



## A Conceptual Framework Regarding the Multicultural Education Competencies of Teachers\*

### Öğretmenlerin Çokkültürlü Eğitim Yeterliklerine İlişkin Kavramsal Bir Çerçeve\*

Yasemin ACAR ÇİFTÇİ\*\*, Mehmet GÜROL\*\*\*

**ABSTRACT:** While the traditional goal of education is to ensure students' socialization by getting them to accept existing ideologies, rules and practices in a country or society, the ultimate goal of multicultural education is to contribute to the establishment, application and maintenance of social justice and equality and thus ensure a social transformation. This perspective requires a drastic change in education system and curriculum. Moreover, the competencies teachers need to possess naturally differ in this paradigm and it becomes necessary to train teachers and teacher candidates in line with this understanding. The purpose of this study is to form a conceptual framework for critical multicultural education competencies that must be possessed by teachers that will work in multicultural environments. In this literature-based study aiming to establish the cultural competencies of teachers, three dimensions - each with 4 sub-dimensions - were determined and a conceptual framework was formed based on critical multicultural education theory, critical theory and critical race theories.

**Keywords:** critical multicultural education theory, critical theory, critical race theory, teachers' multicultural education competence, cultural competence.

**ÖZ:** Eğitimin geleneksel amacı, öğrencilerin toplumda ve ülkede var olan ideoloji, yönerge ve uygulamaları soruşturmadan kabul ederek toplumsallaşmalarını sağlamak iken, eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim yaklaşımının nihai amacı, toplumda sosyal adalet ve eşitliğin oluşturulması, uygulanması ve sürdürülmesine katkıda bulunarak, toplumun dönüşümünü sağlamaktır. Bu bakış açısı eğitim sistemi ve eğitim programlarında köklü bir değişiklik yapılmasının yanı sıra, öğretmenlerin sahip olması gereken yeterlikleri de doğal olarak farklılaştırmakta, öğretmenlerin ve öğretmen adaylarının bu anlayış doğrultusunda yetiştirilmelerini gerektirmektedir. Çünkü böyle bir anlayışta öğretmenler, öğrencilerini güçlendiren ve demokratik değerleri destekleyen toplumsal değişim ajanlarıdır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, çokkültürlü eğitim ortamlarında çalışacak öğretmenlerin sahip olmaları gereken eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim yeterliklerine ilişkin kavramsal bir çerçeve oluşturmaktır. Literatüre dayalı olarak öğretmenlerin çokkültürlü eğitim kültürel yeterliklerini oluşturmaya yönelik bu çalışmada, eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim kuramı, eleştirel kuram ve eleştirel ırk kuramı temel alınarak, her biri dört alt boyuttan oluşan üç boyut belirlenmiş ve kavramsal bir çerçeve oluşturulmuştur.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim kuramı, eleştirel kuram, eleştirel ırk kuramı, öğretmenlerin çokkültürlü eğitim yeterlikleri, kültürel yeterlik.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The "rediscovery" of ethnicity and cultural identities has created an awareness of the need to cope with the management of ethnic and cultural diversity through policies which promote participation of ethnic and cultural minority groups and allowed to the resources of society, while maintaining the unity of the country. Multiculturalism is a systematic and comprehensive

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\*\*Dr. Yeni Yuzyil University, Child Development Program, Istanbul-Turkey, yasemin.acarciftci@yeniyyuzyil.edu.tr

\*\*\*Prof. Dr. Yildiz Technical University, Curriculum and Instruction Department, IstanbulTurkey,mgürol@yildiz.edu.tr

response to cultural and ethnic diversity, with educational, linguistic, economic and social components and specific institutional mechanisms (Kazancıgil, 1994).

Multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning, based upon democratic values that foster cultural pluralism; in its most comprehensive form, it is a commitment to achieving educational equality, developing curricula that builds understanding about ethnic groups, and combating oppressive practices (Bennett, 1990).

Turkey is home to many ethnic, religious and cultural groups (Aydn, 2013). Since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, a single culture oriented and central educational paradigm has been dominant in Turkey. Starting with the enactment of the law on unification of education, the educational system has been restructured to unify education, to centralize curricula and instill Turkish as the language of instruction (Kaya, 2011). A curriculum that focuses on the experiences of Turkish majority and mostly ignores the experiences, cultures, and histories of other ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and religious groups has negative consequences for both mainstream students and students of minority. Deeply rooted cultural socialization becomes problematic in education when the schooling process operates on one cultural model to the exclusion of all others, or when culturally different children are expected to set aside all their cultural habits as a condition for succeeding in school. Because culture plays an important role in influencing a child's process of learning and the skills that are learned. Differences between mainstream culture and the home culture can contribute to the academic and social failure of the student. Researches point out that compared to children from the dominant culture, many children from minority groups fail at school and eventually drop out of school in Turkey. Multicultural education is a common term used to define the pluralist education type in which all children can receive education in equal conditions. Multicultural education in Turkey, which consists of many cultural groups, provides students with a solid ground to continue their lives in a multicultural world.

The traditional goal of education is to get students to accept the dominant ideologies, directives and applications without questioning (Banks, 2004; Hahn, 1998), however the main goal of (critical) multicultural education is to train students for societal critical thinking and societal change and improve their decision making capabilities (Banks, 2004). Multicultural education involves getting students to take decision on important social issues and supporting initiative taking in students, societal change and democratic values (Banks, 2004). This perspective brings along a drastic change in education system and curriculum. The reform process at schools which prepare students for the future might serve as a tool to become a more fair and democratic society. Gorski (2010) stated that the ultimate goal of (critical) multicultural education is to contribute to the establishment, application and maintenance of social justice and equality and thus ensure a social transformation.

Education is carried out through teachers. In that regard, naturally the competencies of teachers who will be working with a critical multicultural education approach need will differ. This study evaluates the multicultural teaching competencies of teachers within the scope of critical multicultural education theory, critical theory and critical race theory, and provides conceptual framework relating to these competencies.

### **1.1. Theories of Multicultural Education**

The traditional perspective in education is referred to as conservative multiculturalism. Conservative multiculturalism theory deems multiculturalism as a dividing factor and argues that the conventions and norms of the dominant culture should be internalized (Grant and Ham, 2013). First and foremost, conservatives are interested in the transmission of fixed knowledge and

cultural heritage based on the maintenance of the social order (Banks & Banks, 2007). Conservatives are afraid of the existence of harmful thoughts disguised under values such as tolerance, diversity and pluralism and fed on the myths of multiculturalism in state-administered schools (Hopkins-Gillispie, 2011; Stotsky, 1991, 26). Conservative multiculturalists tend to view culture as a fixed, essentialist and a predetermined entity (Hopkins-Gillispie, 2011; Taguieff, 1997). According to conservative multiculturalists, the world is as it is (Hopkins-Gillispie, 2011).

Liberal multiculturalism accepts that all ethnic and racial groups naturally are equal and the same “intellectually” (McLaren, 1995). Liberal multiculturalism starts with respect for cultural and ethnic differences, supports cultural sensitivity in curriculum and instruction and cherishes cultural traditions (Banks, 2010; Gay, 2000; Martin, 1998). According to Grant (1994), liberal multicultural education suggests that learning styles, learning strategies, schools and parents be integrated to the educational program. Most teachers who apply practices of liberal multiculturalism feature some aspects of cultural diversity (for example religious differences) in their educational practices and support bilingual education. In this approach, teachers teach content that also includes other cultures. Teachers should be ready to understand students with diverse backgrounds and learn how to communicate with parents. Liberal multicultural perspective considers culture to be dynamic and flexible as opposed to conservatives who deem it fixed and essentialist. According to liberal multiculturalists, the world can be different (Hopkins-Gillispie, 2011).

Critical multicultural education theory expands on the educational program and instruction focused on by liberal multiculturalism and emphasizes the need for a structural change. It provides a cultural framework and context as to how unequal power relations are maintained at a structural and institutional level in daily interactions (May and Sleeter, 2010, 10). Sleeter and Grant (2006) criticize modern society and state that the pressure one group builds on others should be eliminated and educational programs should be entirely restructured to reflect the concerns of different cultural groups. This perspective states that educational practices - educational programs, class management and support for a normal class - that consider the needs of all students are possible and suggests that diversity should be considered in as many aspects as possible. This perspective also emphasizes the importance of the participation of students in school wide decision making processes, the participation of low social group and minority parents, the participation of schools in local social action projects and the participation of nontraditional groups such as those from different races and genders as well as the disabled (Sleeter and Grant, 2006).

Critical multicultural education supports different cultures and intercultural students in a society. Critical multicultural education supports educational programs, pedagogic steps, social relations, and democratic initiatives at schools (McLaren, 2003). Critical multicultural education views teachers as students who transform themselves through their own personal means and interactions with others (Freire, 1998). From a critical perspective, racial and ethnic prejudices are questioned, but critical multicultural education requires transformative actions for a multiethnic, multicultural, democratic, equal and inclusive social transformation in all educational practices. Therefore, according to critical multicultural education view, the world has to change (Hopkins-Gillispie, 2011).

### **1.1.1. Critical Theory**

Critical Theory was developed by a group of writers identified as the Frankfurt School, which was affiliated with the Social Research Institute at the University of Frankfurt in Germany and it drew on early an early Neo-Marksist ideas (Grant and Ladson-Billings, 1997). According to Max Horkheimer, as well as trying to explain the nature of relations between a part and a

whole and between two part, critical theory also tries to explain the nature of things are present in, derive from or initiate the social matrix (Peters, Lankshear and Olssen, 2003). In this regard, critical theory does not only views itself as part of the social reality but also includes a configurative aspect that tries to understand social actors and realities concurrently produced and shaped by historical powers and processes (Peters, Lankshear and Olssen, 2003). Critical Theory which is an activist and liberating project invites people to question the constructs developed and protected by its “founders” (Skovsmose, 2005). Critical theories generally share an activist component mostly based on the critique of oppressive and dominant powers along with social and cultural analyses. They are willing to express marginalized perspectives and establish social justice and equality (Tripathi, 2008). Main premises of critical theory can be summarized as below (Tierney, 1991):

1. One needs to understand the world to change it
2. Knowledge is a product historically shaped and dominated by those who have power.
3. Liberating people is about empowering them. As such they can understand the relations of the complex institutions of which they are a part with the world and then understand their own relation with the world.
4. Education is a transformative activity that creates the empowering conditions for social justice and democracy with a central concern.

In that regard, critical theory has both an epistemological and political goal. This theory aims to uncover the power relations related political institutions by excluding itself from them and its ultimate goal is freedom (Griffiths 2013). Critical Theory aims for a radical democratization in education not to serve the agenda of the capital groups and the high tech industry but to increase democratic participation in all areas of life such as individuality, citizenship, society, social justice as set forth by the progressive thinker such as Dewey, Freier and Illich (Kellner, 2003).

### **1.1.2. Critical Race Theory**

Critical Race Theory, was developed in the middle of 1970 by law professors such as Alan Freeman, Richard Delgado and Derrick Bell (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001) in response to lack of diversity among Harvard University academics and the marginalization of students of color at Harvard Law School. This theory is a complex legal and intellectual tool that, to a great extent, opposes to racist institutions and related racial hierarchy and racial distribution to raise awareness on all sorts of racial inequality among humans (Ladson-Billings, 1999). It analyzes the role of racism in maintaining the social differences between dominant and marginalized groups (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995). Critical Race Theory proposes guidelines, perspectives, methods and pedagogic approaches to diagnosis and analysis efforts aimed at transforming the structural and cultural aspects of education that play a role in and out of classroom to maintain the status of dominant and oppressed groups.

Critical Race Theory focuses on five items: (a) race and central racism and their intersection with other forms of submission, (b) opposition to dominant ideology, (c) adherence to social justice, (d) centrality of experimental knowledge and (e) cross disciplinary perspective (Solorzano, 1997, 1998; Solorzano and Delgado Bernal, Solorzano and Yosso, 2000).

According to Solorzano, Ceja, Yosso (2000) each of these five items is not new in itself however as a group they pose a challenge to current situations in science. The critical race theory in education is different from its counterparts in other fields because it studies race and racism while opposing to the traditional paradigms, methods and texts, it thus shows how different discourses on race, gender, social class and these social structures intersect and how they impact people of color. Moreover, it focuses on the racialized, genderized and socially classified

experiences of people of color and offers a saving and transformative method to investigate ethnic origin/race, gender and class discrimination.

## 1.2. Cultural Competency

An examination of literature on cultural competencies shows that the emphasis has generally been on personal competencies. Scholar in this field list components related to personal competency mostly as such: knowledge, skills, values (Perso, 2012; Weaver 1997), value/attitude, knowledge, skills (Sue, 2001), attitude/value, knowledge, skills (Cross et al., 1989, Martin and Vaughn, 2007). However these components which are mostly personal and partially professional do not seem to be able define the competencies of teachers who will instruct in a culture-conscious manner. Because the ultimate goal of multicultural education is to contribute to the establishment, application and maintenance of social justice and equality and thus ensure a social transformation (Gorski, 2010). By bringing attention to the social oppression and inequalities in the social structure, this approach aims to create a stronger society that will fulfill the needs and benefits of all groups (Sleeter and Grant, 1988). This requires that the link between learning and social life be formed and that knowledge be directly adapted to and practiced in the daily lives of students. Schools needs to individually empower students who will impact social change through strong knowledge and shared effort (Sleeter and Grant, 1988). In such an approach, teachers are agents of change that empower their students and support democratic values (Banks, 2004).

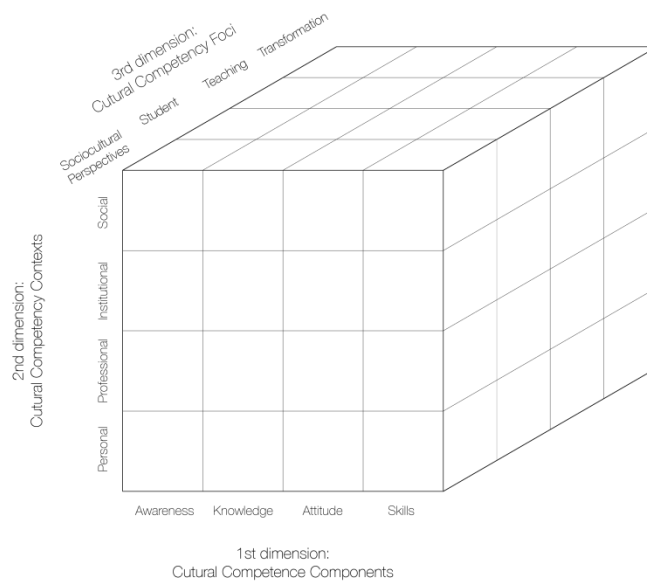
Moreover, there is a consensus among many scholars and researchers that in order to effectively implement multicultural education institutional changes are needed in education programs, teaching materials, teaching styles, teacher and manager attitudes, perceptions and behaviors, goals, rules and school culture. (Banks, 2004; Banks, 1992; Bennett, 2001, Sleeter and Grant, 1999). Gorski (2010) states that equality and justice at school might mean justice and equality at societal level. Therefore, teachers who will be instructing in line with the multicultural education paradigm need to understand the relationship between their perceptions and their life experiences and eliminate any prejudices that might negatively affect the learning experience of students. To this end, teachers are responsible for constantly revising and transforming themselves. In order for multicultural education to serve its function, institutions and education should be critically evaluated in all respects. Therefore, this responsibility requires that teachers have critical thinking and transformation skills (Gorski, 2010).

In this regard, it is evident that defining the teacher competencies required in a multicultural approach only at a personal and partially at a professional level is far from fully accomplishing the transformation of society which is the ultimate goal of multicultural education. The teachers who will serve in a culture proper manner need to have 6 main traits (Villegas and Lucas, 2002): 1) sociocultural conscience, 2) the attitude to properly acknowledge students with different backgrounds, 3) the responsibility and skill to act as an agent of change to make schools and society more fair, 5) identifying students closely, 6) culture proper teaching style. The researcher defines 3 dimensions and provides a conceptual framework in this literature based study on identifying the multicultural teaching competencies of teachers:

- 1) First Dimension: Cultural competence components: awareness, knowledge, attitude, skills,
- 2) Second Dimension: Cultural competency contexts: personal, professional, institutional and social
- 3) Third Dimension: Cultural competency foci: sociocultural perspectives, student, teaching and transformation.

### 1.2.1. First Dimension: Cultural Competency Components

There is no widely accepted definition of cultural competency. Sue (2001) based on cultural sensitivity, defines some of these components as perceptual schema style (Ridley et al., 1994), knowledge of cultures and differences (Pedersen, 1994), one's awareness on their cultural assumptions (Pope-Davis and Ottavi, 1994), skills required for a successful cultural struggle (Sue, 1990), worldview levels (Trevino, 1996), using culture specific contexts to create universal struggle conditions (Fischer, Jome and Atkinson, 1998), the special inclusive nature of multiculturalism (Helms and Richardson, 1997) and some combinations of these components (Sue, Carter et al., 1998).



*Figure 1. Dimensions of Critical Multicultural Education Competencies of Teachers*

This study identifies cultural competencies as follows: (a) awareness; one's understanding of how their beliefs and values are affected by cultural conditions. (b) knowledge; understanding the factors that play a role in culturally different individuals' and groups' worldviews and interpretation of reality and gaining knowledge on different groups. (c) attitude; mental, emotional and behavioral tendencies of a person formed by their understanding at the level of awareness and knowledge (d) skills; the application of right interventions to ensure culture proper education/teaching. The components in this conceptual framework interact with each other and they are interrelated. Furthermore, the area where these components intersect can be defined as the cultural competency area. Therefore, it would not be proper to separate these components.

The act of raising their awareness on their cultural perspectives, gives teachers insights about expectations and behaviors underlying cultural assumptions (Chisholm, 1994). Being aware of their backgrounds/experiences and prejudices enables teachers to be more sensitive towards different groups and accept differences as well as helping them to realize how these affect teacher-student relation, class management, education-teaching processes and evaluation.

Accepting differences means that teachers accept the existence and validity of many speech, attitude, learning and thinking styles.

Many scholars working in the field of multicultural education state that knowledge reflects people's social status, cultural status and power status and based on the knowing party's context, this knowledge is always defined and validated through one of such variables as gender or class (Banks, 1993; Tetreault, 1993). Incorrect information acquired about culturally-different groups is not free choice (Dovidio and Gaertner, 1999; Sue, 2001). Through social conditioning, this information is imposed on people and people are taught to be afraid of and hate people who are different than themselves. (Jones, 1997). Nobody in society is born prejudiced, biased or bigoted by their free will. (Dovidio, 1997; Sue, 2001; Sue, 1999). The impartiality and prejudices are generally expressed involuntarily at an unconscious level (Dovidio and Gaertner, 1999; Sue, 2001). Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the conscious and unconscious assumptions, prejudices and impartialities of their cultural reference points.

Culturally competent teachers have the attitude to properly acknowledge students from different backgrounds (Villegas and Lucas, 2002). The attitudes and behaviors of teachers towards their students affect the learning of students and eventually shapes the expectations of students about their learning (Irvine, 1990; Pang and Sablan, 1998; Villegas and Lucas, 2002). Studies show that positive affirmative attitudes enhance student learning (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lucas, Henze and Donato, 1990; Nieto, 1996). Teachers who are respectful of cultural differences know that students who are not from the dominant culture are also talented and that they come with a different thinking, behavior and speaking style than the one present in the dominant culture (Delpit, 1995).

Being aware of their own cultural points of view and interpersonal relations and the correctly interpreting intercultural relations are important skills that teachers need to possess (Chisholm, 1994). According to intercultural interaction studies, culturally competent individuals can (a) cope with the psychological and behavioral stress of being a stranger (b) quickly form relations with others (c) understand the feelings of others (d) communicate with people from different backgrounds and (e) properly respond to incorrect communication (Giles, Coupland, Williams and Leets, 1991). Intercultural communication calls for as much nonverbal communication as verbal communication. Nonverbal messages form a common ground in interpersonal communication (Curt, 1976; Barnlund, 1968; Hall, 1973; LaFrance and Mayo, 1978). The nonverbal messages of a person are an important component of communication (Bonvillain, 1993). Although some nonverbal messages are universal, culture and cultural context plays a major role in shaping touch, appearance, body language and personal space (Chisholm, 1994; Hall, 1966; Hecht, Andersen and Ribeau, 1989). Managing intercultural relations successfully is also strongly related to the ability to limit oneself. This includes restraint, patience, the ability to put up with silence, listening skills, resisting the urge to keep talking etc. (Weaver, 1997).

Managing student behaviors especially while the educational programs are in progress can be seen as a pedagogic application that includes all these skills (Marzano et al., 2003).

### **1.2.2. Second Dimension: Cultural Competency Context**

Studies on cultural competency are generally geared towards individuals at a micro level (Sue, 2001). During teacher education and training, this field is explored in more detail and to increase teachers' awareness on cultural competency, some vocational activities on the history, culture and lifestyles of various minority groups are carried out also to develop culture specific education methods.

The agent of change role attributed to teachers in the critical multicultural education approach also calls for development of social competencies along with personal and professional competencies. In this conceptual framework, cultural competencies for teachers are considered under the contexts of personal, professional, institutional and social competencies.

Personal context is related to a teacher's acquisition of cultural competencies and includes all components of cultural competency. To be able to develop personal competencies, it is required to acknowledge that race, ethnic origin and culture are the primary drivers behind people's thinking, decision-making, behaviors and event interpretation (Sue, 2001). There are four principles that will ensure acquisition of cultural competencies at a personal level (Sue, 2001): Firstly, individuals should try to test the validity of their personal beliefs and assumptions employing as many different sources as possible. Secondly, they need to spend time with people who properly represent a given cultural group. Thirdly, they need to be aware of the fact that the experiential reality of the groups they are hoping to understand and the factual reality requires an additional level of understanding. Finally, they need to be keep themselves constantly vigilant against both their own prejudices and the prejudiced statements of others in their surroundings.

The professional context of cultural competency means a combination of attitudes, values, knowledge, understanding and skills to effectively target people from a different culture (Perso, 2012). As a result of culture proper education/teaching students (a) develop academic success experiences (b) protect and/or develop their cultural competencies and (c) develop critical perspective. However, cultural diversity poses a pedagogic and social challenge to educators (Chisholm, 1994). When the cultural features of students in a classroom is a lot different from those of a teacher, educating these students becomes harder (Brown, 2007). Culture sensitive teachers believe that culture has a profound effect on student learning (Stoicovy, 2002). Educators generally agree that for effective teaching to take place, mastery in content knowledge and pedagogic skills in a requirement (Brown, 2007). In a classroom with students from different cultural backgrounds, effective teaching means creating equal opportunities for the academic success and personal development of all students, and using culture sensitive strategies and content. This situation requires that teachers be knowledgeable about how children from minorities perceive the world, process and organize information (Chisholm, 1994; Irvine, 1990). Teacher who raise their awareness on their own perspectives realize that there is neither a universal norm nor a single truth. In short, teachers should not only develop an awareness for their knowledge and skills but for also how these impact students' learning activities. Teachers need metacognitive strategies to accomplish this (Chisholm, 1994; Cardelle-Elawar, 1992). Moreover, teacher attitudes should reflect an acknowledgment of each student's cultural, linguistic and social traits.

Institutional cultural competency means changing the power relations in institutions in order to minimize institutional discrimination. Sue (2001) argues that the steps in this process are (a) involving minorities in decision-making mechanisms and power sharing with them and (b) developing and prioritizing institutional multicultural programs and applications that are economic and sustainable. More importantly, these programs should be directly aimed at eliminating favoritism, prejudices and stereotypes. No program that is not strongly antiracist will be successful (D'Andrea ve Daniels, 1991). Teachers need to understand the aspects of institutional policies and practices that might obstruct multicultural development and how these might effects their subject. Teachers need to critically evaluate the role schools play in generating and legitimizing this inequality. Though schools claim to offer unbounded opportunities for social progress, they simultaneously, maintain their structure to limit the social progress of those below social scale (Labaree, 1997). Many teachers tend to explain the academic success or failures of students based on their personal traits rather than the institutional discrimination (Davis, 1995). Teacher also need to understand how social inequalities are generated and maintained though an ideology of social merit and institutional discrimination (Sturm and Guinier, 1996).



There is a strong belief in societies that the cultural heritage of a group (history, values, language, traditions, art/handcraft) is superior to others (Sue, 2001). According to Sue (2001) firstly the norms and values of this group is viewed positively and might include such terms as more advanced and civilized. The members of this group, consciously or unconsciously, have a superiority feeling that “the best way” to something is their way. Secondly, they have the belief that the cultural backgrounds, values, traditions and languages of other groups in society are inferior. They accept that other people or groups are less advanced or uncivilized. Thirdly, the dominant group have the power to impose its own standards and beliefs on the less powerful groups. Monoculturalism is defined by this power or the unequal status between groups (Jones, 1997). Fourthly, the values, beliefs, policies, programs and structures of monoculturalism is present in all social institutions. Lastly, people are entirely the products of cultural conditions, their values and world views emerge without conscience. Monoculturalism is harmful because a single group has the power to define reality. It is harmful because people socialize in an environment of cultural superiority beliefs, undemocratic values, attitudes and beliefs (Sue, 2001). Such monoculturalist societies develop prejudices against individuals or people who are different than they are. Understanding this situation that develops at a societal level is related to teachers’ acquisition of a sociocultural perspective. Teachers who have sociocultural awareness take responsibility to remedy social inequalities. Fullan (1999) views teachers as agents of change, Villegas and Lucas (2002) argues that it is a moral responsibility for teachers to be agents of change. Villegas and Lucas (2002) state that teachers who view themselves as agents of change can understand how school and society are interrelated. They believe that though education has the potential to remedy inequalities at schools and transform society, unless there is an intervention in schools, schools tend to reproduce these inequalities by giving more status to the thinking, speaking, and attitude styles of the dominant culture. Teachers with this perspective accept that education is naturally a politically and ethically complex process.

They are aware that there are no gaps in institutional structures or practices but that these are consciously or unconsciously created and maintained by humans. Therefore teachers need to develop their decision making, social action, leadership and political activity skills, as well as a moral determination for human dignity and equality as much as their knowledge on ethnic issues (Banks, 1991; Gay, 1994; NCSS, 1992). Therefore teachers need to have a clear vision regarding the goals of education and their roles (Fullan, 1999).

### **1.2.3.Third Dimension: Cultural Competency Foci**

To have a sociocultural perspective means to approach policies in all fields, social relations and structures, institutional structures and practices and education by putting culture at the very center. According to Sue (2001) there are three main obstacles to cultural competency in a society: (a) the invisibility of ethnic based monoculturalism, (b) the power of a single perspective in defining reality and (c) a biased historical heritage that glorifies the contributions of a group in comparison to others.

Having a sociocultural perspective enables teachers to be aware of these social, institutional, professional and personal obstacles. This awareness can be defined as sociocultural identity at a personal level. The invisibility of ethnic based monoculturalism and the power of a single perspective on defining reality prevents the perception of the traits of people’s own culture. Under these influences, race and ethnic origin become less obvious and thus prejudice, discrimination and systematic oppression based on these traits become invisible. To eliminate this obstacle, teachers, first and foremost need to investigate their own cultural identity (Banks, 1991; Bennett, 1995; Zeichner and Hoeft, 1996). The teachers who develop an awareness for their sociocultural identity and acquire knowledge about it, then become aware of the race, ethnic origin, social class, language and gender-based identities of students from various social and cultural groups.

At a personal level, personal cultural competency requires assuming responsibility for an action or inaction in which an inequality is directly or indirectly maintained (Sue, 2001). This situation requires teachers to be aware that schools generate and maintain inequality for culturally different students. To value multiculturalism means observing how students from different cultures are affected by institutional and social policy and practices and fighting against the malpractices. For this to happen, teachers need to investigate and evaluate institutional and social policies and practices through a sociocultural perspective. To make learning and teaching more accessible and equal to students from a wide range of backgrounds, it is required to understand students' cultures better (Gay, 1994). One of the main pillars of multicultural education is related to the fact that learning and teaching are cultural processes taking place in a social setting. This makes it necessary for teachers to get to know students better. This is because though students are not only a product of their own culture and there are differences in their identities and personalities, they still have some distinctive cultural behaviors related to their own group (Banks, 2001; Boykin, 1986). Racial and ethnic differences are generally portrayed as racial and ethnic shortcomings by the dominant culture (Guthrie, 1997, Lee, 1993, Sue, 2001, White and Parham, 1990). Teachers' acknowledgement that race, ethnic origin and culture are strong variables in people's thinking, decision making, behaviors and event interpretations can be taken as the first step of eliminating prejudices that might negatively affect students' learning and offering culture proper teaching.

When different cultural systems face each other in a multicultural class, if there is no deliberate mediation between those, cultural conflicts that jeopardize the effectiveness of teaching emerge (Gay, 1994). Culture plays as much role in a child's learning process as in his/her learned skills (Ingalls, 2007). Studies indicate that cultural context has a profound effect on the learning outcomes of minority students (Ingalls, 2007; Ornsstein and Levine, 1989; Salend, Garrick, Duhaney, and Montgomery, 2002). The differences that emerge at schools between the dominant and one's home-culture, negatively impacts these students' social and academic success (Cummins, 1989; Ingalls, 2007; Ogbu, 1987). This situation necessitates that teachers be knowledgeable about the social and cultural context of learning and teaching as well as the cultural backgrounds of their students. Teaching, should respond to the culture specific needs of students from various racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Banks, 2001).

Moreover, from a constructive point of view, learning is a meaning generation process students engage in response to the new ideas and experiences they encounter at school. In this interpretation process, students use the mental structures they have stored in their mind (such as knowledge frameworks, schemas, mental models and personal development theories as put forward by cognitive theorists), their previous knowledge and beliefs to make sense of the new input (Glaserfeld, 1995; Piaget, 1977). As can be seen from this, the information that children bring to school which is derived from their personal and cultural experiences is at the center of their learning (Villegas and Lucas, 2002). Learning experiences should be related to culture specific experiences and perspectives and be structured to reflect these in the case of culturally different students. This need reflects the fact that learning is more effective when it is connected to previous knowledge and experiences (Boggs, WatsonGregeo and McMillen, 1985, Cazden, John and Hymes, 1985, Gay, 1994, Neisser, 1986). Teachers should help students create connections between their knowledge and beliefs and the new ideas and experiences they will be exposed to within the context of a new course to facilitate their knowledge generation. This requires that students question, analyze and comment on the topic or problem that is of interest and value to them. Since students come to the learning environment with different knowledge frameworks, they will not be able to process the information in line with the framework of a new topic (Villegas and Lucas, 2002). This situation makes it necessary for teachers to not only know the topic they will teach but also to get to know their students, learn about their backgrounds, its

impact on their learning, their culture, their culture specific attitudes and behaviors, their culture specific learning styles and the teaching and evaluation strategies tailored to these (Gay, 2004).

Transformation is a term at the center of critical multicultural education. Critical theorists (Darder, 1991; Freire, 1970, 1998; Giroux, 1989, 1997; MacLaren, 1994) are in agreement that unless there is a serious social change and change in school system, the school failures of minority students will not be surprising phenomenon. The goal of multicultural education to ensure social justice and equality is related firstly to a transformation of teachers then to the transformation of schools, education system and society. For a society to be pluralist and democratic, three main components need to be transformed (Gorski, 2010): (1) personal transformation of teachers, (2) transformation of schools and education and (3) transformation of society. Teachers have the responsibility to understand the relationship between their perceptions and their life experiences and eliminate any prejudices that might negatively affect the learning experience of students. To this end, teachers should constantly revise and transform themselves. In order for multicultural education to serve its function, institutions and education should be critically evaluated in all respects. Multicultural school transformation requires student-centered education, multicultural curriculum, multicultural learning environment, culture proper education material, supportive school and class environment and more fair and constant assessment and evaluation. Multicultural education takes transforming itself and schools as a metaphor and a starting step to transform society. As Gorski (2010), states equality and social justice at schools might mean social justice and equality at societal level.

## 2. CONCLUSION

Multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning, based upon democratic values that foster cultural pluralism; in its most comprehensive form, it is a commitment to achieving educational equality, developing a curriculum that builds understanding about ethnic groups, and combating oppressive practices.

The traditional goal of education is to get students to accept the dominant ideologies, directives and applications without questioning (Banks, 2004; Hahn, 1998), however the main goal of (critical) multicultural education is to train students for societal critical thinking and societal change and improve their decision making capabilities (Banks, 2004). Multicultural education involves getting students to take decision on important social issues and supporting initiative taking in students, societal change and democratic values (Banks, 2004).

This perspective brings along a drastic change in education system and curriculum. The reform process at schools which prepare students for the future might serve as a tool to become a more fair and democratic society. At the societal level, its major goals are to reduce prejudice and discrimination against oppressed groups, to work toward equal opportunity and social justice for all groups, and to effect an equitable distribution of power among members of different cultural groups (Banks, 2008; Sleeter, 1996, Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Gorski (2010) states that the ultimate goal of (critical) multicultural education is to contribute to the establishment, application and maintenance of social justice and equality and thus ensure a social transformation.

Teaching from a critical multicultural perspective means interrogating the social system from a critical and social justice standpoint (McLaren, 1998). This means providing preservice teachers opportunities to question their cultural, social, and philosophical perspectives and identities so that they may develop the quality of mind necessary to work with and support the academic goals of students from diverse racial, cultural, socioeconomic, gender, and language backgrounds. In order for preservice teachers to be successful in today's classrooms, a thorough attempt to understand diversity and multicultural education is necessary for them to become better equipped to meet challenges in the classroom.

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## Genişletilmiş Özet

Son yıllarda, etnik köken ve kültürel kimliklerin "yeniden keşfi", bütünlük içinde etnik ve kültürel çeşitliliğin yönetimi ile başa çıkmak için, etnik ve kültürel azınlıkların toplumsal kaynaklara erişimiyle topluma katılımlarını teşvik eden politikalara ihtiyaç olduğu bilinci oluşmasına neden olmuştur. Çokkültürlülük; ekonomik ve sosyal bileşenleri, eğitim, dil ve özel kurumsal mekanizmaları ile kültürel ve etnik çeşitliliğe sistematik olarak ve kapsamlı bir şekilde cevap vermektedir (Kazancıgil, 1994).

Çokkültürlü eğitim, çokkültürlülüğün eğitim boyutunu ifade etmekte ve en temel anlamıyla; tüm öğrencilerin din, dil, ırk, cinsiyet, yaş, sosyal sınıf, ekonomik düzey gibi farklılıklarına bakılmaksızın, eğitimden eşit bir şekilde faydalanmalarını sağlayacak bir eğitim reformu olarak tanımlanmaktadır.

Türkiye pek çok etnik, dinsel, dilsel ve kültürel grubu bünyesinde barındıran çokkültürlü bir ülkedir. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kuruluşundan bu yana Türkiye'de tek kültüre dayalı merkezi bir eğitim anlayışı hâkim olmuştur (Kaya, 2011). Araştırmalar, okullarda ortaya çıkan, baskın kültür ile ev kültürü arasındaki farklılıkların, öğretim sürecinin etkililiğini tehlikeye sokacak kültürel çatışmaları neden olduğunu (Cummins, 1986; Delpit, 1995) ve öğrencilerin hem sosyal, hem de akademik başarılarını olumsuz olarak etkilediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Çünkü kültür, bir çocuğun öğrenilmiş becerilerinde olduğu kadar, onun öğrenme sürecinde de önemli rol oynamaktadır (Ingalls, 2007). Türkiye'de yapılan araştırmalar da, baskın

kültürden çocuklarla kıyaslandığında, azınlık grubundan olan çok sayıda çocuğun okullarda başarısız olduklarını ve okulu terk ettiklerini göstermektedir (Alp ve Taştan, 2012).

Ayrıca, eğitimin geleneksel amacı ile eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitimin amacı arasında çok temel felsefi, toplumsal ve ideolojik farklılıklar vardır. Eğitimin geleneksel amacı, öğrencilerin toplumda ve ülkede var olan ideoloji, yönerge ve uygulamaları sorgusuzca kabul ederek toplumsallaşmalarını sağlamak iken, çokkültürlü eğitim/eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim yaklaşımının temel amacı, öğrencileri toplumsal eleştiri ve toplumsal değişim için eğitmek ve karar verme becerilerini geliştirmektir (Banks, 2004). Öğrencilerin önemli sosyal konularla ilgili karar oluşturmalarını ve problemleri çözmek üzere eyleme geçmelerini, toplumsal değişimi, demokratik değerleri desteklemeyi kapsamaktadır. Çokkültürlü eğitimin nihai amacı, toplumda sosyal adalet ve eşitliğin oluşturulması, uygulanması ve sürdürülmesine katkıda bulunarak, toplumun dönüşümünü sağlamaktır (Gorski, 2010). Bu yaklaşım, toplumdaki baskı ve sosyal yapıdaki eşitsizliklere dikkat çekerek, tüm gruplardan insanların ihtiyaç ve çıkarlarına hizmet edecek, daha güçlü bir toplum yaratmayı hedefler. Bu durum, okuldaki öğrenme ile sosyal yaşam arasında ilişkinin kurulmasını, bilgilerin doğrudan öğrencileri kendi yaşamlarına uyarlamalarını ve eyleme geçmelerini gerektirir. Okulların da, toplumsal değişimi etkileyecek öğrencileri, güçlü bilgi ve ortak bir çabayla kişisel olarak güçlendirmesi beklenmektedir. Pek çok akademisyen ve araştırmacı arasında, çokkültürlü eğitimin başarıyla uygulanabilmesi için; eğitim programında, öğretim materyallerinde öğrenme ve öğretim stillerinde, öğretmen ve yöneticilerin tavır, algı ve davranışlarında, hedef ve kurallarda ve okul kültüründe kurumsal değişiklikler yapılması gerektiği konusunda bir fikir birliği vardır (Banks, 2004). Bu bakış açısı eğitim sistemi ve eğitim programlarında köklü bir değişikliği ve öğretmen adaylarının hizmet öncesi, görevdeki öğretmenlerin ise hizmet-içinde yetiştirilmelerini beraberinde getirir. Çünkü böyle bir anlayışta öğretmenler, öğrencilerini güçlendiren ve demokratik değerleri destekleyen toplumsal değişim ajanlarıdır (Banks, 2004).

ETUCE (2008)'e göre öğretmen yeterlikleri, öğretim kavramı üzerine praxis kuramı (bilinçli eylemlilik/eylemdeki bilinç) olarak inşa edilmiştir. Eğitim öğretim alanındaki yeterlikler belli bir durumda, etkili eylemlere öncülük eden, bilgi, beceri, anlayış, değer ve tutumların karmaşık bir bileşimini içerir. Öğretmen yeterlikleri kavramı, öğrenme, toplum ve eğitimle ilgili varsayımları ya da değerleri içermesi nedeniyle, çokkültürlü bir toplumda öğretmenlik bir görevden çok daha fazlasını ifade eder ve çokkültürlü toplumlara özgü kültürel yeterlikleri gerektirir.

Kültürel yeterliklerle ilgili literatür gözden geçirildiğinde genellikle kişisel yeterlikler üzerine odaklanıldığı görülür. Ancak genel olarak kişisel ve kısmen de mesleki olarak ortaya konulan bu yeterlikler, eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim yaklaşımıyla görev yapacak öğretmenlerin yeterliklerini tanımlayabilme kapasitesine sahip görünmemektedir.

Literatüre dayalı olarak öğretmenlerin kültürel yeterliklerine ilişkin kavramsal bir çerçeve oluşturmaya yönelik bu çalışmada, eleştirel çokkültürlü eğitim kuramı, eleştirel kuram ve eleştirel irk kuramı temel alınarak, her biri dört alt boyuttan oluşan, kültürel yeterlik bileşenleri, kültürel yeterlik bağlamları ve kültürel yeterlik odakları olmak üzere üç boyut belirlenmiş ve kavramsal bir çerçeve oluşturulmuştur. Bu modelin; kültürel yeterlik bileşenleri boyutunu, farkındalık, bilgi, tutum ve beceri alt boyutları, kültürel yeterlik bağlamlarını boyutunu; kişisel, mesleki kurumsal ve toplumsal alt boyutları ve kültürel yeterlik odakları boyutunu da sosyokültürel perspektif, öğrenci, öğretim ve dönüşüm alt boyutları oluşturmaktadır.

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