PCERII Funded Research

FINAL Report

Citizenship Instruction for Adult Immigrants

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Executive Summary: Citizenship Instruction for Adult Immigrants

Objectives of Study

How do adult immigrants to Canada, many of whom have a limited command of English, learn about their rights and responsibilities when applying for Canadian citizenship? A survey of citizenship preparation programs for adult immigrants was conducted in English-speaking Canada to address this question. The main objectives of the study were 1) determine whether citizenship preparation had changed substantially since 1987, (when a census of citizenship programs took place); 2) to identify the impact of the implementation of a multiple choice test in place of a hearing with a citizenship judge; and 3) to ascertain whether changes to adult ESL programs had resulted in a focus on citizenship issues.

Methodology

We contacted immigrant-serving organizations across Canada to identify citizenship programs. We also approached coordinators of large ESL programs in Ontario, BC, and Alberta to inquire about Canadian content in their programs. A three-step process was used: first, telephone contact was made; second, a six-page questionnaire was mailed; and third, a follow-up telephone interview was conducted. We also interviewed immigrants on completion of the citizenship test.

Findings

Several agencies reported that they offered citizenship classes in the past but no longer do so for a variety of reasons, including funding cuts and the introduction of the multiple choice test based on the CIC publication *A Look at Canada*. Coordinators of bilingual programs catering to individuals with a very limited grasp of English are generally in favour of the exam because they can help their students to memorize sight words. The majority of program coordinators, however, felt that the test promotes a superficial and reductionist notion of citizenship. The majority of respondents (programmers, and new citizens alike) felt that all stages of the current procedure are highly depersonalized, from the mail-in application to the actual testing.

Conclusions

It is clear that a general decline in the quantity and quality of adult citizenship education programs has taken place over the past decade. The content of courses is now driven almost exclusively by the multiple choice test. It might be argued that LINC ESL programs provide newcomers with the knowledge and skills required for Canadian citizenship. However, the concerns of most students are principally settlement and employment issues. Furthermore, ESL indicated that their primary focus is communicative competence—although they prefer to use Canadian materials, the content is secondary because communicative skill building is the ultimate goal.

Implications for Public Policy

Several respondents to the survey commented that becoming a citizen is a momentous event for new Canadians, and that the changes, especially the lack of personal contact, have devalued the meaning of citizenship. The elimination of the hearings with a citizenship judge was cited as a major loss. A very disturbing message is being sent to immigrants: if the federal government doesn't value the importance of becoming a Canadian, why should they? We recommend that CIC reintroduce the personal hearing, but in place of patronage appointments to the position of citizenship judge, trained staff be employed to conduct the interviews.

1. **Statement of the Problem**

The initial purpose of the present study was to assess the current state of adult citizenship programs and some large ESL programs from across the country to determine whether the changes to citizenship procedures and content requirements of federally-sponsored ESL programs have resulted in significant changes to citizenship preparation. Comparisons were made with a 1987 survey of all English-language adult citizenship preparation programs. The relative quality of existing programs has been discussed in light of the nature of their content, and whether they address CIC's stated goal, to help newcomers become "a part of Canada." A second goal of this project, which emerged as the study began, was to provide an overview of the recent history of citizenship education for adult immigrants, a description of the current process, and some suggestions for change. Finally, we aimed to get a sense of what new Canadians think of the current procedures for obtaining Canadian citizenship.

2. Background

Although the federal government and several provinces have funded citizenship programs for adult newcomers for a very long time, there has been a paucity of research on the efficacy of these programs. There has been a tacit recognition of the need for citizenship preparation, which was evident in the now-defunct CILT grants: for many years the Department of the Secretary of State provided funding for English as a Second language programs on the understanding that both language and citizenship concepts would be developed. In fact, Derwing & Munro (1987) found, in a census of English-language ESL and citizenship programs in Canada, that a small minority of ESL programs placed any significant emphasis on Canadian content, much less on citizenship issues. They identified approximately 90 citizenship education programs that were devoted to preparing adult immigrants for the Citizenship Court hearing.

The Derwing & Munro (1987) census was part of an initiative of the Citizenship Instruction Review Project (CIRP), under the auspices of the Corporate Policy Branch of the Secretary of State. CIRP entailed not only the review of existing programs and an accompanying directory, but also the development of a handbook entitled *More of a Welcome than a Test* (Pratt, 1988). As a part of the project, Secretary of State also funded three citizenship instructor conferences and provided support for the establishment of the provincial newsletters, *Citizenship Alberta* and *Citizenship BC.* The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship was also very active in the late 1980's.

At the same time that this activity was occurring in adult citizenship education, emphasis in adult ESL programs was moving into a phase of participatory learning, and a number of programs arose in which students' engagement in Canadian society was a principal goal of the programming (Hernandez, 1989; Mohamid, 1989). Citizenship education for adult immigrants seemed to be coming into its own. In response to a perceived increase in interest in Canadian content in ESL, materials developers have produced a number of new textbooks in recent years (e.g., Bates, 1990; Berish & Thibaudeau, 1993; Brod & Frankel, 1993; Cameron & Derwing, 1996; Sauvé, 1996b). In addition, a number of initiatives have been undertaken in the last decade to improve the state of citizenship-specific education, with the goal of broadening its earlier aims, which were limited to meeting the requirements of the Court hearing.

For its part, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) developed a new version of *A Look at Canada*, the document provided by the federal government to every applicant for Canadian citizenship. The booklet contains short descriptions of the regions, each consisting of a few paragraphs (written in basic language) on people, the economy, geography and climate. There is also a section on Aboriginal

peoples from a historical perspective. Canadian government, law-making, electoral procedures and rights and responsibilities of citizenship are the topics of the remaining sections (the full text can be found on the CIC website). In the document, CIC defines Canadian citizenship as "being a part of Canada." The most important change that CIC made to citizenship, however, was the elimination of the Court Hearing. It was decided for purposes of efficiency and economy that the individual interviews of prospective citizens should be replaced by the implementation of a multiple choice test, based on the content of the *Look at Canada* booklet.

Finally, the Department of Canadian Heritage recently created a series of materials under the Canadian Participation Initiative (CPI). These resources are essentially citizenship instruction materials that deal with issues such as family life in Canada, the social welfare system, employment issues, human rights, rights and responsibilities of citizens and the political system. Although the intent is to impart information, the pedagogical approach of the CPI is participatory in nature, and the complexities of the political and social fabric of Canadian life are not ignored.

Given the changes outlined above, we wanted to determine how citizenship education had been affected.

3. Methodology

For the first part of the project, we interviewed program coordinators, as described below:

Locating Programs

We telephoned the agencies that provided citizenship programs in 1987 to inquire whether they still offered citizenship courses and whether they were aware of any other citizenship programs in their area. We also contacted organizations that offer aid to immigrants from a list provided by The Department of Canadian Heritage. Finally, we interviewed coordinators from large ESL programs in Ontario, BC, and Alberta to inquire about citizenship classes in their area and Canadian content offerings in their own programs. A few organizations offering citizenship classes may have been missed, but we made every attempt to identify all the programs in English-speaking Canada, in order to make direct comparisons with the 1987 survey.

Data were collected in a three-step process: first, telephone contact was made; second, a six-page questionnaire was mailed; and third, a follow-up telephone interview was conducted. This method was found to be most efficient, in that program coordinators were given an opportunity to think about the questions and collect some of the information in advance of the interview. The interview provided them with an opportunity to express their opinions and to give elaborated responses that they might not have been willing to formulate in writing because of time constraints.

Questionnaires

We used the questionnaire to elicit course scheduling information, student profiles, an outline of course content, lists of materials and equipment, and staff profiles. In addition, we included some open-ended questions to elicit the coordinators' assessment of the changes to the citizenship process. A slightly different questionnaire administered to the ESL programs focused on the use of Canadian content, citizenship-specific content, and reactions to changes in the citizenship process.

Telephone Interviews
Each telephone interview took approximately 30 to 45 minutes. A small minority of respondents chose to complete the questionnaire and mail it back. Whenever possible these individuals were contacted later to clarify and expand upon their original answers. There was an 86% response rate overall.

For the second part of the study, we wanted to document the history of citizenship education programs, and, in particular, the federal government's role in supported citizenship preparation. To that end, a research collaborator, Dr. Reva Joshee, went to Ottawa to interview individuals who had been involved in citizenship initiatives. They had been or were currently employed by the Department of the Secretary of State, the Department of Canadian Heritage or Citizenship and Immigration Canada. She also explored archival records of citizenship.

Finally, we conducted an exit poll as a group of approximately 30 immigrants finished writing the citizenship test. We also interviewed some employees who had been associated with Citizenship Court for several years.

4. Analysis of the Data
The data collected from the questionnaires and interviews of citizenship and ESL coordinators were tabulated, and compared with the findings of the 1987 study. The interview information from the interviews with the civil servants was examined for recurring themes, particularly for explanations of policy changes over the years.

5. Findings

Program Profiles

Types of programs
We identified 41 separate organizations that offer citizenship courses. Of the programs contacted, 95% provide classes specifically for preparation for the citizenship test, and 5% offer ESL courses with a heavy emphasis on citizenship issues. In the original survey, more than double the number of citizenship-specific programs were located (89) and an additional 15 ESL programs with a heavy emphasis on citizenship issues were also identified. We believe that this disparity reflects a genuine decline in the number of classes available. Several agencies reported that they offered citizenship classes in the past but no longer do so for a variety of reasons, including funding cuts and changes to the court requirements. Many organizations which used to hold citizenship classes now give individuals a copy of A Look at Canada and counsel them to study it on their own. Several agencies have compiled lists of multiple choice questions and answers, based on the content of A Look at Canada, which they give to applicants in lieu of a citizenship preparation course.

Hours of instruction
The number of hours of instruction per week varies from 1 to 14, with an average of 3 hours. Course length also varies considerably, from 1 to 41 weeks, with a national average of 12 weeks. The figures for the longer courses may be somewhat misleading in that they tend to be courses with continuous intake. Because students are accepted over the duration of the course, the number of total class hours may not reflect the amount of time a single individual spends studying citizenship. If the continuous courses are excluded, the weeks of instruction range from 1 to 12 with an average of 6 weeks. This is

likely a more accurate reflection of the amount of citizenship training individuals receive. The 1987 survey found a great deal of variation in instruction time as well. At that time classes ranged from 2 to 90 hours of instruction, with an average of 24.5 hours, including the courses with continuous intake.

Publicity

Organizations have continued to rely on similar methods of publicity over the past ten years. Like the 1987 census, the current study found word-of-mouth, flyers, posters displayed at citizenship courts, and networking with other agencies to be the most common practices.

Fifty-six percent of respondents stated that the citizenship courts distributed information about their programs. However, some coordinators complained that it is now difficult for individuals to get information from the citizenship offices, because there are no direct phone numbers. In many cases, there is no government citizenship office in the city where the program is offered.

When respondents were asked to list the reasons that students attend their programs, quality, cost, bilingual classes, convenient times and locations were common responses. Forty-nine percent of respondents stated that theirs is the only class available or that there are limited choices. This is especially true in smaller centres.

Bilingual programs

Of the 46% of programs which offer bilingual classes (classes in English and the students' native language), a subset of 79% target a specific cultural or linguistic group. In addition, one program offers bilingual Mandarin and Vietnamese classes designed specifically for students who have already failed the citizenship test. Of the bilingual classes, 61% are offered in Chinese, 13% in Punjabi, and 9% in Vietnamese. Classes are also offered in Hindi, Bengali, Portuguese, and Korean. All of these programs have bilingual instructors, rather than interpreters. In 29% of bilingual programs, over three quarters of the instruction time is in the students' first language. Sixty-five percent of the programs report that more than half of the class time is conducted in the students' first language. This finding is similar to the one reported in the 1987 survey. The heavy emphasis on the students' first language suggests that they have extremely limited English proficiency.

Funding

Sources of funding vary across the provinces, but there is a definite downward trend in overall funding. In British Columbia, 50% of the programs charge tuition, 20% receive no funding, 20% are funded through private sources, and 10% receive funding through the Ministry of Multiculturalism. In Alberta, 40% of the programs receive no funding, 60% charge tuition, and 20% have some government funding (i.e., one third of the programs both charge tuition and receive some government funding). The single program located in Saskatchewan is supported by funding to other programs from Canadian Heritage. In Manitoba 50% of the programs receive funding through tuition and 50% are funded by Canadian Heritage. The majority of programs surveyed are located in Ontario, of which 14% report that there is no funding, 9% collect tuition, 19% receive federal government funding, and 41% are supported by the provincial school boards. Another 36% receive other provincial funding. Thirty-four percent of the programs surveyed reported losing a significant portion of their funding in the last two years. At the time of the survey, tuition ranged from $5.00-$60.00; the majority of programs charged less than $30.00, to cover photocopying and other miscellaneous costs. During the telephone interviews it was apparent that

there was a great deal of upheaval and distress in Ontario, and that significant changes in the sources of funding and the programs were expected in the very near future.

Student Profiles

Demographic information

Coordinators indicated that programs collect less information about their students than ten years ago. Respondents often reported that they have a "feel" for their students and that relevant information is obtained informally in class. Of the programs that collect information, 28% use it for class planning, and 21% for student placement. Other uses include providing statistics for a governing Board, providing instructors with background information, and providing funders with required information.

Length of time in Canada

Eighty-one percent of the respondents reported that the majority of their students had lived in Canada between 2 and 5 years. From the telephone interviews it appears that most students apply for citizenship and take the test as soon as they are eligible (i.e., as soon as they have completed their three years residency in Canada).

English proficiency/literacy/ formal education

Respondents were asked to estimate the English proficiency of their students. The average percentages are 11% for advanced, 30% for intermediate, 23% for high beginner, and 36% for low beginner. The estimated number of students who have difficulty reading and writing in English is 48%, with a range from 5% to 100%. The levels of English proficiency in citizenship classes appear to have remained relatively stable. In the 1987 survey it was estimated that at least 60% of students were at the beginner level.

Over half of the programs were unable to estimate their students' level of education. The estimates put forward by the remaining programs are as follows: 0-6 years — 38%, 7-9 years — 24%, 10-13 years — 28%, post secondary — 10%.

Eighty-five percent of respondents reported that their classes consist of mixed proficiency levels, 12% reported some mixed classes, and 2% reported that low beginners are separated from the rest.

Course Content

Course objectives

Eighty percent of respondents stated that the main objective of their citizenship preparation course is to help students pass the citizenship test, 23% cited the development of knowledge about Canada as a primary objective, 18% listed integration and participation as a goal, and 5% reported that English language improvement is a primary objective.

When asked about secondary objectives, twenty-two percent stated that they have none, that they are focused solely on helping students pass the exam. Participation in Canadian society was listed by 20% of the respondents, as was helping the students acquire knowledge about Canada. Both language improvement and passing the test were cited by 10% of the programs. These findings suggest that the objectives of the programs have not changed significantly over the past ten years.

Course topics

Representatives from all of the programs surveyed reported teaching the topics covered in A Look at Canada, namely, geography, history, the electoral process, levels of government, and rights and responsibilities of the Canadian citizens. A few also stated that they attempt to supplement the information in A Look at Canada with localized and current information. These individuals often felt that this supplemental information is essential to help their students to become participating, integrated Canadian citizens, even though local information cannot be tested in the nationally-oriented citizenship test.

Class activities

We asked coordinators how citizenship information is presented in the classroom. Formal presentation of information by the teacher remains, by far, the most common: 93% of respondents reported that this takes place frequently, or every class. Class discussion and practice for the test are also common activities, with over 70% of coordinators stating that they take place frequently or every class. Reading takes place at least sometimes in 70% of the classes. From Table 1 it is evident that few other activities are employed in the citizenship classroom. When asked whether guest speakers are invited to the courses, fifty-nine percent of coordinators stated that they seldom, if ever, have visitors. Of the programs that reported guest speakers, citizenship officers and politicians are generally invited to talk with the students. During the telephone interviews it became clear that although several respondents would like to incorporate other activities, they feel that a lack of both time and resources prevents them from doing so.

Course evaluation

Respondents were asked to list the methods used to evaluate the success of their course. As with the first survey, the majority (51%) stated that they consider their course a success if the students obtain citizenship. In a related form of evaluation, 12% of programs administer a mock exam at the end of their course and appraise the success of the course by those results. Twenty-seven percent of programs use informal feedback as their only method of evaluation. Attendance is taken into consideration in 20% of the programs and 15% have their students fill out evaluation forms. Two coordinators in small centres stated that they consider students' involvement in the community when evaluating the success of their course.

Materials and equipment

By far the most commonly used resource material is A Look at Canada, with 71% of programs making use of it either several times per course or every class. Printed handouts developed in-house (largely question and answer) are also used frequently, with 68% of respondents stating that they use them either several times per course or every class. Several respondents also mentioned using pictures/magazine photos, newspapers, and provincial publications.

In terms of equipment use, the results are very similar to those of the survey ten years ago. Every program reported using photocopiers extensively. The majority of programs never use video or audiotapes, nor were these mentioned in the discussion of classroom activities. All in all, it would appear that media presentations of any kind are rare. Although the use of computers was reported by 31% of the program respondents, most use them solely for word processing (e.g., creating handouts) rather than in the classroom.

Although respondents praised the new version of A Look at Canada as an improvement over the previous publications of Citizenship and Immigration, several individuals expressed disappointment that publications such as the Ontario Times are no longer available because of funding cuts. Also, several suggested that visual aids designed for the citizenship classroom, such as short videotapes, would be useful.

Federal government initiatives

Canadian Heritage has created a series of materials under the Canadian Participation Initiative (CPI). These resources are essentially citizenship instruction materials that deal with issues such as family life in Canada, the social welfare system, employment issues, human rights, rights and responsibilities of citizens and the political system. Although the intent is to impart information, the pedagogical approach of the CPI is participatory in nature, and the complexities of the political and social fabric of Canadian life are not ignored. To assess the impact of the CPI resources, we asked coordinators if they were aware of any federal government initiatives on citizenship education in the past two years. Of the programs contacted, 80% reported being unaware of any government initiatives, 5% had used the CPI binders and found them useful, 10% believed their programs own a copy or that their ESL programs might use it, and 5% were aware that the materials exist but hadn't seen any of the binders. (It was not possible for us to determine whether distribution problems lie with the producers of the material, or within the agencies themselves. One coordinator mentioned that the distribution of materials within her own organization is not systematic, and that often teachers are unaware of some of the available resources that have been sent directly to the agency.)

Staff Training and Evaluation

Staff requirements

The monetary resources of individual programs dictate the extent to which agencies are able to require certain qualifications of their staff. Of the programs that we surveyed, 32% require professional background in teaching English as a second language (TESL), and 29% prefer it. Thirty-eight percent require ESL teaching experience and 44% prefer it; 24% do not take either into consideration. In the programs that existed ten years ago, 40% required TESL training and 40% preferred it; and 39% required ESL teaching experience and 17% preferred it. In the programs that receive little or no external funding, the requirements are often based on the personal attributes of the teacher. Examples of the preferred characteristics are an open mind, a willingness to teach in the evenings, an interest in the area, and personal experience with the citizenship process.

The amount of training that is provided to the staff also fluctuates depending on the resources available to the individual programs. Forty-one percent of programs provide either no additional training or only informal on-the-job training. Thirty-one percent of respondents mentioned sending their staff to workshops, seminars, or conferences sponsored by others. This figure is considerably lower than the 58% reported in 1987. As was the case in 1987, 21% of programs sponsor sessions for their staff; in some cases this consists solely of a general volunteer orientation. Five percent of agencies indicated that there is no need to provide additional training, because they are able to hire highly qualified staff; an additional 5% stated that they send their teachers for a one-on-one orientation with an officer of the citizenship court.

Staff evaluation

The most common form of teacher evaluation is in-class observations by coordinators; 54% percent of programs conduct this form of evaluation compared with 73% ten years ago. The remaining methods of evaluation are similar to those reported in the previous study. Thirty-nine percent have the students fill out an evaluation form, 12% have the teachers complete a self-evaluation, and 12% of programs have in-class observations by other instructors. Finally, 22% of respondents stated that no teacher evaluations occur, or that only informal evaluation is carried out.

Testing and Application Procedure

Contact with citizenship officials

Respondents were asked how often they come into contact with judges, citizenship officers, and provincial government representatives. It would seem that there is very little contact on the whole. In 1987 over 70% of program coordinators reported that they were in touch with judges or citizen officers at least occasionally; now those percentages are 30% for judges and 58% for citizenship officers (Many judges' contracts had expired at the time of the survey.)

A concern voiced by many coordinators has to do with the lack of personal contact in the citizenship process. Several individuals stated that the citizenship application forms are difficult to understand (not only for the immigrants but also for people working in immigrant-serving agencies). Previously, court officers assisted applicants, but in many locations this no longer occurs because applications are handled by mail. One coordinator noted that if there were a short interview to check the application form, the literacy level of the applicant could be assessed. She suggested that if it was clear that the applicant had literacy problems, he/she could be excused from the written test and an oral interview could be held instead. Such a procedure would be preferable to the current practice of having all applicants write the exam, literate or not, and subsequently granting interviews to those who fail.

Multiple choice versus short answer

Respondents were also asked to estimate the percentage of their students who would have difficulty with multiple choice tests versus fill-in-the-blank or short answer tests. Coordinators estimated that 45% of the students would have difficulty writing a multiple-choice exam because of the confusing format. Although several people expressed concerns over the low literacy levels of their students and the ambiguity of multiple choice questions, the general feeling was that fill-in-the-blank or short answer tests would be more difficult for students than multiple choice.

Written test versus oral interview

Participants were also asked to give their opinions regarding the process of becoming a citizen, particularly the change from the oral interview to a written multiple choice test. The majority of program coordinators expressed concern with the current process, citing the inflexibility and superficial nature of the test. In contrast with respondents from unilingual programs, however, most bilingual program respondents preferred the multiple-choice test over the oral interview, stating that it is more objective, cost efficient, and quicker. One of the coordinators reported that the written test was easier for her students, because they had received an education in English (in Hong Kong) and could therefore read and write in English, but had difficulty speaking. The bilingual classes tend to focus on the rote memorization of the answers to the 200 possible questions at the back of the A Look at Canada booklet.

One bilingual program does not use A Look at Canada or any other material; instead a bilingual list of the 200 questions and answers is used exclusively. The respondent from this program felt that this practice enhances the students' likelihood of recognizing key words in the written test.

A majority of the coordinators expressed concern that the test is unfair to individuals who have limited English literacy; even many of those who prefer the test to the interview agree with this sentiment. Although individuals who fail the written test are subsequently interviewed, many respondents felt that having to write and fail the test first is a degrading experience. Doubt over the relevance of the test material was also expressed. Respondents questioned how learning the information on the test would aid new Canadians to become integrated, participating citizens. Several felt that people born in Canada would not know the information that is tested (this intuition was verified in a national Angus Reid poll in the fall of 1997). According to one coordinator, her students feel the test is the government's way of "making" them fail. Another coordinator stated that the introduction of the test had diminished the quality of his class. Previously he was able to explore issues in-depth, discussing why his students wanted to become Canadians and what it means to be a Canadian citizen. Now he finds that his students are extremely anxious about the test and want only the answers to the questions. Many other respondents reported similar experiences and stated that their students want to ensure that they were not wasting the $200 application fee to go through the citizenship process.

The majority of respondents felt that all stages of the current procedure are highly depersonalized, from the mail-in application to the actual testing. Several individuals also expressed dismay over the fact that many judges' contracts are not being renewed and that they are no longer officiating at many citizenship ceremonies.

6. ESL Provider Responses

Half the ESL program coordinators surveyed reported that they place a stronger emphasis on Canadian content that they did prior to LINC; a quarter of the programs were not in existence before LINC, and the remainder said that their focus has not changed. Four-fifths of coordinators stated that they prefer to use Canadian materials whenever possible; however, they were more likely to use commercially available texts than government-produced publications. Only one program coordinator was confident that the CPI material is being used in classrooms. The majority of respondents had heard about the changes to the citizenship process; most were not in favour of replacing the oral interview with a written test. Several coordinators mentioned that students need a personal touch: as one individual put it, "The procedure was better when they had judges; there is nothing to compare. The judge had that personal human contact... They may be saving money, but they are short-changing a lot of newcomers." A third of the LINC providers suggested that the written test might cause less anxiety than an oral interview.

The interviews with the government representatives are still being analyzed. The exit poll of individuals indicated overall dissatisfaction with the test. Many respondents indicated that there was not enough rigor involved; they stated that citizenship should be viewed as more important. There were some people who were simply relieved that the test was so simple. Some respondents noted concern for people who are unable to read. The fact that they are required to write the test anyway before being granted an interview was seen as an unnecessarily humiliating.

7. Policy Implications

It is clear that a general decline in the quantity and quality of adult citizenship education programs has taken place over the past decade. Not only are there fewer programs in existence, but several of those remaining have downsized in terms of length. There is less emphasis on staff training and evaluation, and far less contact with the Court of Canadian Citizenship. The content of courses is now driven almost exclusively by the multiple choice test introduced by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, all the questions of which are derived from the Look at Canada publication.

It might be argued that ESL LINC programs can provide newcomers with the knowledge and skills required for Canadian citizenship, and indeed, there appears to be a greater reliance on Canadian materials than in the period prior to LINC. However, most immigrants in LINC are within their first year of arrival, when their concerns are principally settlement and employment issues. ESL providers in this survey indicated that their primary focus is communicative competence—communicative skill-building is the ultimate goal rather than Canadian content. Some would assert that the changes to the citizenship process, including the implementation of the test and the mail-in application forms, are an improvement over the old procedures. For example, Appelt (1998) claims: "The Department of Citizenship and Immigration continues to find ways of *enhancing* Canadian citizenship. .... Today new procedures are in place in order to shorten the time required for processing routine citizenship applications" (p. 18) (italics added). Expediency and reduction in costs may be served by the changes, but should these factors be prime considerations in granting citizenship to newcomers?

The ultimate question Citizenship and Immigration policy makers should be asking is not "How can we make the naturalization process more cost effective?", but rather "What should our expectations of Canadian citizens be, in general, and how can we best help immigrants meet those expectations?" Coordinators of bilingual programs that cater to individuals with very limited grasp of English are, by and large, in favour of the multiple-choice exam because they can help their students to memorize sight words. Such exams, however, promote no more than an extremely superficial level of understanding of what it means to be a Canadian.

In some respects it seems as though two departments of the federal government are working at odds: Canadian Heritage has spent considerable money developing the CPI, and has recently funded a series of seminars and think tanks related to citizenship education. At the same time, Citizenship and Immigration has put into place an extremely narrow notion of citizenship by eliminating many of the judge positions, by cutting funding to some programs, and by introducing a test that by its very nature allows for no individualization of questions. Apparently Citizenship and Immigration policy makers view citizenship as little more than naturalization upon committing to memory the small body of facts outlined in A Look at Canada. Rather than working at cross-purposes, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration should provide financial support to citizenship programs to ensure that the CPI materials produced by Canadian Heritage could be used.

Several respondents to this survey felt that becoming a citizen is a momentous and tremendously exciting event for new Canadians, and that the changes, especially the lack of personal contact, have devalued the meaning of citizenship. The elimination of the hearings with a citizenship judge, in particular, was cited as a major loss. A human interviewer can adjust questions to the language proficiency level of the applicant such that every individual can respond to the best of his/her ability. The current procedure, where speed of processing paper is the only obvious goal, suggests that the

government does not consider citizenship to be significant. This sends a very disturbing message to immigrants: if the federal government doesn't value the importance of becoming a Canadian, why should they?

Canada receives many more immigrants from non-European countries than previously. As a result, cultural differences between new immigrants and Canadian-born people are sometimes great, and our fast-changing society can make adjustment very difficult. In order for immigrants to integrate, both Canadian-born and newcomers should have a sense of what it means to be a citizen. The type of citizenship education offered to adult immigrants today does not begin to address participatory citizenship; without guidance, and a will on the part of the federal government's Citizenship and Immigration department, the situation is likely to get worse.

Canada is a country of diverse regions, ethnicities, religions, and cultures; as such it has been held up as a model of peaceful integration. Immigration and immigrants are at the heart of the Canadian reality; people come here because they want to *be* Canadians. We have a responsibility, therefore, to provide a means for people to learn about Canada—not just dates and names, but full-fledged discussions about the complexities and contradictions in this society.

8. Dissemination Activities

Conference Participation

- Citizenship Instruction for Adults: Multiple Choice or No Choice? CSSE, St. John's Nfld., June 12, 1997.

- Citizenship Instruction for Adult Immigrants, Metropolis National Conference, Montreal, 10, November 24, 1997.

- Poster presentation at Research Revelations '98, University of Alberta, February 7, 1998.

- Immigrants and Civic Participation, November 23, 1997 Montreal (national invited seminar, sponsored by the Department of Canadian Heritage)

Other Dissemination Activities

- Citizenship Research National Agenda Think Tank, Kananaskis, March 1998.

- Citizenship Education for Adult Immigrants: Policy Implications. Presentation made to Alberta Council of Senior Federal Officials. Edmonton, April 29, 1998.

- All citizenship and ESL program coordinators who participated in the study were mailed a two –page summary of the main findings.

- copies of article in press sent to Ingrid Hauck, CIC; Jeffrey Bullard, Canadian Heritage

- Barb Helm of Canadian Heritage was also sent a copy of the article in press.

• Prairie Research Associates, a private firm conducting research for Canadian Heritage on the use of the materials developed for the Citizenship Participation Initiative was informed of the relevant results of this study.

• At the request of Canadian Heritage, an updated list of all citizenship preparation programs located in this study was supplied to the Department.

9. National Linkages Related to Research Activities

A comparative study, instigated by the current research, is underway in Quebec funded by the Montréal Centre for Inter-university Research on Immigration, Integration and Urban Dynamics. (researcher: Marie McAndrew) The study will determine what, if any, Canadian citizenship course preparation is available to immigrants in Quebec. In addition, comparisons will be made of curricula in settlement language classes in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

10. Student Involvement

Kama Jamieson, MEd student at the time of the project (currently a PhD student in Educational Psychology)

11. Other Collaborators

Dr. Murray J. Munro, Dept. of Linguistics, Simon Fraser University
Dr. Reva Joshee, University of Washington

12. Updated abstract

Citizenship Instruction for Adult Immigrants

In view of changes to the citizenship procedures over the last few years, particularly the introduction of a multiple choice exam based on a booklet produced by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, a survey of citizenship preparation programs for adult immigrants was undertaken. A similar study had been carried out in 1987; the current study was designed to make direct comparisons with the previous findings. Major ESL programs in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta were also contacted to determine whether their language classes incorporate citizenship content.

The number of citizenship preparation programs has dropped significantly in the last decade, and those that remain are even narrower in content than previously. Many program coordinators expressed disappointment in what they perceive to be a systematic devaluing of citizenship. Participatory citizenship pedagogical materials developed by Canadian Heritage are not used or even known to most programs. ESL programs focus on language skills and settlement in response to the immediate needs of their students. It is suggested that CIC re-evaluate the usefulness of the test and consider implementing some form of interview process. Further, it is recommended that CIC support citizenship programs and encourage the use of the materials produced by Canadian Heritage.

13. Publications

- Derwing, T. M., Jamieson, K. & Munro M.J. (in press) Citizenship education for adult immigrants: Changes over the last ten years. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research.*

- Derwing, T. M. & Joshee, R. (in preparation) Citizenship instruction is: a) An important national endeavour; b) Devoid of content; c) Only for the brave of heart; d) All of the above.

- an article is planned in collaboration with Marie McAndrew, comparing citizenship preparation in Quebec and the rest of Canada.