

## Dimensions of Multicultural Education: Pedagogical Practices Knowledge of Graduate Students Towards Multicultural Education in Turkey<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** This qualitative case study aimed to examine teachers' and teacher candidates' who are graduate-level students at a public university views on and perceptions of multicultural education and its dimensions in the Turkish context. For this study, the research question was created to examine how participants' understandings of multicultural education can help them to apply their pedagogical practices in classrooms in Turkey. For this examination, the dimensions of multicultural education that were created by James Banks have shaped the students' possible multicultural practices related to their classrooms, curricula, and schools. This study was conducted at the *Alpha University (pseudonym)*, located in the Marmara Region of Turkey. The data were collected from semi-structured interviews, written documents, focus group interview, classroom observation, and fieldnotes. According to the findings, the participants gave various examples of how their pedagogical practices related to dimensions of multicultural education could be applied to schools. While some of these dimensions can be found in the participants' understandings in a straightforward manner and can be explained via useful practical examples, it is evident that some dimensions are lacking with regard to practical applications. However, especially with regard to teachers and teacher candidates who have graduated from elementary education programs, the examples they provide are similar and generally come from the same courses. They had problems providing more detailed examples of issues related to multiculturalism and diversity relevant to the content of different courses.

**Keywords:** Dimensions of Multicultural Education, Diversity in Education, Turkey, Teachers and Teacher Candidates, Graduate Education

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### Çokkültürlü Eğitimin Boyutları: Türkiye'de Çokkültürlü Eğitim Konusunda Lisansüstü Öğrencilerin Pedagojik Uygulama Bilgisi

**Özet:** Bu nitel örnek olay incelemesinde, bir devlet üniversitesinde yüksek lisans öğrencisi olan öğretmenlerin ve öğretmen adaylarının çokkültürlü eğitim algıları ve Türkiye bağlamında bu eğitimin boyutları hakkındaki görüşlerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu çalışma için araştırma sorusu, katılımcıların çokkültürlü eğitim anlayışlarını, Türkiye'deki pedagojik uygulamalarını ve dersliklerde bu eğitim modelinin uygulamalarına nasıl yardımcı olabileceğini incelemek için oluşturulmuştur. Bu araştırmanın kavramsal çerçevesini James Banks

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tarafından oluşturulan çokkültürlü eğitimin boyutları oluşturmaktadır ve katılımcıların dersliklerinde, müfredatta var olan ve okullardaki olası çokkültürlü uygulamaları incelenmiştir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin Marmara Bölgesi'nde bulunan Alfa Üniversitesi'nde (takma ad) yapılmıştır. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden, yazılı belgelerden, odak grup görüşmesinden, sınıf gözleminden ve alan notlarından toplanmıştır. Bulgulara göre, katılımcılar çokkültürlü eğitimin boyutlarıyla ilgili pedagojik uygulamalarının okullarda nasıl uygulanabileceğine dair çeşitli örnekler vermişlerdir. Bu boyutların bazıları hakkında katılımcılar fikir beyan edip pratik örnekler ile açıklayabilirken, bazı boyutların uygulamaları ilgili olarak eksik bilgilere sahip oldukları sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Sınıf öğretmenliği programlarından mezun olan öğretmenler ve öğretmen adaylarının sundukları örneklerin benzer olduğu ve genellikle aynı derslerin konularından beslendikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Bunun yanında, ilkokul müfredatı haricindeki başka derslerin içeriğinde çokkültürlülük ile ilgili konulara daha ayrıntılı örnekler vermede problemlerinin olduğu sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çokkültürlü Eğitimin Boyutları, Eğitimde Çeşitlilik, Türkiye, Öğretmen ve Öğretmen Adayları, Lisansüstü Eğitim

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## INTRODUCTION

Multicultural teaching practices require that teachers approach their work by way of multidimensional perspectives and make use of materials and methods that will appeal to students of different cultures; this also requires rearrangement of learning environments for students coming from different cultures such that those learning environments become more conducive to successful learning and become more innovative (Riedler&Eryaman, 2016). Although the number of studies on this issue has increased rapidly in recent years so as to make up for the relative deficiency in the area, some research indicates that there is still a lack of understanding regarding the concept of multicultural education by teachers in the teaching-learning process (Demircioğlu & Özdemir, 2014). Previous studies, via surveys, have focused primarily on the perceptions of teachers, administrators, university professors and teacher candidates; however, researchers have missed opportunities to teach these individuals what multiculturalism is and about its dimensions. Most of the researchers recommend completing more qualitative studies, as they believe that this is necessary to conduct a deeper analysis of existing target groups (Aydın & Tombuloğlu, 2014; Karataş, 2015). Gay (2010), one of the most renowned researchers in the field of multiculturalism and teacher education, suggests that examining teachers' or teacher candidates' perceptions regarding multiculturalism is possible, as is "developing cognitive knowledge and pedagogical skills" (p.151). According to Gay (2010), professional preparation of teachers and classroom practice together may provide appropriate changes in teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward cultural diversity, pluralism, and ethnic variances. Even if there is an abundance of research to support the integration of multicultural education into the programs, there is still a big gap with regard to research pertaining to teaching multiculturalism in teacher education

programs (Engin&Genç, 2015). In order to better equip teachers and teacher candidates and allow them to become more familiar with and capable of addressing issues of diversity they may face in Turkish schools, there should be a greater examination of professional preparation in teacher education programs.

For this examination, James Banks' (1993a) "dimensions of multicultural education," is framing the research because they cover the many facets of multicultural education. As can be seen in the literature, most researchers focus on teachers' or teacher candidates' increased perceptions regarding multiculturalism and multicultural education with regard to the integration of diverse contents into the curricula, the reduction of students' biases regarding diversity, the empowerment of diverse school culture, and the teachers' abilities to learn how to provide equal opportunities to students regardless of gender or racial differences as well as their abilities to build appropriate knowledge-bases pertinent to issues of diversity. These focused topics fit into James Banks' multicultural dimensions. I used this framework as part of my dissertation because I want to find out how teachers and teacher candidates in his study connected with their experiences, knowledge, understandings, positive or negative feelings and thoughts in terms of sharing information about multiculturalism and multicultural education as well as their perceptions regarding others' experiences and understandings. This framework was chosen for my research as it relates to the dimensions of multicultural education and will help to identify teachers' and teacher candidates' perceptions with regard to diversity, differences and multiculturalism.

### **Dimensions of Multicultural Education**

According to Banks (2002), teachers must agree with and apply those multicultural dimensions if they want to enable adequate multicultural education. Within these dimensions, teachers will be considered capable of teaching multiculturalism if they maximize,

*[Using] content from diverse groups when teaching concepts and skills; helping students to understand how knowledge in the various disciplines is constructed; helping students to develop positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors; and modifying their teaching strategies so that students from different racial, cultural, language, and social-class groups will experience equal educational opportunities"*  
(Banks, 2002, p. viii).

As many researchers agree, James Banks is one of the best-known researchers within the field of multiculturalism and multicultural education, and his five categories of multicultural dimensions are shown in Figure 1.

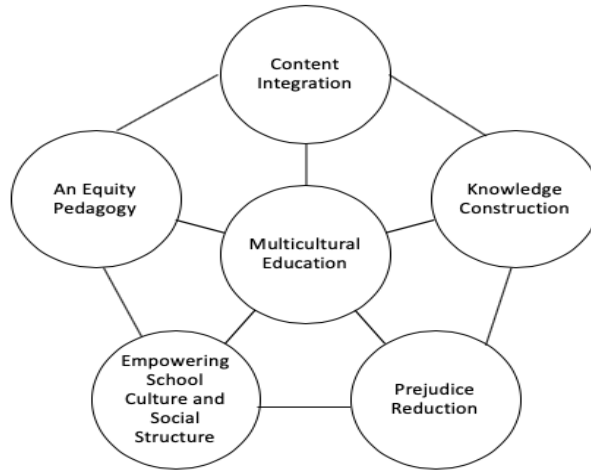


Figure 1. James Banks' five dimensions of multicultural education

Banks' (2008) observations and experiences indicate that teachers should not only understand that multicultural education is an integration of diverse issues to the curriculum, they should also know, understand and perceive that multicultural education is as multidimensional concept. Banks (1993a) states that dimensions of multicultural education must be clearly defined and practiced so that teachers can respond to multicultural education in appropriate ways and so that biases can be reduced.

Banks and Banks (2010) defined multicultural education as,

*[An idea] stating that all students, regardless of the groups to which they belong, such as those related to gender, ethnicity, race culture, language, social class, religion, or exceptionality, should experience educational equity in the schools...Multicultural education is also a reform movement designed to bring about a transformation of the school so that students from both genders and from diverse cultural, language and ethnic groups will have an equal chance to experience school success. (p. 25)*

After a deeper analysis of previous research regarding multicultural education, Banks (1993a) identified five major dimensions of multicultural education. These dimensions include “(1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) empowering school culture and social structure, and (5) an equal pedagogy” (Banks, 1993a, p. 4). Each of these dimensions are described below.

*Content integration.* Banks (1993a) stated that content integration deals with “the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline” (p. 5). According to Banks (1993a), the integration of diverse issues into the content should support the worldviews of all of the students in the classroom and should avoid encouraging students to be tied to sub-groups based on their gender, social class or differences in ethnicity. Gay (2010) mentions that teachers should be capable of generating their own curriculum and educated how to use various sources in

order to support diversity in the classrooms and academic achievement. “What content should be included in the curriculum to support diversity in the classroom?” and “How should classroom curriculum be designed in order to support intergroup relations between students?” are the key questions that should be considered when educating teachers and future teachers with regard to how to integrate different groups and diverse backgrounds that exist within the classroom; this will also help teachers to learn how to establish positive relations among students. These positive improvements will make it possible for teachers to learn how to create class content that supports diversity.

According to Banks (2008), content integration into the school and university curriculum can be approached in different ways. He identified four approaches for content integration: (a) the contributions approach, (b) the additive approach, (c) the transformation approach, and (d) the social action approach.

*The contributions approach* notes that “content about ethnic and cultural groups is limited primarily to holidays and celebrations.” When using the contributions approach, teachers generally use heroes, holiday celebrations, and discrete cultural components. *The additive approach* allows for “cultural content, concepts, and themes [to be] added to curriculum without changing its basic structure, purposes and characteristics.” The primary purpose of this approach is to permit ethnic and cultural content to take place amidst the curriculum without changing the curriculum. *The transformation approach* deals with changing “the canon, paradigms, and basic assumptions of the curriculum and enables students to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from different perspectives and points of view.” According to Banks (2008), this approach is intended to help teachers to design their curricula to help students to internalize people’s actions from diverse backgrounds. Applying this approach to the curriculum provides an opportunity for students to become more critical thinkers and to develop skills that will confirm what they have learned from the course. *The social action approach* helps teacher “to enable students to pursue projects and activities that allow them to make decisions and to take personal, social, and civic actions related to the concepts, problems, and issues they have studied” (pp. 47-49). Within this approach, teachers allow students to be more thoughtful with regard to social change and to become more reflective.

*An equity pedagogy.* According to Banks (1993a), “an equity pedagogy exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, and social-class groups” (p. 6). This dimension includes “using a variety of teaching styles and approaches that are consistent with the wide range of learning styles within various cultural and ethnic groups” (Banks & Banks, 2010, p. 22). According to Tucker (1998), in this dimension, James Banks meant that, “teachers change their methods to enable kids from different racial groups and both genders to achieve” (p. 2). This change would be possible if current and future teachers were educated about how to adapt their methods based on students’ differences in order to create an

environment where equal educational opportunities are supported. Additionally, effective implementation of equal pedagogy provides the following opportunities:

*Teachers who are skilled in equity pedagogy are able to use diversity to enrich instruction instead of fearing or ignoring it. They are able to use diversity successfully because they understand its meaning in both their own and their students' lives. They are able to analyze, clarify, and state their personal values related to cultural diversity and to act in ways consistent with their belief. (Banks & Banks, 1995, p. 157)*

In the classroom, regardless of students' gender, race, religion or ethnic differences, teachers should provide similar opportunities for all students such that the students are all granted equal rights within the class. Teaching multiculturalism to teachers and teacher candidates can allow them to better understand how to create an environment, which supports equality, and they can develop these skills prior to taking action in their own classrooms.

*Empowering school culture and social structure.* Banks (1993a) identified this dimension as “the process of restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social groups will experience educational equality and cultural empowerment” (p. 7). Increasing teaching or educational quality requires more than simply adapting the school curriculum such that it addresses classroom diversity. According to Banks (1993a), all or the interrelated parts of a school system, such as the curriculum, instructional materials, school counseling service and teaching strategies, need to be reformed based on students' diverse backgrounds in order to increase academic achievement. Each student may have different attitudes, learning styles, and behaviors, and those components might affect their levels of academic achievement. Teachers should be aware of and familiar with their students' differences and should design the components of school culture and class social structure such that they take diversity into account. Adaptation of those components will be possible if teachers are educated about how to maximize academic achievement in diverse classrooms, and this can be achieved through multicultural education courses in teacher education programs.

*Prejudice reduction.* This dimension focuses on “the characteristics of children's racial attitudes and strategies that can be used to help students develop more democratic attitudes and values” (Banks, 1993a, p. 6). According to Camicia (2007), increasing students' levels of understanding with regard to issues of diversity is possible through the application of different activities that teach that all people are equal, should have equal rights, and are deserving of respect; these activities will serve to foster prejudice reduction. The researcher continues to explain the importance of multicultural education and how to establish prejudice reduction in the classroom:

*Multicultural education enables students to critically examine traditional mainstream*

*and hegemonic narratives across subject areas. In doing so, students develop the critical faculties necessary to challenge the hierarchies that serve as tools for prejudice construction and social injustice. (p. 225)*

It is impossible to succeed without knowing what types of activities teachers should develop and how this understanding and this knowledge can be built through multicultural education. Multicultural education will provide opportunities to teachers to help their students to reduce their respective misunderstandings and inaccurate information or knowledge regarding “*other*” (Chisholm, 1994).

*The knowledge construction.* “The knowledge construction process describes the procedures by which social, behavioral, and natural scientists create knowledge and how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of references, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways that knowledge is constructed within it” (Banks, 1993a, p. 5). According to Zeichner (1993) and Zirkel (2008), increasing the success levels of students who come from diverse backgrounds is possible if teachers develop their teaching skills and knowledge regarding diverse issues.

To increase teachers’ teaching skills and knowledge regarding diversity, Banks’ five dimensions of multicultural education should be considered by professors and scholars to design courses’ contents in order to educate future teachers who are capable of working with diverse populations (as cited in Finch, 2008). There is no doubt that teachers should help students to understand and investigate hidden sides of their own backgrounds so that they may think critically and read about their respective cultures (Banks, 1993b; Tucker, 1998). Banks (1993b) states that to increase the level of students’ motivation, and to build a more democratic environment, teachers can share their own cultural experiences and perspectives and allow students to share theirs as well. Providing these opportunities will enable students to:

*Acquire the skills and abilities they need to examine conflicting knowledge claims and perspectives. Students must become critical consumers of knowledge as well as knowledge producers if they are to acquire the understandings and skills needed to function in the complex and diverse world of tomorrow. Only a broad and liberal multicultural education can prepare them for that world. (p. 12)*

This will be possible if teachers are educated with regard to multiculturalism and if their awareness regarding diversity is improved. First, teachers should examine their own knowledge with regard to what they know about racially, ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse groups and how to build a democratic classroom; then, they can help students to gain more knowledge and to become more culturally aware with regard to diverse groups. In the researcher opinion, building a stronger knowledge base at is pertains to cultural differences will better inform future teachers and enable them to succeed in diverse classrooms (Banks, 1993b).

## Research Question

In what ways will understandings of multicultural education help teachers and teacher candidates in Turkey in their pedagogical practices in classrooms?

## METHODOLOGY

For this research, qualitative case study model was employed. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) define qualitative research as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p. 4). According to Creswell (2007), case studies are explorations of an issue within “a bounded system.” Those boundaries may be “an individual, several individuals, a program, an event or an activity” (pp. 73-74). For this study, the bounded system was the *MULT- 500 Multicultural Education* course, and it included teachers, teacher candidates, course instructor and course curriculum and materials. Moreover, qualitative case studies are really common in the field of education (Merriam, 2009). According to Yin (1994), a case study is defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries of phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Creswell (2007) elaborated on the necessary steps that a researcher must undertake in order to conduct successful qualitative case study research. These steps include (a) identifying whether or not qualitative case study is the right method of research for the given study, (b) identifying the case or cases, (c) identifying what types of data (i.e. interviews, observation, documents) will be appropriate for the research, (d) identifying type of analysis, and (e) reporting the meaning of the case.

For this study, I employed multiple data collection tools such as semi-structured interviews, written documents, focus group interview, classroom observation and fieldnotes for my research so as to allow teachers and future teachers to discuss, identify and understand multiculturalism and multicultural education and issues of diversity. According to Creswell (2007), those data collection tools – interviews, written documents and observations – are the necessary components of qualitative case studies.

## The Site

This study was conducted at the *Alpha University*, located in the Marmara Region of Turkey. For this site selection, *convenience sampling* was used. According to Merriam (2009), convenience sampling depends on “money, location, availability of sites and respondents” (p. 79). My detailed research indicates that *Alpha University* is one among relatively few universities that offers courses related to multicultural education. This university is one of the biggest educational institutions in Marmara, Turkey, and it has more than 82,000 students enrolled in 14 schools that offer programs leading to bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral, state conservatory and associate degrees in a variety of disciplines. Further, the university employs a staff comprised of 4,000 academic and administrative employees. More specifically, the school of education in this university has 2,400 students in eight



departments that include 10 undergraduate majors, six Master of Arts and Ph.D. programs. This university is located in the Marmara Region; so many students from other regions and countries are accepted each year, which permits the university a very diverse student population. During the 2015-2016 academic year, nearly 250 foreign students from 23 different countries were registered to the programs.

### Participants

For this study, nine teachers and teacher candidates who already registered to the MULT 500 course in MA program (Classroom Teacher Education) in Social Science Institute at Alpha University were willing to participate to the research. Four of them are working at public schools as permanent appointment whereas five of them are working as temporarily appointment at public schools. Table 1 shows the details about the participants of the study.

**Table 1.** Participants of the Study

| Participants<br>( <i>pseudonyms</i> ) | Gender | Ethnicity          | Educational<br>Background              | Years of Experiences                                                                                                                                | Region of Origin                |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mete                                  | Male   | Turkish            | BA in<br>Elementary<br>Education       | 1 year in a special<br>education class<br>( <i>temporary<br/>appointment</i> )                                                                      | Marmara Region                  |
| Ayşe                                  | Female | Turkish            | BA in<br>Elementary<br>Education       | 1 year in a public<br>school ( <i>permanent<br/>position</i> )                                                                                      | Central Anatolia<br>Region      |
| Fatma                                 | Female | Kosovo-<br>Turkish | BA in Early-<br>Childhood<br>Education | Candidate (Not<br>working yet)                                                                                                                      | Kosovo (Europe)                 |
| Harun                                 | Male   | Turkish            | BA in Turkish<br>Language<br>Education | 2 years in a public<br>school ( <i>permanent<br/>position</i> )                                                                                     | Black Sea Region                |
| Zeliha                                | Female | Circassian         | BA in<br>Elementary<br>Education       | 1 year in a public<br>school (Candidate-<br><i>temporary<br/>appointment</i> )                                                                      | Marmara Region                  |
| Nalan                                 | Female | Turkish            | BA in<br>Elementary<br>Education       | 2 years in a special<br>education class<br>( <i>temporary<br/>appointment</i> )<br>4 months in a public<br>school ( <i>permanent<br/>position</i> ) | Black Sea Region                |
| Olca                                  | Female | Turkish            | BA in<br>Elementary<br>Education       | 1 year in a public<br>school (Candidate-<br><i>temporary<br/>appointment</i> )                                                                      | Black Sea Region                |
| Rana                                  | Female | Kurdish            | BA in<br>Elementary<br>Education       | 3 years in a public<br>school ( <i>permanent<br/>position</i> )                                                                                     | Southeastern<br>Anatolia Region |

|                                |      |         |                                |                                                               |                         |
|--------------------------------|------|---------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gokhan                         | Male | Turkish | BA in ESL                      | 4 years in a Military School                                  | Marmara Region          |
| Mehmet (the course instructor) | Male | Turkish | Ph.D in Educational Leadership | 5 years in a public school<br>15 years in a public university | Central Anatolia Region |

### Data Collection

For this qualitative case study, data was collected from semi-structured interviews, participants' written documents, classroom observation notes, and fieldnotes.

### Data Analysis

During coding and while finding emerging themes and categories, the following steps were mainly followed:

- a. Coding the data and finding emerged themes,
- b. Gathering similar themes under a single category,
- c. Determining how the results of the coding relate to the initial research question.

To follow all these necessary steps in an organized manner, the researcher used a tool which is called QSR NVivo.

## FINDINGS

For this examination, the findings' themes are associated with Banks' dimensions of multicultural education. These themes are: (1) equal pedagogy, (2) content integration, (3) empowering school culture and social structure, (4) knowledge construction, and (5) prejudice reduction. For this part of the study, exams and fieldnotes serve as the sources of the findings.

The following Table 2 shows the findings structure of the research question.

**Table 2.** Overview of the Findings for the Research Question

| Research question                                                                                                                                                    | Dimensions of Multicultural Education |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| In what ways will these understandings of multicultural education help teachers and teacher candidates in Turkey in their pedagogical practices in their classrooms? | Content Integration                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Knowledge Construction                |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | An Equity Pedagogy                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Prejudice Reduction                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                      |                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Sub-theme(s)                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | - Contribution approach               |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | - Additive approach                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | - Transformation approach             |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | - Social action approach              |

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Empowering school culture and social structure

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According to James Banks(1993a), using these dimensions in classroom practices helps teachers to unify the classroom culture. Examination of the participants' understandings of multicultural education through these dimensions is the best way to see how teachers and teacher candidates currently support or will support instructions in their culturally diverse classrooms and schools.

### **Dimensions of Multicultural Education**

**Content integration.** The first dimension of multicultural education is content integration. During class discussions, participants came up with some possible means of integrating into the curriculum diverse issues. The majority of participants agreed that the practice of multicultural education in Turkey should include content integration that begins by integrating global values and then moves toward integrating more localized values. Especially with regard to mathematics and science courses, the participants thought that it was better to introduce scientists who are universally accepted in order to start teaching *acceptance of other cultures*. The participants also thought that it was easy for Turkish schools to establish multicultural education through the teaching of universal values. It was emphasized that it may be easier to do this in courses such as science, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology; however, it was noted that there might be some problems trying to incorporate this means of teaching in social studies and similar courses. Further, participants stated that there would be no problems integrating global or universal values and moving toward local values, but beginning with local values would create problems (fieldnotes, March 14, 2016).

In addition to the classroom discussions, the course instructor asked a question in the exam to assess the application of dimensions of multicultural education and the knowledge of participants about these dimensions. This question asked participants to describe what they think about these dimensions, what they have done, or what they can do in their classrooms and school settings. As a result of the analysis, the participants' definitions and samples of each dimension were examined and findings of each participant were obtained. Table 3 shows the summary of their understandings of content integration as the first dimension of multicultural education, and it also shows how this approach has been applied in some of their classrooms or curricula.

**Table 3.** Summaries of Participants' Understandings of Content Integration

| Content Integration |                                                                                        |                                                     |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Participants</i> | <i>Definitions &amp; Aims</i>                                                          | <i>Examples from curricula and their classrooms</i> |
| Ayşe                | Exemplifying of different cultures<br>Combination of cultural elements into curriculum | Lives of world-known scientists,<br>art products    |
| Mete                | Adding names of cultures into curricula<br>Using cultural diversity                    | Using refugees' cultural<br>background in the class |

|        |                                                                                                       |                                                                               |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nalan  | Integration of art products<br>Recognizing differences and accepting them                             | Art products, cultural melodies                                               |
| Gokhan | Using different languages<br>Describing a subject within two languages                                | Integration of different languages into curriculum                            |
| Rana   | Providing examples from various cultures and groups<br>Increasing the understanding of differences    | Dramas about eating habits                                                    |
| Zeliha | Using hidden curriculum with cultural elements<br>Using data and samples of various cultures          | Creating classroom rules within two languages for the integration of refugees |
| Fatma  | Providing cultural samples<br>Explanation of cultural differences by using cultural elements          | Preparing visual materials                                                    |
| Olcay  | Integrating civic heroes of different cultures<br>Increasing the level of learning with enjoyable way | Talking about heroes in Turkish and other cultures                            |
| Harun  | Preparing cultural elements<br>Presentation cultural differences                                      | Providing foods from different cultures                                       |

According to Mete, content integration is “interested in content and examples of cultural diversity that the teacher will use in the teaching process. This involves teachers adding content to their courses on behalf of the different cultures” (Mete, exam question #3). Mete believed that because Turkey has accepted roughly 4 million Syrian refugees, it is more important than ever for teachers to consider this dimension of multicultural education. He recommended that teachers who have Syrian students might use some examples that come from the refugees’ own culture. For instance, in art classes, while teachers are talking about Turkish designers or painters, they might also provide the names of some famous artists and designers from Syria.

Another participant defined this dimension as “a dimension expressing the fact that teachers are exemplifying knowledge and skills from different cultures and combining them in the classroom” (Ayse, exam question #3). Ayse believed that, as a classroom teacher, application of this dimension would be possible if the instructor provided appropriate samples from different cultures. For example, in mathematics or in science classes, this might involve sharing interesting information about the life of a scientist from a different culture. It could also involve providing students with interesting information about life in different cultures such as how people who are a part of other cultures dress. In music lessons, Ayse thought that she could make students aware of cultural differences by having them listen to different cultural melodies and by asking if and how the melodies are similar to melodies that are a part of their own culture. Further, Ayse stated that by integrating content via an interdisciplinary approach, students might be better able to approach life and life events using a holistic approach. She also noted that she had the ability to introduce carefully considered content by introducing different cultures in Turkish language classes. Similarly, Nalan also believed that integrating art products and different melodies into the curriculum, especially in elementary

classrooms, would help children to easily recognize the differences and accept those differences as normal. Nalan defined content integration as “teaching cultures in Turkey in a course and using examples of art products in order to explain these cultures” (Nalan, exam #3).

Fatma and Harun had parallel definitions of content integration. While Fatma defined it as “the presentation of examples from different cultures during the explanation of the subject”, Harun described it as “teachers explain the topics, as they prepare to present new content with examples from different cultures” (exam #3). As seen in both definitions, the participants defined content integration as instructing students in part by providing or teaching them cultural examples associated with various different cultures.

Zeliha had different thoughts about the content integration dimension of multicultural education. According to the Zeliha, teachers must create a hidden curriculum. She wrote that content integration is “the teacher’s use of the data and samples from various cultures and groups in order to present the principles and generalizations pertinent to his or her subject area” (Zeliha, exam #3). She went on to say, “I mean, it’s the dimension of being integrated into the curriculum in a subtler, hidden way” (Zeliha, exam #3). Zeliha stated that there are students from Syria in her classroom, and after she asked these students about their cultural characteristics and behaviors, she reorganized the content of her class. She said that she sought to create and teach intercultural lessons, which involved Zeliha providing her class with examples of her own as well as examples given by Syrian students. She discovered that it is beneficial to include the knowledge she gained from her Syrian students, and finds it helpful to share or include one of their cultural examples for each of her own cultural examples she shares in class. For instance, during the first weeks of school, Zeliha created a list of classroom rules and turned them into a presentation, which she shared via the computer screen. When making her list of rules, she was sure to include, to the side, Arabic equivalents for each rule. She said that she also added pictures of Syrian children next to the students’ pictures in the presentation in order to be sure to address or include all of the students in the class. Since the multicultural education course, she received during Spring 2016 has increased her sensitivity to diversity, Zeliha has begun to consider more cultural differences when putting together presentations or choosing poems that are displayed on the computer screen. Zeliha was delighted to see that diversity in the classroom added to the richness of the classroom, and she was pleased that her students developed positive attitudes toward their Syrian classmates. She pointed out that this outcome is dependent on the instructor’s ability to create the right atmosphere in the classroom and to integrate the cultural objects into class content.

As an English language teacher, Gokhan associated the definition of content integration to the teaching of different languages by using children's own languages and other foreign languages to introduce subjects or describe a topic. He asserted that by integrating different languages into the content, children would learn that there are other languages, and children accept these differences by saying, “There are other languages,” instead of saying, “My language is the best” (Gokhan, exam #3).

Another participant, Rana, defined content integration by stating, “content integration is explaining basic principles and theories by providing examples from various cultures and groups” (Rana, exam #3). Rana suggested that a teacher might achieve content integration by introducing students to stories about the eating habits of people from different cultures or by bringing to class traditional foods from different regions or different cultures. In this way, she believed that children would learn by watching one another.

Finally, Olcay described content integration as “integrating civic heroes of different cultures appropriately into the subject at hand” (Olcay, exam #3). She believed that it is essential to introduce these heroes to the students in order to make learning more enjoyable and thus to increase their level of learning. Olcay pointed out that she always talked about the heroes in the Turkish stories she shared in her class, but she was also sure to talk about the heroes from stories that originated in other countries. Olcay discovered that teaching her students about different folk heroes enabled them to valuable knowledge regarding other cultures. According to Olcay, implementing content integration is straightforward in Turkey because Turkey is a country that is comprised of many cultures, and there are many heroes that are a part of these cultures.

At this point, defining only the dimension of content integration was insufficient to demonstrate how the teachers would go about implementing this dimension in their teaching. For this reason, students were asked to explain how a teacher might integrate content and how they could apply this concept in their own classes and in their schools. They were asked to provide examples and explanations. These examples have been reviewed through a lens shaped by James Banks’ “approaches to content integration,” and I noted the examples in the report. First, these approaches include: (a) additive approach, (b) contribution approach, (c) social action approach, and (d) transformation approach. The definitions of these approaches have been provided in the literature review part of this study.

*The contribution approach.* This approach, which Banks described as the first step, was first discussed during the fourth week of class, and this gave participants the opportunity to share their ideas regarding it. The students agreed that the practices in Turkey regarding this approach were applied primarily in Turkish and life sciences courses textbooks. It is stated that the implementation of this approach is generally most recognizable as short texts describing any cultural concept, historical event or geographical information; these short texts are placed between the main larger texts that make up the bulk of the textbook. However, according to the participants, most of these texts are not read or are given only a cursory look such that applications of this dimension are limited to the examples given by the teacher. When the teacher does not inform the students about a given culture’s most common features while discussing the culture, then, as the participants noted, there is really no application of this approach occurring (fieldnotes, March 14, 2016).

Six participants provided examples to explain how this approach can be applied to the curriculum or how they apply it in their classrooms. First, Mete referred to the contribution approach as “the first attempts at placing multicultural content in the dominant cultural education programs”(Mete, exam #4). This approach takes the form of placing ethnic cultural heroes and cultural works within educational programs. Ethnic content is primarily limited to special days, weeks or months, and ethnic events and celebrations. According to Mete, one of the most important features of the approach has to do with the fact that “the basic structure and features of the dominant culture in education programs remain unchanged, which means that the teacher does not have to implement this approach”(Mete, exam #4). Mete applies this approach in his own classroom when he teaches his students about different sects in Turkey in the “Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge” course. Additionally, he noted that there are many Romani children in his hometown, so he would organize events related to Romani holidays.

Similarly, Harun defined the contribution approach as “giving information about cultures, such as important heroes, cultural events, and specific days, while the application of a program continues”(Harun, exam #4). Harun stated that educators are not always obliged to apply this content; however, the introduction of people with universal fame is more appropriate for the implementation of this approach. He recalled an example given during class discussion, and he advocated that the addition of a lesson that taught content regarding famous people or cultures, such as *Euclid* or *Einstein*, would allow for a better application of this approach (Harun, exam, #4).

Another participant defined the contribution approach as “reorganizing content to give students a general knowledge of cultures” (Zeliha, exam #4). Zeliha asserted that this approach is the most superficial approach compared to other approaches. According to the participant, the introduction of limited information such as that having to do with festivals, cultural events and heroes, gives children a certain amount of information, but it does not lead to the recognition of those cultures and to the development of an in-depth examination of differences. Zeliha recalled the example given earlier in the class discussions and wrote, “Texts that share this sort of information about holidays and cultures are effectively applying this approach” (Zeliha, exam #4). She stated that there might be problems in practice because these texts are only optional, and the teacher is under no obligation to teach them. Instead, Zeliha suggested that this approach might be better applied if a teacher were to describe different cultures in a way that appeals more to students; this might include listening to culturally diverse music and melodies that have traditional or universal motives. Similarly, Gokhan affirmed that this approach aims to teach the differences at a lower level than other approaches. According to Gokhan, while adopting this approach to the curricula, it wouldn’t be necessary to adhere to all of the requirements generally associated with this approach. When this approach is applied, Gokhan noticed that it provided the students with very limited information. Gokhan noted that this approach had been

attempted in Turkey via short texts that introduced cultures; these texts served as additions existing programs (Gokhan, exam, #4).

Unlike the other participants, Rana believed that using historical events as a means of implementing this approach would have a significant impact on students. Through the narration of historical events and a good curriculum planning, she said that the teacher could teach moral goodness of the societies. For example, while teaching the *Canakkale War* in World War I, the teacher would explain how the Anzacs and the Turks helped one another, and this would contribute to students learning and encourage them to learn more about a culture that is foreign to them.

Finally, Nalan claimed that she couldn't come up with any examples of how to implement the contribution approach. She did offer to define this approach, however. She stated that her definition for this approach overlaps with the definitions provided by other participants. Nalan defined the approach as "the teacher's adaptation of the content of different cultures, the cultural events, holidays and celebrations"(Nalan, exam #4).

*Additive approach.* Participants all agreed that this approach requires the most of teachers, and necessitates that they assume a great responsibility. The participants also agreed that this approach adds to the curriculum (e.g., by adding a unit of study) without changing the course or content structure (fieldnotes, March 14, 2016). I examined the participants' individual definitions for the additive approach, and while there were some slight differences, most participants' definitions were similar.

Mete described the additive approach as "the introduction of concepts, themes and outlooks on ethnic content into the educational program without changing the program's purpose or features, or the basic structure of the dominant culture as presented via the education program"(Mete, exam #4). Mete claimed that this approach imposes responsibilities on both the teacher and the school administrator, and he believed that the teacher must put forth considerable effort in order to properly implement this approach. Emphasizing the various shortcomings of this approach, the participant noted that the most important deficiencies are the inclusion of ethnical content from the dominant cultural viewpoint, and the content, material and subject matter often remain extensions of the dominant educational program. According to Mete, application of this approach would be possible in a "Life Science" course in elementary classrooms. Adding new units to the program of a life sciences course, would serve as an example of the additive approach being applied in multicultural education (Mete, exam #4).

Ayşe wrote, "The content related to cultural differences should be included in a formal curriculum while adopting the additive approach in the programs"(Ayşe, exam #4). She mentioned that both the teacher and the administrators are responsible for the inclusion of the relevant content and the acquisition of it. According to Ayşe, those who do not fulfill their program-related responsibilities with regard to the additive approach should be subject to administrative punishment.



However, Ayşe also emphasized that it should not be overlooked that there might be a glitch in program continuity after these additions are made to the curriculum (Ayse, exam #4). Similarly, Harun believed that because of the way this program is formed, it is not right to look for continuity. According to Harun, the additive approach is intended “to add some additional units that address different cultures without changing the course or structure of the content, and all of this has to be done while the program is progress”(Harun, exam #4). Beyond its goals and acquisitions, Harun believed that managers and teachers assume advanced responsibilities because of the pre-determined methods and techniques.

Zeliha suggested that we could think of the additive approach as adding a piece to a “torn dress”(Zeliha, exam #4). She claimed that this added piece would not be obvious in the overall appearance of the dress. In this approach, contents, themes, and different views are added to existing units and subjects without changing the structure of the existing program. According to Zeliha, cultural celebrations, regional information, celebrations of different religions, and different historical views are added as if they were originally part of the programs. Zeliha did not give a specific example, but she did discuss the existence of the added units and achievements in the textbooks used in social studies and life sciences courses in primary education (Zeliha, exam #4). Rana also described the additive approach with metaphors; she wrote that this approach might be like “adding a room after finishing the house”(Rana, exam #4). Rana was aware of the responsibility that this approach imposes on the teacher, and she thought that it is imperative the teacher work hard for students to acquire the acquisitions in appropriate ways.

Moreover, Nalan, who called this approach the teaching of new topics without changing the basis of the teaching program, thought that this approach would be more applicable mostly through *art classes*. According to Nalan, through art activities, motor skills often develop, and while this is happening, the teacher can introduce to the students’ cultural motives and art created by different cultures (Nalan, exam #4). On the contrary, Gokhan mentioned that investigation of the application of additive approach is more important than “how it is treated” (Gokhan, exam #4). According to Gokhan, it would be helpful if the supervisory authorities examined the teacher as the teacher applies the approach to a given program (exam#4).

*Transformation approach.* Participants all agreed that via reform classroom programs have undergone major reforms in Turkey. The participants thought that Turkey had already begun to transform the programs by going one step further than applying just the additive approach, especially considering that many units of the *life sciences* course are designed according to this approach. The existence of multicultural educational activities with many acquisitions, and the existence of predictions about how to perform these activities in a detailed way, gives hope to participants that they will see program transformations that will result in multicultural sensitivity. The new program now claims the existence of a transformed structure by raising multicultural people and values, which

should permit people to more easily live together, but participants noted that there remains a lack of practice with regard to multicultural education. Participants said that authorities know what they need to do; however, participants also noted that authorities are reluctant to take action. The course instructor mentioned one of his works in the classroom discussion, and he said the results show that school administrators and teachers in Turkey wanted to transform religious and moral education programs. However, it was mentioned that teachers and administrators have not allowed the conversation, as they are against religious and moral education programs in some cases. Authorities have stated that they are especially not sensitive to issues related to sexual preference and ethnic issues, and do not permit the transformation approach to be applied to these issues. Rather, the current situation in Turkey has been debated, and participants agreed that many authorities believed that the program should be designed and transformed according to the country's own sensitivities instead of designing it with regard to the many controversial topics that are of particular concern in other countries (fieldnotes, March 14, 2016).

Apart from classroom discussions, participants also explained with specific examples, the function of the transformational approach and how this approach optimally changes the curriculum. As seen in the table, seven participants expressed their opinions related to the transformation approach. First, Ayse claimed that the transformational approach is “a reformist structure”, and she pointed out that while “this approach is adopted, it is necessary for curricula to change radically such that new curricula are established” (Ayse, exam #4). Harun is also convinced that the transformation approach is a reformist structure, and he believed, within this approach, “students have transformed the understandings of concepts, problems, and themes from different cultural views” (Harun, exam #4). Emphasizing that the main purpose of the program is to educate people from multicultural perspectives, Harun also asserted that another important goal of the program is “to encourage students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills” (Harun, exam #4). Harun argued that some programs in Turkey, such as *life sciences* and *social studies* courses, are good examples of how this approach can be applied (Harun, exam #4).

Gokhan was another participant who advocated that this approach is reformist, and he identified the main purpose of the transformation approach as educating people via multicultural perspectives. Like other participants, Gokhan mentioned that the content of the *life sciences* course is designed according to this approach. In addition to these considerations, he claimed that in the implementation of the transformation approach, rather than adopting other cultures' programs through adaptation, it is necessary to create a new program that is unique to Turkey.

Zeliha asserted that, if this approach were adopted, then the multicultural perspective would be fully integrated into the programs. According to Zeliha, with regard to programs in Turkey, multicultural perspectives are integrated according to this approach. She thought that “the programs designed according to this approach would support the activities of classrooms through the lens of

multicultural education, and the programs also aim to provide critical thinking skills via the transformation approach” (Zeliha, exam #4). On the other hand, Nalan stated that the transformation approach is an approach “on a higher level than the other two mentioned earlier” (Nalan, exam #4). Nalan defined this approach as the radical transformation of concepts, contents and themes in the curriculum structure in order to increase respect for different cultures and different perspectives, and to see these differences as normal.

According to Mete, it is improper to only express the values of the dominant culture and community in a society. To correct this mistake, he believed that changing the curriculum through the transformation approach would change the structure of the educational program in order to “make students understand the concepts, events and people from different ethnic and cultural perspectives in various communities in which they live”(Mete, exam #4). Within this approach, the emphasis is placed on how the whole culture of a society in the educational program emerged through the interaction and synthesis of different cultural elements. Based on this, Mete concluded that Turkish language courses demonstrated continuous transformation and development via this approach. By adopting this approach, he believed that the content of all lessons would be more sensitive to the preparation of each child, taking into account the specific and unique nature of each child (Mete, exam #4).

Finally, Rana thought that in addition to the concepts of multiculturalism, “issues related to values education are designed in accordance with the adoption of this approach in Turkey”(Rana, exam #4). According to Rana, programs, their principles, assumptions, and the problem-solving skills of students from different perspectives are key to this approach. She claimed that the program has been transformed and the acquisitions have been identified in Turkey; however, acquisitions are difficult to turn into behaviors even if this approach is implemented (Rana, exam #4).

*Social action approach.* The social action approach, which the participants believe is the best approach by which to teach multicultural content, has been described in class discussions as an approach that assumes a student-centered philosophy and completely transforms programs. Participants agreed that this approach would be of great value to the students, as it would enable the students to learn through activities. Participants believed that, via this approach, students would feel free to express their differences and would feel more comfortable in general, which would lead to an increase in communication among students. Further, participants believed that instead of the government directing the curricula, the internal bodies could develop the curricula according to the characteristics of the district where the schools are located. Participants said that every place has its own priorities and that there are special circumstances that need to be respected in each place; they also said that the social action approach is a superior structure because it considers these special circumstances. Participants identified another aim of this approach, which is to remove obstacles and prejudices among people in given societies so that those people might live together; further, this

approach helps to create a sense of common citizenship through program organization. (fieldnotes, March 14, 2016).

As for the participants' views regarding this approach, according to Mete, the social action approach is intended “to change the curriculum to allow students to make decisions about important social issues and take actions to solve problems, including supporting social change”(Mete, exam #4). With the adoption of this approach, Mete believed that teachers in Turkey would encourage students to create awareness and to produce ideas and projects in order to address or resolve the various tensions created by the sense of being *different*. According to Ayşe, via programs to which this approach has been applied, schools are fully transformed such that they become important environments wherein students can make decisions and help to address social issues (Ayse, exam #4).

Harun stated that this approach aims to create a program for common citizenship by lifting obstacles related to differences, thus this approach encourages people to live together more easily. According to Harun, teachers should be able to learn from the differences that exist in their classes, and they should pass some of the responsibility on to the students. Further, Harun stated that the contribution and additive approaches were used in content forming activities before the constructive approach was adopted in Turkey. Through the program, the teachers were able to teach students about the differences because they added an additional unit that discussed different cultures. Harun wrote,

*The transformation approach is used in content forming after the constructivist approach, which is also interwoven with the social action approach, has already been applied. With these two approaches, people are better educated regarding multicultural issues, and students are taught to know differences, to respect them, and to develop positive attitudes about differences. (Harun, exam #4)*

Zeliha alleged that the programs that have adopted this approach would encourage children to express their differences in confidence. According to Zeliha, via this approach,

*Students are informed about the issues such as sexism and racism that affect multiculturalism, and teachers encourage the students to suggest possible suggestions aimed at solving problems related to these issues. (Zeliha, exam #4)*

The participant stated that some non-profit organizations in Turkey, such as *Association of Volunteers in Society* (TOG) and *Educational Vounteers* (TEGV), have undertaken projects aimed at achieving educational equality for all students in the best way possible by adopting the social action approach. However, Zeliha pointed out that this approach should be adopted not only by mainstream organizations; rather, all individuals in the schools should actively participate in the process of keeping informed and maintaining attitudes such that they positively affect multicultural understanding (Zeliha, exam #4). Similarly, Rana believed that the application of the social action approach should be the aim of more than “non-profit organizations, as the government should also

take serious action to support active participation of students so that those students can learn about cultural differences” (Rana, exam #4).

Nalan shared another point of view, and suggested that teaching students to behave respectfully and “to be respectful” is important to the implementation of this approach (Nalan, exam #4). She pointed out that programs to which the social action approach has been applied would help students to transform their knowledge into behaviors after various core values, including respect, has been correctly taught. According to Nalan, through this approach, teachers should expect students to use the knowledge, skills and creativity they have acquired or developed in order to determine and solve problems and take responsibility for their responses to cultural differences. In Turkey’s educational environment, problem-solving skills are considered important, and it is within this environment that students are asked to develop possible solutions to address difficulties experienced in the schools. Nalan believed that, as the social action approach is being applied, the importance of respect has to be emphasized both in the classroom and in the social activities (Nalan, exam #4).

Finally, Gokhan defined the social action approach as the learning of differences through activities, and within this approach, he stated that the class is “*life itself*” and learning is promoted by giving responsibility to the students. Gokhan, whose ideas were not dissimilar to those of other participants, thought that it is important to organize the program according to the characteristics of the school. He stressed that if this approach is used in Turkey, activities should be especially organized in order to teach religions or sects. Thus, he argued that there would be a movement to establish generally accepted citizenship by removing the obstacles that prevent people from living together, and this movement would also effectively eliminate the lack of information regarding differences (exam, #4).

**Knowledge construction.** The second dimension of multicultural education is knowledge construction. The dimension of knowledge construction has been recognized as a process by which the information existing in a student’s past has been reactivated in order to produce new information and to acquire new knowledge. According to participants, knowledge construction refers to a constructivist learning process. They said that via multicultural education, the students’ experiences and the employment of their previous knowledge were the primary sources of the new knowledge. With regard to this dimension, the participants think that the teachers’ primary roles are to become familiar with students’ experiences and to gather information about them. In particular, the participants believed that teacher must constantly construct information for students who are from different backgrounds. Participants argued that teachers would need to think about how student differences will transform into advantages for the students once they are given new information. In accordance with the objectives of the course, the participants agreed that student differences should be seen as opportunities for students. The participants believe that once the teachers become familiar with the students’ differences, they will be able to better connect past and new information and teach the

students accordingly (fieldnotes, March 21, 2016). Table 4 shows the summary of their understandings of knowledge construction as the second dimension of multicultural education, and it also shows how this approach has been applied in some of their classrooms or curricula.

**Table 4.** Summaries of Participants' Understandings of Knowledge Construction

| Knowledge Construction |                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                     |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Participants</i>    | <i>Definitions and Aims</i>                                                                                                                 | <i>Examples from curricula and their classrooms</i>                                                 |
| Ayşe                   | Explaining how to express cultural differences<br>Understanding that prejudices are effective in this knowledge construction process        | Asking any cultural event in Turkey to support children thinking deeply                             |
| Metem                  | Identifying the existing prejudices and cultural assumptions<br>Helping students to use correct research paths while learning new knowledge | Using "mind maps"                                                                                   |
| Gokhan                 | Moving beyond what students know to what they do not know                                                                                   | Using students' differences in a positive way in the courses                                        |
| Rana                   | Getting some benefits from students' diverse background and adopt them into classroom                                                       | Teaching common words in both Turkish and Arabic languages                                          |
| Zeliha                 | The process of existing knowledge of the learners is actuated, from what they know to what they don't know                                  | _____                                                                                               |
| Fatma                  | Identifying students' readiness, thoughts and ideas about the subject to be taught, then educate them                                       | Encouraging students to learn about cultures out of country                                         |
| Olca                   | Constructing knowledge with students' experiences                                                                                           | Using the information related to students' socio-economic situation, gender and cultural background |
| Harun                  | Achieving "what people do not know" from "what people know"                                                                                 | _____                                                                                               |

According to Mete, with regard to the knowledge construction process, the teacher should identify "the existing prejudices and cultural assumptions in the students beforehand and help them to use correct research paths while learning new knowledge" (Mete, exam #3). Mete thought that, according to this approach, the most appropriate techniques that can be used are "mind maps". Using this technique, he said that the teacher can share a concept with the student, and then the student can create a map of the meanings and discuss why the answers are different or identical to other students' answers. Mete suggested that it is really useful to determine the factors affecting the formation of new knowledge (Mete, exam #3).

Ayşe directly associated this dimension with "teaching differences" and thought that the teacher should be able to explain "how to express cultural differences to students and what factors influence cultures through this dimension" (Ayşe, exam #3). Ayşe argued that the adoption of this approach helps children to understand that the knowledge they gained previously often serves to influence their

prejudices, but the students' past experiences are important. Further, Ayse thought that she had to be more sensitive in her class and observe what kind of knowledge her students have with regard to cultures; she also believed that she had to give them a chance to share their previous life experiences. For example, if she asks a question related to a cultural event in Turkey, then she wants to give students the chance to answer the question. Ayse claimed that children would think deeply about their answers and would ask questions of themselves such as "What causes me to think differently?" She believed that students would use the responses regarding the differences to establish new information (Ayse, exam #3).

Fatma thought that this approach first requires teachers to identify students' readiness, thoughts and ideas about the subjects to be taught, and then the teachers should educate them accordingly (Fatma, exam #3). As the only international student in the class, Fatma provided an example out of Turkey. She predicted that, while teaching about cultures around the world, she would ask questions about a specific culture. For instance, if she is teaching about American Indians, she would ask, "Have you ever heard of American Indians?", "Where do they live?", "What do they eat?", and "What do they wear?" And she would encourage students to conduct searches on the topic and share their findings (Fatma, exam #3).

Three study participants directly associated the knowledge construction dimension of multicultural education with the constructivist approach. First, Harun claimed that the constructivist approach is related to this dimension of multiculturalism, and he considered that the aim of this approach is "to link what people do not know to what they do know" (Harun, exam #3). According to Harun, the teacher would become familiar with the students' backgrounds, and then use the students' experiences to plan lessons that will expose the students to new knowledge. Essentially, the old knowledge and experiences will serve as the sources of the new knowledge. He thought that producing the new information would not be independent of the students' values (Harun, exam #3). Similarly, Zeliha established a connection between constructivism and the knowledge construction approach. Zeliha defined this approach by saying that "the learners' existing knowledge, as well as the knowledge they do not yet have, can serve as the basis that enables them to construct new information" (Zeliha, exam #3). She also believed that this process involves helping to understand how various cultures and groups influence knowledge. According to Zeliha, in this process, "the wrong and incompletely learned information should be transformed into the right knowledge" (Zeliha, exam #3). In addition, Gokhan believed that the constructivist approach is the basis of the knowledge construction dimension of multicultural education. He wrote, "Knowledge construction is moving beyond what students know to what they do not know. At that point, the experiences of students are really important to the shaping of new knowledge" (Gokhan, exam #3). According to Gokhan, teachers should record students' differences, and they should positively convert these differences into advantages.

Olçay identified two important features of the knowledge construction dimension. First, she stated, “Knowledge can be influenced by the transmitter, which is generally the teacher in a school setting”. She also stated that the “new knowledge can be constructed by the receiver, which is generally the student in a school setting.” Further, she wrote, “Knowledge is constructed depending on students’ socio-economic situations, genders and cultural backgrounds” (Olçay, exam #3). According to Olçay, teachers should be aware of students’ experiences and should be familiar with information that pertains to them. She believed that this would be beneficial for teachers who intend to transfer positive knowledge to their students.

On the other hand, having taught refugee students shaped Rana’s understanding of dimension of knowledge construction. In her school, Rana had a couple of Syrian students in her class and wrote that “to get some benefits from students’ diverse backgrounds and to adopt them into the classroom, I always prefer teaching common words in both Turkish and Arabic languages, as it helps the students to learn some new words in Turkish” (Rana, exam #3). Rana claimed that starting from those common words has helped her to take advantage of students’ experiences.

**Prejudice reduction.** The third dimension of multicultural education is prejudice reduction. According to participants, the most important task associated with the dimension of prejudice reduction of multicultural education is to reveal the biased that exist within each individual. It has been thought individuals’ previous experiences serve to influence their judgments and their generalizations. It has been argued that the biases consist of two structures, positive and negative. Positive and negative stereotypes have been identified within the classroom. For example, participants say that sentences such as “Male students are more successful in mathematics lessons, and girl students are more successful in art lessons” are positive biases, and sentences such as “Male students are less successful in social sciences and female students are less successful in sports” are negative biases. Prejudice is the result of negative judgments, and the ways to avoid prejudices have been discussed within the classroom (fieldnotes, March 21, 2016).

Beyond these classroom discussions, the participants were asked what they thought about the prejudice reduction dimension of multicultural education, and they were asked what kind of arrangements, activities and curricula were formed in the classroom to reduce and eliminate these prejudices. Table 5 shows the summary of their understandings of prejudice reduction as the third dimension of multicultural education, and it also shows how this approach has been applied in some of their classrooms or curricula.



**Table 5.** Summaries of Participants' Understandings of Prejudice Reduction

| Prejudice Reduction |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Participants</i> | <i>Definitions &amp; Aims</i>                                                                                                     | <i>Examples from curricula and their classrooms</i>                                                                                  |
| Ayşe                | The qualities of teachers' feature in order to be able to reduce discrimination in student behaviors                              | Science lessons                                                                                                                      |
| Mete                | Determining how to modify teaching materials and methods that can help students develop more positive racial and ethnic attitudes | Sentence completion exercises                                                                                                        |
| Nalan               | Integration of art products<br>Recognizing differences and accepting them                                                         | Art products, cultural melodies                                                                                                      |
| Gokhan              | Applying different contact and exposure ways to decrease lack of communication between students                                   | Teaching universal values and well-known people                                                                                      |
| Rana                | Using different ways of exposure and contact to reduce prejudice in students                                                      | Providing the highest level of communication and interaction among students                                                          |
| Zeliha              | Improving students' democratic attitudes towards various ethnic, religious and cultural groups                                    | Showing the films about the devoted life of male scientists,<br>Reading news about female athletes who won medals in Olympics' Games |
| Fatma               | Interacting with different cultures and reducing prejudices in students with communication                                        | Exposing students to different kinds of meals, clothing styles and behaviors                                                         |
| Olçay               | Making students more positive in their judgments and attitudes that they do not experience                                        | Presentation about each other's cultural traditions, dances, and important people                                                    |
| Harun               | Ensuring the students look more positive towards the differences                                                                  | Exposing students to different languages                                                                                             |

According to Mete, the prejudice reduction dimension of multicultural education deals with “determining how to modify teaching materials and methods that can help students develop more positive racial and ethnic attitudes” (Mete, exam #3). When discussing an example of how he had already implemented this dimension, Mete said that he wrote the following sentence on the class board: “I am thinking about .....-nation-religion-sect- because .....”, and he wanted students to complete the sentence. He later read what the students had written so as to discuss it amongst the class. He said that he employed this method to help reduce prejudices among his students (Mete, exam #3).

Ayşe indicated that this dimension emphasizes of “teachers' qualities that enable them to reduce discrimination that may be demonstrated via student behaviors and to better understand the sources of these behaviors” (Ayşe, exam #3). According to Ayşe, this dimension aims to provide teachers with the basic products expected from multicultural education. The generalizations that individuals make based on their past experiences serve to shape their biases, and Ayşe believes that the teacher, at this

point, should ask him- or herself- “How can I change these prejudices in the students?” Further, Ayse claimed that, to effect change, teachers might consider exposing their students to certain situations or to different cultures, developing materials related to these situations or cultures, and differentiating the teaching methods. Ayse further argued that she could reduce prejudice simply by applying science lessons in ethnic or racial contexts. For example, she declared that she would be able to speak to her students – in accordance with their abilities to understand – about the biological foundations of skin color. She believed that after they learned that biological factors served as a basis for those differences, her students would no longer be prejudiced individuals in regard to different skin colors (Ayse, exam #3).

Fatma made similar comments. She wrote that this dimension aims “*farklı kùltùrlerle etkileşim kurmak*, “to interact with different cultures, reduce prejudices in students via communication, and, if possible, eliminate them” (Fatma, exam #3). According to Fatma, the most effective way to reduce prejudice is to expose the students to other cultures during education. Fatma provided an example from her classroom. She claimed that exposing students to the differences among them in pre-school education by teaching the them about different cultures’ meals, clothing styles and behaviors would reduce the students’ prejudices (Fatma, exam #3).

Another participant, Harun, stated that this dimension is important “to ensure that the students look at differences in a more positive light” (Harun, exam #3). Harun believed that students should be exposed to other cultures at the point of application of this dimension, and he stated that it would be helpful to reduce prejudices in relation to language differences by exposing students to different tongues. He thought that in order to eliminate prejudiced notions, such as “Kurdish is a lack of vocabulary language” in some people in Turkey, it is necessary to teach students that there is no lack of communication between Kurdish people when they speak Kurdish and that every language is valuable. According to Harun, it is possible for these prejudices get out of hand when people are not “exposed to or do not contact or interact” with other cultures (Harun, exam #3).

Zeliha stated that generalizing people’s experiences forms negative prejudices. She noted, “The dimension of prejudice reduction aims to improve students' democratic attitudes toward various ethnic, religious and cultural groups” (Zeliha, exam #3). According to Zeliha, teachers can create and assign activities to eliminate sexist discourse, such as “boys are too lazy” or “girls are not successful in physical education class”. For example, the teacher can put boys and girls together in groups and give them equal responsibilities, or they can have the students carry out physical activities at which girls are good or more successful than their male peers. She claimed that teachers can further reduce prejudices by showing films about the devoted lives of male scientists or by having the class read news about female athletes who have won Olympic medals (Zeliha, exam #3). Another participant, Nalan, also advocated the importance of using materials in reducing prejudice. According to Nalan, the development of educational materials and learning tools to lessen or prevent students' prejudices

against different cultures is a necessary contribution to the learning environment. For instance, a library full of materials, such as heroes of different cultures, talking about people who make informed contributions, and showing that women are very influential, will affect the students in positive ways (Nalan, exam #3).

Olçay also believed that experiencing different cultures and lifestyles is crucial to reducing prejudices. She wrote, “The prejudice reduction dimension aims at encouraging students to be more positive in their judgments and attitudes” (Olçay, exam #3). According to Olçay, if students have opportunities to know and experience different ethnic cultures, they may have assumed more positive attitudes toward people from different cultures. She also stated that the introduction of different cultures and ethnicities in the classroom, and giving students opportunities to experience “others’ lives” could help students to develop positive attitudes toward different cultures. Assigning group work to students from different cultures will also help them to get to know one another better. For example, students from different ethnic backgrounds in a class might be asked to make a presentation about each other's cultural traditions, dances, and important people in that culture, and this will contribute to the development of positive attitudes (Olçay, exam #3).

According to Rana, the role of the teacher in reducing students’ prejudices is very crucial. She wrote, “The teacher should help students to develop more positive racial and ethnic attitudes. Teachers need to use exposure and contact ways to reduce prejudice in students” (Rana, exam #3). She also argued that teachers could reduce prejudices by providing the highest level of communication and interaction among students in the class. Similarly, Tolga believed that different ways of contact and exposure should be applied in the classroom if teachers want to increase communication among students. According to Tolga, to reduce levels of prejudice among students toward “*strangers*,” teachers first must start by teaching universal values. He wrote, “Who is Einstein? What did Euclid do? These sorts of questions will inspire students to learn about foreign scientists, and their findings help them to reduce their prejudices toward foreign people”(Tolga, exam #3). He further stated that if students are not exposed to things they do not know, then it would be hard for them to communicate with people from other cultures.

**An equity pedagogy.** The fourth dimension of multicultural education is “an equal pedagogy.” According to participants, regardless of students’ cultural backgrounds, they all have the right to equal access to the same educational opportunities. The participants argued that gender equality and regional differences should be considered first in Turkey, and while providing equal educational opportunities, the government should make create special arrangements and create policies depending on those differences. Participants shared their experiences regarding inequity in their classrooms. Most of the participants agreed that, unfortunately, students seem to accept gender-related stereotypes. In schools, students, and sometimes teachers, behave differently toward one another based on gender differences. Further, the participants agreed that special needs students are part of the most disadvantaged group in

schools. According to the participants, the second most disadvantaged group is generally comprised of female students. However, since Turkish schools have begun accepting and trying to integrate refugees into the Turkish educational environment, they have become the second most disadvantaged group of students (fieldnotes, March 21, 2016). Table 6 shows the summary of the participants' understandings of equal pedagogy as the fourth dimension of multicultural education, and it also shows how this approach has been applied in some of their classrooms or curricula.

**Table 6.** Summaries of Participants' Understandings of an Equity Pedagogy

| Equity Pedagogy     |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Participants</i> | <i>Definitions &amp; Aims</i>                                                                                             | <i>Examples from curricula and their classrooms</i>                                                                                                                        |
| Ayşe                | Changing teaching methods for the students coming from different groups                                                   | Using collaborative teaching methods in courses                                                                                                                            |
| Mete                | Increasing the academic achievement of students with different cultural backgrounds such as race, gender and social class | Preparing posters to introduce students' culture, asking cultural games during the lesson, asking students to provide and make some basic food samples from their cultures |
| Nalan               | Using learning methods that include different cultures in teaching with the awareness that each individual can learn      | Changing attitudes toward special need people                                                                                                                              |
| Gokhan              | Everybody should be given equal opportunities                                                                             | Avoiding content that include stereotypes                                                                                                                                  |
| Rana                | Awareness of everybody has right to learn and this opportunity should be provided to everyone                             | —————                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Zeliha              | Emphasizing the formation of teaching activity that equally affects the academic achievement of the students              | Creating the content of the course to appeal to various intelligence areas                                                                                                 |
| Fatma               | A way, which uses new, and understandable teaching techniques for the students from different cultures                    | Using all kinds of visual and auditory materials                                                                                                                           |
| Olçay               | Making students more positive in their judgments and attitudes that they do not experience                                | Presentation about each other's cultural traditions, dances, and important people                                                                                          |
| Harun               | Having information about students' background and transforming them into learning material                                | Eating habits of students                                                                                                                                                  |

According to Mete, equal pedagogy is “to increase the academic achievement of students from different cultural backgrounds, such as race, gender and social class differences, by modifying the instructions”(Mete, exam #3). Mete stated that effective teachers are aware of the cultural characteristics of their students, know how to use them in teaching, and plan their lessons such that they are accessible equally to all cultures. Further, he wrote that life sciences courses in elementary classrooms should be designed to provide the integration of multicultural items by making various activities such as preparing posters to introduce students' cultures to other students, playing cultural games during the lesson, and asking students to share and create some basic examples of foods from

their respective cultures. Mete believes that student motivation and academic achievement can increase via these sorts of activities (Mete, exam #3).

Ayse thought that equal pedagogy had to do with information about how to adapt education programs such that they allow teachers to teach to students from different backgrounds. Ayse described equal pedagogy as “changing my teaching method for the students coming from different groups and using the teaching methods that will fit with many learning methods” (Ayse, exam #3). In equal pedagogy, the goal should involve students being able to increase their learning opportunities and teachers being able to change their explanations according to the cultural characteristics of the students. With regard to this dimension, Ayse thought it is best to use collaborative teaching methods in courses and collaborative works in schools.

Harun believed that the most important steps in the equal pedagogy dimension of multiculturalism include “having information about students’ backgrounds and transforming that into learning material” (Harun, exam #3). For this transformation, Harun, like Mete, mentioned that asking students from different backgrounds or regions to share their eating habits, and to determine similarities and differences among the students’ eating habits, would be the most appropriate starting point and would provide useful material for the equal pedagogy approach.

According to Fatma, equal pedagogy is “a way to use new and understandable teaching techniques aimed at helping students from different cultures to understand the lesson as much as their peers do”(Fatma, exam #3). Fatma claimed that this dimension should also provide teaching methods based on the level of intelligence of the students, and that the lecture process should be in accordance with the students’ interests as well as their abilities to understand the lessons. She believed that in order to equate learning with the lesson, the teacher must use all kinds of visual and auditory materials (Fatma, exam #3).

Another participant, Zeliha, described equal pedagogy as "an emphasis on the formation of teaching activities that permit all students to have equal access to academic achievement " (Zeliha, exam #3). According to Zeliha, this dimension includes principles such as giving every student a chance “to learn” and “being fair.” She agreed with Banks's ideas and stated that her thoughts are dependent on her experiences as a teacher; the students with the prevailing cultural characteristics in Turkey have the advantage regarding education compared to the students of different ethnical and cultural backgrounds. For this reason, she argued that the teaching environment should be designed more equitably in order to prevent diversity from becoming an obstructive element among the students. To support her ideas, she provided an example of equality in the classroom and school. She stated,

*The teacher should first create the course content so that it appeals to students of various levels of intelligence so that all students in the class can learn the subject.*

*Then, the teacher should also be able to use tests and methods tailored to individual differences via the dimension of assessment...In school culture, the attitudes of administrators and teachers with regard to discipline should include certain standards, and these norms should be inclusive of all students. (Zeliha, exam #3)*

Similarly, Nalan described this dimension as “teachers using learning methods that take into account different cultures, recognizing that each individual can learn when given the opportunity, and understanding that learning methods can be organized according to the learning styles of students from different cultures” (Nalan, exam #3). Nalan thought that teachers should be attentive at the point of special education, and teachers should have good control over their students’ attitudes towards their classmates with special needs. For example, Nalan emphasized that it is important for classroom teachers to help students to adjust their attitudes regarding special education students. For example, instead of thinking, “*They cannot learn,*” they should think, “*Everybody can learn with the right education and opportunity*” or “*No one should have to sacrifice his or her education*” (Nalan, exam #3).

Rana thought, however, that equal pedagogy first requires “awareness of differences” in the classroom. According to Rana, equal pedagogy is “being aware of the fact that everybody has a right to learn and everyone should be provided the opportunity to learn”(Rana, exam #3). According to Rana, this dimension of multicultural education involves the use of teaching methods that are compatible with many learning methods in different cultural and ethnic groups, and teachers use different methods to address differences.

Finally, Gokhan claimed that the idea that everybody can learn is the first rule of equal pedagogy. In this dimension, he thought, “teachers should be fair and equal, and everybody should be given equal opportunities, then the students will first know their own culture and use their experiences to learn new things” (Gokhan, exam #3). According to Gokhan, the social experiences that vary according to regional differences can serve as examples of how to apply this dimension. Gokhan believed that this dimension comes into play once teachers become aware of differences and subsequently turn these differences into positive learning materials. He emphasized that the content depicted in the books, such as mothers in the kitchen and fathers watching TV, as well as other sorts of negative depictions, are not compatible with equal pedagogy (Gokhan, exam #3).

**Empowering school culture and social structure.** The fifth and final dimension of multicultural education involves “empowering school culture and social structure.” Table 7 shows the summary of the participants’ understandings of empowering school culture and social structure as the fifth dimension of multicultural education, and it also shows how this approach has been applied in some of their schools.

**Table 7.** Summaries of Participants' Understandings of Empowering School Culture and Social Structure

| Empowering school culture and social structure |                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Participants</i>                            | <i>Definitions &amp; Aims</i>                                                                                                                                  | <i>Possible application in Turkish schools</i>                                           |
| Ayşe                                           | Emphasizing justice by eliminating discrimination                                                                                                              | Election of the individuals for administrator offices who are sensitive to diverse issue |
| Mete                                           | Changing the school environment to ensure that students from different racial and ethnic lines can have equal opportunities with other students                | Teaching students' mother tongue                                                         |
| Nalan                                          | Converting all components of the schools, which become a structure that can appeal to students from different cultures                                         | Promoting folkloric features of different ethnic groups in school activities             |
| Gökhan                                         | Creating multicultural environment                                                                                                                             | Getting support from NGOs                                                                |
| Rana                                           | Ensuring multicultural education in which individuals who believe and respect to multicultural education, such as teachers, parents, and school administrators | Getting support from NGOs                                                                |
| Zeliha                                         | Social structural revision of the school throughout schools' managers' multicultural supportive standards and attitudes                                        | Providing equal participation to the activities                                          |
| Fatma                                          | Exemplifying different cultural structures and to strengthen both school culture and social structure by setting activities                                    | Teaching the folkloric dances and games of the different cultures                        |
| Olca                                           | Offering equal opportunities for students from different cultures can benefit from an equal educational opportunity                                            | Avoiding discriminatory attitude, supporting integrative attitude                        |
| Harun                                          | Organizing school cultures for pupils belonging to the differences can receive an equal and fair education                                                     | Getting support from NGOs                                                                |

There are some similarities and differences in their individual understandings of this dimension and how this dimension can be applied in Turkish schools. For instance, Mete claimed that empowering school culture and the social structure dimension of multicultural education involves “changes in the school environment to ensure that students from different racial and ethnic lines can access equal opportunities” (Mete, exam #3). According to Mete, there are many children in Turkey who are beginning their academic careers without knowing or knowing very little Turkish, and this puts these students at a disadvantage. Mete believed that, in order to ensure equal opportunities in education, these students will be given the opportunity to learn in their own language or to at least take some lessons in their own language, especially in regions where there are large numbers of these students (Mete, exam, #3).

Ayşe suggested that school administration has a responsibility to support a multicultural education system and, for this reason, she claimed that this dimension is “the most foundational

dimension for multicultural education in order to identify school administrators' roles" (Ayse, exam #3). She believed that this dimension emphasizes justice by eliminating discrimination that arises from the environment in which the school is located. She emphasized that the most fundamental problem in Turkish schools is that school administrators do not adequately support teachers. According to Ayse, multicultural education sensitivity should be included among the criteria when school administrators in Turkey are being selected. Further, she thought that, in order to make this dimension more functional, there should not be a mandatory sanction from the ministry of education for multicultural education; rather, it is more ethical if those who are selected to serve as administrators are individuals who are sensitive to other cultures and multicultural contexts, and are people who support the philosophies that address the need for multicultural education (Ayse, exam #3).

Fatma defined the main function of this dimension as "exemplifying different cultural structures and strengthening both school culture and social structure by establishing activities designed to strengthen social communication and interaction between students" (Fatma, exam #3). Fatma claimed that the inclusion of folkloric dances and culturally diverse games in the physical education class is one of the best examples of the application of this dimension. She believed that students would become more open to differences by becoming more socially active and more connected through these activities (Fatma, exam #3).

Harun stated that this dimension is guided by concepts such as "equality" and "fairness." According to Harun, this dimension seeks "to organize school cultures such that students belonging to different cultures can receive an equal and fair education" (Harun, exam #3). Harun thought that this dimension is a precondition for the realization of other dimensions, and he stated that managers, teachers and other stakeholders should support it. Empowering the social structure is dependent primarily on the receipt of support from external entities such as NGOs, associations and foundations; moreover, Harun said that the Ministry of National Education needs to create more comprehensive programs related to multicultural education so that multicultural education can be realized more efficiently in schools. In addition, Harun believed that school administrators should interact with foundations and non-governmental organizations for the purpose of encouraging these entities to support the schools' social structures (Harun, exam #3).

Similarly, Zeliha more specifically identified "fairness" as a key element of this dimension. She claimed that this dimension refers to "a whole social structural revision of the school throughout schools' managers' multicultural supportive standards and attitudes, including fair assessment methods" (Zeliha, exam #3). According to Zeliha, cultural and supportive activities in the school are opportunities to enable cross-cultural communication between or among different students. Schools, which adopt empowering school cultures, may create activities that support all students and encourage active participation. Thus, she asserted that students would be able to realize equal access to



opportunities and to via the empowering activities that are a part of the school culture (Zeliha, exam #3).

Another participant, Rana, also believed that “out-of-school associations and non-governmental organizations should provide the necessary support for the multicultural social structure of schools” (Rana, exam #3). Rana argued that this dimension is one of the more important ones, as she believes that it is important for teachers, parents, school administrators, and NGOs to work together to realize multicultural education. According to Rana, upon realizing this dimension, it will be easier for teachers and administrators to support other dimensions of multicultural education, especially if they receive enough support from the types of organizations most able to empower school culture and social structure (Rana, exam #3).

According to Olcay, this dimension advocates “the school structuring itself to offer equal opportunities so that students from different cultures can benefit from equal educational opportunities” (Olcay, exam #3). She believed that this regulation and re-structuring should be a part of all aspects of education, including the curriculum, instructors’ teaching methodologies and perspective, the cultural population of the school, and the school management. Olcay claimed that it would be useless to try to provide multicultural education to students in a school whose teachers and/or management have not themselves adopted multicultural education in the curriculum. She stated changes must occur if this situation is to be corrected. First, teachers should avoid discriminatory attitudes in schools and should support integrative attitudes. Second, the introduction of other world cultures should be included in the curriculum. Third, there should be an equalization of cultures in the schools, and students should not be made to feel isolated. Lastly, there is a need for curriculum and instructional materials that teach that different cultures are normal (Olcay, exam #3).

Like the other participants, Gokhan argued that this dimension is a prerequisite for the application of other dimensions. According to Gokhan, the dimension of empowering school culture and social structure has to be applied first if the other dimensions of multicultural education are to be supported. It is a necessity for the school stakeholders to support the teaching as a whole; otherwise, he believed it would be difficult to create a multicultural environment. Gokhan argued that the Ministry of National Education should put forth regulation that will ensure that this dimension is fully realized such that schools establish strong multicultural social structures. In addition, he suggested that cooperating with non-governmental organizations could help schools to better realize this dimension. Even if they are few in number, cooperation with foundations such as Community Volunteers Foundation or Turkish-German Foundation contributes positively to the process (Gokhan, exam #3).

Finally, Nalan noted that this dimension relates to “the possibilities associated with supporting special needs students” (Nalan, exam #3). According to Nalan, it is clear that this dimension seeks to convert all aspects of the schools, which then allows the schools to establish structures that appeal to

students from different cultures as well as special needs students. Nalan believed that, as well as facilitating the construction of physical structures in schools for students in need of special education, this dimension calls for holding seminars for school staff that promote the acceptance of the characteristics of different cultures, calls for school activities that promote folkloric features of different ethnic groups, encourages students to play games associated with different cultures. (Nalan, exam #3).

## CONCLUSION

### **Understanding of Multicultural Pedagogical Practices**

The research question was created to examine how participants' understandings of multicultural education can help them to apply their pedagogical practices in classrooms in Turkey. For this examination, the dimensions of multicultural education that were created by James Banks have shaped the students' possible multicultural practices related to their classrooms, curricula and schools.

According to Banks (2002), teachers must agree with and apply those multicultural dimensions if they want to enable adequate multicultural education. Within these dimensions, teachers will be considered capable of teaching multiculturalism if they maximize the use of "content from diverse groups when teaching concepts and skills; helping students to understand how knowledge in the various disciplines is constructed; helping students to develop positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors; and modifying their teaching strategies so that students from different racial, cultural, language, and social-class groups will experience equal educational opportunities" (Banks, 2002, p. viii). As such, participants' understandings of multicultural education through the lenses of multicultural dimensions were examined.

*Content integration.* The first category associated with participants' pedagogical practices is content integration, and under this category, participants came up with some ideas regarding how four types of content integration (i.e., contribution, additive, transformation, and social action) might be used in the Turkish educational system. According to Banks (1993a), content integration is "the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline" (p. 5). Participants' perceptions of content integration are often the same genres and are usually described as the inclusion of cultural differences that exist among the students in the curricula, or the presentation of samples from these cultures within the classroom. Participants agreed that it would be possible to use visual materials in order to apply this dimension to the classroom context, since they knew that they would be unable to otherwise alter the already established curricula. With regard to the application of the content integration dimension of multicultural education, the majority of participants also concluded that social studies and life science lessons taught in primary education contexts were most appropriate.

Although the participants had an idea regarding how this dimension would work and how different approaches to this dimension could be used in the school, they also expressed notions about how this dimension is suited to social sciences and life sciences courses in general. This finding indicates that there are very few examples of how this dimension can be applied in other courses (e.g., mathematics, science, technology) in the curricula, and that teacher and teacher candidates may have problems coming up with examples of issues of diversity when teaching most courses beyond those mentioned above.

*Knowledge construction.* The second category in these pedagogical practices is the knowledge construction dimension of multicultural education. According to Gay (2010), teachers should address controversial issues in the classroom and correct students who have incorrect ideas regarding societal differences. However, some of the participants had difficulty in expressing their opinions regarding the application of this dimension to establish knowledge related to cultural diversity among the students. Although the participants expressed their views regarding the function of this dimension, some were unable to provide an example of how to apply it in the classroom. Nonetheless, other participants expressed a correct understanding of the dimension, and they shared a common opinion that the greatest feature of knowledge construction has to do with student experience and students' abilities to build upon prior knowledge and acquire new knowledge.

*Prejudice reduction.* Third among these pedagogical practices is the prejudice reduction dimension of multicultural education. The findings regarding this dimension indicate that study participants developed positive attitudes toward diverse groups and also came up with some useful methods to reduce their students' prejudices against differences. According to Banks (1993a), this dimension focuses on "the characteristics of children's racial attitudes and strategies that can be used to help students develop more democratic attitudes and values" (Banks, 1993a, p. 6). Camicia (2007) claimed that increasing students' levels of understanding with regard to issues of diversity is possible through the application of different activities that teach that all people are equal, should have equal rights, and are deserving of respect; these activities will serve to foster prejudice reduction. The most reasonable method posed by the participants and the teacher involved "exposing the students to something they do not know." The participants acknowledge that exposure to things they do not know will help reduce or even eliminate prejudice. Interaction with unfamiliar cultures is considered one of the most valuable means of reducing prejudice. The participants noted that individuals in Turkey have a lot of prejudices about gender, religious belief and ethnic identities, in particular, and they believed that neither individuals within society nor the government take sufficient action to reduce people's levels of prejudice. It has been said that introducing people to new cultures through education is one of the most important steps that can be taken to reduce people's levels of prejudice.

*An equity pedagogy.* Fourth among these pedagogical practices is equity pedagogy. According to Banks (1993a), "an equity pedagogy exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will

facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, and social-class groups” (p. 6). This dimension includes the use of “a variety of teaching styles and approaches that are consistent with the wide range of learning styles within various cultural and ethnic groups” (Banks & Banks, 2010, p. 22). The results of the study show that participants are very clear about this dimension of multicultural education and are already disposed to providing equal pedagogy in their classrooms. Further, participants came up with some creative methods to support this. According to Banks and Banks (2010), if teachers want to successfully implement equity pedagogy, they should possess “in-depth knowledge of an academic discipline, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of their students’ cultures” (p. 80). Some of the participants’ creative methods for the implementing equal pedagogy suggest that they are aware of their students’ cultural differences.

All participants agreed that all people currently among Turkey’s classrooms deserve to have access to equal rights and opportunities to be well educated. Participants agreed that each student might have different ways in which they learn best, and teachers should employ teaching methods aimed at successfully reaching each student. However, thought participants believe that the role of the teacher is very important in the application of this dimension, they also believe that school administrators play roles as well and that equality in the classroom can be achieved when teachers and school administrators cooperate in accordance with their respective roles. It has also been noted in the literature that establishing cooperation between teachers and administrators is important if equal educational opportunities are to be provided to every student (Katz, 1999; Riehl, 2008). According to previous studies, one of the major roles of school administrators is to encourage teachers to examine their teaching strategies in effort to rid themselves of all possible biases regarding diversity in the classroom.

*Empowering school culture.* The final pedagogical practice is related to empowering school culture and the social structure dimension of multicultural education. According to the participants, this dimension is key to multicultural education because it effectively supports the others and is essential to the creation of an educational environment for all. The participants believed that if authorities, such as the government and Ministry of National Education, support the schools, then the other dimensions outlined above would be more functional. The participants also claimed that others beyond these authoritative bodies should take action to support diverse school environments; for example, according to the participants, school administrators, teachers and parents should also assume the responsibility of fostering culturally diverse school environments. The participants agreed that if these individuals do not assume this responsibility, then multiculturalism would not become a part of the schools. Further, according to participants, an unfortunate lack of collaboration among parents, school administrators, teachers, and the government and Ministry of National Education have caused Turkish schools to be less empowered with regard to school culture and social structure.

In addition, participants mentioned that the Turkish education system operates primarily by following orders that come from the central government, and they stated that this might be useful to education. According to the participants, if the government hands down meaningful orders related to its support of multiculturalism and its aim to empower culturally diverse school environments, then school administrators would be likely to take on more responsibility to enhance the diverse social structures in the schools. However, the participants were somewhat self-critical, as they claimed that it was unlikely that teachers in Turkey would take the initiative and carry out the difficult tasks that are necessary in order to achieve these goals. The participants believed, though, that if the government directly assigns these tasks or duties to teachers, then the teachers would likely work harder to support culturally diverse students and make school environments more culturally diverse. Participants also saw collaboration between non-profit organizations and schools as a potential means of empowering school culture. The participants noted that some schools have created projects and have involved non-profit organizations in these projects, which has helped schools to make their respective environments better places for students from diverse backgrounds.

When we look at the ideas that the participants revealed, we see that they are touching on all of the features that Banks identified with regard to what constitutes an effective multicultural school. The participants talked about the fact that the students need to see something of themselves in the materials. They also stated that there should be changes in education policies that allow for multicultural schooling to be designed properly, changes with regard to teachers' and other employees' attitudes toward differences, reorganization of the curricula according to differences, and use of modern and all-encompassing teaching methods. These features are in line with the literature, which is in line with the effective multicultural school criteria established by Banks. According to Banks (2008), there are indications that suggest that a school is teaching in accordance with a curriculum rooted in multiculturalism:

- A multicultural education policy statement sanctions and supports diversity;
- Staff attitudes and expectations toward diverse students are positive;
- The school staff reflects ethnic and cultural diversity;
- The curriculum is transformative and action-focused;
- Parent participation provides a cultural context for teaching and a link with student personal/cultural knowledge;
  - Teaching strategies are constructivist, personalized, empowering, and participatory;
  - Teaching materials present diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural perspectives on events, concepts, and issues;
- Each program is monitored on a continuing basis. (p.112)

## IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first conclusion revealed participants' possible pedagogical practices through multicultural education. The participants gave various examples of how their pedagogical practices related to dimensions of multicultural education could be applied to schools. While some of these dimensions can be found in the participants' understandings in a straightforward manner and can be explained via useful practical examples, it is evident that some dimensions are lacking with regard to practical applications. However, especially with regard to teachers and teacher candidates who have graduated from elementary education programs, the examples they provide are similar and generally come from the same courses. They had problems providing more detailed examples of issues related to multiculturalism and diversity relevant to the content of different courses.

Participants' understandings of pedagogical practices related to multicultural education are satisfactory in some areas; however, it is necessary to enhance these understandings and examples in other areas. In order to examine them, participant understandings were evaluated according to dimensions of multicultural education practices created by James Banks. The resultant findings may prove useful for teacher education programs to design courses according to Banks' multicultural education dimensions so that teachers and teacher candidates can practice more and enhance their understandings such that they reach a higher level.

Future studies should also examine the multicultural practices of teachers in their own classrooms. Accepting more than 4 million refugees from Syria changed the demographic structures of the classrooms throughout most of Turkey, especially the southeastern part of the country where thousands of students are registered. If researchers spend more time with the teachers who work in that part of Turkey, they could have more opportunities to see the possible applications of dimensions of multicultural education. It is also recommended that future research examine multicultural education courses at the undergraduate level of the school of education as well as the instructional strategies teachers have developed to support differences.

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