despite these potential benefits, the specific practices and pedagogy used in classrooms, along with the topics chosen to focus upon, are largely dependent on the professional choices of the educator themselves. Though there has been advocacy centering on the ways in which teachers may approach global current events and social justice, as seen in Chapter 2, answers to important questions, including how teachers approach the teaching of global current events topics, how global current events education may serve as a means for promoting elements of global competency or social justice, and what factors contribute to teachers' willingness to teach these topics have largely been unanswered to this point.

In an attempt to provide insight into these inquiries, this study employed a qualitative case study methodology guided by the following research questions: First, how does a select sample of teachers conduct global current events education content? Second, how is the choice of instructional approaches related to teachers' beliefs concerning global current events and their importance in the curriculum? Third, what factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events topics in their classroom? Finally, how do the teachers in this study act to maintain or challenge particular visions of social justice education and global competence?

Analysis of the data suggest that development, both of greater awareness of the complexity of global current events and of the attitudes and pedagogy necessary for successful implementation in the classroom, is dependent on the three critical factors: how teachers use global current events in their curricula (implementation); teachers' beliefs on the role of global current events (positionality); and understanding the process through which teachers' select global current events topics (self-selection). These three factors, together, can be considered separate pieces of a puzzle; interconnected components of a comprehensive approach to achieve global competence. When these factors are intentionally included as part of a global current events focused pedagogy, there is a greater likelihood that a better understanding of the complexity of such issues and the attitudes and actions consistent with a globally competent teacher will be fostered.

I begin this chapter by briefly introducing each participant as they identified themselves, along with information about background and education, which proved to be useful for understanding how they viewed their own teaching practices. I then provide an overview of the emerging theory of the process of the development of a globally competent teacher through the use of global current events topics in the classroom. As a way to explicate the emerging theory, I describe three factors, implementation, positionality, and self-selection, which each contribute to the development of a global current events pedagogy and globally competent teacher. Additionally, results from the elicitation task will be discussed, which will serve to better understand the process through which each participant selects global current events topics to discuss in their classroom as well as their willingness to either address or avoid certain topics or areas when teaching.

## **Participant Overview**

For this case study, five high-school social studies teachers at a large Midwestern inner-city district were chosen to be participants. Surveys were first sent to all social studies educators at each high school within the district, asking simply whether they actively teach current events in their classrooms and gauge their interest in participating in a dissertation study regarding their pedagogy and choices. Teachers were then contacted with a follow-up email to inquire about availability and willingness to be interviewed and observed, a process that elicited ten positive responses in total. From these ten, the five teachers chosen to participate in this study were then randomly selected using an online randomizer and notified of their future participation in the study and next steps via additional emails from myself.

The table seen below (Table 4.1) highlights the demographics of each participant using descriptive information as obtained through the course of the interview process. These descriptions are provided to introduce each teacher who participated in the study, the specific classes and grade levels they teach, and the number of years they have spent in the classroom. This is followed by detailed participant profiles, each of which are listed by pseudonyms assigned to each participant by the author. These profiles include their current teaching position and grade level, education obtained, early experiences with global current events topics, and the reasons they identified for pursuing a job in education, among others. Additionally, personal definitions and understanding of concepts such as “global education” and “current events” are highlighted when applicable, giving insight into the process through which each teacher came to understand the role of global current events in the curricula and classroom.



**Table 4-1 Participant Overview**

<b>Participant ID</b>	<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Years Teaching</b>	<b>Subjects Taught (Grade Levels)</b>
P1	Mrs. Grayson	F	51	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World Studies (9-10)</li><li>• Contemporary World Issues (11-12)</li><li>• Early African American History (11-12)</li><li>• Modern African American History (11-12)</li><li>• American Studies (10-11)</li></ul>
P2	Mrs. Wayne	F	53	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World Studies (9-10)</li><li>• AP American Government (12)</li><li>• Economics (10-12)</li></ul>
P3	Mr. Todd	M	25	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World Studies (9-10)</li><li>• Economics (10-12)</li><li>• American Studies (10-11)</li></ul>
P4	Mrs. Kelley	F	48	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World Studies (9)</li><li>• Geography (10-12)</li><li>• Economics (10-12)</li><li>• American Studies (10-11)</li></ul>
P5	Mr. Drake	M	27	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World Studies (9-10)</li><li>• Economics (11-12)</li><li>• AVID (11)</li></ul>

### **Participant Profiles**

The following profiles expand on the table above, sharing details regarding each of the participants, their experiences in the classroom, and the ways in which they see both their own roles in the classroom as well as the definitions of social justice and/or global current events they use when developing their own pedagogy. These insights serve to not only provide important background information on each of the teachers within this study, but also to establish a framework of definitions through which each operate in their classroom and in their planning. As stated prior, multiple interviews were conducted with each participant, as well as classroom observations, so that a thick description of each participant and their views could be gathered.

***P1 – Mrs. Grayson***

The first participant (P1), Mrs. Grayson, is a 47-year-old female who has accumulated 22 years of experience in the classroom setting. A well-known and highly respected educator in her school, Mrs. Grayson teaches a variety of courses including World Studies, American Studies, and a relatively new course in the district, Contemporary World Issues. “Global current events” she stated in the first interview when referencing the Contemporary World Issues class, “is basically the entire curriculum – what I teach basically depends on how much background I think I’m going to have to do to get them to understand what is happening” (Interview P1.1, p. 1). Mrs. Grayson also plays a key role outside the classroom as the advisor to several extracurricular clubs and organizations including National Honor Society and the school’s LGBTQ club. “They [the clubs and activities] help me stay connected to the students” she explained, “and help make sense of some of the things they find important every day” (Interview P1.1, p. 2). In a follow-up interview, Mrs. Grayson defined social justice as “mostly being about equity and equitable distribution of resources” and added that “in most [classroom] cases, there is a social justice element to be discussed” (Interview P1.2, p. 1).

***P2 – Mrs. Wayne***

Participant P2, Mrs. Wayne, is a 25-year teacher with a wealth of experience and knowledge, particularly in the field of social studies. As a veteran teacher within her school, Mrs. Wayne teaches primarily students in the upper classes, with a section of AP American Government each year along with Economics and World Studies. Mrs. Wayne is also an active member of the state’s social studies council, and routinely either attends or creates professional development opportunities to promote emerging pedagogy and methods. Mrs. Wayne viewed global current events as a “necessity” in today’s culture and felt as though students today often

“lack the background and vocabulary” to make sense of the world in which they live (Interview P2.1, p. 2). Regarding her definition of social justice, Mrs. Wayne stated that education focused on social justice “provides opportunities to educate about oppressed, discriminated, disenfranchised minority groups. It gives students an opportunity to right past wrongs and provides a pathway to success” (Interview P2.2, p. 1).

### ***P3 – Mr. Todd***

Mr. Todd (P3) was the youngest participant in this study, at only 27 years old and currently in his fifth year of teaching social studies in the district. Due to staffing issues at prior schools, Mr. Todd has been displaced multiple times already in his short career, and once again found himself in a new building with unknown staff and students during the 2024-2025 school year. “It has been frustrating” commented Mr. Todd when asked of his displacements, “but I have to remind myself that it comes with the territory – I kind of see it as a new challenge now instead of feeling defeated” (Interview P3.1, p. 2). As a result of his shifting positions and assignments, Mr. Todd claimed that “he is always having to teach something new” and listed World and American studies as his primary classes this year (Interview P3.1, p. 1). Mr. Todd viewed social justice as “justice being taken for those who are marginalized and have been marginalized for a very long time” and stated that for these groups, justice comes “in the form of laws being passed for protection, more opportunities, and progressive reforms” (Interview P3.2, p. 1).

### ***P4 – Mrs. Kelley***

Mrs. Kelley (P4) came to teaching as a second career but has spent the last 15 years in the same school focusing primarily on World Studies and Geography, with occasional sections of American Studies and Economics depending on the student population. “I didn’t get my teaching

license until I was 38, but I as soon as I stepped foot in the classroom, I knew that this was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life” (Interview P4.1, p. 1). Mrs. Kelley’s passion for the social studies was evident throughout her interviews and in the classroom and claimed that “watching students be able to analyze and synthesize global current events as they happen, then evaluate it and discuss it – it is amazing” (Interview P4.1, p. 2). Social justice, according to Mrs. Kelley “is hard to define really, but is something that we have to be aware of whenever we teach a lesson – especially when we are dealing with students who may have felt oppressed in their lives” (Interview P4.2, p. 1).

### ***P5 – Mr. Drake***

The last participant, Mr. Drake, is currently a World Studies, Economics, and AVID teacher who “is just now reaching what I commonly hear referred to as a third-year stride” and stated he is “feeling like being more experimental than I ever have been before” when it comes to designing and implementing pedagogy in the classroom” (Interview P5.1, p. 1). This comfort level has allowed Mr. Drake to “spread my wings more and fly” throughout the year and take on the challenge of implementing global current events topics and issues into “pretty much every lesson I give” (Interview P5.1, p. 2). When asked to provide a definition of social justice education, Mr. Drake stated that he sees it as “anything that empowers young individuals to impact the world around them through awareness and education of global social events” and that he strives to help students become “more socially aware about various things and strive for involvement in social justice efforts” (Interview P5.2, p. 1-2).

### **Participant Profiles Overview**

As demonstrated in the above profiles, the participants in this study all represent many of the elements of a globally competent teacher with a wide range of courses, experiences, and

views. These glimpses into their individual motivations and definitions provide a basis upon which the data were then analyzed and coded and will be later discussed in the following chapters. Most notably, all participants claimed that both global current events and social justice education played a significant role in their lessons and pedagogy and cited a personal desire to see additional lessons focused on global current events be utilized in their classrooms and beyond.

### **Initial Codes**

The following section highlights responses to the interview protocol questions and the initial codes developed throughout the interview and observation process. The domains of interest, namely how global current events are used (topic domain 1), the beliefs supporting the use of global current events (topic domain 2), and the pedagogy chosen to implement global current events in the classroom (topic domain 3) are all highlighted, including tables illustrating initial coding categories and response frequencies.

#### ***Topic Domain 1: Understanding the Role of Global Current Events***

The first topic domain and interest of this study was to understand the purpose and scope of global current events education in each classroom and how global current events were either utilized or avoided throughout typical classroom procedures. In order to do this, interviews with all participants were coded and analyzed until clear patterns emerged from their responses. These were then matched with classroom observations to develop a rich understanding of how each teacher viewed the role of global current events in their respective classrooms. Initial codes can be seen in the table below.

**Table 4-2 Initial Codes – Topic Domain 1**

<b>Initial Code</b>	<b><i>n</i> of participants (<i>N</i> = 5)</b>	<b>Sample quote</b>
Global Current Events (GCE) used to facilitate discussion	5	“It is important to me and [my classroom] that we find the space to discuss what is happening in the world.” (P5)
GCE used for interviewing/deliberation	1	“I like to encourage students to think of all angles of GCE when they happen” (P1)
Cited relevance to students’ lives as motivating factor as best attribute of GCE	4	“I bring things up and relate them to things in the past so they can make connections” (P4)
GCE used for procedural purposes only	4	“I use them as a bellringer to get everyone settled before we start the lesson” (P4)
GCE prowess not measured/assessed	5	“They [the students] know it’s not necessarily for a grade.” (P3)
Felt capable of teaching GCE in classroom	3	“I think I just know more than most of my colleagues when it comes to this kind of stuff.” (P4)
Felt uncomfortable or challenged with certain GCE topics/themes	3	“It’s just the climate we are in – certain topics I just don’t want to talk about.” (P4)

These data indicate that global current events (GCE) are widely used to facilitate discussions in the classroom, with all five participants highlighting their significance. Mr. Drake stated, “It is important to me and [in my classroom] that we find the space to discuss what is happening in the world” (Interview P5.1, p. 3). Mrs. Kelley felt similarly, arguing that “in order to talk about global current events we need to create open-ended questions to start” and that these types of questions worked best “at as bellringer to get everyone settled before we start the lesson” (Interview P4.1, p. 2). Mr. Todd and Mrs. Wayne also claimed that in their respective classrooms, global current events were used as a “kind of jumping-off point, before we get to the stuff we are supposed to teach” using them as procedural bellringers or initial questions (P3.1, p. 1). Only one of the participants, Mrs. Grayson, claimed to use global current events to facilitate more in-depth pedagogical methods such as deliberation and argued that “we spend a lot of time

on human rights and climate change, and these types of issues because need more focused units and time to get them through it” (P1.1, p. 2). She added that in using global current events, she hoped that students would “think of all angles of global current events when they happen” and indicated that by engaging in pedagogy such as deliberation or student-led interviews, a more in-depth analysis of these events may occur.

One interesting result of the teachers’ frequent use of global current events primarily as a procedural task, often occurring at the beginning of a class or as a supplement to the scripted curriculum, was that none of the teachers in this study used any form of summative or formative assessment or evaluation when judging the effectiveness of such content. “They [the students]” stated Mr. Todd when discussing the focus on global current events in his classroom, “know that it’s not necessarily for a grade” and added that he merely attempts to “connect it to what we are about to learn” in his classroom (P3.1, p. 3). Furthermore, Mrs. Wayne added that her hope is that “they digest everything they can in 10 minutes and touch upon [global current events] before we move on,” indicating that so long as students are making connections to the classroom material, no assessment seems required (P2.1, p. 3). These data indicate that while the use of global current events may be of importance to each of these teachers, providing evaluative means of assessment for student progress was not a priority.

The most repeated element between participants in this study in the teaching of global current events was the need to find relevant connections between what was happening in the world and their students’ lives. Each participant frequently cited personal relevance as a motivating factor in incorporating topics into their classrooms, such as Mrs. Kelley who claimed that she likes to “bring things up and relate them to things in the past so that they can make connections” (Interview P4.1, p. 2). Similarly, Mrs. Grayson highlighted the importance of

relevance in choosing topics to discuss saying “if I can tie what’s happening today to what I’m teaching it makes my life so much easier – they can see a connection between something that happened in 1853 and something that’s happening today in the world” (Interview P1.1, p. 4). In doing so, it can “open the door to talk about specifics and the background” Mrs. Grayson contended, “and that gets them asking questions and spend some time off their blessed phones for 5 seconds” (Interview P1.1, p. 4). In each case, the teachers in this study highlighted the need for connections to be made between the scripted curriculum and events as they unfolded and used such connections to bridge the gap between what students understood and make not fully be able to make sense of in the world at large.

One final point of interest within this domain was that while some of the teachers felt comfortable teaching global current events, others indicated a level of discomfort in approaching certain topics or issues due to a combination of personal uncertainty and societal pressures. Mrs. Kelley, for example, felt incredibly confident with the material stating that she felt as though she “just know[s] more than most of my colleagues when it comes to this kind of stuff” but also claimed that due to the “climate we are in – certain topics I just don’t want to talk about” (Interview P4.1, p. 3). Mr. Todd and Mr. Drake also claimed to feel constrained in some of the topics they could use and discuss in the classroom and specifically cited outside pressure as a huge influence on whether certain global current events could or should be used in their classrooms. “The parents,” argued Mr. Drake, “are in large parts your boss. So the parents are the ones constricting those kinds of conversations and topics because they’re the ones that generally would have a problem with it” (Interview P5.1, p. 4). Mr. Todd simply referred to certain topics as “no go zones” and claimed that “what that looks like seems to change with each school I am at so I have to really pay attention to my students and what they may take home”



(Interview P3.1, p. 5). These data seem to indicate that while global current events were clearly a goal of each participant, the hesitancy and perceived risk of controversy that comes with the teaching of such topics was of great concern.

***Topic Domain 2: Understanding Teachers’ Beliefs***

The second topic domain and interest of this study was to better understand the studied teachers’ beliefs concerning the role of global current events in the curriculum. Specifically, why teachers choose to discuss global current events topics was of interest, as well as the ways in which global current events reflected their visions of education or how they identified with such topics as educators. As with the first topic domain, interviews were coded in terms of frequency resulting in the initial codes seen in the table below.

**Table 4-3 Initial Codes - Topic Domain 2**

<b>Initial Code</b>	<b><i>n</i> of participants (<i>N</i> = 5)</b>	<b>Sample quote</b>
GCE used due to personal interest	5	“I’m fascinated by [GCE] and the kids pick up on that.” (P5)
GCE used due to own experiences (travel, family, etc.)	5	“If I didn’t travel as much as I did as an undergrad there is probably no way I’d teach international content today.” (P2)
GCE believed to be important in schools	5	“It’s [the teaching of GCE] is something we have to do for these kids. Who else will do it?” (P1)
GCE represents belief in overall vision of education	4	“My family grew up valuing knowing about what was happening in the world. I want to do the same for my students.” (P4)
GCE cited as potential change agent	3	“It’s our responsibility to put discerning individuals out into society. I want them to see connections across the scale, across curriculum, and across the globe.” (P2)
GCE seen as a moral responsibility	3	“I feel like I have a moral responsibility to teach these topics.” (P5)

In all interviews, the participants highlighted personal interest in global events topics as a motivating factor to their use in the classroom. “I am fascinated” stated Mr. Drake “by them, and

the kids pick up on that” (Interview P5.1, p. 3). Mrs. Wayne claimed that “if I hadn’t travel[ed] as much as I did as an undergrad, there is probably no way I’d teach international content today” (Interview P2.1, p. 4). Mrs. Kelley was also highly motivated by her background when thinking about her usage of global current events in the classroom, citing an instance of her own travel overseas during the fall of the Soviet Union as “an eye-opening experience” and one that “has always stuck with her as an adult and certainly now as a history teacher” (Interview P4.1, p. 3). In each interview, teachers in this study seemed to routinely recall moments in their lives that inexorably influenced their classroom decision-making and shared a commitment to expand students’ global perspectives in similar ways when able. In many ways, this theme underscores the personal connection that teachers feel towards the teaching of global current events and their vision for their responsibilities as classroom educators today.

To this end, all teachers interviewed in this study not only believed that global current events were important in schools today, but that some felt as if they had a moral responsibility to discuss such topics or use them in the process of influencing the society around them. “My family” argued Mrs. Kelley, “grew up valuing knowing about what was happening in the world. I want to do the same for my students” (Interview P4.1, p. 4). Mrs. Wayne felt as though it was teachers’ “responsibility to put discerning individuals out into society” and encourage them to “see connections across the scale, across curriculum, and across the globe” (Interview P2.1, p. 4). These statements seem to highlight the dual role global current events can play in education today: both to enrich the curriculum and as a tool for fostering social change. Mr. Drake argued that “I feel like I have a moral responsibility to teacher these topics” (Interview P5.1, p. 4) a responsibility that was seemingly echoed by Mrs. Grayson when she stated that if not for

teachers being willing to discuss global current events, “who else will do it?” (Interview P1.1, p. 5).

***Topic Domain 3: Understanding Pedagogical Choices***

The final topic domain and interest of this study was to understand the pedagogical choices used in the teaching of global current events that may have served to achieve the aims and principles of global competency and/or social justice education. Of interest were not only the ways in which the teachers in this study actualized global current events education topics in the classroom, but the challenges they face to their inclusion due to a variety of community, environmental, or administrative factors. Initial codes and analysis can be found below:

**Table 4-4 Initial Codes - Topic Domain 3**

<b>Initial Code</b>	<b><i>n</i> of participants (<i>N</i> = 5)</b>	<b>Sample quote</b>
Importance of finding connections to existing curriculum	4	“You still have to teach the content. These topics can just help the students make connections.” (P3)
GCE used as a supplement to larger lessons/units	4	“Because there is no curriculum for teaching [GCE] – I tend to focus on the ones that engage kids more and fit best.” (P1)
GCE used as standalone lesson within class	2	“If the topic is a big enough deal, we will stop everything else and focus on it.” (P5)
Certain GCE issues avoided due to administration	2	“I sometimes feel like I’d get in trouble if I stray too much from what I am ‘supposed’ to be teaching.” (P3).
Certain GCE issues avoided due to community/potential controversy	2	“No way am I touching some of these topics. Not in this climate.” (P4)
GCE avoided due to curricular/time constraints	4	“For the most part [choosing GCE topics] is kind of, for me, picking and choosing right now, what we’re trying to do and fit it into the curriculum and what I’m supposed to teach...it’s a difficult balancing act.” (P2)
GCE pedagogy is often most effective when it is student-led or inquiry based	4	“Inquiry based approaches work best for me because the objective as far as actually educating students on issues is to establish constructive conversation. That usually means students have to care” (P5)

As seemingly indicated within the first two topic domains of interest, a clear pattern emerged in the data of teachers in this study striving to connect global current events to the existing curriculum. Mr. Todd argued that “you still have to teach the content” and global current events “can just help the students make connections” (Interview P3.1, p. 4). Mrs. Grayson saw these opportunities as largely supplementary to larger units and idea and highlighted that “because there is no curriculum for teaching [global current events]” she often found herself focusing “on the ones that engage kids more and fit best” (Interview P1.1, p. 5). Infrequently were global current events seen as the focus for a standalone lesson, as only two participants noted their usage outside the scripted curriculum and in some cases, presented the teachers with the difficult task of deciding when they could be discussed and used. “For the most part” argued Mrs. Wayne when discussing her choice of topics and pedagogy “it is kind of, for me picking and choosing right now what we’re trying to do and fit it into the curriculum and what I’m *supposed* to teach – it is a difficult balancing act” (Interview P2.1, p. 4). These data suggest that while global current events are valued, they are often integrated in ways that support or supplement the existing curriculum, rather than supplant it altogether.

One pedagogical task, outside of procedural bellringers as seen earlier, that participants in this study often cited as effective when teaching global current events is inquiry-based methodology. Teachers frequently cited using students’ own innate interests and questions as building blocks upon which important lessons and topics could be addressed, specifically when discussing topics that may focus on issues of social justice or inequality. “Inquiry based approaches” stated Mr. Drake, “work best for me because the objective as far as actually educating students on issues is to establish constructive conversation. That usually means

students have to care” (Interview P5.2, p. 2). Mrs. Wayne further elaborated on the importance of such pedagogy:

“Inquiry, reflection, compare and contrast opportunities. All of these are good. Students need to weigh evidence and scenarios. They have to examine – what and who’s agenda are we talking about? Which group has power? Who are the oppressed? What and how are decisions being made? All of these questions need to be explored by students because if not, they will go unanswered and unappreciated. And nothing changes” (Interview P2.2, p. 1).

In this view, the data seemingly indicate that by allowing students the opportunities to develop inquiry skills, and potentially decide upon the global events topics discussed, social change and impact can be directly related to the pedagogical choices made by classroom teachers.

One final code that was important to focus upon within this domain was the challenges faced by the teachers in this study to implement, design, or encourage global current events curriculum in the classroom. Two of the teachers in this study directly highlighted administrative concerns with teaching global current events, while two others cited community backlash as an impediment to their use of such topics. Mr. Todd stated that he sometimes feels as though he would “get in trouble if I stray too much from what I am ‘supposed’ to be doing” (Interview P3.2, p. 2) and Mrs. Kelley flatly commented that “no way am I touching some of these topics. Not in this climate” (Interview P4.2, p. 2) when asked about challenges to teaching global current events. Mr. Drake shared similar hesitation and stated, “I don’t want to get caught by administration that I am not doing 100% what I’m supposed to be doing” (Interview P5.2, p. 3). These data indicate the challenges that some teachers may face when fully integrating global

current events in the classroom and seem to indicate there are additional decisions being made by each teacher when deciding upon what to teach daily in their classrooms.

Perhaps the most cited constraint, shared amongst four of the five teachers in this study was that of time and what they perceived as their curricular goals and duties as social studies educators. Mr. Drake stated:

“We will carve out a day where we’ll journal or discuss things and stay away from content, but every week we have developmental standards that my department says we need to be focused on so my problem is, where do you draw the line? We are always stuck with the struggle of scope and sequence. We’re always racing to the finish line...so you can’t spend too much time talking about current events when you have that in the back of your mind” (Interview P5.2, p.3).

Similarly, Mrs. Wayne saw time as a critical factor influencing her usage of global current events and lamented

“I wish sometimes I had an hour and a half to teach, but because I have all the nonsense and paperwork of teaching, I just basically lean on what’s on the news and say, we have five minutes to talk about whatever. What are the hard hitters and I will let CNN do the rest because I just don’t have the time to dig deep unfortunately” (Interview P2.2, p. 4).

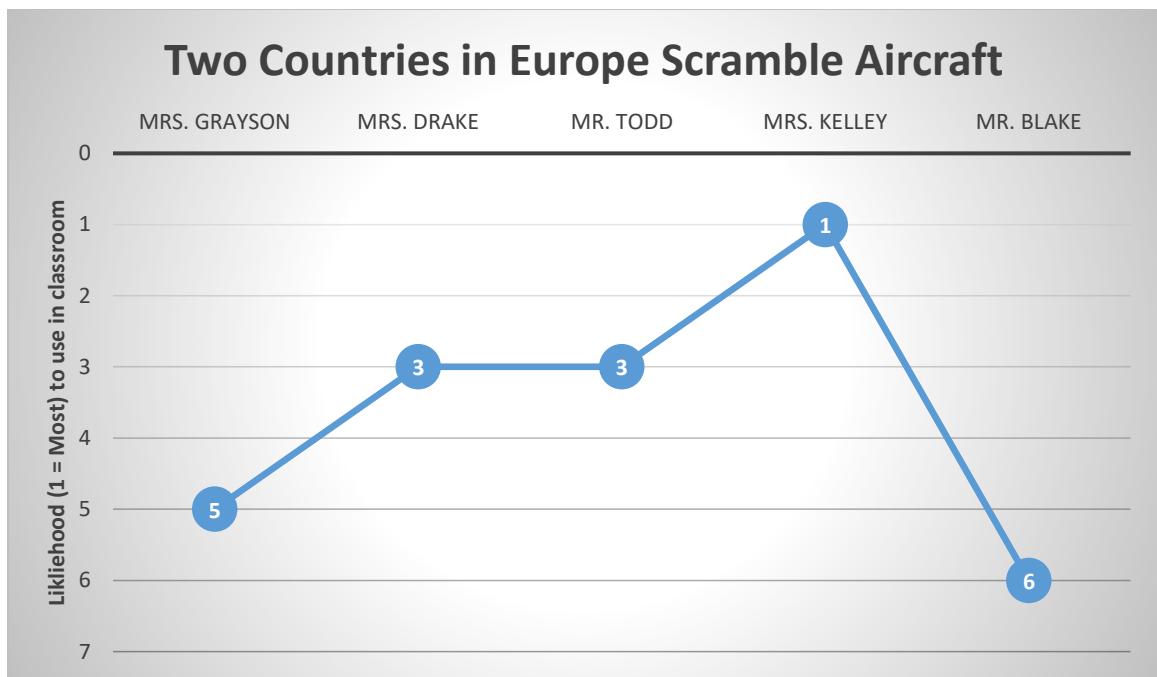
In the end, both Mrs. Wayne and Mr. Drake saw their time as limited and as a constraint to delivering global current events content in the manner that they believed would be most effective. The “race to the finish line” as Mr. Drake stated, seems to fit directly with prior research in the formulaic structure presented in scripted or official curricula, and while Mrs. Drake’s comments suggested a more broad view of the constraints placed upon her by the nature

of the profession, she similarly felt as though she simply could not afford the time to “dig deep” on topics that may be of importance to her students.

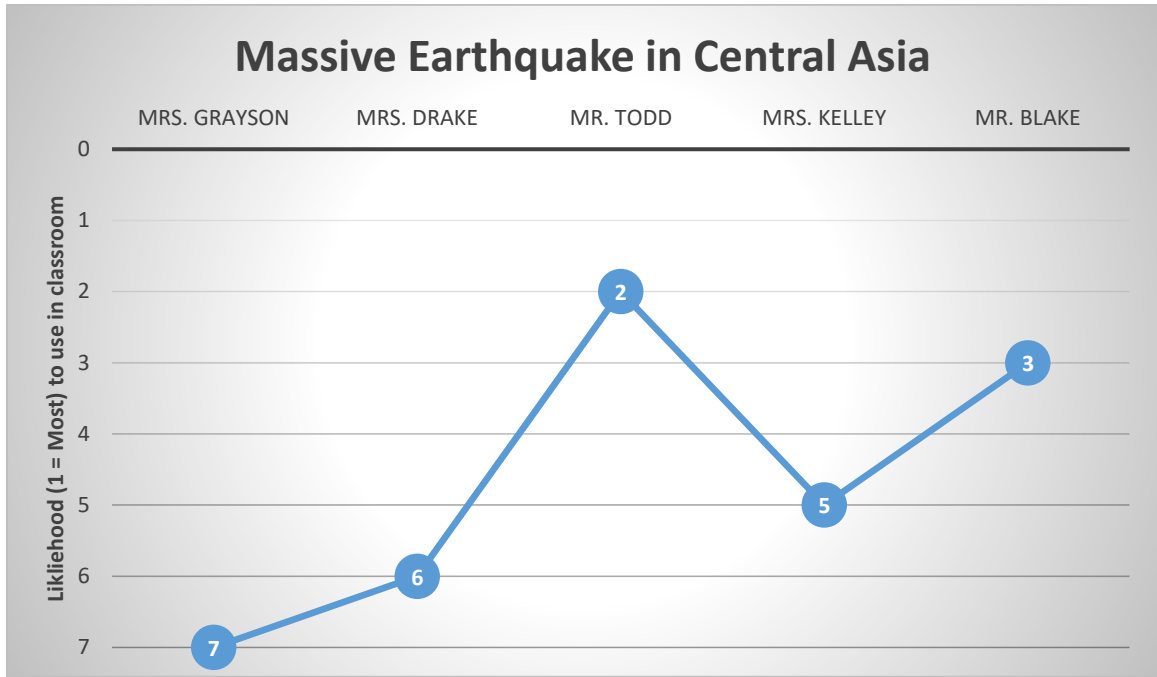
### Elicitation Task

Results from the interviews and initial data coding seem to indicate a willingness to discuss global current events in the classroom, but with significant challenges in the choice of topic and resultant pedagogy. In order to directly attempt to provide insight into the decision-making processes that teachers in this study routinely employ, this study also used an elicitation task in which participants were given the opportunity to make and explain their hypothetical choices when teaching global current events. Events were printed on printed fictional newspaper headings (see Appendix C) and were prompted to place the events in order from most likely (1) to teach in their classroom to least likely (7) and given the opportunity during and after the task to explain their choices. Resultant data from the task can be seen in the figures and table below.

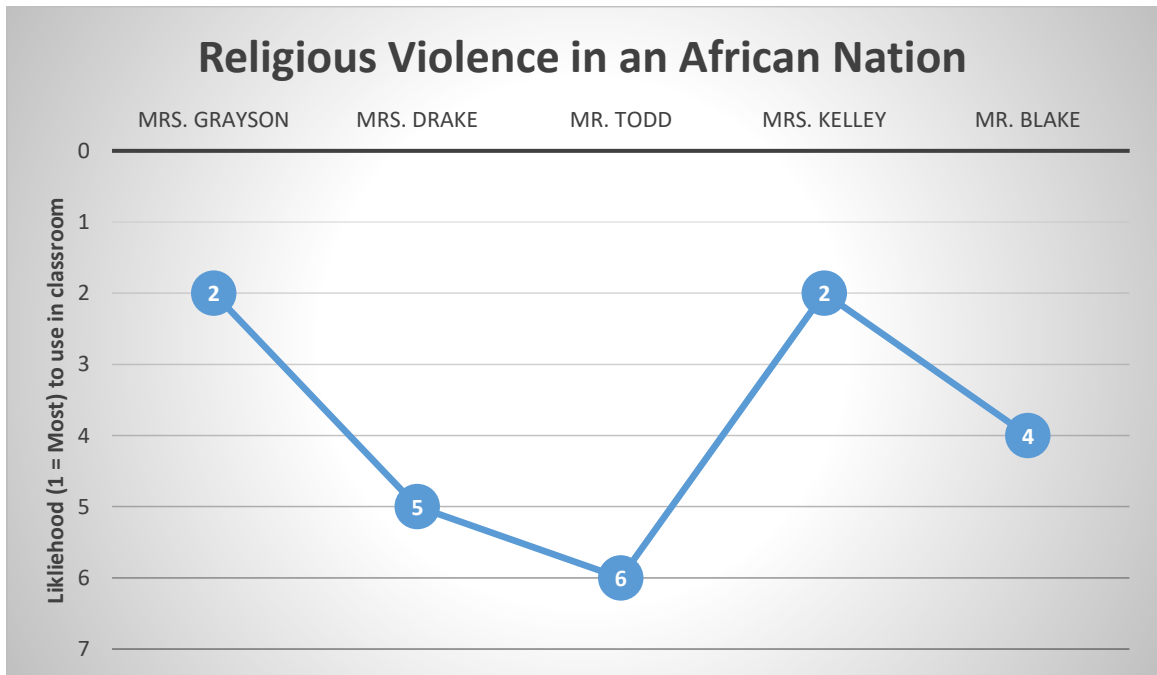
**Figure 4-1 Two Countries in Europe Scramble Military Aircraft Over a Disputed Territory**



**Figure 4-2 A Massive Earthquake Occurs in Central Asia**

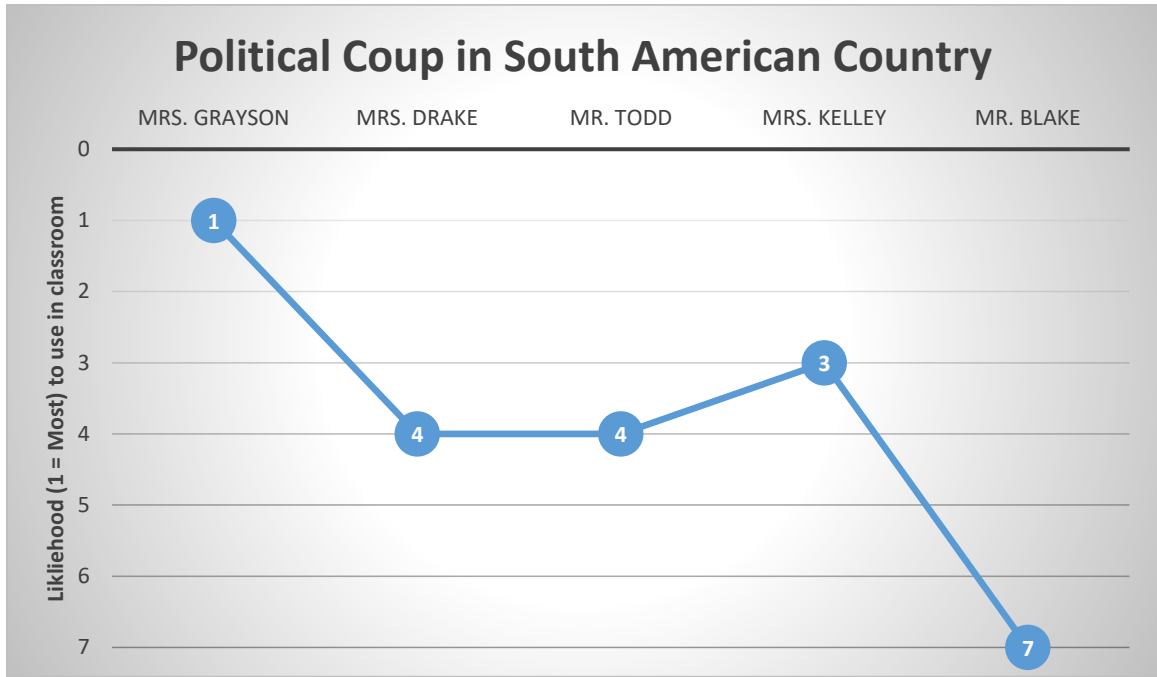


**Figure 4-3 Hundreds Are Killed in Religious Violence in an African Nation**

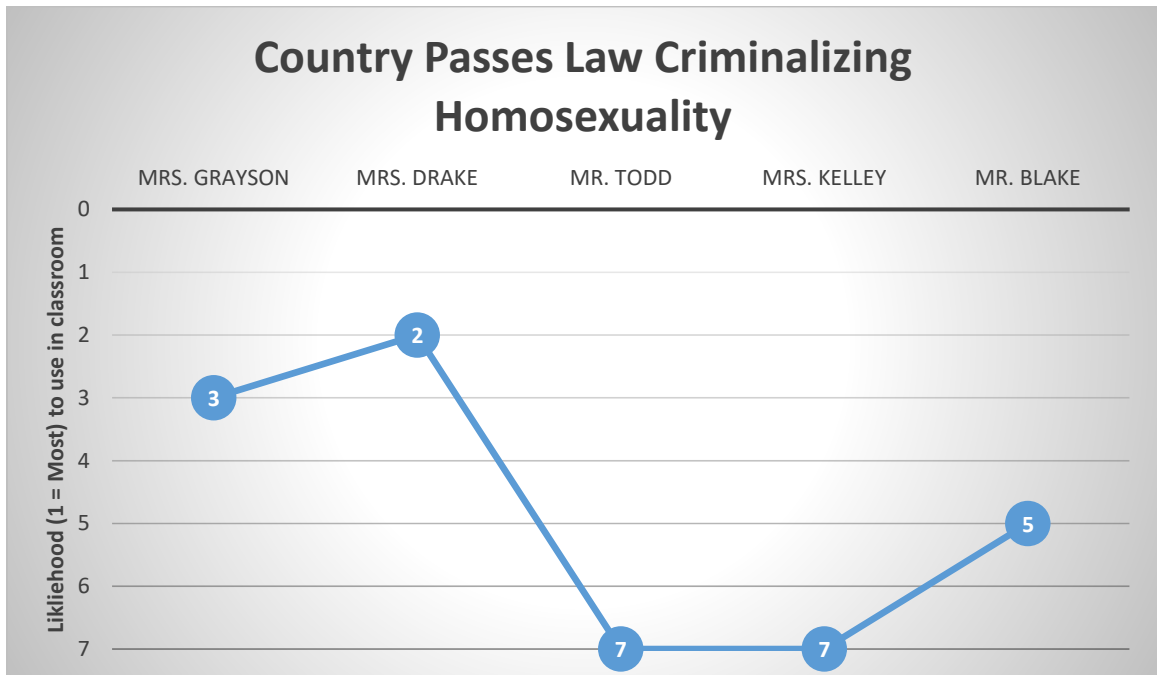




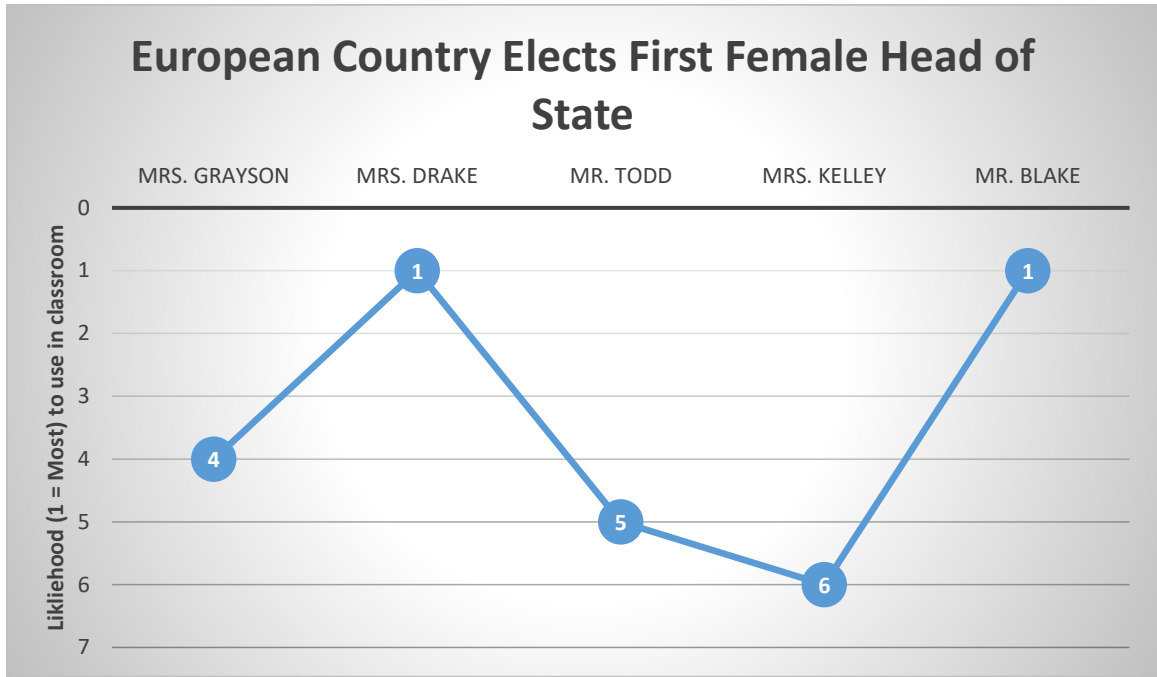
**Figure 4-4 A Political Coup Takes Place in a South American Country**



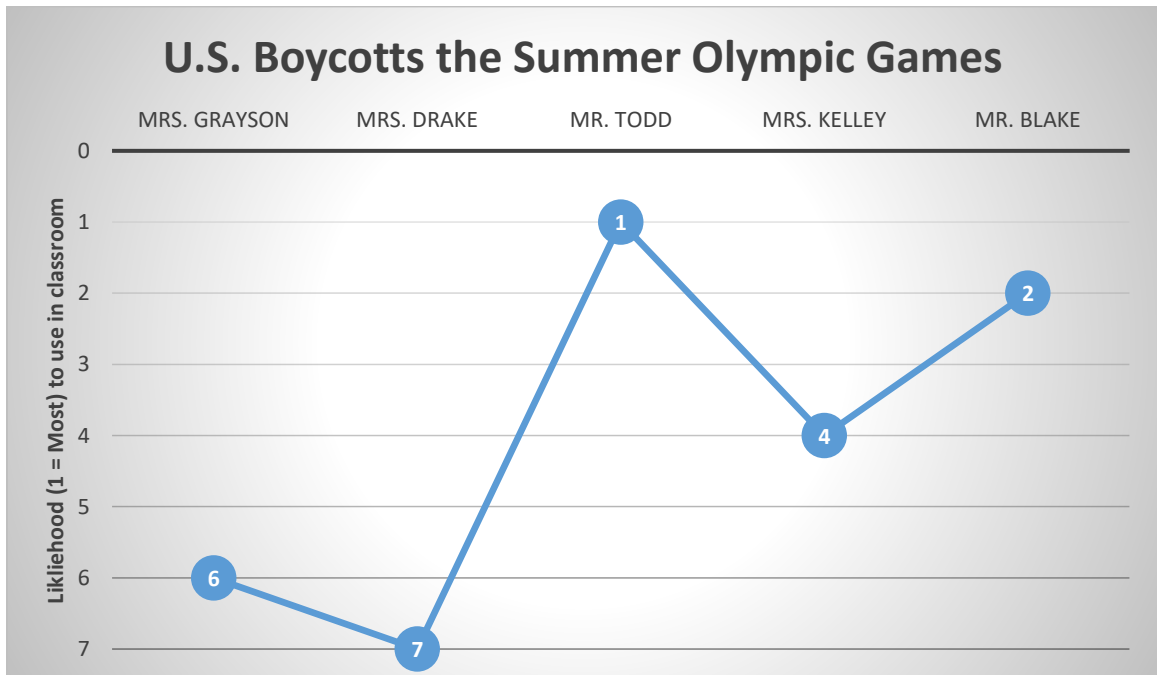
**Figure 4-5 A Developing Country Passes a Law Criminalizing Homosexuality**



**Figure 4-6 The First Female Head of State is Elected in a European Country**



**Figure 4-7 The United State Boycotts the Olympic Games for Political Reasons**



## Results

Results from the elicitation task indicate a number of interesting patterns and decisions made by the participants of this study. These can be seen in the table below.

**Table 4-5 Elicitation Task Results**

Headline	Mean	Times Chosen as “Most Likely”	Times Chosen as “Least Likely”
Scrambled Aircraft	3.6	1 (Mrs. Kelley)	0
Massive Earthquake	4.6	0	1 (Mrs. Grayson)
Religious Violence	3.8	0	0
Political Coup	3.8	1 (Mrs. Grayson)	1 (Mr. Drake)
Homosexuality Criminalized	4.8	0	2 (Mr. Todd & Mrs. Kelley)
Female Head of State	3.4	2 (Mrs. Wayne & Mr. Drake)	0
Olympic Boycott	4	1 (Mr. Todd)	1 (Mrs. Wayne)

Responses varied wildly from participant to participant, with multiple topics chosen as “most likely” to be taught and “least likely” with a variety of combinations in the middle. As can be seen in the table above, a lower overall mean score indicates a higher overall likelihood of

being taught in the classroom, and a higher score indicates a lower likelihood. In this instance, the topic of “First Female Head of State Elected” garnered an average score of 3.4, making it the most likely of these topics to be discussed in the classroom, while the topic of “A Developing Country Passes a Law Criminalizing Homosexuality ” was seen as the least likely, with an overall mean of 4.8. Interestingly enough, four of the topics, (Olympic Boycott, Political Coup, Female Head of State, and Scrambled Aircraft) all received placement as teachers’ most likely topics to be taught while four topics (Olympic Boycott, Homosexuality Criminalized, Political Coup, and Massive Earthquake) were seen as the least likely.

Teachers explained their reasoning throughout the task and were asked after their rankings were completed to share their thought processes while determining the order. Two of the teachers, Mrs. Wayne and Mr. Drake chose the Female Head of State topic as their most likely to use in the classroom, with Mrs. Wayne explaining, “when we talk about global current events, I like to select things that are breaking news or unheard of. There is something setting a precedent here and it’s important to recognize it” (Interview P2.3, p. 2). Similarly, Mr. Drake posited that “so many of my students are going to find [the topic] to be celebratory” and added that due to its nature, “it’s not like an intense uncomfortable conversation to have” (Interview P5.3, p. 2). Mr. Drake clarified this comment later in the interview by arguing that he could approach the topic by comparing it to “other decisions that may have looked questionable at the time” and have students “construct timelines of events that are similar as a way to see the progress minority groups have made” (Interview P5.3, p. 4). In either instance, responses from the participants would seem to indicate that the celebratory and novelty of the event as reasons for their decisions and saw it as an opportunity to connect what was happening in the world to their planned curriculum.

Two of the other events that were selected as first choices by teachers in this study were driven much more by the direct connection between it and what was currently being taught in their classroom. Mr. Todd chose the U.S. Olympic Games Boycott due to the fact that he “had just recently done a unit on political protests and this would fit perfectly” and that students already have “interest in anything that has to do with sports” (Interview P3.3, p. 2). This connection was important to him as “it wouldn’t take much background” to find a relevant connection to the material he had covered in his class and that ultimately, students own innate interests could help him in delivering the content (Interview P3.3, p. 2). Similarly, Mrs. Grayson cited the Political Coup topic as the most relevant to her classroom due to her students’ use and monitoring of “the tool Freedom House” which “gives a score for every nation on the freedom that people enjoy” (Interview P1.3, p. 2). She continued by stating her students “would find it the most interesting because it would have the potential to be able to show them the changes over the next week or two” and “watch the real effects of political insurgency in real time” (Interview P1.3, p. 3). These curricular connections were seen as critical in the decision-making processes of these teachers and formed the basis for their selections.

Perhaps the most surprising response to their defense of their first choice came from Mrs. Kelley. Mrs. Kelley chose ‘Two Countries in Europe Scramble Military Aircraft’ as her most likely topic and commented that it was “the most immediate and scary” of the given topics (Interview P4.3, p. 2). When asked to clarify this comment, Mrs. Kelley argued that “it is something that people would be talking about at home and it can be scary to know that some countries just don’t like us at all” (Interview P4.3, p. 3). To Mrs. Kelley, the selection of this topic as the most likely to be discussed in the classroom was less about the potential connection to the curriculum, but what may elicit the most shocking responses both at home and in the

classroom. “A couple of years ago” she added, “there was a kid on his phone and he said, ‘I just got a pop-up – Russia just invaded Ukraine’ and this type of topic seems like it would do the same for them” (Interview P4.3, p. 3). In this way, Mrs. Kelley seems to be drawing from past experiences and seems to indicate that the immediacy of the event is of the utmost importance when deciding what topics to teach.

While immediacy seemed to be a deciding factor on what Mrs. Kelley looked to focus upon in the classroom, she was also acutely aware of the controversial nature that some of the headlines potentially posed. In selecting her least likely headline to be taught in class, Mrs. Kelley, along with Mr. Todd, chose ‘A Developing Country Passes a Law Criminalizing Homosexuality.’ “It’s just...uncomfortable” argued Mrs. Kelley when asked why this was chosen as her least likely option, adding “we still have a lot of kids these days who are outright homophobic” and that while she would “love to” teach topics such as these “I have to know when to put a lid on it and let it go” (Interview P4.3, p. 4-5). Mr. Todd felt similarly uncomfortable with the topic stating “I’m not in a position to really dive into this topic in any of my classes, especially this being my first year [at this school]” (Interview P3.3, p. 3). Both teachers here cited their own personal discomfort with the topic as deciding factors in their choices and felt as though avoiding the topics altogether would help them avoid personal or professional pitfalls that may occur as a result.

When discussing the other three least likely topics to be used in their respective classrooms, Mrs. Wayne, Mrs. Grayson, and Mr. Drake all cited a similar rationale: the lack of relevancy to their students’ lives or curriculum in the classroom. “Unless I have a student of South Asian heritage” argued Mrs. Grayson “I would probably not even mention the earthquake in class” (Interview P1.3, p. 3). Similarly, Mrs. Wayne stated that the Olympics “have gone and

passed already” and that unless there were “other reasons to discuss the boycott, like some international conflict” it probably would not come up organically in her classroom (Interview P2.3, p. 4). Mr. Drake, chose the Political Coup as his least likely due to the fact that he tends to “teach a lot of freshmen” and added that “there is very little chance I can give them enough background knowledge to make sense of a political coup as it is happening” (Interview P5.3, p. 3). In each of these instances, disinterest or unfamiliarity with the topics were most commonly cited as reasons for avoidance, and while acknowledgment of their potential relevance was noted (i.e. the presence of a student who may identify with an affected culture) they simply did not see a natural fit in their current classrooms.

What this task was able to demonstrate overall were the ways in which many of these teachers come to make decisions in their classrooms regarding the topics that they choose to spend their time discussing or avoiding. Overall, decisions of relevance and tone seemed to be of most importance for each of these teachers and determining not simply if there were connections to be made, but how the focus on each topic may be received by students, staff, and community was critical in their decision-making process. Ultimately, these data help support many of the findings seen in the initial codes and allow for the emergence of several important themes.

### **Emergent Themes**

Following the interviews and elicitation tasks, the initial codes gleaned were then grouped to form themes. Three major themes emerged from the data: Implementation, Positionality, and Self-Selection. Each of these themes can be seen represented in the table below and will be discussed at length throughout this section. These themes went through a member-checking process as well in order to ensure that participants felt as though their responses were being accurately represented and analyzed.

**Table 4-6 Emergent Themes**

Theme	<i>n</i> of participants contributing (N=5)	<i>n</i> of transcripts excerpts assigned
<p><b>Implementation:</b> Teachers claimed to use GCE mostly as a procedural task to facilitate discussion/find relevant connections to students’ lives and/or curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GCE used for procedural means</li> <li>• GCE used to facilitate discussion/draw connections</li> <li>• GCE not assessed/measured</li> </ul>	5	8
<p><b>Positionality:</b> Teachers claimed that their educational and personal backgrounds heavily influenced their perception of the importance of teaching GCE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GCE used due to personal interest</li> <li>• GCE believed to be important/support vision of schools</li> <li>• GCE usage direct result from own experiences</li> </ul>	4	7
<p><b>Self-Selection:</b> Teachers utilized GCE to supplement existing curriculum through various pedagogical strategies but felt constricted in their ability to address some topics due to external factors (community, administration, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to connect GCE to scripted curriculum</li> <li>• Felt constrained/uncomfortable in teaching some GCE topics due to one or more outside factors</li> <li>• GCE usage rarely as a standalone lesson or focus</li> </ul>	5	9

***Implementation***

The first major emergent theme of this study regards the implementation of global current events in their respective high school classrooms. Through the conduct of semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and an elicitation task, the data indicate that teachers in this study use global current events mostly as a procedural task to facilitate discussion/find relevant connections to students’ lives and/or curriculum. These tasks most often translate to the use of global current events topics as bellringer activities or short activities to engage student interest



before delving into what was seen as the scripted curriculum. While some teachers in this study claimed to use global current events in more rigorous pedagogy such as student-led inquiry, deliberation, or interviews, the use of global current events in these classrooms was largely in the form of discussion-prompting devices, usually occurring at the beginning of classrooms. Furthermore, while all teachers in this study cited the importance of global current events as an ongoing theme, there were no assessments or evaluations made to track student progress or understanding. As a result, global current events could be seen as a supplement to the curriculum in each of these classrooms, rather than their own distinct focus.

### ***Positionality***

The second major theme to emerge from the data collected for this study concerns the positionality demonstrated by each of the teachers. Throughout the course of the semi-structured interviews and elicitation task teachers in this study repeatedly claimed that their educational and personal backgrounds heavily influenced their perception of the importance of teaching global current events in the classroom. This included, but was not limited to, their own personal international travel, innate interests, and even their own trials and tribulations when attempting to make sense of unfolding global current events. Most notably, all teachers in this study saw the teaching of global current events, and the selection of topics focused upon in the classroom, as an obligation or responsibility that they did not take lightly, and reinforced their own positions on how education, social studies, and their pedagogy can influence students' lives and society for the better. This was echoed in their provided understandings of social justice education as well, as both the methods and topics chosen in their respective classrooms were born out of their own desire to make the world around them a more informed, compassionate, and just place.

### ***Self-Selection***

The final theme that seems to have emerged from the data is that while teachers utilized global current events to supplement existing curriculum through various pedagogical strategies, they often felt constricted in their ability to address some topics due to external factors including the perceived responses from their students, administration, or community at large. Teachers in this study all cited the importance of connecting their chosen topics to the scripted curriculum but often found themselves constrained in what they were able to choose daily. As a result, while a variety of pedagogical methods, including student-based inquiry, deliberations, and self-guided reflections projects were cited as appropriate methods when focusing on global current events, a more procedural-based approach was most often used.

### **Summary**

As seen throughout the data, teachers in this study actively attempted to implement global current events in their respective classrooms in a variety of ways. While most often used procedurally, as an introductory or connecting task to the scripted curriculum, global current events topics were shown to be a focal point of all five teachers in this study, and were said to be used as a direct result of the teachers' views on education, their roles in the classroom, and the potential for such topics to bring about social or cultural change. Through analysis of a combination of interview data, elicitation task results, and classroom observations, three themes emerged from this study that highlight the use of global current events in today's social studies classrooms: the abbreviated use of global current events in the pedagogy (implementation), teachers' beliefs regarding the importance of global current events as seen through their unique experiences and perspectives (positionality) and the selection, and avoidance, of certain global current events due to a litany of reasons, including personal comfort, outside constraints, or

curricular relevance (self-selection). Chapter five will continue the discussion of these findings, specifically examining the theoretical frameworks guiding this research, previous studies into the pedagogy and practice of global current events education and concluding with an exploration of a potential new model to approaching global current events in today's classrooms.

## **Chapter 5 - Discussion**

### **Introduction: Global Current Events Pedagogy**

The data from this research study established that educators today are faced with a series of difficult choices when it comes to routinely addressing global current events education in the classroom. Whether due to constraints felt inside or outside the classroom walls, the educators in this study shared that the current use of global current events in their classrooms was most often insufficient but that there was little they felt could change to engage with such topics on a more frequent or in-depth basis. These findings align with many prior studies into global current events pedagogy, as often though teachers agree that such content is important, they struggle to find ways to effectively implement them into their classrooms (Barton & Ho, 2022, Haas & Laughlin, 2000; Wilson et al., 1999; Evans & Saxe, 1996; Soley, 1996; Houser, 1995). Furthermore, the use of global current events topics and issues as mostly a procedural task, as was reported by the teachers in this study, has been seen in other studies (Haas & Laughlin, 2000; Wilson et al., 1999) and echoes the argument that what is taught in the social studies is often subject to “time and circumstances” (Vontz et al., 2010).

It is within these circumstances, however, that important decisions were seen to be made daily by the teachers in this study. Tucker (1990) argued that “teachers, not textbooks, appear to be the primary carriers of global education” (p. 114) and each of the five educators in this study supported such a claim. Throughout the interviews, classroom observations, and elicitation task results, the teachers in this study shared their specific reasoning for making choices on what to teach and felt as though they were independently deciding what was most important to either share or discuss with their respective students. This autonomy in selection aligned with prior

studies that have shown that teachers' meanings ascribed to such ideas as global education can shape classroom practice and understandings (Calderhead, 1987; Olson, 1988; Clark & Yeager, 1987). As such, and as was seen in prior studies such as Pike (1997), the teachers in this study demonstrated pedagogy that was not strongly influenced by prevalent theory, but rather a combination of school culture, personal and professional experiences, and their own beliefs and comfort levels.

Perhaps most interesting when looking at the data from this study, and particularly the results of the elicitation task, is that while all five teachers taught within the same district, and thus, shared communities and similar (sometimes overlapping) students, there was little consensus in terms of the topics that were most often chosen as potentially viable for their respective classrooms. Data from the elicitation task varied wildly, with several topics sharing both the 'most likely' and 'least likely' to be taught monikers, and little shared overlap between teachers' opinions. These findings seem to suggest, much like the work of Pike and Selby (2000) that global education is less a matter of content as it is a style of pedagogy and way of seeing the world. Several factors, including years of experience in the classroom, personal comfort levels, and perceived relevance to the students all seem to have factored into the decision-making processes during the elicitation task, and highlight the personal nature of global current events pedagogy as a whole. As Gaudelli (2011) indicated in his work, global educators need to consistently engage in a "process of reflection and revision" when incorporating global current events content in their classrooms and the teachers in this study seemed to understand both the choices they routinely make as well as their own ever-shifting perceptions of the constraints placed upon them and their classroom.

## **Applying Theory**

Two theoretical perspectives were used when analyzing the resultant data from this study: the Asia Society's (2011) model of global competency and Amartya Sen's (2009) vision of social justice. The data from this study established that educators who are actively engaged in the teaching of global current events incorporate many elements from both models into their pedagogy, while also feeling constrained within their practices to fully achieve the goals of either. In other words, while the teachers in this study indicated a willingness to achieve the goals of both global competency and social justice education, it was clear throughout that neither was seen as achievable nor practical in practice.

In the Asia Society model outlined by Mansilla and Jackson (2011), students should be viewed as investigators, achieving global competence through a combination of asking and researching critical questions and answerable problems. In this light, students are often tasked with the challenge of connecting the local to the global and encouraged to ask questions regarding global current events that may help to both make sense of the ongoing phenomenon and make relevant connections to their own lives. The teachers in this study echoed this sentiment, as many of them felt as though relevance was one of the critical factors in both deciding what to teach, and how to teach it to their students. Global current events that were chosen for use in the classroom, in the minds of these teachers, were ones that had both global impact and local relevance, and the connections between what was happening globally and, in the communities, and lives of the students were often cited as critical to these teachers when selecting what to teach. These choices served to facilitate achievement of the first two competencies of Mansilla and Jackson's (2011) model, the investigation of the world and

weighing of perspectives, as well as echo Hanvey (1976) and Merryfield (1998) in the creation of a body of knowledge and awareness of globally significant issues.

Beyond this however, teachers in this study rarely utilized global current events as a means to achieve the next two aspects of global competency outlined by Mansilla and Jackson (2011), communication and action. These two processes, when viewed through the lens of global competency, serve as a much more dynamic process, as both are contingent upon students using their newfound understandings of global current events to communicate with one another and establish ways in which they can work together towards a common goal. This is an integral part of achieving global competency and demands that students must “view themselves as players in the world” (p. 11) and participate in meaningful ways with the content, both personally and collaboratively, when discussing prevailing world conditions, issues, and trends. The data in this study seem to indicate that due to the ways in which global current events were discussed and used in the classroom, few opportunities were given for students to engage in these ways with their developed understandings. Instead, seeing connections between what was happening globally and what was already being taught in the classroom was of the utmost importance, and while ultimately such focus may lead to action in the future on the part of the students, little time was dedicated to explicitly fostering these skills in the classroom. In other words, while teachers in this study felt as though making global current events relevant to their students’ lives was an important step in what they chose to focus on, the practical reality was that connection to the curriculum was seemingly a larger factor in their decision-making process.

Given that global competence has not only been viewed as a core educational aim for the 21<sup>st</sup> century but one that has been established as a key term in the discussion of global education (Doerr, 2018; Ndubuisi et al., 2022; Mansilla & Wilson, 2020; Majewski, 2022; Han & Zhu,

2022; Auld & Morris, 2019; Yacob et al., 2022) these findings are concerning. While certainly introducing issues of global current events and weighing multiple perspectives is an important step in establishing global competence, the lack of opportunities for students to deliberate, discuss, and act upon these newfound realizations can serve to not simply undermine the importance of the events, but diminish the potential for students to truly achieve global competence from the classroom. Furthermore, while the teachers in this study claimed that drawing connections to students' lives was a critical step in deciding what global current events to discuss in the classroom, little evidence of this was seen either in the classroom observations or interviews that would indicate these connections were explicitly made.

Two teachers from this study, however, Mrs. Wayne and Mr. Drake displayed a willingness to push beyond the procedural in their approach to global current events in the classroom and move closer to the global competency model argued for by Mansilla and Jackson (2011). Both teachers highlighted the occasional usage of an inquiry-based approach, where they employed pedagogy that asked students to compare differing global events and encouraged students to “weigh evidence and scenarios” frequently as a means to further discussion and develop deeper understandings (Interview P2.2, p. 1). These methods seem to indicate that, given the opportunity within the curriculum, both Mr. Drake and Mrs. Wayne would ideally find ways to encourage global competency in the classroom and potentially move students towards a more action-focused approach to global current events.

The other theoretical framework used to guide this study was based on the social justice work (2009) of Amartya Sen, and particularly the ways in which his contextual approach to social justice can serve as a means to advance justice through the social studies and specifically, the teaching of global current events. Sen's theory revolved around three central elements



regarding social justice-thinking: 1) it must be comparative in nature; 2) one must recognize the role of one's own identity; and 3) public reasoning can serve as an effective tool in the process. These three elements coalesce to form the basis for social justice thinking, and when combined with the work of social studies scholars such as Parker (2003), and many others who have advocated for additional pedagogical efforts based on discussion and dialogue (Burenheide, 2017; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Hess, 2009; Kunzman, 2006; Vontz & Leming, 2005) it becomes clear that successful global current events pedagogy must not simply identify important topics, but provide space for their deliberation to occur as well. Results from this study indicate that this simply is not the case.

While all of the educators in this study were willing to use global current events as they unfolded as a topic of discussion the classroom, few managed to share pedagogy that displayed the opportunities to develop dispositions required of Sen's view on justice. No opportunities, either identified through the interviews and classroom observations, were given that seemed to utilize global current events topics in ways that would allow students to engage in self-reflection, and most were quickly moved past once a basic understanding was reached by the class. In doing so, little chance was given for students to explore their own identities and roles as citizens, and instead the use of global current events was seen more as a form of curricular currency – a task needed to be completed before moving onto the planned content. Clark et al. (2010) argued that the goal of civic educators needs to be focused on the development of “citizens who can look carefully at society, ask critical questions about issues, and use democratic means to solve public problems” (p. 52) and while the participants of this study seemingly encouraged students to look carefully at some topics (including the developing conflict in Ukraine/Russia, issues of the

environment, etc.) little effort was made to encourage students to ask questions or move towards public and social action after the initial tasks were completed.

Inevitably, the results of this study, when seen through each of these models, highlight the need for global current events to be expanded pedagogically in today's classrooms. Whether due to the constraints felt by the teachers, both internally and externally, or simply the lack of comfort in unknown and unfolding material, it is clear that the teachers within this study were unable to ultimately display the goals of either global competence or Sen's contextual social justice in the classroom. There are, however, important connections that can be made between the emergent themes seen in the data and Sen's view of justice, particularly in the ways in which the three core elements of Sen's vision of justice align with the participants' usage of global current events in their classrooms.

### ***From Comparative to Implementation***

Sen's first argument was that justice must be viewed as comparative in nature and that any singular, monolithic view of justice was not suitable for a robust understanding of social justice as it pertains to unfolding events around the world. In other words, what may be seen as just in one context, may be seen as unjust in another, making universal agreements not only difficult, but nigh impossible to achieve. In this study, each educator spoke of the need to use global current events in comparative means, either through connections made between the students' lives and experiences or between the global current event itself and the enacted curriculum. While the data indicate that little connections to students' lives were made, the implementation of global current events in each classroom seemingly attempted to encourage comparison and provided students with the opportunity to draw meaningful connections between themselves and their learned social studies content.

This finding is significant because it highlights the fact that while all of Sen's social justice model may not be fully actualized in these classrooms, the basis for understanding, and developing a comparative mindset, has been encouraged by each educator in this study through their usage of global current events topics as a procedural task at the onset of their classes. In doing so, these teachers are encouraging students to think globally, and to make important connections to the world around them, which often includes cultivation of the skills to hear and recognize competing principles and viewpoints. Teachers in this study shared multiple instances where they were encouraged after hearing their students ask important questions regarding the events they were discussing and frequently encouraged students to draw connections between what they had learned prior and the unfolding events. In this light, the implementation shown throughout this study of global current events seem to indicate that elements of Sen's comparative view on justice and the world is not simply achievable, but currently ongoing in these classrooms.

### ***From Identity to Positionality***

Sen's second element of his justice-thinking model revolved around the recognition of one's own identity as a critical factor to thinking in more just ways. Sen argued that positional objectivity, or the understanding that one's view of the world is wholly dependent on one's place within it, was integral to realizing social justice-thinking, and acknowledged the deeply personal, and reflective nature of the process. As seen noted previously, the educators in this study heavily referred to their own positionality as stewards of global current events education and often referred to their role as global educators as a "moral responsibility" or "duty" they were proud to uphold. Sen posited that when thinking in a socially-just way, it was impossible to remove oneself, or become fully objective, from your own identity, and that this recognition was key to

understanding the ways in which you view the world and developing events. The teachers in this study echoed this mentality and universally agreed that the decisions they made in the classroom were largely the result of not only their own pedagogical decision-making, but their own subjective views on education and society as a whole.

Often, particularly in today's education climate, teachers are encouraged to be objective in their teaching and pedagogy, and dissuaded from divulging their own opinions, beliefs, or views. In this study, the teachers demonstrated not simply a willingness to discuss global current events but felt as though it was imperative to their positions as social studies educators. Their positioning of themselves as reflective, thoughtful, change agents allowed them each to address topics that were outside the curriculum and thus provide students with what could often be seen as a more subjective view of the world and its unfolding events. As a result, the teachers in this study were acutely aware of their own identities as social studies educators and showed consistent reflection in their practices and pedagogy.

### ***From Public Reasoning to Self-Selection***

Sen's third element, public reasoning, focused mainly on the use of reasoned discourse as a means to uncover and retreat injustices, and the collaborative measures that can be taken to identify and act upon potentially controversial issues. It is within this particular element that the teachers in this study felt the most constrained, with multiple teachers citing or highlighting issues or topics that they either could or *should* not teach in the classroom due to a variety of factors. While the individual constraints varied, from either personal discomfort with the topic, to perceived external pressures exerted upon the teachers from either the administration or public (i.e. parents), a common thread amongst the teachers in this study was the apparent tension

between their own subjective choices in teaching global current events and their duties to focus on content agreed upon by the school and/or district.

In many ways, the self-selection process demonstrated by the teachers in this study showcased the delicate nature of teaching global current events today and the difficulty in achieving Sen's view of public reasoning. While each teacher explicitly stated they felt some form of an obligation, duty, or responsibility to teach global current events in their classroom, their willingness came with the caveat of being able to withstand either the scrutiny or the uncertainty the topic would inevitably bring. In some cases, this led teachers in this study to avoid topics altogether (as seen in the elicitation task results) and, despite their potential nature to invoke public discourse and action amongst their student population, chose topics that were more aligned with either their own comfort-level or that they perceived to be more comfortable within their current environment. Perhaps this is where Sen's model is most critical, as while finding moments to reason publicly about unfolding global events may not always prove effortless, through a focus on more controversial or uncomfortable topics, students may find themselves most civically motivated to act outside the classroom. By the teachers in this study actively avoiding particular global current events topics, pedagogical opportunities to discuss and actualize student action activism may have been missed altogether, in lieu of more comfortable or widely accepted content.

### **Extending Theory**

At the conclusion of this study, there was evidence that all the teachers in this study, particularly Mr. Drake and Mrs. Wayne, found ways to extend the theories of Sen and the Asia Society to their own practices and engage with their students in global current events. Mr. Drake especially saw to it that students understood each day that cultivating a global mindset was

critical for his students' success and constantly worked with students in ways that encouraged them to think and question what was happening in the world. Mrs. Wayne repeatedly mentioned the importance of critical reflection regarding her own practices and determined that through her vast overseas experiences, students were hopefully able to gain a greater appreciation of the world around them and encouraged them to think globally whenever possible, regardless of how it may or may not personally affect them. In each classroom, simply through the process of introducing global current events, even as a procedural task, some of the teachers in this study were able to actualize elements of each framework and extend them to their own pedagogy and practice.

Conversely, the constraints felt by Mrs. Kelley and Mr. Todd in particular served to limit the global current events they used in the classroom and reflected on the process of their teaching in ways that seemed to lament the current system in which they found themselves. These constraints forced them to make curricular decisions that they seemed to disagree with at times, and while they hoped for a time in which they were able to provide additional depth for their students, saw little changing in the immediate future. Mrs. Kelley vehemently opposed the idea of teaching certain topics in her classroom, blaming "the climate" as a primary constraint and saw that even with her experience, she would be unwilling to broach issues that could be seen as controversial for fear of repercussions from parents or her administration.

Mrs. Grayson, as she reflected on her pedagogy, provided the most nuanced responses overall, and found personal connections to many of the global current events issues she chose in the classroom. As an advisor to a number of extracurricular clubs focused on social activism and outreach, Mrs. Grayson saw her role as one who not only recognizes her own political and social agency, but one who encourages students to recognize theirs as well. Through this, Mrs. Grayson

most typified what Makler (1999) argued for in structuring “roles within schools....so that students confront the kinds of issues faced by public citizens” (p. 270). This was seen through Mrs. Grayson’s insistence on finding “connections between [the past] and something that’s happening today in the world” when teaching global current events and how it can lead to students “asking questions” about what was occurring globally (Interview P1.1, p. 4). Classroom observations of Mrs. Grayson’s class supported these findings, as she placed posters and signs throughout her room encouraging students to *help others* or *think globally, act locally*. While little of the lessons viewed during conduct of this research showcased these connections to students’ lives outside the classroom, the mere presence of such messages, coupled with Mrs. Grayson’s interview responses, indicated critical pedagogical reflection that seemed to mirror much of what Sen and the global competence model encourages.

### **Summary**

Throughout this chapter, implications from the theoretical perspectives of two models, the Asia Society’s view of global competence and Amartya Sen’s contextual view of social justice were examined as a means to better understand the findings of this study. Additionally, elements of the literature that seemed to either support or contrast the data compiled through this research were noted, and ways in which these findings can serve to advance the practice and pedagogy of global current events educations were highlighted. To conclude the discussion, teachers’ own critical reflective thinking were explored as well as ways in which their pedagogy served to extend some of the elements of either theoretical model. Chapter six explores the implications of this study, including a revisiting of the original research questions, as well as limitations present within the study and opportunities for further research.

## **Chapter 6 - Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations**

### **Introduction: Summary of Study**

This study sought to better understand the ways in which a select group of high school social studies teachers approached, taught, and reflected upon their practices of global current events education. While consensus over the use of global current events in social studies classrooms exists throughout the literature, the procedures for their inclusion, appropriate pedagogical choices, and thought-processes teachers routinely engage with have thus far been largely unknown. As such, this study sought to examine these exact elements through a series of interviews and classroom observations so to better understand not simply what is taught in today's classes, but the decisions teachers must make daily regarding the inclusion or exclusion of particular topics and events. When seen through the lens of two different models for approaching global current events education, the Asia Society's global competence framework and Amartya Sen's view of contextual social justice, themes of implementation, positionality, and self-selection emerged, and it was shown that while elements of each were reached in the studied classrooms, all teachers within the study failed to fully actualize either model due to a variety of constraints.

Despite this, a number of important implications for teachers and practitioners emerged from this study, particularly in the ways in which global current events can be actualized in social studies classrooms. Four categories of practical applications, from curricular implementation to leadership modeling, are discussed below, each of which can serve to both encourage and incentivize social studies teachers to embrace the inclusion of global current events in the curriculum. In the end, the educators researched for this study showcased important insights into both how global current events can be effectively used as well as provide



encouraging reminder that while the selection of global current events can be largely one of personal choice, commonalities exist that can lead to the development of best practices and pedagogy for future teachers.

### Research Questions Revisited

The study was guided by four research questions, each of which served to further understand the practices, pedagogy, and perception of five social studies teachers who routinely engage in the teaching of global current events. From this, three themes emerged from the data: implementation, positionality, and self-selection, each of which can serve to provide insight into the initial research questions posed at the onset of this study. These connections can be seen in Table 6.1 below:

**Table 6-1 Research Questions Revisited**

Research Question	Themes Addressing Research Question
RQ1: How does a select sample of teachers conduct global current events education content?	Theme 1: Implementation varied among teachers but was most often used as a procedural task to stimulate discussion.  Theme 3: Additional pedagogical methods discussed as possible uses for GCE content in the classroom.
RQ2: How is the choice of instructional approaches related to teachers' beliefs concerning global current events and their importance in the curriculum?	Theme 2: Teachers' positionality was integral in the selection of topics and issues, particularly when viewed through the lens of their own experiences or visions of schooling.  Theme 3: Choice of GCE topics and issues dependent on relevancy to curriculum and students' lives
RQ3: What factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events topics in their classroom?	Theme 3: Selection process as seen throughout interviews and during elicitation task indicated topics chosen constrained by a variety of factors.
RQ4: How do the teachers in this study act to maintain or challenge particular visions of	Theme 1: Pedagogy was often limited to procedural tasks, and thus did not provide

<p>global competence and/or social justice education?</p>	<p>opportunities for full actualization of either model.</p> <p>Theme 2: Teachers believe that they have a moral responsibility or obligation to encourage students to improve the world around them.</p>
---	---

The research questions presented in the above table illustrate some of the emergent themes and findings that arose throughout the course of data collection and analysis. The first question that guided this study was:

- 1) How does a select sample of teachers conduct global current events education content?

In answering this question, a combination of data collection elements, including semi-structured interview responses, results from an elicitation task, and classroom observations were analyzed. Results indicated that while all five teachers used global current events in their respective classrooms, implementation was most often to use global current events as a procedural task, often held at the beginning of the class. As such, the use of global current events was often not an assessed or graded topic but rather served as a discussion-starter or “bellringer” to engage students’ interests before delving into the planned daily lesson. While a few additional methods, including inquiry-based discussions, were mentioned as ways in which global current events were utilized in the classrooms, none were observed throughout the data collection process and the majority of teachers in this study reported only minimal usage.

The second question for this study concerned the connection between teachers’ beliefs and their pedagogical choices, specifically:

- 2) How is the choice of instructional approaches related to teachers’ beliefs concerning global current events and their importance in the curriculum?

In addressing this question, teachers in this study were asked to reflect upon their own practices and pedagogy and consider their own positionality when choosing to engage with global current events in their respective classrooms. For all teachers in this study, while the use of global current events in the classroom was seen as a matter of personal choice, it was one that they all readily and willingly participated in, with some feeling as though they had a responsibility or duty attached. In some of the cases, the teachers felt compelled to discuss global current events due to their own subjective experiences and interests and found that they enjoyed the engagement of such topics with students on a regular basis. Furthermore, all teachers in this study expressed the importance of finding relevance between global current events and their students, either by connecting the events to their lives and society or to their previously learned or soon to be taught curriculum.

The third question, gathered largely through interview data and the elicitation task, specifically focused on how teachers make selections of global current events topics in their classrooms, namely:

- 3) What factors contributed to teachers' willingness to focus on global current events in their classrooms?

Teachers in this study expressed a great deal of constraints in their choices and shared a variety of reasons why certain topics were chosen or avoided in their classrooms. Throughout the conduct of the elicitation task, where teachers were asked to arrange a set of fictional headlines in order of likeliness to teach in their classroom, it was revealed that the teachers in this study felt constrained in what they could teach due to factors such as the community (i.e. parents and/or climate), curricular impediments (i.e. time), personal comfort levels with the topics themselves. Several of the teachers in this study reported that certain issues were too

controversial to discuss in their current situations, and while all five educators shared the same district, comfort in discussing topics such as homosexuality, gender, or religious violence varied wildly. In the end, teachers' willingness to choose global events topics was seen to be largely one of personal choice and highly dependent on a number of coalescing factors.

The final question focused on two specific theoretical models, the Asia Society framework for global competence and Amartya Sen's contextual view of social justice, asking:

- 4) How do the teachers in this study act to maintain or challenge particular visions of global competence and/or social justice education?

What the data showed here was that while initial elements for both models of global competence and social justice education seemed to be met, the pedagogical choices made in each classroom did not allow for full actualization of either. In most instances, the teaching of global current events was used as a task that engaged students in discussion and comprehension, but rarely moved into areas of global competence or contextual social justice that would lead to student action or civic engagement. Despite this, the teachers in this study all reported having realizations of the importance of encouraging students to think beyond the classroom and cited their own personal subjective interests as driving forces to their engagement with global current events in the classroom. This would indicate that while neither model is currently actualized in these classrooms, if given the opportunity, each teacher would be more open to exploring additional pedagogical methods and practices.

### **Implications**

The implications for this study are vast and many of the findings serve to not only suggest that global current events have a place in the curriculum, but that active participation in

their selection and pedagogy is vital to their success in the classroom. Three areas of implications, theoretical, practice, and future, are all discussed below.

This study employed the use of two specific frameworks through which to view the data, the Asia Society's global competence model and Amartya Sen's view of contextual social justice. What was shown through the data was that while both may serve as lofty ambitions for social studies classrooms, achieving full actualization of either model may prove difficult. Global education, and more specifically, global competence, requires that not simply students be given the opportunity to explore global current events, but to interact with them often, and frequently, and in ways that are not only pedagogically diverse, but challenging as well. Similarly, to engage with Sen's contextual view of social justice fully, students must not be given just the chance to uncover issues of injustice but be provided the tools and procedures to uproot them as well. In either model, student action is not simply a feature, but rather a necessity, and as was shown throughout this study, time, preparation, comfort, and external pressures can all serve to impede that process.

Practically, the results of this study indicate that while social studies teachers today may have an interest in teaching global current events, several factors must be considered before implementing them into the classroom. Firstly, all teachers in this study shared an innate interest in global current events, both as educators and in their personal lives, and this helped to drive their willingness to explore such topics in the classroom. Teachers who are interested in utilizing global current events must interact with the material often, even engaging with topics currently unknown to them, as unfolding issues of global importance that may arise in the classroom cannot be planned ahead of time. Additionally, as was shown throughout this study, global current events can be used effectively as a procedural task that serves to engage student interest

or connect them with what is happening in the world at large. While this may be seen as only minimal interaction with global current events, it can be a particularly powerful tool, especially to those new to the profession.

Arguably the most important practical implication of this research is that the selection of global current events topics, and their subsequent usage in the classroom, is largely one of personal choice and can be constrained by a variety of factors. As was seen throughout the data, teachers in this study expressed frustrations in their ability to address or discuss certain topics in the classroom, particularly those seen as controversial in nature. As such, several of the teachers opted to avoid topics such as these altogether when teaching current events while others felt a “moral responsibility” to present these issues to their students. In the end, these practical decisions were both largely personal and without any formal guidance, leaving each educator to make the professional decisions they thought were best for their respective situations. Practically, this indicates that the teaching of global current events, including the chosen pedagogy and the topics discussed, were solely up to the discretion of the individual educators.

This leaves the use of global current events in today’s social studies classrooms in a difficult spot. While the literature and this research overwhelmingly indicate that scholars and educators value the importance of incorporating global current events into the classroom, there seems to be difficulty in finding authentic ways to have students interact with them in complex pedagogical methods. Use of methods such as the narrative approach (Jacobowitz & Onore, 2004), student-led inquiry (Boyle-Baise & Zevin, 2009), concept mapping (Yelich-Biniecki, 2014), reflective journaling (Camicia & Dobson, 2010) and especially deliberation (Parker, 2003; Clark & Brown, 2011 & 2013; Barton & Levstik, 2004), were all largely ignored in these classrooms, citing constraints such as time in the curriculum or external constraints as major

factors for their avoidance. While overwhelmingly seen as effective procedures for approaching global current events and advancing the goals of global competence and social justice, it seems as though the teachers in this study simply were not able to enact them in their current situations.

Perhaps this is partly to be expected. As seen early in this study, the aims of global education have historically been overwhelmed with seemingly divergent goals and intentions (Anderson, 1982; Gaille, 1964; Becker, 1979; Case, 1993; Kirkwood, 2001; Kniep, 1986; Lamy, 1987; Tye, 1990) and such “amalgamations” as argued by Gaudelli (2011) have long led to a lack of understanding of the goals and aims of global education and thus, global current events, in the classroom. As was seen in the findings of this study, the teachers all saw themselves as global educators and leaders, and yet the ways in which they approach that task seem to vary from person to person, and while commonalities existed, they each had distinct processes for choosing what global events they were willing to teach and the pedagogy they would employ to address them. What this seems to imply is the need for reunification of what global current events and global education can and should be, and perhaps a broader understanding of which pedagogical methods have proven to be effective over time. This may serve to not only align social studies educators’ goals and conceptions of global current events but provide inspiration for those who are still hesitant to accept their inclusion into their classrooms.

### **Practitioner Takeaways**

For practitioners of high school social studies, and particularly those who are either currently implementing global current events into their curricula or simply interested in their inclusion, there are several important takeaways to consider from this study. These takeaways fell into four distinct categories: 1) Curricular Implementation; 2) Personal Relevance; 3) Topic Selection; and 4) Leadership Modeling. These can be seen in Table 6-2, below:

**Table 6-2 Practitioner Takeaways**

Theme Area	Takeaway
Curricular Application	C.A.1 – Global Current Events can be used as an effective procedural task at the beginning of class periods/lessons.  C.A.2 – Effective pedagogical methods for Global Current Events can include deliberation, reflective journaling, and student-led inquiry.
Personal Relevance	P.R.1 – Teachers hoping to incorporate Global Current Events in their classroom need to monitor and encourage their own innate interests in global affairs and issues.  P.R.2 – In order to effectively implement Global Current Events material, students must be able to make relevant and important connections to their own lives/curricula.
Topic Selection	T.S.1 – Teachers need to be aware of constraints and limitations placed upon them and their curricular choices, especially when focusing on controversial topics.
Leadership Modeling	L.M.1 – Teachers need to model thinking and actions that support the development of a globally competent/socially just student  L.M.2 – Teachers should embrace feelings of moral responsibility and/or obligation to encourage students to improve the world around them.

***Curricular Application***

While several pedagogical methods emerged from the data, it was clear that for practitioners hoping to include global current events topics in their classrooms, the most common usage (C.A.1) is as a procedural task at the beginning of a class period, lesson, or unit. The nature of an unfolding event of global importance can serve to grab the attention of high school students, and, with the immediacy of information today, may involve a topic that is already known to students before entering the classroom. While using global current events as a



procedural task may not serve to meet all the aims of the frameworks discussed throughout this study, it was undoubtedly a powerful tool for many of the teachers and one that they frequently utilized. When used as a bellringer or opening “hook” to a lesson, global current events can offer teachers the opportunity to engage students in a timely, and important, topic before moving to their planned curriculum.

Additional usages of global current events may include more student-led inquiry methods (C.A.2), particularly deliberations, narrative reflection, and journaling. With each of these strategies, social studies teachers across all disciplines can plan, develop, and implement lessons that focus intensely on global current events, and encourage students to discuss and make sense of news stories as they occur in real time. These methods may also lend themselves to inquiring about classroom subscriptions to services such as newspapers (print or online) or digital shorts offered by various news outlets to get quick snapshots of daily global current events. Overall, global current events can be used in a variety of pedagogical methods and designs and can lead to valuable student-led inquiry at all grade levels.

### ***Personal Relevance***

One common factor among teachers in this study was that all expressed innate interest in global current events in both their personal and professional lives, and credited these interests, and even travel overseas, as sparking their interest in implementing them into their classroom curricula (P.R.1). In order for teachers to effectively implement global current events in their classroom, it is vital that they themselves stay abreast of what is happening in breaking news and monitor, along with their students, new developments as they occur. Additionally, some of the teachers in this study cited international travel as a motivating factor in their focus on global topics in the classroom, and while that expectation is clearly not feasible for all teachers, there

are distinct advantages to broadening one's horizons and gaining appreciation for other cultures, customs, and occurrences. Teachers interested in using global current events content in their classroom should be aware of opportunities to embrace exposure to international cultures and travel and constantly evaluate ways in which they can merge their own interests and experiences with their desired curriculum.

In addition to teachers embracing their own innate interests in global current events, it was also shown in this study that effective global current events education provides relevant connections to students' lives and communities (P.R.2). Studies have long shown that students react positively to content and material that they find relevant to their own lives and situations. With the teaching of global current events, it can be difficult to find connecting threads between what is happening internationally and locally, but these threads may be vital to engaging and retaining student interest. Educators interested in teaching global current events can learn from the teachers in this study who routinely attempted to connect what was happening in the news to either their enacted or scripted curricula and found ways to encourage active student participation when possible. Holding daily updates on unfolding events, creating a classroom fundraiser for relief efforts in natural disasters, or simply encouraging discussions at the onset of a period can all prove to be useful ways to encourage students to connect with events outside their immediate worldview.

### ***Topic Selection***

Given that the teaching of global current events is, by its nature, both unscripted and unexpected, it is important that teachers be aware of their own comfort level in approaching certain topics and issues (T.S.1). As was seen throughout this study, teachers expressed feelings of constraint when choosing global current events issues to focus upon in their respective

classrooms, citing pressures from administrators, the district, and even the surrounding community as limiting factors. This hesitancy was even greater when broaching topics that could be viewed as potentially controversial, and led to some teachers in this study, particularly those newer to the profession, to be unwilling to discuss them at all. Teachers need to be aware of such potential constraints when approaching the teaching of global current events, and perhaps even communicate frequently with colleagues and administration to better understand the expectations of the school, district, and community-at-large.

### ***Leadership Modeling***

If the aims of global competency and contextual social justice are to be fully met and realized in schools today, teachers must model core elements of each in the teaching of global current events (L.M.1). Most notably, this involves not merely introducing global current events as a procedural task in classrooms, but using them to encourage public reasoning and discourse, develop robust understandings of the context in which the event is occurring, and cultivate the space for students to act. Modeling behavior that is consistent with the aims of global competence and contextual social justice can be a powerful tool in encouraging students to think globally, and, as was seen by several teachers in this study, can lead to valuable pedagogical and curricular insights in the social studies.

Additionally, some teachers in this study expressed a feeling of moral or professional obligation to embrace the teaching of global current events education, even in the face of potential constraints or controversy. While it would be impractical to imply that all teachers feel a sense of moral responsibility to include global current events material into their classrooms, those who do feel such a calling should attempt to embrace such responsibility and utilize it as motivation when approaching similar topics (L.M.2). In doing so, students may not only benefit

from the actual content of a global current events focused lesson, but the rationale for its inclusion in the curriculum as well. Teachers should be encouraged to share the responsibilities they feel in choosing to teach global current events, as this may emphasize not only their importance, but model a more globally aware thought process.

### **Limitations & Suggestions for Further Research**

While important findings can be gleaned from this study regarding the use and perception of global current events, there are a number of limitations that could be improved upon with future research. One such limitation is simply the size and scope of the study. In only focusing on five high school social studies teachers within a singular district, the findings of this study are not generalizable to all educators and was very narrow in scope. This design was purposeful, given the intensive time requirement of the interviews and elicitation task but severely limited the findings as results could vary greatly when applied to other districts, teachers, or areas of the country. Future studies should seek to engage with a much larger set of participants to better understand practices and pedagogy more broadly. Additionally, while the focus of the study was on the ways in which teachers prepare and implement lessons in global current events, additional research into the effectiveness of such lessons could serve to illustrate important student data, including interest in the topics, assessment data, and engagement surveys. These data may prove valuable in helping to realize not simply the result of these lessons, but also the ways in which they may serve to encourage student action or inaction as a result.

A further opportunity for this study could be to utilize additional theoretical frameworks when attempting to understand the role of global current events in today's curriculum. While the Asia Society's global competence framework and Sen's contextual social justice models may serve as possible visions of the goals of global education, the varied nature of this area lends

itself to further exploration, and other theoretical frameworks may provide a wholly different view in the goals of using global current events in the classroom. This could be particularly fascinating when considering competing conceptions of the self, issues of identity, and the establishment of one's own global perspective, as each of these elements proved illuminating throughout this study. Additionally, a longitudinal approach to the research questions, particularly the ways in which these teachers' views change over time and experience could provide important data regarding teacher growth, professional development, and the adjustments made in a rapidly changing world.

Another area research that may prove beneficial when better understanding the scope and depth of global current events education is increased quantitative studies focused on student understanding and comprehension. One limitation of this particular study was by focusing solely on the teachers and their unique practice and pedagogy, student assessment and achievement was largely ignored. Future studies in the effectiveness of global current events study in relaying difficult concepts such as economic dependence, political decision-making, and international affairs could prove useful for those teachers seeking guidance in their own implementation of such lessons. Furthermore, additional research in the field of pre-service teacher training could also prove useful as new teachers adopt and adjust unfamiliar strategies to social studies education in their burgeoning professions. By studying the ways in which new teachers approach the teaching of global current events, and their potential hesitancy to create such lessons, we may be better suited to address global current events in teacher preparation courses.

## **Conclusion**

The results of this study highlight the importance of considering global current events in social studies classrooms. While largely used as a procedural task, the teachers' willingness to

discuss global current events in their respective classrooms is a key step to encouraging globally competent, and socially-just student citizens. Furthermore, the process through which each teacher selects global current events topics and issues to use in their classroom provided insight into the professional decision-making educators must engage with each school day. In order to fully actualize the goals of global education, educators must continue to find ways in which to engage their students with meaningful pedagogy that can extend beyond the procedural and encourage deliberation and collaboration when addressing global current events topics.

Ultimately, the teaching of global current events in social studies classrooms is at a vital crossroads. As external pressures and constraints continue to push and pull teachers towards increasingly scripted curricular choices, the choice to embrace and incorporate global current events continues to be a decidedly personal one, dictated largely by the motivations and inclinations of teachers themselves. As seen throughout this study, in order for global current events education to be effectively used, social studies educators must take it upon themselves to find ways to encourage students to think globally, act locally, and monitor their own awareness of breaking news from around the world. Teachers here, despite expressing a variety of issues that could have prevented their usage of global current events, chose willingly to engage their students in these topics, wade into the waters of uncertainty, and model attributes of a globally competent, socially-just citizen. These five teachers exemplified effective ways of approaching global current events education and provided a blueprint not only for their own success, but for all social studies educators looking to incorporate similar lessons. In learning of their thought processes, procedures, and pedagogy, we not only can begin to see a path to a more effective global current events approach to education, but to an increasingly aware and active citizenry as well.

## References

- Ainsworth, M. T., Ortlieb, E., Cheek, E. J., Pate, R. S., & Fetters, C. (2012). First grade-teachers' perceptions and implementation of a semi-scripted reading curriculum. *Language and Education, 26*, 77-99.
- Anderson, C. C. (1982). Global education in the classroom. *Theory into Practice, 21*(3), 168-176.
- Asia Society. (2014). *International Studies Schools Network*. <http://asiasociety.org/international-studies-schools-network>
- Auld, E., & Morris, P. (2019). Science by streetlight and the OECS's measure of global competence: A new yardstick for internationalization? *Policy Futures in Education, 17*(6), 677-698.
- Baran, E. & AlZoubi, D. (2020). Human-centered design as a frame for transition to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 28*(2), 365-372.
- Barr, R. D., Barth, J. L, & Shermis, S. S. (1977). *Defining the social studies*. Bulletin No. 51. National Council for the Social Studies.
- Barrett, B., Burns, T. A., & Timberlake, M. (2018). Flipping the script: Teachers' perceptions of tensions and possibilities within a scripted curriculum. In B. Barrett, U. Hoadley, & J. Morgan (Eds.), *Knowledge, curriculum, and equity: Social realist perspectives* (pp. 167-182). Routledge.
- Barton, K. C. (2012). School history as a resource for constructing identities: Implications of Research from the United States, Northern Ireland, and New Zealand. In M. Carretero (Ed.), *History education and the construction of identities*. (pp. 93-107). Information Age Publishing.
- Barton, K. C., & Levstik, L. S. (2004). *Teaching history for the common good*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Barton, K. C., & Ho, L. (2022). *Curriculum for justice and harmony: Deliberation, knowledge, and action in social and civic education*. New York: Routledge.

- Barton, K. C. (2011). Elicitation techniques: Getting people to talk about things they don't usually talk about. Presentation to College of Education, University of Missouri.
- Becker, J. M. (1979). The world and the school: A case for world-centered education. In J. M. Becker (Ed.), *Schooling for a global age* (pp. 33-57). McGraw-Hill.
- Becker, J. M. (1982). Goals for global education. *Theory into Practice*, 21(3), 228-233.
- Becker, J. M. (1991). Curriculum considerations in global studies. In K. Tye (Ed.), *Global education: From thought to action* (pp. 67-84). Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- Berkowitz, S. (1997). Analyzing qualitative data. In J. Frechtling, & L. Sharp (Eds.), *User-friendly handbook for mixed-method evaluations*. National Science Foundation.  
[https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/chap\\_4.htm](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/chap_4.htm)
- Booth, R. A. (2023). Youth are interested in political action, but lack support and opportunities. *Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement*. Tufts University.
- Boulding, E. (1998). *Building a global civic culture: Education for an interdependent world*. Teachers College Press.
- Bowyer, B. & Kahne, J. (2020). The digital dimensions of civic education: Assessing the effects of learning opportunities. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 69, 1-11.
- Boyle-Baise, M., & Zevin, J. (2009). *Young citizens of the world: Teaching elementary social studies through civic engagement*. Routledge.
- Bruce, C. D. (2007) Questions arising about emergence, data collection, and its interaction with analysis in a grounded theory study. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 6(1).
- Butts, R. F. (1988). History and civic education. In B. R. Gifford (Ed.), *History in the schools: What shall we teach?* (pp. 61-81). Macmillan.
- Burenheide, B. (2017). Let the chips fall where they may: An analysis of a discussion strategy. A Paper Submitted to KREX: Manuscript, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS.
- Calderhead, J. (1987). Introduction. In J. Calderhead (Ed.), *Exploring teachers' thinking* (pp. 1-19). Cassell.



- Camicia, S. P., & Dobson, D. (2010). Learning how to respond to current events: Partner journals between U.S. preservice teachers and children. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(3), 576-582.
- Carl, N. M. (2014). Reacting to the script: Teach for America teachers' experiences with scripted curriculum. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 41*(2), 29-50.
- Carter, S. & Little, M. (2007). Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 17*(10), 1316-1328.
- Case, R. (1993). Key elements of a global perspective. *Social Education, 57*(6), 318-325.
- Castles, S., & Davidson, A. (2000). *Citizenship and migration: Globalization the politics of belonging*. Routledge.
- Carspecken, P. (1996). *Critical ethnography in educational research*. Routledge.
- Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (2013). *All together now: Collaboration and innovation for youth engagement*. Tufts University.
- Christensen, R., & Alexander, C. (2020). Preparing K-12 schools for a pandemic before it occurs. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 28*(2), 261-272.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1992). Teacher as curriculum maker. In P. W. Jackson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on curriculum* (pp. 363-401). Macmillan.
- Clark, J. S. & Brown, J. S. (2013). Developing civic agency in an international videoconference: Reflecting on audience and public voice in participatory media. *Journal of the Research Center for Educational Technology, 8*(2).
- Clark, J. S. & Brown, J. S. (2011). Empowered voices: Considerations from an international videoconference. *The Social Educator, 29*(1), 16-25.
- Clark, J. S., Vontz, T. S., & Barikmo, K. (2008). Teaching about civil disobedience: Clarifying a recurring theme in the secondary social studies. *The Social Studies, 99*(2), 51-56.
- Clark, C. M., Yinger, R.J. (1987). Teaching planning. In J. Calderhead (Ed.), *Exploring teachers' thinking* (pp. 84-103). Cassell.
- Cochran, K. F., DeRuiter, J. A., & King, R. A. (1993). Pedagogical content knowing: An

- integrative model for teacher preparation. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 44, 263-272.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (1990). Research on teaching and teacher research: The issues that divide. *Educational Researcher*, 19(2), 2-10.
- Crabtree, C. (1989). Returning history to the elementary schools. In P. Gagnon and the Bradley Commission on History in the Schools (Eds.), *Historical literacy: The case for history in American education* (pp. 173-187). Houghton Mifflin.
- Craddock, A. (2007). Developing context in international civic education projects. *International Journal of Social Education*, 21(2), 123-141.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Crocco, M. S., & Costigan, A. T. (2007). The narrowing of curriculum and pedagogy in the age of accountability. *Urban Education*, 42(6), 512-535.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research*. Sage.
- Dewey, J. (1900). *The school and society*. University of Chicago Press.
- Dewey, J. (1987). Democracy and educational administration. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), *The later works of John Dewey 1925-1953* (Vol. 11, pp. 217-225). Southern Illinois Press.
- DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical Education*, 40, 314-321. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2929.2006.02418.x>
- Dilworth, P. P. (2006). Widening the circle: African American perspectives on moral and civic learning. In D. Warren & J. J. Patrick (Eds.), *Civic and moral learning in America* (pp. 103-118). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Doerr, N. M. (2020). 'Global competence' of minority immigrant students: Hierarchy of experience and ideology of global competence in study abroad. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 41(1), 83-97.
- Doyle, W. (1990). Classroom knowledge as a foundation for teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 91(3), 247-260.
- Doyle, W. (1993). Constructing curriculum in the classroom. In F. K. Oser, A. Dick, & J. Patry (Eds.), *Effective and responsible teaching* (pp. 66-79). Jossey-Bass.

- Edelman, L. (2020). *Planning for the use of video conferencing in preschool special education and early care and education during the COVID-19 pandemic*.  
[https://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/disaster/Planning\\_for\\_the\\_Use\\_of\\_Video\\_Conferencing\\_in\\_Preschool\\_during\\_COVID-19\\_Pandemic.pdf](https://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/disaster/Planning_for_the_Use_of_Video_Conferencing_in_Preschool_during_COVID-19_Pandemic.pdf).
- Eisenbach, B. (2012). Teacher belief and practice in scripted curriculum. *The Clearing House*, 85, 153-156.
- Eisner, E. W. (1995). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs*. Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Engle, S. H., & Ochoa, A. S. (1988). *Education for democratic citizenship: Decision making in the social studies*. Teachers College Press.
- Ernest, P. (1989). The knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of the mathematics teacher: A model. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 15, 13-34.
- Evans, R. (2004). *The social studies wars: What should we teach the children?* Teacher's College Press.
- Evans, R. W., & Saxe, D. W. (1996). Defining issues-centered education. In R. W. Evans & D. W. Saxe (Eds.), *Handbook on teaching social issues, NCSS Bulletin 93* (pp. 2-5). National Council for the Social Studies.
- Falk, R. (1994). The making of global citizenship. In B. van Steenberg (Ed.), *The condition of citizenship* (pp. 126-140). Sage.
- Feiman-Nemser, S., & Parker, M. B. (1990). Making subject matter part of the conversation in learning to teach. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 44, 263-272.
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2003). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Freire, P. (1970). *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.
- Gallie, W. B. (1964). *Philosophy and the historical understanding*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Gaudelli, W. (2011). *World class: Teaching and learning in global times*. Routledge.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. Basic Books.
- Getzels, J., & Jackson, P. (1963). The teacher's personality and characteristics. In N. Gage (Ed.),

- The handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 506-582). Rand McNally.
- Gleason, B., & von Gillern, S. (2018). Digital citizenship with social media: Participatory practices of teaching and learning in secondary education. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 21(1), 200-212.
- Goren H., & Yemini, M. (2017). Global citizenship education redefined – A systematic review of empirical studies on global citizenship education. *International Journal of Education Research*, 82, 170-183.
- Griffin, A. F. (1992 [orig. 1942]). *A philosophical approach to the subject-matter preparation of teachers of history*. National Council for the Social Studies.
- Grossman, P. L., Wilson, S. M., & Shulman, L. S. (1989). Teachers of substance: Subject matter knowledge for teaching. In M. C. Reynolds (Ed.), *Knowledge base for the beginning teacher* (pp. 23-36). Pergamon Press.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage.
- Gudmundsdottir, S., & Shulman, L. S. (1987). Pedagogical content knowledge in social studies. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 31, 59-70.
- Haas, M. E., & Laughlin, M. A. (2000). *Teaching current events: Its status in social studies today*. Unpublished manuscript. Retrieved from ERIC.
- Hahn, S. L. (1983). Building the foundation for global citizenship: a pilot project. *The Modern Language Journal*, 67(2), 152-158.
- Hancock, D. R. & Algozzine, B. (2017). *Doing case study research, a practical guide for beginning researchers* (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Hanvey, R. G. (1976). *An attainable global perspective*. Retrieved from the American Forum for Global Education. <http://www.globaled.org/>
- Harper, D. (2003). Developing a critically reflexive position using discourse analysis. In L. Finlay, and B. Gough (Eds.), *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences* (pp. 78-92). Blackwell Science.
- Hess, D. (2012). Should schools teach students to vote? Yes! *Social Education*, 76(6), 283-289.
- Hess, D. (2009). *Controversy in the classroom*. Routledge.

- Hess, D. (2004). Is discussion worth the trouble? *Social Education*, 68(2), 151-155.
- Houser, N. O. (1995). Social studies on the back burner: Views from the field. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 23(2), 147-168.
- Howard, T. C. (2018). Capitalizing on culture. *Young Children*, 73(2), 24-33.
- Hunt, M. P., & Metcalf, L. E. (1955). *Teaching high school social studies: Problems in reflective thinking and social understanding*. Harper and Row.
- Jacobowitz, T., & Onore, C. (2004). Programs in practice: Case-method teaching as democratic practice. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 41(1), 35-37.
- Jan S. & Zhu, Y. (2022). (Re)conceptualizing 'global competence' from the students' perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*.
- Johnson, J. C., & Weller, S. C. (2002). Elicitation techniques for interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 491-514). Sage.
- Johnston, H. (1995). A methodology for frame analysis: From discourse to cognitive science. In H. Johnston & B Klandermans (Eds.), *Social movements and culture* (pp. 217-246). University of Minnesota Press.
- Kahne, J., Hodgin, E., & Eidman-Aadahl, E. (2016). Redesigning civic education for the digital age: Participatory politics and the pursuit of democratic engagement. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 44(1), 1-35.
- Kirkwood, T. F. (2001). Our global age requires global education: Clarifying definitional ambiguities. *Social Studies*, 92(1), 10-16.
- Kliebard, H. M. (1995). *The struggle for the American curriculum, 1893-1958* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Routledge.
- Kniep, W. M. (1986). Defining a global education by its content. *Social Education*, 50, 424-436.
- Kohlberg, L., Levine, C., & Hwer, A. (1984). The current formulation of the theory. In L. Kohlberg (Ed.), *Essays on moral development (Vol. 11). The psychology of moral development: The nature and validity of moral stages* (pp. 212-319). Harper & Row.
- Koro-Ljungberg, M., Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Hayes, S. B. (2009). (E)pistemological

- awareness, instantiation of methods, and uninformed methodological ambiguity in qualitative research projects. *Educational Researcher*, 38(9), 687–699.
- Kubow, P. K., & Fossum, P. R. (2007). *Comparative education: Exploring issues in international context*. Pearson.
- Kunzman, R. (2006). *Grappling with the good*. Teachers College Press.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1988). Critical thinking through structured controversy. *Educational Leadership*, 45(8), 58-64.
- Lahman, M. K. E. (2022). *Writing and representing qualitative research*. Sage.
- Lamy, S. (1987). *The definition of a discipline: The objects and methods of analysis in global education*. Global Perspectives in Education.
- Lamy, S. (1990). Global education: A conflict of images. In K. Tye (Ed.), *Global education: From thought to action* (pp. 49-63). Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- Laughlin, M. A., & Hartoonian, H. M. (1995). *Challenges of social studies instruction in middle and high schools: Developing enlightened citizens*. Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Lemkin, R. (1944). *Axis rule in occupied Europe: Laws of occupation – analysis of government –proposal redress*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Levine, P. (2008). A public voice for youth: The audience problem in digital media and civic education. In W. L. Bennett (Ed.), *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth*. (pp. 119-138). The MIT Press.
- Levine, P., & Kawashima-Ginsberg, K. (2017). *The republic is (still) at risk – and civics is part of the solution: A briefing paper for the Democracy at a Crossroads National Summit*. Tufts University.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook to qualitative research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 163-188). Sage.
- Loutzenheiser, L. W. (2006). Gendering social studies, queering social education. In A. Segall, E. E. Heilman, & C. H. Cherryholmes (Eds.), *Social studies: The next generation* (pp. 61-

- 75). Peter Lang.
- Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *The All-Ireland Journal of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, 9(3). <https://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/335/553>
- Majewska, I. A. (2022). *Teaching global competence: Challenges and opportunities*. *College Teaching*, 71(2).
- Makler, A. (1999). Courage, conviction, and social education. In M. S. Smith & O. L. Davis, Jr. (Eds.), *Bending the future to their will'': Civic women, social education, and democracy* (pp. 253-275). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mansilla, V. B., & Wilson, D. (2020). What is global competence, and what might it look like in Chinese schools? *Journal of Research in International Education* 19(1), 3-22.
- Mansilla, V. B., & Jackson, A. (2011). *Education for global competence: Preparing our youth to engage the world*. Asia Society.
- Marrelli, A. F. (2008). Collecting data through focus groups. *Performance Improvement*, 47, 39-45. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pfi.201>
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Sage.
- Marx, K. (1990). *Capital* (B. Fowkes, Trans.). Vol. 1. New York: Penguin Classics. (Original work published 1867).
- Mauthner, N. S. (2003). Reflexive accounts and accounts of reflexivity in qualitative data analysis. *Sociology*, 37(3), 413-431.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Sage.
- Newmann, F. M. (1989). Reflective civic participation. *Social Education*, 53, 357-360, 366.
- Menon, S., Green, C., Charbonneau, I., Lehtomaiki, E., & Mafi, B. (2021). Approaching global education development with a decolonial lens: teachers' reflections. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 26(7-8), 937-952.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. Jossey-Bass.

- Merryfield, M. M. (1993). Reflective practice in global education: strategies for teacher-educators. *Theory into Practice*, 32(1), 27-32.
- Merryfield, M. M. (1994). *From teacher education to the classroom: reflections of teachers upon their teacher education experiences in global education*. Unpublished manuscript. Retrieved from ERIC.
- Merryfield, M. M. (1997). A framework for teacher education. In M. M. Merryfield, E. Jarchow, & S. Pickert (Eds.), *Preparing teachers to teach global perspectives: A handbook for teacher educators* (pp. 1-24). Corwin Press.
- Merryfield, M. M. (1998). Pedagogy for global perspectives in education: Studies of teachers' thinking and practice. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 26(3), 342-379.
- Merryfield, M. M., & Wilson, A. (2005). *Social studies and the world: Teaching global perspectives, NCSS Bulletin 103*. National Council for the Social Studies.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook (2nd ed.)*. Sage.
- Morine-Dershimer, F., & Kent, T. (1999). The complex nature and sources of teachers' pedagogical knowledge. In J. Gess-Newsome & N. G. Lederman (Eds.), *Examining pedagogical content knowledge* (pp. 21-50). Kluwer Academic Publisher.
- Ndubuisi, A., Marzi, E., Mohammed, D., Edun, O., Asare, P., & Slotta, J. (2022). Developing global competence in global virtual team projects: A qualitative exploration of engineering students' experience. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 26(2), 259-278.
- Nespor, J. (1987). The role of beliefs in the practice of teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 19(4), 317-320.
- Neuman, W. L. (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- OECD (2018). *PISA: Preparing our youth for an inclusive and sustainable world*. OECD.
- Oliver, D. W., & Shaver, J. P. (1996). *Teaching public issues in the high school*. Houghton Mifflin.



- Olson, J. K. (1988). Making sense of teaching: Cognition vs. culture. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 20*, 167-169.
- Owen, D. D. (2010). Commercial reading programs as the solution for children living in poverty. *Literacy, 44*(3), 112-121.
- Pajares, M. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62*(3), 307-352.
- Parker, W. C. (1996). "Advanced" ideas about democracy: Toward a pluralist conception of citizen education. *Teachers College Record, 98*, 104-125.
- Parker, W. C. (2003). *Teaching democracy: Unity and diversity in public life*. Teachers College Press.
- Parker, W., Grossman, D., Kubow, P., Kurth-Schai, R., & Nakayama, S. (1998). Making it work: Implementing multidimensional citizenship. In J. J. Cogan & R. Derricott (Eds.), *Citizenship for the 21st century: An international perspective on education* (pp. 135-154). Kogan Page.
- Parks, A. N., & Bridges-Rhoades, S. (2012). Overly scripted: Exploring the impact of a scripted literacy curriculum on a preschool teacher's instructional practices in mathematics. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 26*(3), 308-324.
- Parreira do Amaral, M., & Fossum, P. R. (2021). Education gone global: Economization, commodification, privatization, & standardization. In A. Wilmers & S. Jornitz (Eds.) *International perspectives on school settings education policy, and digital strategies* (pp. 301-309).
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Sage Publications.
- Peck, R. F., & Tucker, J. A. (1973). Research on teacher education. In R. M. Travers (Ed.), *Second handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 940-978). Rand McNally.
- Pike, G. (1997). *The meaning of global education: From proponents' visions to practitioners' perceptions*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of York: UK.
- Pike, G. (2000). Global education and national identity: In pursuit of meaning. *Theory into Practice, 39*(2), 64-73.

- Pike, G., & Selby, D. (2000). *In the global classroom: Volumes 1 & 2*. Phippen.
- Popkewitz, T. S. (1980). Global education as a slogan system. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 10(3), 303-316.
- Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Harvard University Press.
- Remillard, J. T. (2005). Examining key concepts in research on teachers' use of mathematics curricula. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(2), 211-246.
- Remillard, J. T., & Heck, D. J. (2014). Conceptualizing the curriculum enactment process in mathematics education. *ZDM Mathematics Education*, 46(5), 705-718.
- Richardson, V. (1996). The role of attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook on teacher education* (pp. 102-119). Simon & Schuster Macmillan.
- Roman, T. (2020). Supporting the mental health of preservice teachers in COVID-19 through trauma-informed educational practices and adaptive formative assessment tools. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 28(2), 473-481.
- Rose, J., & Johnson, C. W. (2020). Contextualizing reliability and validity in qualitative research: Toward more rigorous and trustworthy qualitative social science in leisure research, *Journal of Leisure Research*, 51(4), 432-451.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2020.1722042>
- Ross, E. W., Connett, J. W., & McCutcheon, G. (1992). Teacher personal theorizing and research in curriculum and teaching. In E. W. Ross, J. W. Connect, & G. McCutcheon (Eds.), *Teacher personal theorizing: Connecting curriculum practice, theory, and research* (pp. 3-18). State University of New York Press.
- Rossmann, G., & Rallis, S. (2017). *An introduction to qualitative research: Learning in the field*. Sage.
- Rubin, B. C. (2007). "There's still not justice": Youth civic identity development amid distinct school and community contexts. *Teachers College Record*, 109(2), 449-481.
- Safi, F., Wenzel, T., Spalding, L. T. (2020). Remote learning community: Supporting teacher educators during unprecedented times. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*,

- 28(2), 211-222.
- Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Sage.
- Sassen, S. (1996). *Losing control? Sovereignty in an age of globalization*. Columbia University Press.
- Schmidt, S. J. (2010). Queering social studies: The role of social studies in normalizing citizens and sexuality in the common good. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 38, 314-335.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 189-213)*. Sage.
- Schwandt, T. A., & Gates, E. F. (2018). Case study methodology. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The sage handbook of qualitative research (5<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 241-258)*. Sage
- Sen, A. (2009). *The idea of justice*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Sen, A. (1981). *Poverty and famines: An essay on entitlement and deprivation*. Clarendon Press.
- Serbyn, R. (2008). *The Holodomor: Reflections on the Ukrainian genocide*. 16<sup>th</sup> Annual J.B. Rudnyckyj Distinguished Lecture.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations for a new reform. *Harvard Education Review*, 57, 1-22.
- Snow, D. A. (2004). Framing processes, ideology, and discursive fields. In D. A. Snow, S. A. Soule, & H. Kriesi (Eds.), *The Blackwell companion to social movements (pp. 380-412)*. Blackwell.
- Soley, M. (1996). If it's controversial, why teach it? *Social Education*, 60, 9-14.
- Soysal, Y. N. (1994). *Limits of citizenship*. University of Chicago Press.
- Srivastava, P., & Hopwood, N. (2009). A practical iterative framework for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 76-84.
- Stosich, E. L. (2016). Joint inquiry: Teachers' collective learning about the common core in high-poverty urban schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 53, 1698-1731.
- Sunal, C. S., & Haas, M. E. (1993). *Social studies and the elementary/middle school students*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.

- Szente, J. (2022). Resources for preparing early childhood teachers to assist children in disasters: Reflections on current events. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 43(3), 406-413.
- Szente, J. (2020). Live virtual sessions with toddlers and preschoolers amid COVID-19: Implications for early childhood teacher education. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 28(2), 373-380.
- Szente, J. (Ed.). (2019). Preparing early childhood teachers to assist children who are caught in disasters. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 40(1), Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.
- Theofanidis, D., & Fountouki, A. (2018). Limitations and delimitations in the research process. *Perioperative Nursing*, 7(3), 155-163.
- Timberlake, M. T., Burns-Thomas, A., & Barrett, B. (2017). The allure of simplicity: Scripted curricula and equity. *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 67, 46-52.
- Tobin, K., & LaMaster, S. U. (1992). An interpretation of high school science teaching based on metaphors and beliefs for specific roles. In E. W. Ross, J. W. Connect, & G. McCutcheon (Eds.), *Teacher personal theorizing: Connecting curriculum practice, theory, and research* (pp. 115-136). State University of New York Press.
- Torrf, B. (2006). Expert teachers' beliefs about the use of critical-thinking activities. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 33(2), 37-52.
- Tucker, J. L. (1990). Global education partnerships between schools and universities. In K. Tye (Ed.), *Global education: From thought to action* (pp. 109-124). Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- Tupper, J. A., Cappello, M. P., & Seigny, P. R. (2010). Locating citizenship: Curriculum, social class, and the 'good' citizen. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 38(3), 336-365.
- Tye, K. A. (1990). *Global education: From thought to action*. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tye, K. A. & Tye, B. B. (1993). Overcoming teacher resistance to global education. *Theory into Practice*, 32(1), 58-63.

- U.S. Department of Justice (2020, July 31). *Justice department reaches settlement with Toledo Public Schools to resolve complaints of race and disability discrimination in student discipline*. Office of Public Affairs. <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-reaches-settlement-toledo-public-schools-resolve-complaints-race-and>
- U. S. News & World Report (2023). *Overview of Toledo public schools*. <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/ohio/districts/toledo-city-104950>
- Vontz, T. S., Franke, J., Burenheide, B., & Bietau, L. (2007). Building bridges in social studies education: Professional development school partnerships. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 100(4), 254-262. <http://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.100.4.254-264>
- Vontz, T. S., & Leming, R. S. (2005). Designing and implementing effective professional development in civic education. *International Journal of Social Education*, 20(2), 67-88.
- Walker, J. C., & Evers, C. W. (1982). Epistemology and justifying the curriculum of education studies. *British Journal of Education*, 15(2), 213-229.
- Whyte, W. F. (1984). *Learning from the field: A guide from experience*. Sage.
- Wilkinson, S. (1998). Focus group methodology: A review. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 1(3), 181-203.
- Wilson, S. M., & Wineburg, S. S. (1998). Peering at history through different lenses: The role of disciplinary perspectives in teaching history. *Teachers College Record*, 89(4), 525-538.
- Wilson, E., Sunal, C., Haas, M., & Laughlin, M. (1999). Teachers' perspectives on incorporating current controversial issues into the curriculum. *The International Social Studies Forum*, 2(1), 331-345.
- Woolard, J. C. (2023). *Ohio school report cards highlight continued growth*. ODE
- WTOL Newsroom (2018, January 24). *TPS superintendent faces temporary license suspension related to data scrubbing*. WTOL11 News. <https://www.wtol.com/article/news/tps-superintendent-faces-temporary-license-suspension-related-to-data-scrubbing/512-c9e2f16d-6cc0-42b0-aa84-a7d90d42132e>
- Yacob, N. S., Yunus, M. M., & Hashim, H. (2022). Globally competent teachers: English as a second language teachers' perceptions on global competence in English lessons.

- Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1-10.
- Yelich-Biniecki, S. M., & Donley, S. (2016). The righteous among the nations of the world: An exploration of free-choice learning. *SAGE Open*, 1-11.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016659319>
- Yelich-Biniecki, S. M. (2014). Engaging learners in critical analysis through concept maps: From theory to practice. *Adult Education Research Conference*.  
<https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2014/papers/104>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sage.
- Youdell, D. (2006). Subjectivism and performative politics – Butler thinking Althusser and Foucault: Intelligibility, agency, and the raced-nationed-religioned subjects of education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27(4), 511-528
- Xu, M. A., & Storr, G. B. (2012). Learning the concept of researcher as instrument in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 17(21), 1-18.
- Zhang, W. & Chen, Z. (2022). Rethinking civic education in the digital era: How media, school, and youth negotiate the meaning of citizenship. *The International Communication Gazette*, 84(4), 287-305.

## **Appendix A - Interview Protocol**

*Interest: understanding the purpose and scope of global current events and global education as envisioned by a select group of high school teachers.*

*Topic Domain 1: Understanding the role of global current events education in each classroom*

Lead-Off Question 1: What is one example of how global current events are used in your classroom?

[covert categories of interest: understanding teachers' definitions of the scope and role of global current events, understanding of the ways teachers utilize the concept of global current events in their respective classrooms, examining challenges to the teaching of global current events]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. Do you think this type of topic/lesson is typical in schools?
  - a. Why or why not?
2. How does this topic/lesson compare to other topics/lessons in which you have used/created?
3. What are the best attributes of these topics/lessons?
4. What are the worst attributes of these topics/lessons?
5. How capable do you see yourself in teaching about global current events?
  - a. What would make you more capable in teaching about this topic?
  - b. Why?
6. How capable do you see yourself in implementing lessons about global education?
  - a. What would make you more capable in implementing these topics?
  - b. Why?
7. What challenges do you see to teaching about global current events?
  - a. How would you address those challenges?
  - b. What are ways to overcome these challenges?

Topic Domain 2: Understanding teachers' beliefs concerning the role of global current events in the curriculum.

Lead-Off Question 2: Why do you use global current events issues in your classroom?

[covert categories of interest: teacher buy-in, teacher understanding of the purpose and belief in the potential of global current events, understanding connections between the teaching of global current events issues and the purposes of education, schooling, and society]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. How do you identify with these topics/lessons?
2. Should there be more topics/lessons like these in schools?
  - a. Why or why not?
  - b. How would you propose to have more topics/lessons like this in schools?
    - i. Is it possible?
    - ii. What are the biggest challenges?
  - c. If not, what types of lessons would you like to see more of in schools?
3. Why do you think this is an important topic to teach about?
4. Why is this topic/lesson important for students to consider/experience?
5. Do these lessons/topics represent any of your beliefs about teaching?
  - a. Can those beliefs be realized in schools?
  - b. Are there any constraints?
    - i. Are there ways of addressing those constraints?
6. Does this lesson represent any of your beliefs about teaching global education?
  - a. Can those beliefs be realized in schools?
  - b. Are there any constraints?
    - i. Are there ways of addressing those constraints?
7. Does this lesson represent any of your beliefs regarding the purpose of education/schooling?
  - a. Can those beliefs be realized in schools?
  - b. Are there any constraints?
    - i. Are there ways of addressing those constraints?
8. Does this lesson represent any of your beliefs about how schools can change?
  - a. Can those beliefs be realized in schools?
  - b. Are there any constraints?
    - i. Are there ways of addressing those constraints?
9. Does this lesson represent any of your beliefs about how U.S./World society can change?
  - a. Can those beliefs be realized in schools?
  - b. Are there any constraints?
    - i. Are there ways of addressing those constraints?



*Topic Domain 3: Understanding pedagogical choices in the teaching of global current events that may serve to achieve the aims and principles of comparative social justice.*

**Lead-Off Question 3:** What are some of your most commonly used pedagogical methods when teaching global current events?

[covert categories of interest: understanding teachers' specific pedagogical choices, understanding the extent to which teachers encourage the retreat of injustices in their respective classrooms, examining challenges to implementing comparative social justice education]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. [For each given method] How do you actualize this method in your classroom?
  - a. What student objectives do you hope to meet?
  - b. How do students respond to this particular method?
2. [For each given method] Why do you chose this particular method when focusing on global current events topics?
  - a. What are the ways you learned about this particular method?
  - b. What are some procedures you typically utilize with this method?
3. How often, if ever, are students given the opportunity to reflect on their own ideas and understandings of global current events?
  - a. In what ways are they encouraged to do so?
  - b. Would you like to devote more time to such reflection? Why or why not?
4. [If not already offered] Do you ever engage in deliberation/debate?
  - a. Why or why not?
  - b. How are these lessons structured? How are these lessons actualized?
5. What are some potential benefits to community/society do you think the teaching of global current events can offer?
  - a. Do these benefits encourage your use of particular pedagogical methods?
  - b. Why or why not?
6. What are some potential complications to community/society do you think the teaching of global events can cause?
  - a. Do these complications discourage your use of particular pedagogical methods?
  - b. Why or why not?
7. Do you discuss events that could be deemed 'controversial' in your classroom?
  - a. If yes, please provide some examples
  - b. Why do you choose to engage in these topics?
  - c. If no, what is your reasoning to not address these topics?
  - d. What challenges do these topics present in your school classroom?

## Appendix B - Elicitation Task Questions

Topic Domain 4: Understanding teachers' thought processes when selecting global current events topics to use in their respective classrooms.

Lead-Off Question 4/Instructions: Imagine each of these events were to appear in your news feed. Please place them in order, from least likely, to most likely, to teach or address in your classroom.

[covert categories of interest: teacher constraints, teacher thought process when selecting classroom content, understanding connections between the teachers' respective comfort levels with particular topics and choice, addressing teachers' willingness to approach topics/controversial events]

### Global Current Events Topics for Elicitation Task - News Headlines

- Two countries in Europe scramble military aircraft over a disputed territory.
- A massive earthquake occurs in central Asia.
- Hundreds are killed in religious violence in an African nation.
- A political coup takes place in a South American country.
- A developing country passes a law criminalizing homosexuality.
- The first female head of state is elected in a European country.
- The U.S. boycotts the summer Olympic Games for political reasons.

Possible follow-up questions:

1. Why did you select:
  - a. [X] as your most likely?
  - b. [X] as your least likely?
2. Explain how you would approach the teaching of your most likely choice.
3. Explain what could be problematic about the teaching of your least likely choice.
4. Explain why (if applicable) you would avoid any of these topics?
5. How well would any of these topics fit with your current curriculum? Explain.
6. Have you discussed/taught similar topics to any of these before?
  - a. If so, describe the pedagogy used and how successful the lesson was.
  - b. If not, what, if anything, prevented you from teaching a similar topic?
7. Which of these topics:
  - a. do you believe would bring most student interest? Why?
  - b. do you believe would bring the least student interest? Why?

**Appendix C - Elicitation Task Headlines**

---

# **Global Events Times**

---

**TWO COUNTRIES IN  
EUROPE SCRAMBLE  
MILITARY AIRCRAFT OVER A  
DISPUTED TERRITORY**

---

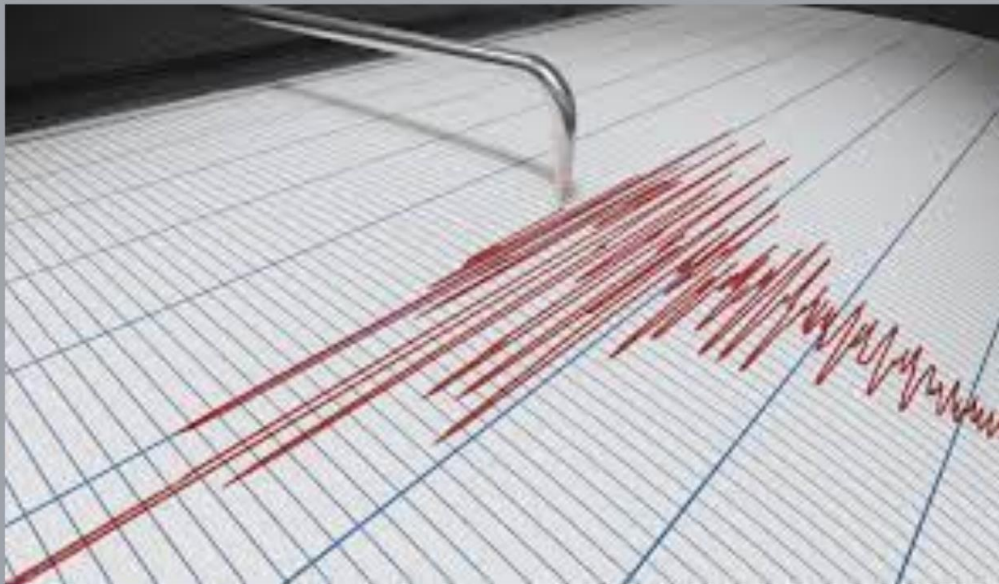


# Global Events Times

---

## A MASSIVE EARTHQUAKE OCCURS IN CENTRAL ASIA

---



# Global Events Times

---

## HUNDREDS ARE KILLED IN RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN AN AFRICAN NATION

---





# Global Events Times

---

## A POLITICAL COUP TAKES PLACE IN A SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY

---



## A DEVELOPING COUNTRY PASSES A LAW CRIMINALIZING HOMOSEXUALITY

---



# Global Events Times

---

---

## THE FIRST FEMALE HEAD OF STATE IS ELECTED IN A EUROPEAN COUNTRY

---





# Global Events Times

---

## THE U.S. BOYCOTTS THE SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES FOR POLITICAL REASONS

---



## Appendix D - Initial Email & Survey

To whom it may concern,

My name is James Brown, and I am a teacher at [REDACTED] and am currently seeking participants for my doctoral dissertation research on the teaching of global current events. If possible, please answer the following questions regarding your current teaching practices and willingness to be a part of this study. There will be minimal time commitment required (data will be gathered primarily through several interviews) and all information will be kept strictly confidential. I appreciate your consideration and I look forward to your responses!

Sincerely,

James S. Brown

[REDACTED]

- 1) What grade levels do you currently teach?
- 2) What social studies subjects (i.e. History, Economics, etc.) do you currently teach?
- 3) Do you discuss/teach about global current events in any of your classes?
- 4) Would you be willing to participate in this dissertation study?