Language as an Indicator of Integration in Educational Attainment and Political Participation of Immigrants in Germany and the United States

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ABSTRACT

ANNA-MARIE DARLENE DRAKE: Language as an Indicator of Integration in Educational Attainment and Political Participation of Immigrants in Germany and the United States
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Advanced countries are continually grappling with the necessity of integration and the best practices for advancing minority groups within its borders. Germany and the United States are amongst these seeking to accommodate large groups of labor immigrants from foreign countries. Several factors facilitate the integration of these minority groups, especially important is language acquisition. In 2000, the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) tested 15 year old students around the world and one of the major revelations was the discrepancy between native speakers and non-native speakers, especially in Germany and the United States. This essay will explore the importance of language in integration by comparing two example countries with vastly different citizenship laws, based on the premises of *jus sanguinis* or *jus soli,* and the role language plays in two different intermediaries of integration, education and political participation, within these citizenship frameworks.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For integration[1] to be effective, it needs to proceed on many social levels, through means such as access to education, the labor market and political participation. This paper will focus on the areas of education and political participation. While there is much research on how education affects future gains in the labor market for immigrants (Gang & Zimmerman 2000; Frick & Wagner 2001), links between education and political participation, in terms of language ability, during the integration process is not so widely covered.

Communication is the first step towards integration, and communication requires a level playing field in regards to language. Language is therefore widely regarded as an indicator of "full" integration. Language opens doors to further success, especially in the case of new immigrants. If immigrant or minority language populations are not able to succeed as well as native populations, especially during the period of educational development, they are unlikely to succeed as well when they reach adulthood. This leads to discrepancies in other areas of integration as well, such as the labor market and political participation. Then does the lack of language skills in a dominant language hinder education? And do education levels and minority language status affect other levels of integration such as political participation? To address these questions, I will

[1] For this essay I will use Rinus Penninx's definition of integration: "Integration is the process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups" *in* Integration: the Role of Community, Institutions and the State," *Migration Information Source,* 1 Oct. 2005

compare the role of language in integration in two countries with different immigration patterns: Germany and the United States, and in their two largest immigrant groups, namely the Turkish minority in Germany and the Hispanic (Mexican and Latin American) minority in the United States. Germany and the United States were chosen because of the vast differences in their citizenship laws. Germany, until only very recently, based its citizenship on the *jus sanguinis,* or blood connection; while the United States has based its citizenship on *jus soli*, or on a civic connection. Integration, for this paper, will be measured as comparable results in performances and participation as compared to natives. In particular, I will look at the abilities of second-language students compared to those of their native peers. For full integration, students need to be able to perform and compete at the same levels as their native peers if they are to have the same employment opportunities. The other important integration arena that I will assess is political participation. I will examine recent voting records to determine the political participation of each immigrant group and compare it to the majority group's participation in each country.

It should be noted that education and political participation cannot fully be analyzed in isolation from other factors. Although other factors such as the relationship between the majority group and the minority group play a large role in the feelings of belonging and integration that can affect strongly social acts in democracies (such as voting), I will not be covering these topics in this paper. The goal of this paper is to look at the impact of language in these different social levels of integration.

To assess the impact of language on education levels, I will look specifically at the 2000 Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) exam. Not only did the

PISA exam assess 15 year olds and their abilities in reading literacy, mathematics and sciences comprehension, it also recorded information about the students' backgrounds including their immigrant and ethnic status, language and socioeconomic position. This data set enables a direct comparison between the native born and native language students on the one hand, and their immigrant counterparts on the other. The results from the 2000 PISA exam were disheartening in many ways for educators in both Germany and the United States. Not only did the immigrant groups not do as well as had been hoped, but there were much larger discrepancies than had been expected between the native students and their immigrant counterparts. Moreover, and strikingly, these differences linger on in Germany long after German becomes the main language for the immigrant child, while in the United States, once such language differences are overcome, the immigrant students are no longer far behind the rest of their peers.

For the political participation of the minority groups, I will first begin by looking at a case study of Hispanic voters in the three southeastern states of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. Unlike many other states, these three states record voter ethnicity upon registration, thereby enabling our analysis. Hispanic voters are relatively new to these states as well (as compared with other regions in the United States), which makes it a parallel comparison to the Turkish Minority in Germany. For the United States, I will look at registration rates as well as voting rates, and compare background factors such as status as first or second generation citizens as well as language use and other variables. The United States has lower voter turnout than most other Western democracies, approximately half that of most European countries. This can make the data much more interesting when second generation voters are less active than the first generation. Voter

registration in the Hispanic community, especially in that of the southern United States, tends to be higher among naturalized first generation Americans than among their children, the second generation of Hispanic Americans. There are many factors that could play into this. One may be that the second generation is becoming more "Americanized" by participating in lower levels.

Since the new citizenship reforms in Germany in 2000, naturalization rates have risen considerably, and larger proportions of the naturalized have come from non-European countries, particularly Turkey. This increased voter registrations since 2000, and much was made of the then possible affect of new Turkish voters on the 2005 election. Many of these registrations were Turkish–German citizens who had been born and raised in Germany, in effect second and third generation immigrants. Because voter registration policies in Germany do not record ethnicity and former country status, accurate registration-based numbers are hard to come by. I will therefore look at information from survey research done in the cities of Mannheim and Heidelberg, whose interviewers recorded such data as well as voter preferences and knowledge of the German political system and intention to vote.

Germany has a history of very tight controls on immigration and asylum seekers, even to the extent that these controls are often seen as excessive. Despite these practices, and the attitudes behind them, however, Germany has more immigrants living inside its borders than any other EU country - almost 15 million people, making up almost one fifth of the German population (Population and Development Review 2006, 597). The United States, by contrast, has a reputation of more relaxed controls, and many illegal immigrants within its borders. But just like Germany, the United States does not always

live up to its reputation. Since the 1860s, its immigration laws have sought to restrict immigration by setting quotas with National Origins Act of 1924 (Saragin and Kelly 1985, 34). Hispanic immigrants have been coming in increasing numbers since the mid 20th century, so that the number of immigrant youth exponentially. The Turks are the largest minority group in the Federal Republic, with rising numbers since the *Gastarbeiter* or guest worker program of the 1960s and 70s. Each group has such large numbers that its population concentrations and insularity impede language acquisition compared to smaller and more dispersed immigrant groups who are more likely to be absorbed in the dominant culture. It should be noted that in some cases the insulation is forced upon them due to ambivalence and discrimination on the part of the dominant group towards guest workers and their families. There may be few effective programs available to teach English or German and to ease their acceptance into the established society, not least because the expectation was that they would leave when their employment contributions were no longer needed. In the United States, the issues surrounding legal Hispanic immigrants are difficult to divorce from illegal immigrants, which only compound the issues at hand.

In this paper, I will first review theories of immigration and language identity, as well as provide a short background history for each country with immigration and language policy. This will set up my analysis of the differences between the two countries. In the second section of the paper, I will construct a case study of each group by looking at their success in the education system and political participation. I will do this by analyzing their scores from the 2000 PISA exam. Differences between native-language students and those who speak predominantly a foreign language will be of

particular interest here. I will then look at recent figures for Hispanic and Turkish voting behavior in certain regions of their respective resident countries to explore the impact of language acquisition upon political participation. Finally, I will do a comparative analysis of the two groups to determine how language acquisition affects educational attainment and political participation in a traditional European nation state, Germany, and in a multicultural immigrant society, the United States.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY OF IMMIGRANT LANGUAGES

Background: Germany

Although the idea that Germany is not an *Einwanderungsland,* or not a nation of immigration, which has always circulated around its borders or that it, has only just encountered immigrants during the last 50 years, is completely untrue. As with the rest of Europe, Germany has a long history of immigration. One of the recurring factors in earlier waves of immigration in Germany is the lack of success with integration. From the 17th until the 20th century, Germany experienced five major immigrant groups attempting integration into the country: Huguenots, Jews, Mennonites, Poles and Serbs. Of these five groups only one became fully integrated (Huguenots); and according to Janoski and Glennie (1995, 22), language was one of the critical factors in its success.

Germany's borders have not always been open to other groups. While the rest of Europe was reaping the consequences of colonialism in the vast numbers of former colonial subjects immigrating to the home country, Germany did not follow this pattern. It did not have large colonial pursuits, and the ones it did have, were all but taken away after the First World War. Moreover, it was policy not to teach the colonial subjects the German language as a means maintaining control. While other countries such as Portugal and England, by contrast, pushed for their subjects to learn the colonial language and, in

turn, saw the subjects push for rights and the ability to have more representation, Germany moved in the other direction. When the other colonial powers were receiving high numbers of former colonial subjects into their borders at the turn of the 20th century, Germany only had 100 come to the colonial home and only 24 spent any extended period of time during the colonial period (Janoski and Glennie 1995, 23). After the First World War and the Second World War, the climate in Germany became much more *Ausländerfeindlich,* or hostile towards foreigners, and the pattern in Germany quickly shifted to one of emigrants leaving the country, and for that matter, the entire European continent. This subsequently added to the immigration to the western Hemisphere, notably the United States.

It was then the reconstruction programs following World War Two that led increasing numbers of immigrants to the Federal Republic. They included mostly G*astarbeiter* or guest workers mostly from Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey. These immigrant workers were part of the *Wirtschaftswunder,* or the economic miracle that Germany experienced in the late 60s and early 70s. But after the downturn in the economy in 1972, these guest workers were regarded as having out stayed their welcome. The message that Germany was expecting them to leave when they were no longer economically necessary must have been lost on the thousands of young male workers, for they began to bring their families into Germany as well, thus strengthening their roots in the Federal Republic. When the families did arrive, the German government initially had no intention of fully integrating these families, and instead announced that Germany was not an *Einwanderungsland*. As in their colonial days, they resisted integrating immigrants into the German system, and instead allowed

them to be taught in their own native tongues, hoping thereby to ease a transition back to their home countries (Hansen-Thomas 2007, 256). By 1989, when the wall came down in Berlin, changes were unavoidable in most aspects of life in Germany. One of the surprising developments and especially disconcerting for the guest workers, many of whom had lived in Germany for several decades by this point, was the rapid acceptance of *Aussiedler*, or ethnic Germans, from the former Soviet Union. These ethnic Germans were allowed entrance and easy access to naturalization procedures based on their long past German heritage. Although they often came without any prior knowledge of German language or culture, they were given the opportunity for citizenship with fewer requirements than many of those whom had lived in Germany their entire lives.

This *jus sanguinis* approach to citizenship permeated most German citizenship laws, even through the 1990 reforms. Between the years of 1951 and 1988 more than 1.6 million *Aussiedler* came into German and became German citizens under the "re-settler" clause in the Basic Law (Article 116) (Wüst 2004, 342). During reunification, more than 1 million came in the period of 1989-1991. It was not until the 1993 language tests for "ethnic-Germans" and defacto ceilings for their numbers that their integration slowed. Citizenship laws that moved away from "blood ties" to Germany were not fully implemented until 2000. The new laws in 2000 allowed citizenship for those who had lived in Germany for a minimum of 8 years and could meet the language and civic requirements. The most positive change in immigration policy allowed those born to at least one legally residing parent (minimum 8 years) in Germany, to receive German citizenship by they time they reached adulthood. Although the new reform did not allow for dual citizenship past the age of 23, something many immigrants preferred, the

changes were touted as a move in the right direction. In 2000, Germany had 7.3 million non-Germans within its borders with more than 2 million holding Turkish citizenship. Another major sign of change in German policy was the announcement by the 2005 Grand Coalition, led by the CDU, that integration was a priority for the new government, and that they would put through measures to deal with it accordingly.

Background: United States

The United States, since the time of its founding, has had more of an ambivalent attitude towards its language policy. Although there were several attempts in the beginning to change the *lingua franca* of the colonies to the classics of Hebrew or Greek, these notions were not taken seriously. The English language did take on its dominant status quite quickly, despite the fact that it was not the only language spoken by all inhabitants as their mother tongue. Besides the Native Americans with their own particular tribal languages, there were several European languages that were spoken in high numbers by the immigrants who brought their language over with them. Along with those out west in the former Spanish colonies who spoke Spanish as their first language, there was an ethnically mixed community in the southern Louisiana area who spoke a dialect of French as their first language, as well as several groups of immigrant farmers who spoke German, Italian and several Nordic languages that had taken up roots in the upper Midwest as well as on the northern sea board (Sagarin and Kelly 1985). Up until the start of the First World War, German actually was the second most common language in the United States, spoken by upwards of 6 million people, or more than 6.5% of the population at that time (36). It was not until World War I that these numbers began to

dwindle. During the interwar period, the United States began its first real tightening of immigration laws. A quota system was put in place to reduce the numbers of "unwanted" immigrants of "lesser" quality from the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. Although throughout these periods several groups tried to continue to speak the language of their home country, this was often seen by the immigrant children only as a means to communicate with older family and community members, rather than a symbol of strong pride in their immigrant origins. There was much discrimination, overt and latent, during peak immigration periods during the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century in the United States. Still, most of these groups were able to set up schools, religious institutions and community groups that worked in their native languages, often with financial help from cities and states (Sangrin and Kelly 1985).

It was rather the next wave of immigrants that would be more determined to preserve their heritage through the language issue in the United States. Immigration levels began to pick up again in the 1960s and 70s, following patterns that held up through much of the western world. These immigrants to the United States came mostly from Mexico and other Latin and Central American countries such as the Dominican Republic and Columbia. Their numbers reached unprecedented levels during the 1980s, and much of the rise of the Hispanic minority in the United States came not just from those first generation immigrants but also from the second and third generations to be born. The fertility rate of Hispanic mothers is much higher than that of non-Hispanic whites and even more than that of African-American mothers, with those from Mexico at almost triple the rate for all other women in the United States for women between the ages of 15 and 44, (Clark and Schultz 1998, 20).

The unprecedented numbers of immigrants and especially illegal immigrants has become a political issue in recent American politics. According to the US Census Bureau 2003 Current Population Survey (CPS), the United States had 33.5 million foreign born (excluding most undocumented population), with 51 percent of those coming from south of the border, from Latin, Central and South America, altogether comprising 11.7% of the total U.S. population[2]. The political exploitation of this situation, including rhetoric about the dangers of "losing the American culture," has driven issues of national language to the forefront of politics again, despite the fact that even this 11.7% lags behind the historic high of almost 15% during the period of 1890 and 1910 (Sangrin and Kelly 1985). The United States has never had an official language and though some in the mid 19th century entertained the ideas of adding German as the second "unofficial" language, it seems now that the Spanish language has taken that spot. The perceived refusal of language acquisition within this growing group seems to motivate the negative rhetoric farther.

Each country has a unique past with languages and the policies used to either encourage or discourage their usage within their borders. Access to language assistance is the first step for those in each country to succeed. The first place most of these children of immigrants will encounter the lingua franca of the country, to a large degree, is in the public education system. Now I will look at the use of language as a determiner of future success for students. I will also take a look at what types of policies are currently in place in the school systems that either help or hinder students with second languages.

[2] MPI 2005, http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=283

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY: EDUCATION

Education in Germany

In 2000 the Organistation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) held the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for 32 participant countries including OECD member countries and 4 non-OECD countries with more than 250,000 students participating world-wide. The objective was to test the academic levels of 15 year olds in most industrialized nations. The results were shocking for the German public. Germany did not do as well as many had hoped, it performed at the average level in most subjects and even below that of the United States in reading literacy (Stanat 2003, 249). The Federal Republic, the land that produced great thinkers like Einstein and Goethe, could not believe that their students could have done so poorly, and the blame game began soon after the results were released. Students with migration backgrounds were the first to bear the brunt of the public outrage. The real blame came after the dust had settled and a closer look was taken at the school system itself (Huisken 2005).

Researchers and educators began looking at what the results meant to Germany and how they should be interpreted. Some blamed the fact that students did not understand the importance of the exam as they were told they could leave whenever they were finished. Some of the blame went to the test itself and that was supposedly not created fairly. But there were two themes that stood out above the rest: Germany had the highest differential between native and migrant students with 105.7 points, more than 20

points higher than the next country[3], and how the results highlighted the differences of the three tiered school system. The numbers between the different Federal States in Germany are also noteworthy. In Germany, as in the United States, the federal states are responsible for the majority of their own educational policies. In the German Federal State of Bremen, the scores from the PISA exam were the lowest amongst all students with foreign born parents. The population of 15 year-olds in Bremen that came from a Turkish background during the 2000 PISA exam was 24.3% and the total population of youth with foreign born parents that speak that foreign language at home was 82.5% (Stanat 2003, 252). While Bremen had poorer scores amongst all its students (native and foreign born), even the best performing states had on average a 90 point difference between students with native born parents and those with foreign born parents (Stanat 2003, 251)[4]. States with much lower percentages of Turkish populations and high percentages of foreign born German speakers however, did much better on the exam. States such as North Rhine-Westphalia pulled higher scores for both native and non native students, despite having the second highest percentage of foreign born parents and the second highest population of Turkish background students. What separates North Rhine-Westphalia from a state such as Bremen is the much lower percentage of students who speak a foreign language at home. In North Rhine-Westphalia almost 17% more students from foreign backgrounds speak German at home (252).

When comparing the scores of those foreign students who speak German at home and those who still speak their heritage languages, there is a positive upward movement

[3] Here migrant students are interpreted as those who are foreign born, their parents are foreign born and they speak a foreign language at home. (*Source:* Entorf and Miuniu, 2005)

[4] Calculations my own, following numbers given by Stanat 2003.

in scores. While the differential between native born native speakers and foreign born foreign speakers is the highest amongst the PISA participants in Germany, with 105.7 points, there is a large leap forward for those who do speak the language. For those foreign born students that do speak German at home, their point differentials jumps 61.9 points to a margin of 43.8, a marked improvement, though still at the bottom of the scale, just above France, with 45.1 points differential (Entorf and Minoiu 2005, 371).

While foreign students received the first blame with their presence and perceived *Überfremdung* or loosely, over-foreignization, the second attack came from the numbers that alluded to a high differential between the education tracks. However, it is interesting to note, that Germany, unlike other education systems that did much better, has a divided secondary education. It consists of three levels, *Hauptschule, Realschule, and Gymnasium*. Hauptschule is the first level that only goes until grade 9 and in a word is the blue collar school. Real would continue on until the 10th grade and is the white collar school. Both the Hauptschule and Realschule students then go on to apprenticeships. The tight labor market currently in Germany presents even more challenges to Hauptschule graduates, competing with those from the Realschule for lucrative places. Gymnasium is the only track that leads to an *Abitur* which is necessary for admission into the University system. What determines which track a child may follow is usually decided in the fourth grade by teacher recommendation[5]. This recommendation is not binding. The German education system, from the first grade even through university is free (there is always a move back and forth concerning university fees). What some researchers cannot understand then is why the phenomenon does not lead all parents to choose to send their children to Gymnasium (Dustmann 2004). There are many factors to take into account.

[5] The decision was formerly decided by an exam. The practice was eliminated in 1960.

One factor is that children are likely to follow in their parents footsteps, through either model or coercion (Gang & Zimmerman 2000; Frick & Wagner 2001). Another aspect of the issue is the number of foreign parents, who may not understand the system and the language well enough to fully understand their options. There is also the possibility that parents take the word of the teacher as written in stone, as teachers may be highly respected.

This does not even take into account that students with second language abilities are often at a disadvantage in school systems that do not have public kindergarten or pre-school, as is the case in Germany. Studies show that students, who are given access to language early on, preferably during the first formative years, go on to learn the language at a much better level than those who first encounter the language upon entering primary school (Bleakley and Chin 2008). Recommendations from teachers may be coming from the stance that they fully believe that a child does not have the ability to pursue a higher education. Or, perhaps a more sinister reason could be behind the numbers of foreign students that enter the lower tracks of secondary education:[6] discrimination could very well play a role in teachers' decisions, whether fully intended or not.

When the numbers from each school are laid out, there is a clear pattern that is keeping so many migration-background students from reaching higher levels of education. In some cities, the Hauptschule can be comprised of up to 80% immigrant backgrounds while only 15% of students in the school system in Germany are from foreign backgrounds. The numbers are quite even for the native German born students,

[6] 15% of Naturalized citizens went to *Hauptschule*, while only 7% of German-born students did (Wüst 2004, 345). Those numbers broken down farther show that over 39% of those without any German ethnic ties attend *Hauptschule* while those that are German-born attend at a 27% rate (Frick and Wagner 2001, 27).

sending about one third to each school. For students with Turkish background, it is quite different. Most students are likely to go to Hauptschule or perhaps Realschule, with only a small percentage reaching the Gymnasium level and even fewer going on to attend university. Regardless of the school track that the students are assigned, the number of foreign students that drop out is almost four times the amount of native students with 22% to 6%, (Wagner et al 1998, 37).

Education in the United States

The results for the United States from the PISA exam were also disappointing, although not completely unexpected. Unlike other traditional immigrant countries like Canada and Australia, which performed quite well, the United States did significantly worse. While the United States practices often what has been termed a "reunion" type immigration policy thereby reuniting family members, other immigrant countries such as Canada and Australia practice selective immigration. Some researchers attribute this to the United States' issue with its Mexican border and the number of illegal or unauthorized immigrants that come through that border. This is not to say that education practices do not have a strong influence on the results from the 2000 PISA exam.

The mean scores for all students in the reading literacy was just under OECD average of 500 points in the United States with 496.0 and those with migration backgrounds (in this case both parents are foreign born) was 464.9, and the difference between national medians and median scores for immigrant students 35.5.[7] This difference between national and immigrant medians is not concurrent with the other traditional immigrant countries, where Australia and Canada had small differences (with

[7] (Unweighted) statistics based on PISA 2000 (OECD, 2001) *Source*: Entorf and Minoiu 2005.

immigrant students having more positive scores than the national median in Canada) between their national medians and immigrant student medians. However, only one of the western European countries in the comparison (Entorf and Minoiu 2005, 360)[8], the United Kingdom, did better than the USA. Even Sweden and Finland, countries that performed at the highest levels overall, had differentials of more than 20 points higher than the US. German had a differential of 79.8, the highest difference between median scores[9].

The differentials between native speakers and non-native speakers were the most striking contrast for the United States. When student scores are separated by their origin and language use at home, the results are noteworthy. For students who were born in the United States and speak the native language of English, the mean score is 513.8. When that number is compared to students who were both foreign born and speak a foreign language at home, the point differential is 69.7. The most positive sign, though, is the differential for those who are foreign born but speak the native language at home; they only lack behind the native born by 9.4 points. By this standard the United States does even better than their neighbor to the north, where Canada has a differential between native born speaker and foreign born native speaker at 17.6 points. However, the two other traditional immigrant countries, Australia and New Zealand, have better scores from their foreign born, native speakers, with 3.5 and 18.7 points, respectively. It is important to note that these immigrants are likely to come from Western countries, and

[8] Entorf and Minoiu 2005, Table 1.

[9] The United States and Germany had comparable percentages of immigrants, with 14.5 and 14.0 percent respectively.

are not likely to come from labor migrants, such as in the United States (Entorf and Minoiu 2005).

These points do not explain all language factors affecting students. For many students, it is not whether they were foreign born that affects their academic futures as much as whether their parents were. In the United States some 8% of students in the public school system are classified as limited English proficient (LEP), with close to 75% comprised of Hispanics. Only half of the LEP students are foreign born, leaving another 50% that are native born and foreign speakers (Bleakley and Chin 2008, 268). In Bleakley and Chin's analysis of parent's language abilities, they discovered this under researched factor often accounts as much as or more than socioeconomic factors, especially considering that language abilities may be the reasons behind those socioeconomic factors, particularly those attained after reaching the United States[10]. What Bleakley and Chin were able to determine, was that the immigration age of parents was the largest determiner of their children's future English proficiency and educational development. Immigrant parents who came to the United States at a younger age, especially before age nine were more likely to have significantly higher English speaking ability. Their potential influence on their children's future begins at an early age. Children with more English proficient parents were more likely than their other immigrant children to attend pre-school and first grade at their expected ages, with three-four year olds having a 9.39% increased probability to attend[11]. Their parents' English

[10] Bleakley and Chin, 2008, did an analysis of immigrant parents from non-English speaking countries and their English language proficiency and its affect on their children's language acquisition. Bleakley and Chin used immigrant parents from English speaking countries as a control. Though the analysis uses children from all non-English speaking countries, Bleakley and Chin maintain that results mirror those of parents from Mexico and other Central American countries that immigrated to the United States.

[11] This is one quarter of the mean attendance rate for three to four year olds.

proficiency also decreases the chance that six and seven year olds will be behind their grade level by 1.93 percentage points[12] (Bleakley and Chin 2008, 284).

These results continue even after a student's first school years. Although the influence a parent may have on their children's English decreases after the age of nine and plateaus by the time the student reaches middle school, their parent's English proficiency still affects their education far into high school. Parents with just a small improvement of English proficiency decrease the chances their 15-17 year old will drop out of high school by 1.77%.[13] Parental English also has an affect on their grade placement through high school as well. A student is more likely to be at the age appropriate grade by 4.32 percentage points depending on their parent's English skills (285). Unfortunately, this language gap that appears in primary school for students with less English proficient parents continues into adulthood. According to the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (1979), although children of less English proficient parents seem to close the gap by middle school, the survey shows that even as adults, individuals with less proficient parents continue to have worse English language skills. This language gap seems to only be closed in so far as the speaking abilities, not in more nuanced and "richer measures of English-language skills," (Bleakley and Chin, 2008, 294).

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[12] This is two thirds of the mean percent below age-appropriate grade.

[13] This is about 80% of the mean high school dropout rate for children with parents from non-English speaking countries.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Turkish-German Vote

Studies show that education and income have a direct correlation to political participation and immigrants are often less likely to participate. It was not until the 2000 German citizenship reform that language was added as a requisite to naturalization. This directly affects the possibility for language to inhibit the political participation of immigrants in Germany. The Turkish naturalization rates also declined after this reform in 2000, reaching back to 1994 levels for several years after the reforms were put into motion (Eccaruis-Kelly 2004, 13).

There were many who thought that the reform of the German naturalization laws in 2000 would allow for a large increase in naturalized citizens from Turkish backgrounds. Oddly enough, the numbers did increase, but the percentages actually dwindled. The peak percentage and number of those with Turkish citizenship that were naturalized as Germans was in 1999, with 72.5 % of the 143,267.[14] Total percentages dropped to below those from 1995, but the total numbers did continue to be more than double that of the early 1990s.

These increased numbers of naturalized citizens became an interest of many social scientists and polling agencies. Groups such as the *Politbarometer* and the

[14] Data provided by Statistisches Bundesamt and compiled in, Eccarius-Kelly 2004.

Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e.V. Mannheim began polling the new German citizens about their political preferences and intentions. Since February 1999, *Politbarometer* has screened monthly for new citizens. In 2000, Andreas Wüst looked at the case study of new citizens in the Baden-Württemberg, using this monthly questionnaire. His major finding, besides political party affiliation[15], was that former Turkish citizens by far had the best knowledge of the German political system and politicians, as compared to other naturalized citizens. Over 80% of former Turkish citizens asked knew all parties and all or most politicians.[16] The only difference that Wüst could come up with between those who were formerly Turkish and the other ethnic groups (mainly those from the former Soviet Union and Romania) was that the Turkish groups was more likely to have attended more school years in Germany (Andreas Wüst 2000, 566). Although both groups attended school the same number of years over all, former Turkish citizens had a higher percentage that attended school in Germany than elsewhere. According to the *Politbarometer* between October 2001 and September 2002, the deficit of knowledge concerning German parties proved this point further. With the exception of naturalized Poles, the former Turkish citizens had a less than 4% difference than that of German-born citizens (8.7% to 4.9%), while the former Soviet Union citizens had an almost 20% difference with 24.5%, (Wüst 2004, 349).

Although Wüst shows that former Turkish citizens had the best knowledge of the German parties and politicians, interestingly, this does not seem to motivate them to be interested in those politics that they know so well. In Diehl and Blohm's 2001 look at Mannheim,

[15] 86% former Turkish born citizens supported SPD, while those born in Germany supported SPD by 14%. The Green Party has been making gains with higher educated and younger former Turkish citizens. (Wüst 2000, 565). In Mannheim these numbers were close to the same with 87.6% leaning left on the party scale (Diehl and Blohm 2001, 412).

[16] The then leader of CSU, Stoiber, was unknown to 31% of former Turkish citizens (Wüst 2000, 566).

they found that the Turkish residents in Mannheim had half the interest in German politics than those of the native population (15.4% to 30%), (411). The *Politbarometer* did show that in the year 2002, when asked their intention to vote, those with Turkish backgrounds gave the most negative response. Those planning to vote were 78%, which is almost ten percent less than German-born (87%) and is 10% less than that of those with Romanian backgrounds. Only those from the former Soviet Union matched the former Turkish citizens in their relative lack of enthusiasm, (Wüst 2004, 348). What is also telling is that those with Turkish backgrounds had the highest number of unsure voters. Despite their higher knowledge of German politics, the number of those disinterested seems to affect actual voting.

One of the positive outcomes of the polls, Diehl and Blohm concluded that the high number of those with Turkish backgrounds that are members of clubs or associations shows that Turkish migrants show a high degree of self-organization. This coupled with their higher knowledge and interest (as compared to those with other former nationalities) could foretell future involvement in German politics, (413).

Hispanic American Voters

In the United States only five states maintain registration and turnout files by ethnicity, of those five, Bullock and Hood (2006) looked at the results from three of the states: Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina and their results in their expanding Hispanic communities. Between the years of 1990 and 2000 the Hispanic population more than doubled in more than three fourths of the counties in the three states, with some counties experiencing growth rates of more than 500% (1119). It is important to

note that a large percentage of this new Hispanic population is made up of illegal or undocumented immigrants. According to the 2000 Census, the Hispanic population made up 4.5 percent in the three states with a voting age percentage that was slightly less at just over 4%. However, when the numbers of non-citizens are excluded the number of those eligible to vote lowers to less than 1.6%.[17]

The rates of voter registration were quite low in 2000, but did rise over the next two election cycles. In 2000 and 2002 the voter turnout among Hispanics was 0.12 % and 0.11% but increased sharply to 0.48% in 2004 (Bullock and Hood 2006, 1123). This shows that although Hispanic turnout is still low and has a long way to go to become a real source of voting power, it has increased sharply over a short period of time. One of the reasons that keep the percentage so low is the high numbers of illegals, which alters the numbers of total Hispanics present and the percentages thereof.

The results help to determine what affect being native born and linguistic isolation has on participation in the Hispanic communities of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. They found that "greater linguistic isolation was an indication of lower levels of assimilation," (Bullock and Hood 2006, 1126). The number of Hispanic Voting Age citizens drops by over 16% in areas of linguistic isolation. The level of assimilation may be lower in these groups for several reasons. There is a high likelihood that these isolated groups have higher populations of illegals, and therefore have less incentive to socialize outside their circles for fear of being discovered or reported. There is also perhaps a higher likelihood of children living within these groups, lowering the percentage of those eligible to vote even more. For those who are legally able to register, the prohibiting

[17] The Census Bureau does not provide estimates by race or ethnicity when the total numbers for such groups are less than 100 per county. As a consequence, the number of counties for analysis is 211, not the full 305 (Bullock and Hood 2006, 1112)

factor may be the lack of English proficiency. This helped promote printing the materials were present in Spanish in the hopes it would make a difference in voter registration and turnout. In the case of Hall County Georgia, the results were a bit surprising. In the 2004 general election, Georgia piloted a trial study using Spanish-language ballots. The resulting turnout of the 19.6% of the Hispanic population in the county was 51.9%, whereas the statewide total was 60.5% (1129).[18] The difference of almost 10% is not to be over looked, although the numbers of eligible Hispanic voters was not given. In Georgia, the trial proved that while Spanish ballots did not necessarily hinder voters, it did not show an increase above that of the rest of the state.

The other major factor affecting Hispanic voters in these three states was the number of native born citizens. The numbers that Bullock and Hood worked with supported the study from Ramakrishan (2005) that showed that political participation actually falls overtime. While the *potential* for more voters is present when more American-born Hispanics are part of a community, their *actual* voting habits decrease as they become more assimilated. This factor is more likely to affect those parts of the country that have larger numbers of American-born Hispanics. However, as we saw in the numbers at the beginning of this section that the numbers of Hispanics in these three states are mainly adults, there are usually few or no children as apart of these communities. Bullock and Hood, then believe that the real potential in Hispanic voting power will come from those naturalized citizens (in percentage terms), and not those who are native born (1132).

[18] Bullock and Hood included this explanation about the Spanish Language Ballots ,"Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina are not included among jurisdictions covered by the language provisions of the 1975 Voting Rights Act." Therefore the 2004 pilot study in Georgia was a trial run of practices used elsewhere in the USA. An interesting research point would be the use of Spanish Language Ballots in states that fall under the jurisdiction of the Voting Rights Act.

The Bullock and Hood Study shows that the voter participation rates in the southern states are rising and will continue to rise over the near future. The authors, while trying to confirm that assimilation measures, are the best determiners of voter behavior, have found that while language does keep potential voters back, full integration, in terms of having American-children, does not ensure more voters. The eventual turn in voter numbers does not support the notion that language and education (assuming that native born children are better educated than their parents) would allow for political participation.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

One of the main findings in this paper supports those findings for Bleakley and Chin (2008), that parental language skills are an asset for their children's futures, especially in the case of Germany and the United States, both of whom receive their majority of immigrants from labor migrant backgrounds. Parental language was often coupled, but never divorced from other factors such as cultural attitudes or socioeconomic levels. The numbers from the PISA exam support this strongly. In most countries the point differentials for students that spoke another language at home were surprisingly high, especially in countries that performed well, but these countries had lower percentages of immigrants. However, the point differentials were widest in Germany and the United States. Both countries have similar percentages as well as high numbers of immigrant students. It would be expected that systems that support more foreign students would be able to perform at higher levels (assuming they were more practiced in integrating students) with their foreign background students. Their differences among foreign born and foreign speakers and foreign born but native language speakers were also similar with around 60 point difference. The major difference in the United States was that once foreign born students spoke the native language at home, the differentials compared to native born students all but disappears. Students that were foreign born, but spoke English at home, only had a 9 point difference form Native students. This number is one of a few encouraging signs in an otherwise

bleak assessment of the US education system, especially in comparison with other western industrialized countries. Both countries have high rates of second language use at home, especially with the households of the two case groups. Both groups have higher rates of dropping out or being kept below grade level (in the US) or not achieving the higher secondary schools (in Germany) because of their language proficiency.

Hispanic-Americans and Turkish-Germans also have relatively lower interest in the politics of their new home country. Although Germany does have a much higher voter turnout (or at least intention with 87% for German-born) this does not lessen the almost 10% difference between the Turkish minority and the native majority. That is a significant amount. When coupled with the issue of less interest, this shows that there is room for improvement with party outreach in Germany.

In the United States the numbers look a bit bleaker. Hispanic voter turnout is much lower than white or even black American turnout, almost half that of the other two groups The reasons are not necessarily lack of interest, though that may be the case in the downward movement of second generation citizens. In the case of the Hispanics in the southern states of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, the biggest issue is the mere fact that the majority of the Hispanics present are not eligible to vote due to their legal status. This, along with larger groups of linguistic isolation, leads to lower numbers of registered voters and in turn voter turnout.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In the case of educational integration, the PISA exam illustrates that those with second languages almost universally had poorer results than native born students (there are a few exceptions, although usually in countries with highly selective immigration policies such as Canada). Germany had by far the worst discrepancies. Students learning the new language are not able to catch-up by the 12 year old mark (as we saw with the Bleakley and Chin study); instead they are rooted out by the time they are 10 years old for the lower tiered schools. In the United States we saw that this there is also a high discrepancy between native and non-native speaker households. While there is a great leap in the scores between immigrant students who speak English at home, and those who still speak their heritage language at home, there is still room here for improvement as well.

Perhaps both countries need to involve a more systematic approach to teaching second language students. Methods such as those used in Canada and Australia might be just what Germany and the United States need. This would include specialized teachers and programs that work across the board. This would however, be difficult to implement in these two countries because of the power given to the states to form most education policies.

Language may not be as important in political participation as with education. In Germany, where the naturalization process now involves a stricter language component,

all naturalized citizens, since 2000 (and even somewhat before) should in theory speak German well enough to integrate on this level. Despite that and their knowledge of the German political scene, their interest has not peaked in the politics of the country. This is mainly due to feelings of not-belonging and hardships within the country in partnership with the lack of direct interest of the political parties. Perhaps a more keen interest in the needs of the Turkish community will bring a heightened interest to the political scene and to voting.

In the United States, although the numbers are a small percentage of the actual group living with the country, we find that first generation voters are more likely to vote, but they are more likely to be citizens if they live in areas of second generation citizens, that have lower registration numbers. The US shows that although second generation citizens should in theory speak English better and understand the politics better from attending local schools, their interest also seems to wane. This could also be due to the fact that they feel disconnected to the parties, though there has been a large outreach to the Hispanic communities in the last two elections. Still, the community seems to be rising in numbers and registered voters; as the process continues in these new Southern communities, perhaps the numbers will be clearer as to what factors affect voter registration and turn out amongst the Hispanics in the South.

The Turkish minority and the Hispanic minority are each trying to find their place in their new home countries, and while the integration process is far from over, there have been some movements towards reaching those goals. Language plays a large role in the potential success of immigrant students in both the United States and Germany. However, in both countries, language did not seem to play the deciding factor in political

participation. One might argue that it even worked against it. In both cases, when the citizens were more likely to speak the language and more fully understand the political system, the interest waned. In Germany, the naturalized citizens with a Turkish background were more likely to attend school in Germany, and as such speak the language better than their former Soviet and Romanian counterparts. But they were also more likely to be uninterested in the politics they knew more about. In the United States, second generation Hispanic Americans were less likely to be registered to vote than their parents, despite being more familiar with the English language and the political system. This suggests that other factors more strongly affect political participation. Factors such as the relationship between the majority and the minority group and immigrant group status probably play a larger role in this area of integration. However, language still plays a role, as there is arguably a better understanding of the political situation because of their learned language skills. Increased knowledge of the system (assisted by better language skills) does not directly correlate to increased interest.

Language is still an important indicator in certain areas of integration. Those areas where native born citizens are put directly in competition with the foreign students seem to account for much larger discrepancies than those areas that are more equal access. All citizens are open to vote however, a university education cannot be open to everyone. But as language can affect those first years of integration into society and those in turn affect the future ability to integrate (in certain areas); its importance cannot be underestimated. Its effect on the future career opportunities and subsequent socioeconomic levels, make it undoubtedly a major issue that should be taken in earnest in both countries.

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