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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, PERSPECTIVES ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: CASE STUDIES OF A GERMAN AND AN AMERICAN FEMALE MINORITY TEACHER, by YESIM OZBARLAS, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

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ABSTRACT

PERSPECTIVES ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: CASE STUDIES OF A GERMAN AND AN AMERICAN FEMALE MINORITY TEACHER

by

Yesim Ozbarlas

American and German educational systems have both experienced an increase of ethnic groups in the classrooms; however, in both countries the increase in ethnic groups is not matched by increases in the numbers of minority teachers (NEA, 2005). Therefore, challenges such as interracial tensions and conflicts, an increasing percentage of second language learners, and continuous gaps in achievement suggest that an increase in the numbers of minority teachers is imperative as the twenty-first century begins (Gay, 2000; Luchtenberg, 2004). These increases suggest a need for a more thorough understanding of minority teachers' viewpoints as they serve as role models, mentors, and activists (Carrington & Skeleton, 2004).

Two naturalistic case studies based on critical theory, critical race theory, and feminist theory will examine perspectives on, challenges of, and opportunities regarding cross-cultural issues among a German and an American minority teacher and their views on multicultural education. The following questions guided the study: 1) What are the challenges and/or support experienced by a German and an American female minority teacher who attempt to implement multicultural principles in their classrooms? 2) What are the similarities and/or differences experienced by a German and an American female minority teacher regarding the implementation of multicultural principles into their

teaching practice? 3) To what extent are the teachers' beliefs and actions shaped by their subject positions as minority females?

During each 2-month period of investigation, qualitative data methods such as observations, semi-structured interviews, daily field notes, lesson plans, telephone conversations, emails, and the researcher's reflections were used to gather data. Data were analyzed using constant comparison methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to identify codes and categories and to develop emergent themes. Analysis revealed following themes: life and classroom experiences, opinions related to differences and similarities, and participants' subject positions as female. Both teachers' experiences emphasized a culturally sensitive pedagogy toward minority students.

PERSPECTIVES ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: CASE STUDIES OF A GERMAN AND AN AMERICAN FEMALE MINORITY TEACHER

by
Yesim Ozbarlas

A Dissertation

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in
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in
the College of Education
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2008

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ABBREVIATIONS

AACTE	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
CRT	Critical Race Theory
ERIC	Education Resources Information Center
KMK	Standing Conference of Education Ministers from the German States
NCATE	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NCLBA	No Child Left Behind Act
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NCTE	National Council of Teachers of English
NEA	National Education Association
OECD	Organization for Economic and Co-operation and Development
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> According to Baker (1983) it is the individual teacher who determines how and when students begin to experience pressures in society that encourage racist and sexist attitudes. The teacher's attitude is crucial in helping students to develop strategies that will prepare them for a harmonious existence in a culturally diverse society. (p. 43)

Identifying my Topic

The success of finding one's individual path and life aspiration is often just a lucky coincidence. Like research, the *camino* is not straightforward, and often it does not seem easy to understand and to follow. But when we look closer, the voyage is set into motion, the path begins forming its cobblestones. My journey to this topic, these questions, and this process has followed such a path. This journey has led me to design a study that will guide educators to see different perceptions of and experiences with multicultural education in the international context, namely in a German classroom and in a United States classroom.

When I arrived at the university campus in the Unites States the first time several years ago, I did not think much about either my own or others' culture and diversity. I believed that I was in tune with multiculturalism. As a matter of fact, I sincerely believed that I was multicultural enough, having traveled all over the world and becoming fluent in eight languages. I was doing all I could to ensure that whatever I was involved in was fair, empathetic, and appropriate. In my classes, I said all the "correct" things. I told my students to honor the culture and individuality of their future students. I told them that

everyone deserved a “good” education. Then I encountered members of Amnesty International, who spurred me to think more deeply about culture, ethnicity, and activism. Additionally, I started reading books in different languages about multicultural education. I began to realize that my beliefs and actions were only scraping the surface of what I needed to do.

The first stop on my voyage occurred when I conducted a pilot study in a suburban school in the southeastern United States. The teacher whom I was observing asked her 6th grade students to draw a picture of a Middle Eastern person. Each child drew a stereotypical picture of a Middle Eastern individual, with dark hair, strong and intimidating features, ugly clothing, and a weapon. I noticed that all around the room there were stereotypical images of Middle Easterners, Asians, Hispanics and African Americans. Every child was laughing, including the teacher. This revelation touched the core of my thinking and being. Not only was it completely unacceptable for young children to learn how to stereotype, but teachers were in their own way, though perhaps not on purpose, reinforcing such behavior. My voyage had begun.

The second stop on my voyage occurred sometime later, when I was observing a preservice teacher. Most of her students were White/European-American with the exception of a couple of African Americans. When introducing the topic of brainstorming for essay ideas, the preservice teacher showed pictures of Egyptian women. Students started to think aloud and said, “We could write about terrorists.” Unfortunately, the preservice teacher did not comment on that statement; rather, she went further with her lecture. Certainly, this kind of student response was not appropriate and needed to be

questioned, and the educator should have been responsible for making that critical comment, which could help further social change (Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1998).

Stereotyping, misunderstanding, and political vilifications of diverse populations in the media are no longer acceptable (Wingfield & Karaman, 1995). Teachers and preservice teachers must be aware of this, and they should help to change student attitudes in the classrooms. Remaining neutral by not acting on stigmatizing comments replicates the "common opinion." Therefore, all current and future educators should be prepared to teach children from diverse cultural groups. This view is commonly supported by the literature on the topic.

For example, Sonia Nieto (1992) pointed out the critical situation in which White teachers find themselves. She emphasized the so-called culturally relevant teaching pedagogy, where the teacher has to acquire knowledge about each student in the class regardless of his or her background**.** Thus, Nieto asked, how can we as educators become more sensitive to different cultures? How can we begin to envision strategies that make sure all students are being understood and welcomed by both teacher and students? In other words, how can we build bridges among diverse students so that we may teach and learn from multiple perspectives? Is it possible to fight stereotypes of stigmatized social groups through education?

One solution could involve multicultural education courses. Educators could talk about different ethnicities and discuss their statuses in society. Another way could be to listen to minority teachers' perspectives. Perhaps they could tell others about their concerns and how these should be discussed in the classroom. With this realization,

initial thoughts on my study began to take shape. I thought through all the concepts I would be using and also decided to become more active.

On the third stop of my voyage, I became proactive in the desire to be more active about diversity in education. I asked questions to the people of color that I knew. At least, I wanted to start somewhere. I sought out organizations where I could meet people of different ethnicities and consequently became a member of Alliance Française and Goethe Institute. In addition, I traveled to China this past summer to obtain more cultural knowledge on how to teach Chinese students. I went to Amnesty International events and supported their beliefs. More importantly, I took a proactive stance when my students or friends made stereotypical comments about people of color, different ethnicities, and religions. I attempted to create a teaching environment where students of different cultures, nationalities, ethnicities, and colors felt comfortable and as part of a community where everyone's opinion was valued and every culture honored. Still, I knew that more needed to be done. As I was reading more about these issues, I came to the conclusion that educators and students may listen to what minority teachers think about multicultural education in the classroom and what they do in order to implement it in the classroom. At that point, my dissertation research was taking its shape. However, no longer was it enough merely to discuss why there is a decrease in the number of minority teachers in the United States and Germany and why the educational system--particularly in the United States with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA)--continues to create significant barriers to recruiting teachers of color. I thought rather that to continue discussing and theoretizing, I needed to take some action.

To escape this "vicious circle," I decided to identify the reasons behind these problems. I started to feel that education had to become more innovative and progressive in its approach to comparing, analyzing, and evaluating different teaching methods and philosophies. It had to achieve a better understanding of different cultures in order to show preservice and existing teachers different ways to implement multicultural education in their classrooms. Specifically, I needed to start soliciting minority teachers' perspectives on multicultural education in order to be able to advocate for students better. It was at this point that my serendipitous journey came into focus, and that journey became this research study.

Background

Since the mid-1980s, multicultural education has been the focus of numerous research projects (Banks, 2004; Culpepper, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 1994). However, efforts have primarily centered on education in urban schools, suburban schools, and institutions of higher learning in the United States. Furthermore, an extensive amount of research has dealt with preservice teachers' perspectives on multicultural education. Most studies in this field discuss ways to incorporate multicultural education in the teacher preparation programs more effectively. There are also plenty of studies looking at teachers' beliefs on multicultural education in the U.S. public school environment (Anders & Richardson, 1992; Fang, 1996; Hofer, 2002; Lortie, 1975; Schraw & Olafson, 2002; Scott & Pinto, 2001; Tillema, 1997). Thus far, such studies have compared minority and White teachers' opinions on specific aspects of multicultural education (Scott & Pinto, 2001). Little is known about teachers in foreign countries and their attitudes to multicultural education. Even less is known about how

minority teachers' perceptions of multicultural education in one country compares to minority teachers' perceptions in another country. Significantly, there are almost no studies that compare the situations in the United States and Germany regarding minority teachers' beliefs on multicultural education. This information is important, especially in light of changing paradigms that affect educational practice and the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in both countries' classrooms.

Interestingly enough, although there is ample of research about minority teachers in the United States and about multicultural education, the two topics combined do not yield many studies in the ERIC database. Banks (2004) stated that while most scholars research minority teachers' advantages or perspectives in the classroom, they do not look at the teachers' psychological situation or their struggles before coming to the classroom. Therefore, it was interesting to analyze what kinds of personalities the teachers bring and how their challenges are manifested throughout their studies and eventually in the classroom.

Likewise, in Germany many studies about "migrant education" were conducted in the 1980s. This was the original term before it changed into "intercultural education," which denotes the same concept as multicultural education in the United States. Migrant education was only concerned with assimilating migrant students into the German school system. It was mainly geared towards migrant students, not towards all students in the classroom (Luchtenberg, 1997, 2004). As there were hardly any minority teachers who taught German in the public school system at that time, there were no studies about their perspectives or beliefs. Furthermore, no connections have been established between multicultural education and minority teachers' perspectives. As recent studies indicate

(Banks, 2004; Luchtenberg, 2004), it is important to comprehend what wealth of information and views minority teachers will bring and this may help educators to be more sensitive towards all diversity in the classrooms.

Also, the recent PISA study (O.E.C.D., 2003), which looked at the level of knowledge among European students in fields such as reading, math, and language arts, has clearly shown that the German school system has so far failed to give migrant students access to a good school career that is a precondition for economic and social participation (Luchtenberg, 2003). According to the statistics from the Kultusministerconference (2003), nearly 20% of migrant students did not graduate, which is double the number of German students who did not graduate (Luchtenberg).

Regardless of the situation of multicultural education and of the problematic position of migrants in Germany, it is imperative to find solutions for closing the achievement gap between German students and migrant students. One solution is to listen to minority teachers' points of view and to discuss multicultural education with them. Therefore, this study helps to illuminate different perspectives regarding cross-cultural issues among minority teachers and explores multicultural trends in education in geopolitical contexts. U.S. and German preservice teachers, teachers in public schools, and individuals who are interested in multicultural education in general may have opportunities to explore, analyze, and compare international perspectives on multicultural education. The study developed additional applications of teaching methods in the arena of multicultural education, added new information on minority-female teachers' concerns and challenges in classrooms, and opened up a new research field in international, minority, and female teachers' beliefs on multicultural education.

For this study, I examined minority teachers' beliefs on multicultural education and its implementation in a classroom in the United States and a classroom in Germany. Minority teachers' perceptions are important to listen to, as they can give insights what might be important and effective to practice in order to reach out to diversity and to close the achievement gap between minority/migrant students and White/German students. While evaluating this aspect, I also analyzed ways in which both countries incorporate multicultural education in their teacher preparation programs and looked at challenges or opportunities minority teachers have while implementing multicultural education in their classrooms. Finally, I wanted to explore similarities and differences between minority teachers' perceptions of multicultural education in the United States and Germany. This study had significant benefits not only for the participants but also for other educators who will gain knowledge of minority teachers' experiences in two different countries. Also, as educators always seek new research endeavors in the field of multiculturalism, they need to look beyond the national boundaries to see how other countries deal with concerns over multicultural education. In this way, they could get a different perspective that would add knowledge to the scarce resources on multicultural education in the international context.

Ethnic, Racial, and Immigrant Groups in the United States and Germany

Student populations in the United States and Germany are becoming increasingly diverse (Gay, 2000; Martin & Midgley, 1999; Nieto, 1998; Pratt & Rittenhouse, 1998). In the United States, by 2020, nearly half (46%) of the public school population will be from ethnic minorities (Morgan, 2002; Ryan & Cooper, 1993). The Hispanic student population, which is the most populous ethnic minority group of students in the

United States, is increasing especially rapidly; however, teachers do not provide the support necessary to serve Hispanic students (Wortham & Contreras, 2002). Also, U.S. classrooms are becoming more and more diverse because immigrants bring their children, who do not speak English as a first language.

In Germany, about 25% of students are of foreign descent and are citizens of other European Union states (Gogolin & Reich, 2001). Apart from European Union states minority students, the largest ethnic minority student group as well as the most important "ethno-linguistic group" are Turkish students, followed by Bosnians, Croatians, Serbians and Italians (Gogolin & Reich). Although both countries are seeing an increase of minority students in public schools, educators are still struggling with finding adequate teaching methods for reaching out to the students (Luchtenberg, 2003; Nieto, 1998).

Diversity is regarded and classified differently in the two countries. In the United States the term diversity suggests different minorities and/or different ethnicities. For instance, Americans talk about African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians and Asians. In contrast, in Germany, diversity mainly encompasses different nationalities, such as Turks, former Yugoslavs, Italians, Spanish, Albanians, and, recently, Russians of German descent (Luchtenberg, 2004). Members of these groups are also referred to as "migrants" in the literature, literally people with a migrant background.

Regardless of how diversity is depicted and classified in both countries, the fact remains that educators are discussing how to educate effectively minority students and to find ways to acknowledge their cultural identity in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Luchtenberg, 2003; Nieto, 2003; Ozbarlas, 2005). I do not assume that all minority students have a cultural heritage; however, because most of them grow up in a culturally

different environment with English or German not being their first language, they experience difficulties and cannot relate in any significant way to their own cultural identity in schools.

One way to discover how to approach to these children is to consider the perspectives of minority teachers in each country. Minority teachers in each country may share similar backgrounds and experiences and may relate to minority students (Carrolton & Skeleton, 2004). They might offer an interesting perspective on their educational developments. By listening and trying to understand minority teachers' perspective how they include diversity in their lesson plan, how they teach to and teach about minority students, educators may get a different view about new ways to incorporate multicultural education in the classroom.

> It is imperative for all educators--regardless of the country--to learn about students' cultural differences and to value the assets each individual brings to the classroom. While today major scholars conduct a plethora of research within the multicultural area, acknowledging the urgent need to reach out to diverse students, it is interesting to note that teaching multicultural was considered problematic between the 1960s and 1980s, as the handbook of multicultural education (Banks, 2005) indicates. At the time, there was insufficient literature on historical and legal background as well on the ideology of racism, and the role of social class and race was rarely questioned (Weinberg, 1977). For instance, Lightfoot (1980) criticized multicultural education research and was concerned that much of the research lacked insight into the context in which students live, cope, and survive. However, current literature reflects scholars' attempts to include richer descriptions of social or psychological factors, particularly relating to schoolchildren, their attitudes, and identities (Goto, 1997; Peshkin & White, 1990, Luchtenberg, 2004).

Similarly, German literature reflects that it took a long time for the German education system to react to the increasing numbers of students of a non-German background in the late 1960s and 1970s (Luchtenberg, 1997). Migrant education, a precursor to multicultural education, was mainly provided to migrant students and to

assimilate rather than integrate them in public schools (Luchtenberg, 2003, 2004). Hence, what was important was not to value and understand their "funds of knowledge" but to make them assimilate to the German system by improving learning conditions and developing teacher training.

Although the assimilation phase might sound positive, the pedagogy itself was deficit-oriented, which meant that it was premised on migrant students' lack of knowledge of German language, culture, and history (Luchtenberg, 2004). Rather than developing the migrant culture and valuing students' first language and culture, educators believed that they needed to assimilate migrant students as soon as possible in order to make them high achievers.

Within the body of research regarding teachers in the United States, there are several studies analyzing teachers' attitudes toward students, specifically among the K-12 student populations (Baker, 1999; Becket, 1998; Birrell, 1995; Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1997; Davidson, Howell, & Hoekema, 2000, Kailin; 1999; Lawrence & Tatum, 1997). However, the research does not go in depth. It considers primarily the teachers' background, how they live, how they cope with the situation and survive it. Even less is known about minority teachers and how they perceive classroom interaction socially and psychologically. In Germany, there is little research on minority teachers in the literature. Studies discuss the kinds of advantages and disadvantages that minority teachers would have in the classroom in their interactions with students (Carrington & Skelton, 2004). However, little research analyzes their struggles and backgrounds in depth. It was beneficial to explore not only minority teachers' beliefs on multicultural education but also the ways in which their backgrounds promote or inhibit multicultural approaches in

their classrooms. It is imperative to analyze their ideological backgrounds, showing how they manifest themselves in the classroom.

History of Racism in the United States and Germany

To analyze minority teachers' understanding of multicultural education and how its manifestation in the classroom is portrayed, I needed a better understanding of why being a member of an ethnic minority might put a different angle on this research. Essentially, I analyzed the historical developments of attitudes toward minorities in the United States and Germany. I understood the historical impact of racism in both countries, which helped me in the results and discussion sections of my dissertation and shed light on why minority teachers think in a certain way. (I elaborate on this point later in more detail.) Because a comprehensive discussion would go far beyond the scope of the study, I have tried to mention briefly the main historical aspects of racism in both countries and started discussing significant similarities between the histories of racism in the two countries in the following section.

In both countries "federalism served as an obstacle to equal citizenship" (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 82). Although the U.S. Civil War may have shown that a state cannot be sovereign, the resolution of this constitutional issue did not prevent the states from having the right to discriminate against the Black population. Similarly, German law during the Reich after 1871 did not prevent discrimination based on religion (Fredrickson). Racism was literally embedded in state institutions and had support in both countries. Furthermore, in both the United States and Germany rapid industrialization and economic growth gave rise to situations where socially dominant groups were competing

for jobs with marginalized members of society. It was during this time that racism reached its peak.

In the late 19th Century, emancipation in both countries was based on the "fortunes of a liberal to radical political movement" (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 83). Fredrickson mentioned that Bismarck originally allied with the center-left National liberals and after he repudiated the liberals in 1879 and started associating with conservative political elements, anti-Semitism began taking shape for the first time and the situation of Jews in Germany worsened.

In the United States, the rights of African Americans were similarly dependent on Radical Republicans, who had passed the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 and 1868 (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 83), mainly out of idealism and political calculation. They were trying to use Black votes to gain political leverage in the Southern states (Fredrickson, 2003; Poliakov, 1973). As with the decline of liberalism in Germany, which made Jews vulnerable to anti-Semitic assaults, the Republicans' failure to prevent the South from becoming solidly Democratic exposed African Americans to White supremacist terror and Jim Crow segregation.

These developments provided contexts for the strengthening of racist ideologies in both countries in the late 19th Century. One especially discriminating ideology was the eugenics movement that originated in England as a biological approach to class difference; it was eventually also applied to racial and ethnic groups in Germany and the United States (Fredrickson, 2003; Yerushalmi, Y. H., 1982). Furthermore, the belief that is necessary for the government to interfere in order to "weed out" different ethnicities

justified different policies, such as "immigrations restrictions, prohibition of interracial marriage and forced sterilization and euthanasia of entire categories of people" (p. 86).

Despite the similar tendencies in both countries government in late 19th Century, there were still some major differences in both countries regarding racist ideologies at the beginning of the 20th Century. The economic and social competition set off by emancipation involved different classes or strata of the two societies. The freed slaves in the United States competed mainly with working-class Whites. In Germany, however, the competition mainly occurred within the middle class. During this period in the United States African Americans were almost never in a position to exert authority over Whites. The fact that Jewish babies in Germany were sometimes wet-nursed by Christian women, a practice that the Nazis later outlawed, highlights the radical difference in the social status of the two groups (Fredrickson, 2003). Thus, the main difference was that the Wilhelmina Reich did not accuse Jews of incompetence or intellectual inferiority (as was the case with White attitudes toward Blacks in the United States); rather, they claimed that Jews were incapable of participating in German cultural life and were hostile to it. Thus, where Germans feared that, under modern competitive conditions, Jews might be their superiors; most White Americans believed that Blacks were innately incompetent in all ways that mattered.

This brief historical narrative helps to show how Whites in U.S. history thought and discriminated against blacks based on their skin color and how Germans manifested their beliefs into actions against Jews. We can see that belief in White supremacy in this century not only manifested in the United States but as a worldwide problem. The conservative movement and fundamentalist thoughts are prevalent in the current

administration. However, I would not really call this racism per se, as we are dealing with a new phenomenon, which I define as a new way of racism based on skin color and culture. Fredrickson (2003) wrote that in our time ethnic conflicts are for the most part based on "authentic cultural or religious difference [rather] than on race in the genetic sense" (p. 145). If we follow contemporary political developments, we will notice that most persecutions and victimizations are based on religion, as with Irish Catholics in Ulster, North African Muslims in France, Turks in Germany, Chechens in Russia, Tamils in Sri Lanka, and Bosnian Muslims in former Yugoslavia (Lewis, B., 1971). According to Fredrickson (2003),

> Although most Muslim immigrants to Europe are not potential terrorists and do not seek to impose their beliefs on others, Christians and secularists alike make them targets of suspicion and discrimination. In the United States, the religious right seeks to control the behavior of those who do not share its views of abortion, sexual orientation, sexual morality, or euthanasia. (p. 145)

Fredrickson (2003) noted that in social-scientific terminology, the difference that is discriminated against is ethnic; however, it is primarily ethno-religious rather than ethno-racial. Whether racism is based on religion or ethnic orientation does not make any difference to me. I see both terms as equal and have looked throughout my study critical towards this kind of ideology which is based on color or religion. Whether we can see this conservative tendency in both countries manifested in immigrant laws, xenophobia, or in general fundamentalist movements, racist ideology perpetuates itself.

American Education

While student populations across the United States are becoming larger and more diverse, the teaching population is aging. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, half of all secondary teachers are 45 and over, and more than half are expected

to retire between 2000 and 2008 (Lee, 2001). It is projected that by 2008 public school enrollment will surpass 54 million, a boost of nearly 2 million children since 2001 (National Education Association [N.E.A.], 2001). More than 2 million teachers are needed in school districts across the country to meet this challenge, and it has been predicted that only 100,000 people will enter the teaching field each year during that time (Hope, 1999). All in all, the numbers show that education will experience a need of more teachers in public and private schools.

According to N.E.A. Vice President Bob Chase, the national pool of teachers consists of only 12% minority teachers, and out of these 18% are African American, 3% are Hispanic, and 1% are Asian or Asian American. While the mainstream teaching arena is made up of mostly white, middle-class women (Smith-Davis, 1995), there is a critical need for minority teachers and applicants (Singh, 1996). N.E.A. (2005) has stated that 69% of African American potential teachers and 59% of Hispanic potential teachers are passing tests necessary to obtain the teaching certification; however, compared to a 91% rate of success among White applicants, ethnic minority candidates are still lagging behind. The lack of personnel from diverse racial/ethnic groups creates conditions that detract from building a successful multicultural society and excellence in education for all students in the United States (Smith-Davis, 1995).

> In U.S. classrooms more closely, there is in array of racially, ethnically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse students, families, and communities, with a growing percentages of immigrants (Morgan, 2002). In effect, by 2020, nearly half (46%) of the U.S. public school population will be minorities (Morgan; Ryan & Cooper, 1993). According to Garcia (1999), "The increasing cultural and linguistic diversity that they bring to schools calls for reconsidering what effective multicultural pedagogy should be." (p. 10)

Furthermore, considerable concern surfaces over teacher and student differences in backgrounds and ways in which these differences affect the learning environment (McCray, 2000). Many maintain that ethnic differences between teacher and student create profound barriers and, therefore, seriously impede learning (Eccles & Jussim, 1992; Pollard, 1989; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1992). Other scholars, however, believe that the ethnicity of the teacher is not relevant when teaching diverse student populations (King, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 2004).

Regardless of whether a teacher's ethnicity matters, numbers indicate that the teaching force in the United States is comprised of mostly White-middle class women and that the number of minority teachers is dropping. There is an urgent need to examine why there is a decrease in the number of minority teachers at this time. I will explain this further in my next section.

The necessity for teacher diversity is overlooked rather than accepted as a central component to school reform, and the logistics of the No Child Left Behind Act continues to create significant barriers to recruiting teachers of color (Techniques, 2005). Entrance tests and insufficient credentials among minority candidates prevent them from entering the teaching field. Although some studies show (King, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 2004) that race matching would have little effect on students' achievement, it can have positive effects on other levels. For instance, when feminist scholars in the 1970s and 1980s reflected on their own experiences in the educational system, they helped to broaden young girls' choices and opportunities (Arrot, 1999; Weiner, 1994). Thus, although teacher gender and ethnicity might not have an impact on students' achievement, teachers and students share similar critical life experiences and may discuss together how to act on

them. Sharing critical life experiences could provide strategies and support for the policy drive to recruit more minority teachers (Carrington & Skelton, 2003).

Other scholars point out that it is necessary to have minority teachers because they serve as role-models (Abbott, 2002; Allen, 2000; Carrington, 2002; Carrington & Skelton, 2003) and mentors for counseling, support, and negotiation of students' self-esteem (Bleach, 1998). Moreover, research indicates that minority teachers have higher performance expectations of minority students, which eventually affect their achievement in the school (*NEA Today*, 2005).

Quicho and Rios (2000) have observed that ethnic minority teachers are more likely to make positive subjective judgments of minority students while recognizing and challenging personal and institutional racism in schools. Thus, if teachers share this critical experience with their students, they are more likely to bring change to the school policies with their students.

Finally, Carrington (2002), who has noted that the United States is trying to recruit more Black teachers from the Caribbean, argues that the United States needs teachers of color as their appearance would break down cultural stereotypes and implicit messages that are inherent in the curriculum (Carrington, 2003).

Other scholars researched if minorities are needed in the classroom and why they do not choose a teaching career. Gordon (2000) explored reasons why minorities do not choose teaching as a career. The author first interviewed preservice Asian-Pacific American teachers about their values regarding teaching. Then those interviewees conducted similar interviews with Asian-Pacific American non-teachers in several communities in California. Although Gordon did not break Asian American into distinct

Asian-Pacific groups, she did focus on the influence that traditional Chinese teaching roles have on the choice of an education career. She also noted that most participants did not regard race-matched teaching as either necessary or valuable.

Similar conclusions are also reached by Carrington and Skelton (2003). They emphasized that although students recognize the need for underrepresented groups in the teaching profession, they are also concerned that their credibility as teachers would be undermined, that is, that minority teachers would be seen as privileged by virtue of their race and gender. In other words, the process of selecting entrants to the teaching force on the basis of gender and race may exacerbate student hostility and minority teachers may not be seen as being bona fide teachers and selected on the basis of individual merit (Carrington & Skelton). Stereotypes may also be perpetuated if the teacher is solely selected on the basis of her or his ethnicity or gender (Sukhnandan, 2000).

Possible solutions to the decrease in minority teachers include revising the N.C.L.B.A. policy by spelling out diversity as a critical element of a high quality teaching force and eliminating obstacles faced by minority teachers in passing entry tests (NEA, 2005). In addition, programs in some universities in the United States are being created that support teachers of color. Grants are awarded to teachers who will work in public urban and rural schools where large portions of minority students reside. For example, there are plenty of opportunities in colleges in California. In the same vein, minority teachers will receive support when deciding to enter a teaching career (*Education Week*, 2005). Although the struggle to recruit teachers continues in the American educational system, there are valuable studies that indicate why minority

teachers are important and what can be done to increase their numbers in U.S. school systems.

German Education

As in the U.S. educational system**,** in the German education system the diverse student body is growing. About 25% of students in Germany are of foreign descent and citizens of other European Union states (Gogolin & Reich, 2001). The largest group of minority students and the most important "ethno-linguistic group" are Turkish students, followed by Bosnians, Croatians, Serbians, and Italians (Gogolin & Reich).

Despite the increase in the number of non-German students, an important study called PISA, which is carried out by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2003) every three years, indicated that the German school system has not been able to bridge the social gap among diverse groups of students. Migrant students are adversely affected because they usually do not do well in school and because they belong to socially disadvantaged groups (Luchtenberg, 2003). The study also showed that there is a general lack of migrant students in the school system. The lack might be due to the selective nature of the German school system, which is rigidly divided into four different school types according to students' capabilities and intelligence. For example, if a student fails one grade he or she either needs to repeat it or is immediately transferred to another school type. Rather than receiving additional assistance with problem subjects including "mother tongue teaching or help in German as a second language" (p. 7), weak students are automatically seen as incapable of completing that specific school type.

The most interesting conclusion of the PISA study was that teachers are not able to evaluate which of their students have the lowest reading ability. In turn, the deficiency

of the teachers created new discussions about German teachers' "lack a competence of diagnosis that is not taught during their teacher training" (p. 7). Thus, it is a paradox that, on one hand, educators are trying to find ways of closing the social gap between migrant and German students, and on the other hand, teachers are incapable of achieving that aim. Surprisingly, the study demonstrated that only teachers who had training in German as a second language were able to perform the diagnosis (p. 7).

Special programs have been initiated to address this deficiency dilemma of teachers, such as bilingual literacy classes. Turkish is now taught in secondary schools in several regions, and preschool German language programs have been introduced.

Problem areas have been identified now from educators, and educators have realized that the system was deficit-oriented. The focus was on the assimilation of migrant students to overcoming their deficits (e.g., their inability to speak German). The dilemma is still present and German education continues struggling with the inability to diagnose problem areas of migrant students' reading ability.

An additional problem is that most educators in the university system are of German descent. There is hardly any diversity within the teaching force. Most German teachers live in a predominantly German or German-only environment and have hardly any contact with the "ghetto or migrant workers" (Luchtenberg, 2004). Luchtenberg observed that the eastern part of Germany has no diversity at all in the classrooms and some of the teachers have never had any contact with immigrants or migrant students in their classrooms. Xenophobia is on the rise, particularly in former East Germany, and the lack of any contact with immigrants will strengthen this ideology. The disparity

continues, along with the fact that there are almost no minority teachers in the teaching force that could make a difference and help identify problem areas of migrant students.

Although the student body is becoming more diverse, the number of teachers who would be able to understand and approach these students is not increasing. There is a gap between the needs of the diverse student body and what is available in the teaching field. The number of ethnic minority students, particularly of Turkish and of Russian descent, has increased in the five years prior to 2004 (Luchtenberg, 2004). At the same time, teachers are not prepared culturally and linguistically to assist these students.

There is only one university in Germany where preservice teachers can select Turkish as a subject area in combination with another area in teacher preparation program. (In Germany, a teacher must graduate with a degree in two different subject areas to finish his or her teacher preparation program.) Most ethnic minority teachers select for the first option to have Turkish as one subject area and another elective subject as a second option. Only recently, minority teachers, mostly of Turkish descent, started graduating from the teacher preparation programs in German and in Turkish to teach these students. Most ethnic minority teachers are currently placed into Comprehensive schools and Hauptschools (where the educational achievement is much lower than in Grammar or Realschools) because most migrant students are in these schools.

As graduates have only recently started entering the public school system to teach German and other subjects in schools, there is currently no research in this field. Consequently, the absence of research in the above mentioned problem area is why I was interested in conducting a study internationally. Both countries' understanding of multicultural education and their minority teachers' perspectives have been analyzed,

including ways in which the countries encourage teachers to apply multicultural education into their classrooms. My research goal was to understand the views of a German and American minority teacher and to see if that somehow helps future educators in their classroom. In addition, I examine the challenges and opportunities they encounter as minority teachers when implementing multicultural education in the classroom.

Theoretical Framework

I strongly believe that because the making of meaning is a political act (Lincoln, 1998; Said, 1993), the construction of meaning is grounded in a specific theory. When this theoretical foundation is applied to research, it is imprecise; that is to say, research studies are often founded upon two or more theories. Limiting a study to only one theoretical perspective also limits the scope of possibilities for analysis. Adding additional theoretical perspectives adds multiple dimensions to the analysis (Mallette, Readence, McKinney, & Smith, 2000). Multiple theories help to visualize "a way of looking at the world deciding what things are important and hence, what data to collect (LeCompte & Preissle, 1984, p. 116). My theoretical framework is largely based on critical theory, critical race theory and feminism. I chose to use these theories because the purpose of this study is to examine critically the participants' perceptions of and experiences with multicultural education. If I understand and analyze their "worldview" of multicultural education, I can help other teachers to understand the struggles and challenges that minority teachers go through because they are of another race or of migrant descent. On top of being bilingual or Black, being a female teacher makes the challenge even harder as women seek for institutional equality (Lotz, 2003). Because I am a German woman, it is important to me that both race and gender oppression be

examined through a critical lens because of their historical presence in education in the United States and Germany.

It is necessary and helpful to include race and gender as significant determinants of identity in any society. My traversing of theoretical terrains to both issues of race and gender enhances my critical intervention.

Critical Theory

My theoretical framework is mainly based on the theoretical paradigm of critical theory. There are a plethora of reasons why researchers select to see research from a critical lens. As a researcher, provocateur, and continuous inquisitor, I am inclined to see particularly from a critical stance as I go along with Max Horkheimer's (as cited in Peters, Lankshear, & Olssen, 2003) beliefs:

> Critical theory sought to explicate the nature of the relations between part and part, and parts and whole, revealing in addition its own embeddedness in the social matrix from which it arises and operates. In this sense, critical theory incorporates a constructionist dimension not only in that it sees itself as part and parcel of the social reality it seeks to comprehend, but also in that social actors and realities are produced and shaped by historical forces and processes. (p. 4)

Shaped by Horkheimers' thoughts, I truly believe that *raison d'être* can only be maintained by continuous critique that entails fundamental ideas of truth, freedom and justice, and very imperative to this belief is *to liberate humans from their oppressed conditions* (Freire, 1977; Peters et al., 2003). As the improvement of the human condition is vital for its existence, it is vital to search for reasons that are not the case for all humans within the societal structures.

Research reveals that critical thoughts initially emerged and later established as a conglomerate called Frankfurt School by a group of Jewish intellectuals, who were inspired by Marxist critiques of capitalistic society during the 1920s (Peters et al., 2003).

At that time, intellectuals such as Jürgen Habermas, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse fostered their work solely on "human subject as self-realization of history and that as a basis for the critique of bourgeois society" (p. 2). During that period, the Frankfurt School was faced with a highly difficult situation and was forced to emigrate to France and the United States because of the rise of the Nazi regime. Upon the arrival of the theorists in the United States in 1951, the Frankfurt School began using "critical" as a code word for the theory it supported. Such a code word was needed because of the aversion Americans had at the time to Marxism and socialism, two ideologies closely related to the Frankfurt School (Tierney, 1991).

Briefly stated, the essence of critical theory is a belief that the social institutions and structures that are currently in place are primarily responsible for the social and political inequalities that exist between people (Martusewicz & Reynolds, 1994). Furthermore, for social and economic conditions to change, democratic struggle is necessary. Tierney (1991) presented four concise statements which explain the theoretical underpinnings of what is known as critical theory:

- Critical theorists want to understand the world in order to change it.
- Critical theory views the production of knowledge as socially and historically determined and as a consequence of power.
- The role of the researcher to the researched is brought into question and examined.
- Empowerment concerns the liberation of individuals, so they are capable of understanding their relationship to the world and complex organizations in which they reside. (pp. 6-7)

A significant aspect of critical theory is the function of schooling**.** As aforementioned, the ideology or cultural conditioning among different classes that societal structures impose onto *womankind* to run their agenda and let everyone believe that this is assumingly "correct," is essentially also used in the schools to promote social

inequality. This silent promotion is observable via the hidden curriculum, with the selection of literature and policies among teachers, principals, administrators and students.

In their study, Bowles, Gintis, and Meyer (1999) described the power struggles between the dominant class and the subordinate classes. They emphasized that these occur within three spheres of influence: the workplace, the family, and the school. Indirectly, they demonstrated that the dominant cultures' ideology concerning different class structures in society can be directly transferred to and can be seen in the public school system.

Paulo Freire (1998) went further and coined the term "banking" strategy, namely depositing indoctrinated knowledge via the teacher. Thus, as I emphasized before, the continuous pursuit for a humanization--in this case to reach out to all students in class, regardless of religious, racial or class differences--cannot be attained as it is impeded by the action of others (Freire, 1970). Teachers just repeat the information that higher societal structures have deposited into them, thus manifesting this behavioral attitude is manifested in the curriculum and perpetuating the *status quo*.

Finally, the caveat in positioning a study only within the paradigm of critical theory is the position of the researcher and the limited language available to describe the work. To position my theoretical framework only based on critical theory would limit myself as a researcher. Giroux (1983) argued that critical theory had focused primarily on male and class issues and had been silent on race and gender issues. According to McLaren (1997), my position as a doctoral student, who is female, White, German, of Turkish descent, and middle-class and who holds particular political views, places me in

a specific camp in regard to marginalized or diverse populations. When discussing analysis of data, Denzin (1995) took “the limited language” availability by the researcher one step further. He believed that any analysis a researcher does is actually grounded in the biography of the researcher. This focus may not be my intent, but there is no mechanism for separating one’s background and belief system from clouding issues that relate to “identity/difference” (McLaren, 1997, p. 184). I believe to place a study only through a critical lens is crucial and limited. Being a female of Turkish-German descent it is important to me to include the notion of gender and race or ethnic background into my holistic work.

Although critical theory has some missing tenets, it helps to see and detect inequalities in societal structures and questions beliefs and disparities in education and schooling. While researching on my literature review along with my critical lens, I could acknowledge why there are not so many Turkish-German teachers in the teaching force and why they are always placed into Comprehensive schools rather than to Grammar schools. Being female, Turkish, and Muslim places the teacher in a different status than other German teachers. On the same note, critical theory will give me insight into the perceptions of a female minority African American teacher and German-Turkish teacher of their life experiences, beliefs, and their teaching career.

Critical Race Theory

My theoretical framework also includes critical race theory, also called C.R.T. in the literature. C.R.T. is a complex legal and intellectual tool for making sense of all forms of human racial inequity; significantly, it is about deploying race and racial theory as a challenge to social hierarchy (Ladson-Billings, 2004).

C.R.T., along with related theories including LatCrit, Asian critical theory, tribal critical theory, and critical race feminism (Bernal, Villalpando, Brayboy, & Thompson, 2003; Brayboy, 2001), drew from and extended the broad field of critical theory (Solarzono & Bernal, 2001). Initially developed by scholars of color working in academic legal circles in the United States, C.R.T. grew out of dissatisfaction with the extremely slow rate of real racial reform since the growth of the Civil Rights Movement (Ladson-Billings, 1998). As a result, legal scholars of color began articulating a theory of race and racism that "allows us to better understand how racial power can be produced even from within a liberal discourse that is relatively autonomous from organized vectors of racial power" (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995, p. 25).

C.R.T. is characterized by four tenets. First, critical race theory works to name and discuss the daily realities of racism and expose how racism continues to privilege White Americans and disadvantaged people of color. Second, it legitimates and promotes the voices of people of color by using storytelling to integrate experiential knowledge drawn from a shared history as "the other" into critiques of dominant social orders. Third, critical race theory insists on criticizing liberalism, particularly the notion that meaningful social change can occur without radical change to existing social structures. Related to the critique of liberalism, C.R.T. questions the efficacy of much of the civil rights legislation enacted in the United States, arguing that, rather than reducing the effects of racism on people of color, the primary beneficiaries of this legislation have been White people (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Nebeker, 1998).

Tate's (1994) autobiographical article in *Urban Education* was the first use of C.R.T. in education. A year later, the publication of Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995)

article, “Towards a Critical Race Theory of Education,” first brought C.R.T. to the attention of the education circles. Finally, in special issues on C.R.T. in the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* in 1998 and in *Qualitative Inquiry* in 2002, critical race theory was examined for its potential as a lens through which educational practices and policies can be investigated (Ladson-Billings, 1999) and as a methodological tool that can reveal “greater ontological and epistemological understanding of how race and racism affect the education and lives of the racially disenfranchised” (Parker & Lynn, 2002, pp. 7-8).

In keeping with researchers working in the general field of critical educational studies, critical race theorists in education are committed to social justice as a general principle but particularly acknowledge the pervasiveness of race and racism in the ongoing experiences of students of color and in the structures and practices of educational institutions. Ladson-Billings (1998) noted, “despite the scientific refutation of race as a legitimate biological concept and attempts to marginalize race in much of the public, political discourse, race continues to be a powerful social construct and signifier” (p. 8).

Thus, a key component of the work of educational researchers working with critical race theory is to discuss and define race and racism in specific historical and social contexts, recognizing that race is seen as a pre-eminently socio-historical concept (Omi & Winant, 1986, p. 60) and that racism is more than just acts of individual prejudice. Rather, it seems as an endemic part of life, deeply ingrained in the education system through historical consciousness and ideological choices about race (Parker & Lynn, 2002). Race may be a social construct, and it has material effects on all people.

Here, the origins of C.R.T. in legal studies draws attention to the role that law has played in racializing people and to legal constructions of citizenship, which in turn lead to educational entitlements.

In recent years, critical theory has benefited from conversations among postmodernist researchers, feminist researchers, and Postcolonial researchers (McLaren & Kincheloe, 1997; Roithmayr, 1999). Similarly, critical race theory has been affected by these conversations in feminist methodology (Lynn, Yoss, Solorzano, & Parker, 2002) in its use of storytelling and in its privileging of the voices of "the other." Indeed, as Parker noted, there may be some skepticism about whether critical race theory can add anything different to current epistemological and methodological approaches to investigating issues of social justice in education. However, he argued that the critical centering of race (together with social class, gender, sexual orientation, and other areas of difference) at the locations where the research is conducted and discussions are held can serve as a major link between fully understanding the historical vestiges of discrimination and the present-day racial manifestations of that discrimination (Parker, 1998).

Further critiques of C.R.T. mostly originated within the field of legal studies and only a few originated within the field of education. Within legal studies, some critics of C.R.T. argue that it is an essentialist paradigm based on race. Essentialism is based on identity politics, which portrays a one-dimensional characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, or gender (in Banks, Sleeter & Delgado, 2004). According to Sleeter and Delgado (2004), "Critiques argue that an essentialist notion of identity is simplistic and does not allow for the myriad experiences that shape who we are and what we know (p. 248)." Surprisingly

enough, what many critics do not take into account is that many C.R.T. theorists are against an analysis based solely on race.

Another major line of critique targets the use of stories and narratives in legal scholarship (e.g., Farber & Sherry, 1993, 1997; Posner, 1997). Generally, these critics emphasize that C.R.T. theorists "replace traditional scholarship with personal stories, which hardly represent common experiences" (Simon, 1999, p. 3). This specific critique also applies to the methods of qualitative research.

I believe that apart from the fact that Critical Race Theory is an exciting and intellectual movement that puts race at the center of critical analysis, two foci are interesting for me. First, Critical Race Theory describes the relationship between ostensibly race-neutral ideals, like the rule of law, merit, and equal protection, and the structure of White supremacy and racism. Second, Critical Race Theory proposes ways to use the bond between law and racial power to transform that social structure and to advance the political commitment of racial emancipation. More specifically, the use of critical race theory offers a way to understand how a regime of White supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in the United States or in Germany and to change the bond that exists between law and racial power. Although the latter is not going to be a focus for my research agenda, it is a common interest of most C.R.T. theorists.

In summation, critical race theory in educational research has been used to expose racism within existing educational practices and policies. Much of this research has focused on the experiences of students and faculty of color in secondary or higher education (Bernal, 2002; Fernandez, 2002; Solorzano, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Ladson-Billings (1999) and Solorzano & Bernal (2001) have used critical race theory to examine practices for preparing teachers to teach culturally diverse students. These research projects are all situated in the United States. While the United States and Germany share some similarities historically regarding racial attitudes of people, they differ in their perspectives on the various "races" in their country. For instance, although in Europe people do not talk so much about racial background they do still classify according to social class (Milroy & Milroy, 1998), nationality, and ethnic background (Luchtenberg, 2004). On the other hand, in the United States, race is mostly based on the color of one's skin and other physical characteristics. However, in both countries, race has played a fundamental role in shaping relationships of power and notions of citizenship through inclusions and exclusions (McDonald, 2003).

Feminism

The final portion of my theoretical framework is grounded in feminism. Feminism, a progressive intellectual movement, has unfolded in different epochs, usually termed "waves." According to Cudd and Andreasen (2005), "Feminism acquired a number of different meanings, many of which indicate key turning points in the history of feminist thought" (p. 7). I will try to present in brief the central ideas during the different stages and as well as particular kinds of feminism, which are important for my purpose of this study.

Many feminist theorists are philosophers by training and affiliation. By default, they are trained to conceptualize and theorize, to question assumptions, and to deduce principles from the assumptions that they have justified (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005). The idea that one questions, deduces, and justifies also characterizes critical race theory.

Feminism essentially prompts one to "read between the lines" and provides a lens through which ideas and social practices can be analyzed. Furthermore, "what we do, and how we conceptualize what we do, is affected by gender" (p. 2).

As I am bilingual, German-Turkish, and female, the lens through which I perceived, understood, and conceptualized throughout the study was different from the lens of a male person. This difference also applied to my informants. Comparing one African American female teacher and one Turkish-German female teacher provided a different angle to my research than comparing African American male teacher and one Turkish-German male teacher.

After offering a rationale for selecting Muslim feminism and Africana womanism for my study, I emphasize further that feminist theory offers avenues of liberation which show what society and "la dolce vita" would be without the subordination of women.

Therefore, with this research, I hoped to demonstrate practices and ideas for minority and female teachers in a language arts classroom and offer a different perspective on multicultural education.

History of Feminism. The initial wave of feminism is often associated by Mary Wollstonecraft's (1792) *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, which mainly depicts the psychological and economic damage that is done to women as a result of their economic dependence on men and their exclusion from the public sphere. Second wave feminists, on the other hand, centered their attention on seeking institutional equality during the 1960s and 1970s (Lotz, 2003). The main text associated with this movement is Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005, p. 7)

Finally, third-wave feminism was initiated in the late 1980s by feminists who wanted to make women's diversity more central to feminist theory and politics (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005). Part of the reason for this change was that, historically, second-wave feminists were largely presented by middle-class White women, who tended to focus on the similarities of experiences among women without taking racial, economic, sexual and religious circumstances into consideration. As a response to this trend, women of color began to argue that one can not classify "women" as one specific and unified category. bell hooks (1984) wrote that it is "one-dimensional" to exclude women of color from the line of thought. According to her, most feminist discourse today rarely questions whether or not perspectives on women's reality are true to the lived experiences of women as a collective group (Cudd & Andreasen).

Third-wave feminist thinking typically challenges the notion that women's subjugation is either tied to gender or class. Black feminist scholar Patricia Collins (2000) suggested that race, class, and gender should be regarded as interlocking modes of oppression, not as separate entities. Alice Walker (1984), the creator of the term "womanism," wrote that both African men and women suffer from oppression, and through dialogue and reflection many of the gender issues can be resolved. Following this line of thought, Clenora Hudson-Weems (2003), the founder of Africana Womanism, wrote that gender differences between Black men and Black women are not as significant an issue as they are between White women and White men: "Africana men have never had the same institutionalized power to oppress Africana women as white men have had to oppress white women" (p. 158).

As one of my participants was an African American woman, her beliefs and actions will be very different from those of a European woman. Her African American background was reflected in her teaching style, in the challenges or opportunities she encountered at school, and in her perceptions of multicultural education. For this reason, I conducted research and analyzed my data through an African American feminist lens.

Muslim Feminism. Aside from initiatives undertaken by women of color or third-world women, several critiques emerged as well from other marginalized women's groups, such as working-class feminists (Helmbold, 1987; hooks, 1984, 2000; Tokarcyzk & Fay, 1993), lesbians (Bulkin, 1980; Cruikshank, 1982), Muslim women (Ahmed, 1980; Al-Hibri, 1983), Jewish women (Beck, 1988; Pegrebin, 1982), and women with disabilities (Fine & Asch, 1988; Hillyer, 1992; Wendell, 1996). A number of scholars have documented the struggles and liberation movements of women in the Middle East. During the 1990s, the term, "Islamic feminism," gained currency in several Middle Eastern countries. According to several researchers, Islamic feminism argues that gender equality and social justice are ensured by the Islamic paradigm (Ahmed, 1992; Mernissi, 1991; Spellberg, 1994). The central tenet of Islamic feminism argues that the Qur'an affirms equality for all human beings, but gender equality has been subverted by patriarchal ideologies and practices within Muslim societies and Islamic fundamentalists states (Schmitz et al., 2004).

Across the United States, Muslim feminists have had to abide stereotypes and the preoccupations of U.S. feminists in the academy with issues of the veil and excision (Mernissi, 1992). For a long time the only cited Egyptian Muslim feminist throughout women's studies programs in the United States was Nawal El Saadawi. The reception of

the *Hidden Face of Eve* (1980) encouraged representations of Arab women solely as victims of oppression (Schmitz et al., 2004). Recently, Muslim feminist scholars have portrayed Muslim-American and Arab-American women from multiple perspectives (Ahmed, 1999; El Saadawi, 1997; Kadi, 1994; Karakasoglu, 2005; Shakir, 1997, Topcu, 2005; Web, 2000).

> In comparison, in Germany, "Germans tend to consider Turkish women as victims of a patriarchal society shaped by religious beliefs" (Topcu, 2005). Topcu added,Female Muslims are believed to be oppressed, forced into marriage and beaten by men. The media nurture such clichéd prejudices. Therefore, head scarves and Turkish woman have become synonymous in Germany, even though only a minority of women from Turkey cover their hair. (p.1)

However, the personal circumstances of Turkish women in Germany vary greatly. Gender roles within the Turkish migrant community cannot be sweepingly divided into traditional or modern. Karakasoglu (2005), researcher in the field of migration and professor at the University of Bremen, emphasized that "different orientations can develop" (p.4). In this context, it was interesting to observe how my Turkish participant is shaped by these thoughts in her teaching and understanding of multicultural education. Because my participant is a member of an ethnic minority and a Muslim woman, her perspective will be that of a minority within a minority.

As my informant is a Turkish woman and a Muslim, her beliefs and actions are different from those of a Western woman. Her Muslim background reflects in her teaching style, in the challenges or opportunities she encounters at school. It is for this reason that I chose to conduct my research and analyze my data through a Muslim feminist lens.

Feminism and teaching. It is well-known that most teachers are underpaid (Berliner & Biddle, 1995). As Jane Gaskell (1988) wrote, "In the process of trying to

achieve equal opportunity, we encounter a world framed in the image of men's experience and that world is ultimately where the problem lies" (p. 21). But teachers are not neutral in their teaching: They are obligated to work for social betterment and such betterment can only be achieved by overcoming current gender inequities. Although the feminist literature has documented this struggle and inequality for many years, it seems that salaries are now becoming almost equal (National Center for Educational Statistics Report, 2000-2001).

On a different note, a famous study initially carried out by Perry (1970) and then challenged by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) incorporated women from various ages and occupations and investigated how women experience knowledge. Their research results indicate that there are specific differences in the way in which women experienced knowledge. Their perspectives are (a) silence, a condition in which women did not speak out; (b) received knowledge, listening to the voices of others; (c) subjective knowledge, listening to the inner voice and a quest for one's own identity; (d) procedural knowledge, looking for reasons and becoming aware of separate and connected knowledge; and (e) constructed knowledge, integrating the voices of all with respect to context. It is important to note that educators have to adopt the cultural feminist argument that there are differences in the way in which women experience the world and, therefore, think about the world. Certainly, the fact that women are silent receivers of knowledge rather than subjects constructing their own knowledge is an important factor in the education of women. Unfortunately, this study does not include women of color of different social class, or of different religious backgrounds into consideration. Also it has been challenged to be too essentialist oriented. While the study certainly helps me to

understand how women learn, it does not cover the range of voices that characterize my projected participants.

According to Vadrick (1997), international female students may be more concerned with poverty, survival, religion, or the environment than with Western feminist issues such as pornography or the male-female gap in wages. She emphasized that there can be more than one voice and opinion that describes women's needs. And finally, if women do think and learn differently from men, then educational leaders need to address those differences in education, especially in the terrain of multicultural education. Multicultural education deals with taboo topics, provocative issues, and stigmatized groups in society. Including a female perspective into this difficult arena will provide an additional, different, and valuable perspective from a traditionally suppressed social group.

Finally, during my review of the literature, I payed attention to feminist voices, particularly those presenting Muslim or Africana perspectives, which will be visible throughout my research in general. Moreover, when I analyzed teacher perceptions of multicultural education and its implementation in the classroom, I considered their actions in the context of feminist pedagogies such as caring (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Collins, 2000; Noddings, 1995), teamwork, and the sharing of control (Ropers-Huilman, 1997).

All in all, trying to analyze data from three different perspectives does not necessarily indicate that I am trying to evaluate data from three different lenses. All of theses frameworks are components of emancipation and critique; they seek equal rights for anyone regardless of gender, race or religion.

Statement of the Problem

In this study, I described and analyzed how multicultural education is perceived and implemented in the classroom by a U.S. ethnic minority teacher and a German ethnic minority teacher. Each participant encountered challenges and opportunities in her respective teacher education program and work environments. The participants' views on how they have been shaped by their experiences, and on what they have learned about multicultural education, will be discussed in this study. Additionally, this study will demonstrate how each teacher implements multicultural education in her language arts or German classes, respectively. The purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of these issues is to see how minority educators in the United States and Germany deal with similar issues regarding multicultural education and how they implement culture in their classrooms.

The research questions guiding this study were as follows:

1. What are the challenges and/or support experienced by a German and a U.S. female ethnic minority teacher who attempt to implement multicultural principles in their classrooms?
2. What are the similarities and/or differences experienced by a German and a U.S. female ethnic minority teacher regarding the implementation of multicultural principles into their practices?
3. To what extent are the teachers' beliefs and actions shaped by their subject positions as ethnic minority females teaching language arts in their classrooms?

Significance of the Study

Regardless of the situation of multicultural education and of the problematic position of minority and migrants in Germany and the United States, it is imperative to find solutions for closing the achievement gap and to work on the challenges such as interracial tensions and conflicts, and the increasing percentage of second language learners. One approach for seeking solutions is to increase the numbers of minority teachers in both countries and listen to their viewpoints as they serve as role models, mentors, and activists (Carrington & Skeleton, 2004). Therefore, I sought to illuminate different perspectives regarding cross-cultural issues among minority teachers and to explore multicultural trends in education in geopolitical contexts. U.S. and German preservice teachers, teachers in public schools, and individuals who are interested in multicultural education in general will have opportunities to explore, analyze, see, and compare international perspectives on multicultural education. The study may develop additional applications of teaching methods in the arena of multicultural education, will add new information on minority-female teachers' concerns and challenges in classrooms, and, most importantly, will open up a new research field in international, minority, and female teachers' beliefs on multicultural education.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Multicultural Education in the United States

A historical perspective is imperative in order to understand current developments in multicultural education. Banks (2004) discussed extensively the early movements and landmark events prior to multicultural education. He demonstrated the rationale behind multicultural education, pointing out why schools, colleges and universities need to restructure and reflect on multicultural issues and concerns. Although it is necessary to mention all antecedent movements before multicultural education started, this discussing will go beyond the scope of this study.

According to Banks (1996), "The intergroup education movement is an important antecedent of the current multicultural education movement but it is not an actual root of it" (p. 12). He found the roots of multicultural education in the early ethnic studies movement and elaborated further on an important precedent, namely the "Intergroup Education Movement," which also fostered the work of African American scholars such as Woodson, Wesley, DuBois, and Logan (Banks, 2004).

Early Ethnic Studies Movement

The early ethnic studies movement was founded in the 1960s by African American scholars such as G. W. Williams (1882-83), Woodson and Wesley (1922), and Du Bois (1935, 1973), who were trying to develop teaching materials and information about African American culture to integrate it in the schools (Banks, 2004, p. 8). Other

scholars, such as Brooks (1990), described the historical change of segregation of African American schools in the United States. Because of discrimination, the Black community supported the efforts to have separate schools for African American children (Banks). Although the African American schools had only African American teachers, the school curricula, textbooks and school boards were mainly controlled by White Americans (Banks, 2004).

Therefore, it was very difficult to include African American culture and history into the school curriculum. In his landmark study, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, Woodson (1933) argued that schools were trying to indoctrinate students with solely White culture and history, and, as a result, African American students were missing out on information about their own cultures. He pointed out that this practice neglected Black history and civilization and would therefore harm the self-esteem of African American students. Throughout his career Woodson was one of the main scholars who published on African American culture, history, and civilization, promoting its inclusion into the school culture (Roche, 1996). He initiated several African American journals, such as *Journal of Negro History* and *Negro History Bulletin*, and was highly keen on constructing and introducing knowledge about African Americans into the schools.

Intergroup Education Movement

The Intergroup Education Movement was an important predecessor to the ethnic studies movements in the 1960s and 1970s (Banks, 2004). It was linked to the work of major African American scholars, such as Woodson, Wesley, DuBois, and Logan, and dealt with issues of religion, nation and racial groups (Banks, 1996; Cook & Cook, 1954). The reason that this significant movement was linked to the field of multicultural

education was that it highlighted and shared many of its contemporary ideas (Banks, 2001).

Essentially, this movement grew out of the national tensions experienced after World War II. Many minorities living in the south or in rural areas migrated to the north in order to search for jobs and compete with people already living there (Banks, 2004). Out of these challenges and problems, which arose because of job competition, the intergroup education movement emerged. Its essence was to "reduce prejudice and ethnic tension in the nation" (DuBois, 1984; Taba, Brady, & Robinson, 1952; Banks, 2004, p. 9). During that time, scholars such as A. Cook, Alain Locke, Franz Boas, John Dollard, and E. Franklin Frazier published articles and books to enlighten people about problems that the nation experienced (Banks, 2004, p. 10). Allport's seminal study of 1950 revealed the "the Nature of Prejudice." Here, he defined four conditions that need to be met in order to create positive interracial contacts: equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities (Pettigrew, 2004). The United States continues to struggling with fulfilling the last condition. Almost 50 years later, the school systems, teachers, and higher education institutions still need the support of authorities. All in all, the intergroup education movement's central focus was to develop students' democratic racial attitudes and values (Cook, 1947; Taba & Wilson, 1946) by researching the curricular interventions into students' racial attitudes (Banks, 2004).

In comparison with both movements, the intergroup educational materials did not include much about issues and problems such as institutionalized racism, power, and structural inequality (Banks, 2004). Rather, they emphasized interracial harmony and human relations. The central focus of the early ethnic studies movement was ethnic

empowerment, and most scholars who were trying to achieve this aim were of African American descent. By contrast, most of the Intergroup Education Movement leaders were White. Both movements shaped new ideas, thoughts, and democratic values in the multicultural arena and were each thus important in their ways.

The Beginning of Multicultural Education

During the Civil Rights Movements in the 1960s, most Africa-American people in the United States suffered, and they became impatient with the deliberate speed of racial desegregation. As I mentioned earlier, the Intergroup Education Movement was trying to reach interracial harmony between groups and diminish desegregation. Along with the frustrations they were already experiencing, African Americans started to request full control over their own schools in order to administer the curriculum and embed separate courses into the school's system (Banks, 2004). Other minority groups, such as Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, and Asian Americans, followed and voiced their interests as well (p. 12). In addition, publications which were neglected earlier or were not allowed to go into print were now getting published. There was a continuation of the tendency to make everyone--particularly those within the educational field--aware of how ethnic groups of color had been victimized by institutionalized racism and discrimination in the United States.

In the 1970s, scholars inspired by pioneers in the field continued the struggle and played a significant role in establishing multicultural education in the United States. Scholars such as Baker, Banks, Gay and Grant were strongly directed by the previous African American scholars, who initiated the first move within the early ethnic movements. Later on, specialists in other subgroups within the United States conducted

research within the field of multicultural education to issues concerning Mexican Americans, American Indians, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans. Researchers, such as Cortes, Forbes, Nieto and Sue.

According to Banks (2004), multicultural education went through five phases until it reached the current level. In the initial stage, it was important to include ethnic studies into the school and teacher-preparation programs. These classes focused only on theories and cultural concepts of minority groups. During the second phase, educators realized that these kinds of classes were not sufficient to make a major impact on curricular changes, respond to unique needs of minority students, and increase awareness of democratic racial and ethnic attitudes. Hence, the second phase initiated systemic changes in the school system in order to reach to educational equality.

The third stage mainly included voices of people who regarded themselves as "victims of the society" (p. 13), such as people with disabilities and women. Their interests were also represented in the school changes, curricular activities, and general educational structure. In the fourth and current stage much research has been carried out in order to analyze how race, class and gender are connected to school, curricular and societal activities (Banks, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 1986). Furthermore, many professional associations since the 1970s integrated and are still integrating statements and publications about ethnic groups in their agenda. For instance, the National Council of Teachers of English (N.C.T.E.) and American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (A.A.C.T.E.) included these values in their statements.

Since the 1970s, major changes occurred with landmark developments in the multicultural educational arena. Starting from the early 1900s until the year 2000,

multicultural education effected several major influences of important scholars in the field and went through several obstacles and struggles until reaching its goals. Yet educators are still struggling to make significant changes in the curriculum, selecting their own literature and combating a great deal of negative stereotyping of minority groups in the educational field.

Challenges and Tensions

Although multicultural education has made, in the past century, great progress within U.S. school systems, it is still troublesome to think of it in current terms. In many parts of the United States, there is a significant movement against affirmative action, bilingual education, and race-based admissions and scholarship policies in higher education (Gordon, 2001). Unequal resources and opportunities to learn still persist, and they do not provide everyone the same starting point and equity within high-stake tests. Some critics even call this situation the ”No Child Left Untested Act” (Toppo, 2002). Furthermore, broadly speaking several important changes affected schooling in the United States (Ladson-Billings, 1998); however, there has been little broad-based fundamental change in education policies (Gollnick, 1995) and teacher education programs (Irvine, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1999). The backlash of American universities and insistence on teaching from a mainly monocultural perspective prevails (Zeichner, & Hoeft, 1996). This will eventually offer a different perspective on race, class, linguistic background, culture, gender and ability (King & Castenell, 2001).

According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), in addition to multicultural courses within teacher preparation programs, the field placement within diverse settings needs to

be obligatory. This would imply that preservice teachers would eventually start seeing diverse perspectives by receiving a practical experience within such an environment.

On another note, a major government-funded synthesis of research in teacher preparation (Wilson et al., 2001) discussed all policies within the Bush administration, outlining five major questions central to the idea of teacher preparation programs. Sadly, none of the questions were concerned with preparing teachers for diverse settings or special problems of urban schools that are in dire need of teachers. On top of this, the most urgent problem facing multicultural education is that in much of the United States it is viewed as anti-white, anti-intellectual, and anticapitalist (Stotsky, 1999).

Paradoxically, this is the best time as well the worst time for multicultural education and related progressive beliefs across the United States. It is going to be interesting to see how the continuous historical change of multicultural education will help me to discuss my results later on.

Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States

According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) curriculum guidelines, 16 out of 17 national guidelines reflect multicultural values (Davis & Fries, 2004, p. 932). Likewise, 35 states acknowledge that it is important to consider different ethnicities in order to analyze cultural influences on learning and define policies regarding teacher candidates. Forty states even insist that schools and teacher preparation programs include the study of ethnic groups, diversity, bilingual, and multicultural education (Gollnick, 1995). In addition, universities in the United States incorporated multicultural education as part of a course, fieldwork, or curriculum within the teacher preparation programs (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996).

Remarkably enough, with the general changes in the field of multicultural education, there has also been an increase in the number of ethnic minority teachers coming into the teaching force (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001; Zeichner & Schulte, 2001), a change that will eventually help to diversify the teaching body (Lauer, 2001).

Davis and Fries (2004) concluded that "basic changes in teacher education are necessary but have not occurred despite more than a quarter-century of attention" (p. 945). Back in the 1980s, Baptiste and Baptiste made an early statement by pointing out that portions of teacher education needed to be redesigned, and yet education is still working on this and has many goals left to accomplish. After 12 years of NCATE's incorporation of multicultural education into their policy guidelines, Gollnick (1992) stated, "institutions still have not taken seriously its incorporation into its programs and practices [and] equality and cultural diversity are not central to their missions" (p. 237).

One reason that there has been little change within teacher education and practice is still due to marginalization and under funding (Davis & Fries, 2004). Davis and Fries suggested that "well-developed and thoughtful impact measures are needed that allow for comparisons of recruitment and selection strategies, as well as comparisons of the pedagogies of teacher education" (p. 946).

Historical trends in multicultural education in the United States have been marked by struggle and challenge since the beginning of the 1900s. Since the 1960s, major changes occurred within the multicultural field. Although, there have been major developments in the last decade as well, educators and scholars in the multicultural field are still struggling to find a consensus between policies in schools and limited views of policy makers and administrators on multicultural education.

Intercultural Education in Germany

Compared to the development of multicultural education in the United States, this particular field is a fairly new area in Germany. Around the time of the U.S. Civil War, initial multicultural concepts emerged in Germany. Intercultural education is synonymously used as multicultural education in Germany. Surprisingly, whereas one movement tries to "interact' with diversity, namely as multiple diversities, the other one just calls it as "in between" two cultures. Despite the migration in the1950s and 1960s of guest workers from other countries, such as Turkey, Italy, Spain, and Yugoslavia, German educational leaders did not consider the relevance of adopting a multicultural education system. According to Luchtenberg (2003), as the work migration was viewed as only temporary, educational leaders did not feel that the situation was urgent enough to "challenge education" (p. 1). However, when the guest workers started to settle down as permanent residents in the 1970s, education had to deal with migrant children attending the German schools. The first answer to this initial need was called *Ausländerpedagogik* (migrant education). Luchtenberg (1997) wrote that multicultural education was afterwards implemented as a "counter-concept to migrant education" (p.54) because migrant education could not solve the initial problems. This happened very late and reluctantly in the 1980s as an urgent response to the increase in the number of migrant students and a problematic situation in education regarding policies toward such students.

The major difference between migrant education and multicultural education is that the latter tries to incorporate all children regardless of their background instead of just focusing on migrant children. It also tries to highlight migrant children's differences rather than deficits and essentially to integrate them into the educational system rather

than assimilate them (Luchtenberg, 2003). In German literature classes, migrant children's capabilities used to be viewed as deficient and, accordingly, the German education system was trying to "solve this problem" by teaching migrant students as much German as possible so that they could assimilate as soon as possible. Multicultural education was initially developed purely because there were many migrants in the country. Hence, multicultural education was a way to "meet the other culture and learn from each other" (Luchtenberg, 2003, p. 3). It was seen as a very superficial form of getting to know "the other." Rather than getting to know the migrant students' culture on a deeper level, including the study of their customs, habits, and beliefs, it involved a banal introduction to their national cuisines and celebrations. This was certainly evident in the U.S. education system as well. This kind of teaching needed to be questioned, as the responsibility for critical change or social betterment was in the hands of educators (Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1998).

Furthermore, it is interesting to analyze the difference in terms used as well as contexts of their usage. While Americans use the prefix "multi" to describe several cultures at once Germans tend to this mingling of cultures from the "between cultures" point of view. This is somewhat peculiar as migrants are not in between cultures. The assimilation concept still prevails and this is already a critical starting point.

Multicultural education also included anti-racist education, criticizing discrimination towards migrants and foreigners in Germany, which was important as these aspects needed to be discussed before "mutual exchange was possible" (p. 3). The current literature review outlines the challenges that the European Union faced in 1993, including the implementation of the European dimension into the educational system in

Germany. This promoted the concept of multicultural education to a European and global perspective level (Luchtenberg, 2003). Thus, in the late 1980s multicultural education and European education were used interchangeably. While it was very hard to accept this term in the German educational system in the beginning, it has now gained currency (Luchtenberg, 1996).

The term "multicultural education" is now also used for all international educational approaches, such as the European Dimension or the international education proposed by UNESCO. In Germany, this opening toward international approaches has helped multicultural education to achieve greater acceptance, especially in school administration, even if the main focus in schools and research is on education in a multicultural society.

Challenges and Tensions

The focus on integration rather than assimilation of migrant students made them join the same classes as Germans as opposed to having their own classes. Consequently, bilingual education has never been developed in Germany, although language has always played an important role in the concepts of multicultural education (Luchtenberg, 2002). German as a second language is mainly taught in German schools in remedial or support classes for several hours each week. Researchers stress the fact that migrant students experience their whole school lives and all the subjects they take through German as a second language, but this message is only reluctantly accepted in teacher education and in schools (Krashen, 1999).

Meanwhile, there are some universities and teacher training institutions that offer extended graduate courses for teachers or graduate students to qualify in multicultural

education, with a focus on German as a second language, so that more teachers are becoming qualified in this subject than ever before (Luchtenberg, 2004).

There is nearly no coordinated bilingual education. The task of coordinating migrant children's two languages is left to the bilingual students themselves. Those who attend German speaking classes get additional support in German as a second language and can be taught in their mother tongue for up to five hours per week, depending on the conditions in their school or school district (Luchtenberg, 2004, p. 252). It is interesting to note that "normal" language arts teachers can also teach German as a second language. There are no prerequisites in the German school system for teachers who have a background in German as a second language to teach the migrant students. This creates two large problem areas. The PISA study (O.E.C.D., 2003) showed that only teachers with German as a second language background can make a valid diagnosis of a migrant child's reading ability and problems areas. Therefore, if "normal" teachers continue teaching migrant children, the disparity in learning and teaching will be perpetuated. From the perspective of the teachers, this situation is also unbearable, as they have a massive workload in different fields. My German participant thus teaches German, German as a second language, and Turkish as a second language, although she does not have a degree or pedagogy knowledge in teaching a second language. Does this indicate that there is no coordination in the German school system regarding the placement of teachers? Is this chaos also replicated in migrant students' learning patterns? The disparity between migrants and Germans is evident: Migrant students are still lagging behind the educational achievement of their German peers.

One of the central foci of multicultural education in the fields of educational administration, school reality, and research is the organization of Islamic lessons in German schools (Karakasoglu, 1999; Luchtenberg, 2004). Religion, generally Catholic or Protestant Christian, is a compulsory subject in German schools and is organized in cooperation with the churches. One of the difficulties with Islamic lessons lies in finding an adequate institution which is authorized to speak for all groups (Luchtenberg, 2003). As there are different branches of the Islamic religion, it is hard to find a religious teacher who can cater to all students.

Also, the German school system is heavily hierarchical in terms of dividing students according to capability or intelligence. As most migrant students have a hard time in German as a second language it is highly certain that they will only go as far as the lowest level of schooling in the German system, called Hauptschule (Mainschool). Just as educators and theorists, such as Sonia Nieto, James Banks, and Jacqueline Irvine are concerned that minority students in the United States do not have the same resources or opportunities to continue their education (e.g. in terms of their schooling or test performance), so is the same complaint applicable and valid in Germany. As most migrant students live in migrant areas, their language competency in German will not develop in the same way as that of other students. German as a second language will remain, and, eventually, this will reflect on their educational achievements in school.

Most importantly, there are hardly any minority teachers who can serve as role models, mentors or activists (Carrington & Skelton, 2004). As research indicates, a minority teacher can care for and improve minority students' education levels and can give a different, critical perspective on the situation of minorities. I am confident that this

can increase the awareness of students and faculty and promote multicultural education. That is one of the reasons I was interested in doing this study.

All in all, multicultural education is defined by two main tasks: preparation for life in a multicultural and multilingual society and improvement of migrants' opportunities. It is a major component of multicultural education to achieve equal or at least improved opportunities for migrants and their children. There can be no doubt that this is necessary since the school results of children with a migrant background are still poorer than those of students with a German background (see O.E.C.D., 2003).

Integration of Multicultural Education into the Curriculum

Recent curricula and textbooks indicate that multicultural awareness is increasing. The presence of migrant students is taken into consideration in many recent curricula. This is connected to an acceptance of diversity. There is often a mixture of external and internal approaches, thus mixing an interest in indigenous cultures in the United States, European history, and diversity due to migrations. This is not necessarily a negative approach, although the different approaches should also be looked at in their own rights. Many newer textbooks have pictures of multiethnic classrooms, use names from different languages, offer examples from different cultures, include texts from migrant authors, and phrases, words, or even texts in language other than German. However, according to Sigrid Luchtenberg (2004) "Many formulations--especially in the instructions for students--reveal the old dichotomy between 'them' and 'us,' such as 'Ask your foreign classmates about their holiday traditions!'"

Multicultural education still has to fight stereotypes and established opinions, especially with regard to language use. Many teachers do not accept the use of mother

tongue within group of migrant students, and these languages are not recognized in schools, classrooms, or school subjects. It is still possible to become a teacher in Germany without having dealt with concepts of a multicultural society and school, or the needs of migrant students. In general, it has to be admitted that multicultural education is mainly accepted in its international approaches, while in Germany itself the focus is on integration as a task to be fulfilled by migrants.

Teacher Preparation in Germany

The teacher education program includes multicultural education as part of an obligatory course for preservice teachers. Up until this research, I can only rely on online research and prior experiences I had with teachers. As far as I know from friends and literature in the field, most preservice teachers complain that their educational experience is too theoretical and not practice-related. To date, presently, teachers in all states must complete a 24-month period of student teaching before applying for their first full-time teaching position. This is quite different from the U.S. teacher preparation program.

Some of the changes in teacher training introduced in recent years have resulted from the work of the K.M.K. (Standing Conference of Education Ministers from the German States). Education in Germany is a matter handled individually by each of the sixteen states; however, the K.M.K. coordinates the work of the education ministries in each state. In 1990, the K.M.K. agreed on minimal requirements for the number of courses in major subjects and in education and educational psychology required for completion of university teacher training (K.M.K., 1992). This agreement was an attempt to remove obstacles for teachers who wished to transfer to a different state, a problem that arose because of differences in teacher training programs between states. As an

example of minimum requirements, prospective *Gymnasium* teachers are required to take eight to ten semester hours in general education and educational psychology and a total of 120 to 130 semester hours in two major subjects, such as math and biology (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, 1991).

The length of teacher training for all types of schools consists of 4-5 years of academic training at a university, followed by 2 years of student teaching. The minimum length of university studies varies from 3 years (plus an additional year for final examinations) for *Grundschule* teachers to 4-5 years (plus an additional year for examinations) for *Gymnasium* and vocational school teachers. However, in many cases, students require more than the minimum number of semesters in order to satisfy all course requirements for certification. After completing all required courses at the university, students finish their university studies with the First State Examination (*Erstes Staatsexamen*) and then undergo two years of training as a student teacher before taking the Second State Examination to become a certified teacher.

The classification of teachers varies according to the different states. Teachers are certified in one of the following areas: *Grundschule* for primary-level teachers for grades 1–4 (1–6 in Berlin and Brandenburg); *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* teachers for grades 5–10; *Gymnasium* and *Gesamtschule* teachers for grades 5–13; vocational-school teachers for grades 10–13; and special education (*Sonderschule*) teachers for all grade levels. In Hessen, Bremen, and Hamburg, teachers can be certified for both primary and secondary levels (grades 1–10) in their major subject.

Presently, teachers for all types of public schools in Germany complete university training programs. In the past, only *Gymnasium* teachers were trained at universities,

while *Grundschule*, *Hauptschule*, and *Realschule* teachers were trained at special teacher colleges (*pädagogische Hochschulen*). Most states integrated training for all teachers into university programs during the 1970s and 1980s in the belief that teachers would receive a more solid foundation in major subjects at the university. One consequence of this reform was the fact that *Grundschule*, *Hauptschule*, and *Realschule* teachers received a considerable increase in salary in recognition of their higher degree of training. However, some critics have questioned whether teachers receive an appropriate education at large, overcrowded universities (Führ 1989).

The prerequisites for university entry include the *Abitur*, or a comprehensive exit examination at the end of the twelfth or thirteenth grade of *Gymnasium*. Traditionally, there were no other requirements to enroll in a teacher training program. Currently, however, over enrollment and high numbers of unemployed teachers have led some states to attempt to limit the number of students in teacher education programs.

The course requirements for all students include courses in pedagogy and educational psychology, but other course requirements vary according to the type of school for which students will be certified. Math and science teachers focus on their subject areas, but otherwise fulfill the same course requirements as other teachers do for that type of school. While teachers for *Gymnasium* and vocational schools take more courses in each of their two major subjects, *Grundschule* and *Hauptschule* teachers take additional courses in general education. As part of the general education requirement, *Grundschule* teachers take courses in the philosophy and history of education, educational psychology, teaching methodology, and pedagogy and a basic course in philosophy, sociology or political science.

Gymnasium teachers select two major subjects in addition to general education. University training for *Gymnasium* teachers emphasizes the academic content of subjects to a greater extent than does training for teachers at other types of schools. In the past, this emphasis came at the cost of fewer courses in education. Since the beginning of the 1970s, however, the number of required credit hours in general education has been increased for Gymnasium teachers (M.W.F.B.W., 1994).

Also, in relation to course choices, the mother-tongue curriculum has improved in Germany since the 1970s when it was originally introduced. In some schools, students can choose their mother tongue as a regular second language, which is generally Turkish. At Essen University, teacher education students can take a course in Turkish and in pedagogy with the aim of becoming a teacher of Turkish (in combination with another subject because teachers in Germany must study and teach two subjects). These students are mainly second-generation students with a Turkish background, so that in a few years there is the chance of having regular teachers with a migrant background.

Furthermore, students who wish to teach at a *Gesamtschule* complete university programs and are certified at the grade level they plan to teach. There is no university program specific for the *Gesamtschule*. Rather, *Gesamtschule* teachers are trained as *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, or *Gymnasium* teachers. In a typical *Gesamtschule*, roughly 40% of all teachers are certified as *Hauptschule* teachers, 30% as *Realschule* teachers, 27% as *Gymnasium* teachers, and 3% as vocational teachers, special education teachers, or school psychologists (Schulz, 1990). The German participant in my study worked at a *Gesamtschule*. After completing their university studies with the First State Examination, prospective teachers are eligible to begin student teaching.

There are several strands of critique directed at German university training for future teachers. For instance, teachers generally confirm that university teacher education programs lack balance between theory and practice. Hauptschule and Realschule teachers believe as well that the teacher training is too theoretical. Gymnasium teachers generally are satisfied with the quality and quantity of subject matter learned during their university studies. At the same time, Gymnasium teachers describe the required courses in education as being of little value (Klinzing 1990). Despite widespread criticism of university training for teachers, the system has apparently not been changed.

Teacher training in Germany is very different depending on the school classification a preservice teacher selects. Even though teachers criticize their theoretical education, they generally regard student teaching as being the most useful phase of their training in preparing them for their first teaching position.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Considerations of Qualitative Research

In this study, I explored the experiences of two minority teachers regarding multicultural education in their classroom. The study consisted of two case studies, one of an African American teacher in the United States and one of a Turkish-descent teacher in Germany. To examine the personal and sociocultural contexts in which these teachers lived and worked, I had to consider each teacher's background as a member of a minority ethnic group and as a woman, how these characteristics affected her school relationships and also how she presented herself in the classroom. Both teachers' multicultural pedagogy, beliefs, challenges and experiences and ways in which this manifested in their teaching required a profound observation over a period of time using several data techniques. A case study, "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1988, p. 21), was the most appropriate design for this particular type of inquiry as it allows for the collection of rich data for a prolonged time of observation and demonstrates in depth the teachers' perceptions, beliefs and experiences of multicultural education.

Qualitative research methodology helped me to go through my endeavor in Germany and the U.S. to guide me researching through the internal states for several months (Bernard, 1995). I wanted to know what both teachers' perceptions were about multicultural pedagogy, why they may teach in the way they do and what has induced

their thoughts about multiculturalism. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe the features of the naturalistic research paradigm that make it particularly relevant for my study:

> Where positivism establishes meaning operationally, the new paradigm establishes meaning inferentially. Where positivism sees its central purpose to be prediction, the new paradigm is concerned with understanding. Finally, where positivism is deterministic and bent on certainty, the new paradigm is probabilistic and speculative. (p.30)

Because I was researching the perceptions of both minority teachers, a quantitative paradigm would not have been useful here. I did not seek to make predictions, hypotheses and any statistical analysis, but rather as Lincoln and Guba state, I sought to come to a better understanding of what kinds of challenges both teachers with whom I work dealt with and are still dealing with regarding their racial and ethnic background and how they implement their multicultural perspectives in their classrooms.

There are several advantages to using qualitative research. A major benefit is that it perceives people as human beings rather than as statistics or mere representations. Through "face to face interactions" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. xi), the researcher becomes involved with the people he or she studies. Examples of qualitative methodology include the use of interviews, participant-observation, and dialogue between and among individuals. As qualitative researchers value the uniqueness of individuals, they challenge the claims to objectivity and generalizability that are valued by quantitative researchers. The subjectivities of both researcher and researched are accepted and recognized as integral elements in the process. Qualitative research promotes understanding and interpretation. According to Glesne and Peshkin,

> Since qualitative researchers deal with multiple, socially realities or "qualities" that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them. (p. 6)

For the purpose of my study, it was important to me to see and analyze how my participants interpreted the "worlds" around them and how these interpretations were replicated again in the classroom. Thus, qualitative research helped me to deal with my participants' realities, which were complex and indivisible, and helped me to find themes and categories for my research goal. Further, qualitative research reveals phenomena in their natural settings with the aim to understand those phenomena and the meaning people make of them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). It was important to me to not only see how both teachers implement multicultural pedagogy in their classroom, but also to understand thoroughly what made them think in a multicultural way, and what their beliefs and feelings were about multicultural pedagogy. Thus, qualitative methodology helped me to develop a profound relationship with both participants and observe them for a prolonged period of time.

As a researcher with a multicultural background, my attempt to understand the nature of multiculturalism in classrooms was grounded both personally and intellectually. Because I am multicultural in the sense that I grew up speaking Turkish and German and because I am an international educator, I am more interested than most other teachers in improving the way multicultural pedagogy is understood not only in one country but also internationally and in the way it is implemented by minority teachers. Cowen (2000) addresses the advantages of doing an international study:

> Reading the global could involve placing at the center of comparative education the issue of global peace and international understanding… (p. 336). Comparative education is about learning things of practical value from the study of foreign educational systems. (p. 335)

It is because I have this unique perspective as both a comparative educator and a researcher that I am interested in this topic of inquiry. I have made judgments throughout

my own studies which teachers were sensitive enough to relate culturally to students of all colors and which teachers were interested in international or multicultural aspects of education. I have become dissatisfied with what schools of education are doing to address the needs of minority students, to talk about multicultural and international aspects of education critically and to teach student teachers about how to approach diversity.

With the world going in a highly conservative direction, and education back tracking to teach about integral components of stigmatized and stereotyped minorities in society, I feel that this study opens up avenues to critically get involved and think about minority teachers' perspectives. These words reflect my feelings towards this research study. My role as an international educator and my multiple identities combine to create an intense desire to take some liberal action to enlighten and help conservative teachers and students to understand how these stigmatized groups in society feel.

Another perspective I bring to this study is that I am an international student who happens to teach about diversity in college. While this international identity might lead some to see this work as biased, it is unlikely that someone who is not international would have the interest necessary to conduct this research. My role as an international educator and critical pedagogue combine to create an intense desire to take action to help enlighten educators about comparative aspects in the multicultural arena and to break down stigmas (nowadays promoted in the media) about minorities. I can see in Germany and the United States that similar challenges regarding minority issues are continuing, so I know the value this research can have.

In fact, I came to the United States to complete my doctorate in education in order to develop my knowledge and to understand how American educators and student

teachers perceive international and multicultural aspects of education. Furthermore, I have lived, worked, and studied in major continents throughout the world. I have continuously tried to get to know different cultures, learn their languages, and see their "lenses onto life." Intellectually, I changed through new experiences; I changed through learning; and again I changed through new understandings of new perspectives. I wanted to teach about my intellectual growth in my classes at college. I have taught Spanish, German, Turkish, and English and often focused on the cultural dimensions of language. I am currently teaching preservice teachers about diversity because I believe strongly that multicultural education is an essential component of a teacher's preparation program. In this sense my research is as much about myself as it is about teaching educators or student teachers. This notion of how one's self influences one's research interests is generally the beginning of our discussion on the issue of bias in research. As Denzin (1989, p. 12) states: "Interpretive research begins and ends with the biography and self of the researcher." Scheurich (1994) remarks further that one's historical position, race, gender, religion, and so on, interact and influence, limit and constrain the production of knowledge. Furthermore, I cannot claim that my findings and interpretations are unbiased, and that what I have produced is the objective truth as I discovered. To further my point, Krieger (1991) argues that the outer world, or our "external reality" is inseparable from what we already know based on our lives and experiences - our inner reality. Krieger goes on to argue that the knowledge of the external world is only a small part of what our total knowledge can be; what we ever really know is, in essence, self. Thus, the reality we all see is based on our understanding of the world, which in turn is based on our knowledge of the self. In other words, who I am determines, to a large

extent, what I want to study. As a result, while most research studies are autobiographical, this particular study describes my own concerns at the heart of the research process.

Additionally, I have both a personal and intellectual interest in this project. Due to my international background, my continuous experiences teaching in a foreign country, my interest in other cultures, particularly in stigmatized minority groups, and my participation in activist movements supporting minorities and immigrant populations, I became more and more attentive and sensitive to minorities in any country. Personally, while teaching about gay and minority issues , I saw much resignation from my students and misconceptions. However, I have also seen how much my critical teaching can make a positive impact in the student teacher perspectives on the abovementioned topics. I have seen students develop a better understanding of minorities and receive a better picture of international comparative aspects, important to their future role as teachers approaching and critically thinking about taboo topics in education. At heart, I know that one needs to start making an impact; however, talking about stigmatization and controversial political topics is still rare among educators.

I saw that it was hard to combine an activist orientation and critical pedagogy in my classes, and to increase interest in my talks at conferences about diversity and stigmatized groups. The interest of educators was scarce in listening to presentations or sharing what they know about multicultural pedagogy, particularly in discussions about stigmatized groups, such as minorities in the U.S and Muslim students in public schools. As my German Turkish participant is Muslim and female, I believe that this project reveals feelings of this particular minority group as well. These were some initial

thoughts which made me create a study, which can help to understand what kinds of challenges and perceptions minority teachers are experiencing internationally. As a result, I had to make sure that my personal motivation would not interfere with the research aspects of this study.

My knowledge gained through the doctoral program helped me to create this study and use my intellectual skills to carry it out. The past year I was reading and researching a plethora of literature to be able to understand minority teacher beliefs in the U.S. and in Germany and multicultural pedagogy.

Research Design

Case Study

The study was a qualitative investigation of a German participant's and a U.S. participant's perceptions of multicultural education and how they implement its pedagogy in their classrooms. Through the use of a case study, "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1988, p. 21) was obtained. Case studies are detailed investigations of individuals, groups, institutions or other social units. The researcher conducting a case study attempts to analyze the variables relevant to the subject under study (Polit and Hungler, 1983). In the case study methodology, the focus may not be on generalization but on understanding the particulars of that case in its complexity. It focuses on a bounded system, usually under natural conditions, so that the system can be understood in its own habitat (Stake, 1988). Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the

boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p. 23).

The advantages of the case study relate directly to the common reader's everyday experience and facilitate an understanding of complex real-life situations. A case study was appropriate to my research study since I was in a natural environment such as a school setting. Teachers' perceptions and the ways in which they paid attention to multicultural pedagogy can be seen in the context of their work. Therefore, the data are time-dependent, context-dependent, and inherently tied to the phenomenon itself (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study I was interested in finding out the experiences and perceptions of both minority teachers, Chantelle Latimer and Lara Cekirdek: I investigated how these were based on their personal and professional beliefs and how they could be seen as lived experiences within their worlds of meaning (Merriam, 1988).

Purposeful Selection

Qualitative researchers use two types of sampling techniques. The first is known as probability sampling, the second as non-probability (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995). Probability sampling is based on the idea that the people or events that are chosen as the sample because the researcher has some notion of the probability that these will be representative of the people or events in the whole population being studied. On the other hand, non-probability sampling is conducted without such knowledge about whether those included in the sample are representative of the overall population. Because I did not have sufficient knowledge about the sample to undertake probability sampling and did not know how many people make up the population, I turned to the forms of non-probability sampling as the basis for selecting the sample. The crucial and defining

characteristics of non-probability sampling, whatever form it takes, is that the choice of people or events to be included in the sample is not a random selection. Streubert & Carpenter (1995) point out that there is no need to randomly select individuals because manipulation and control are not the purpose of the exercise. By using the non-probability sampling, I did not mean to suggest that I know absolutely nothing about both teachers; but I didn't know enough to use the probability sampling. Therefore, purposeful selection is a type of non-probability sampling (Polit & Hunglar, 1999, p. 284) and requires that I have criteria established prior to the beginning of the study regarding the participants (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Thus, I had chosen my participants on purpose and I had criteria established prior to my research study (see below).

While I was observing my student teachers in the field, I asked the teachers in school if they could help me to locate a female African American language arts teacher in their school. They mentioned two names and I met with both teachers. One of the teachers was not interested and mentioned right away that she would not have time to assist me. The second teacher, who turned out to be my participant Chantelle Latimer, agreed immediately. Among many African American language arts teachers, I chose Chantelle Latimer for the following reasons: (a) She belonged to an ethnic minority group; (b) she taught language arts; (c) she was a woman; and (d) she taught in a middle school (grades 6-8).

I am also aware that my purposeful selection was one of convenience as I was already aware of this school during my student teachers observations. However, I believed that this study would be enriching my strong knowledge about the school already.

My search and selection of the German teacher was challenging. A study of a migrant teacher in language arts was difficult to do in Germany because it was hard to find ethnic minority teachers in schools in general. Most teachers, either of migrant or foreign descent, teach their own native language. It is almost impossible to find a migrant teacher who also teaches her main courses in German.

At first, I tried to call from the United States to find one teacher for my study. It was very hard and time-consuming to locate the German teacher. I called major public school systems and asked if the school employs ethnic minority teachers. I was astonished by the negative and pessimistic reactions I received over the phone, and I was politely reminded that this search is "utopian" because there are hardly any minority teachers anywhere. Specifically, one female principal even pointed out that my study is nonsensical, and I should not even do a research in the minority teachers' field because no one would be interested. All in all, although I had some discouraging moments, I still continued with my search. Finally a former friend, who attends Max-Planck Comprehensive School, referred me to a Turkish teacher who was teaching Turkish. I called the teacher and found out that, fortunately, he had recently mentored a Turkish-descent intern who graduated from the university and started working in his school. After obtaining my participant's phone number from the Turkish teacher, I called her and told her about my idea. She agreed to participate in the study and during my first visit to Germany I met her for the first time. She met my criteria for the research study: (a) She belonged to an ethnic minority group (Turkish descent); (b) she taught language arts (i.e., German to German students); (c) she was a woman; and (d) she taught in a comprehensive school (grades 6-8).

Once I gained a verbal agreement from the teacher to cooperate with me in the study, I also wrote an official letter to the principal to conduct the research. My initial plan worked out, and I was ready to start my research.

I can say with confidence that I did not choose Lara Cekirdek out of convenience; I had a hard time locating even one Turkish-German teacher. I already knew something about her and about the location from my having lived in Germany. Lara was appropriate as she was *multigravida*, was able to read, speak and understand German and Turkish and was Muslim. In effect, she was selected with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose reflects the particular qualities of German Turkish women chosen and her relevance to the topic of investigation.

Researcher Role

Within the critical research paradigm, the role of a researcher is an important aspect to consider (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Critical theorists believe that influence and bias are important facts to take into account. With the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, unique characteristics unfold: the researcher interacts in a context and can react accordingly, adapting when necessary; the researcher can also be sensitive to body language and other nonverbal communication. Further, the researcher can work immediately with the data to clarify and summarize it as the study unfolds to determine additional data to be collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998). Therefore, it is essential that the researcher's background, including potential biases, as well as the researcher's role during data collection and analysis be disclosed in order for the findings to be trustworthy.

In this study, I was an observer (Merriam, 1998). As an interviewer I watched and listened to my participants. In the classroom, I observed profoundly my environment. As Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 3) mention, I was an "observer in the world" and very sensitive to anything around me through the study. I acknowledge that the results of this study lay within some of my own perceptions, beliefs, and ideas on multicultural pedagogy. However, I analyzed and considered my role as a researcher as objectively as possible while I was doing the research in both teachers' classroom. I knew that it was going to be difficult to listen to my participants, observe, record my data and be as accurate as possible in my research. Particularly, data collection in Germany was in addition time consuming as I also needed to translate accurately all data into the English language. I believe it is well understood that data collection in two different countries is a hard task to accomplish. However, I made sure that I employed all verification tools in the qualitative paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to ensure the most accurate information and data analysis.

At the beginning I noticed that my German Turkish participant was somewhat reserved and nervous when I observed her and that she was trying to find reasons why she is not yet knowledgeable enough to teach certain educational topics. I tried to get closer to her by asking personal questions regarding her husband and family and trying to find out if we have mutual friends. In time, I noticed that she got more comfortable and could relate better to me and my presence in her classes. She even started to feel more confident while I was there and always made sure that I got all the details of her lesson by providing syllabi and handouts, sharing her ideas and making sure that I understood everything in her class. I think I gained her trust by then.

With my American participant, I did not observe any trust issues as she was highly confident in what she believed and taught. I could see this attitude in her personality and her mimic and gestures. She was outspoken, often eloquent, spoke with a New York accent, and was overall smart teacher. She was highly supportive and interested in what I intended to do. She freely volunteered anything I requested for the study and was ready to "support research" from the beginning. I was impressed with how well we worked together from the beginning and how much interest and input she gave to this project.

With that in mind, finally I reconsidered my role as a researcher, and had to acknowledge that my own background and experiences did not correlate with my observations for this research. I was aware that my role as a researcher was not only improved but also complicated by my multiple identities as a teacher, researcher, and Turkish German. I will elaborate on this in the next section in more detail.

Participant Observation

In the United States. For this study, I assumed the role of participant observer as defined by Adler and Adler (1994). Participant observation is a straightforward technique: by immersing him- or herself in the subject being studied, the researcher is presumed to gain understanding, perhaps more deeply than could be obtained, for example, by questionnaire items. (p. 380) Arguments in favor of this method includes reliance on first-hand information, high face validity of data, and reliance on relatively simple and inexpensive methods. (p. 380) the downside of participant observation as a data-gathering technique is that it raises some possible biases as it is mostly based on subjective views. However, defenders of participant observation find greater bias in

allegedly neutral instruments such as survey questionnaires. These, they say, involve the imposition of an externally conceived "scientific" measuring device (the questionnaire) on individuals who do not perceive reality according to that external conception (Bruyn, 1966). For my purpose, I chose participant observation, as it gave me the chance to observe my participant in depth, for a long period of time. It guaranteed enriching data first hand.

I attended one of Chantelle's 7th grade classes for eight weeks, and spent three days a week in this class. This grade level served the best for my research. I think the middle-school grades are an important grade level where students still can be shaped by thoughts about multiculturalism, minorities and their importance in our society. In the middle grades students start thinking about stereotypes and stigmatization of certain groups in our society. It is the teachers' task to discuss it and find out where all these beliefs come from. Therefore, I deliberately chose the middle graders, thinking that it was an important phase in which to do research.

The school was trying to implement a new teaching method that the principal decided on upon parental decisions. The teaching method was a rigid implementation of continuous tests and prepared tasks for students to get ready for the school test. I was attending one class session per day. Therefore, I usually attended the class session from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m.

As it was very common for the class and Chantelle that there was always some new person in their class, it was not regarded as strange that I sat daily in the back of the class. Adler and Adler (1994) require that a participant observer becomes a participant in the culture or context being observed. I usually sat at a student desk at and took copious

notes in my research journal. As I was not allowed to audiotape the session, I recorded additional notes and insights in my researcher's notebook immediately following the class session. I ensured a stronger recollection of events that occurred in class. I never explained to anyone in the class why I was sitting there, so students assumed that I was a student teacher and was learning from Chantelle by observing her classes. Thus, I never revealed my purpose or identity.

In Germany. For the purpose of the study, I looked at only 7th grade level, where students are 11 to 13 years of age. The reason why I went to this particular class in Germany was a suggestion from Lara herself. She told me that this class was a good mix of German and migrant students and that they work well with her during the allotted class time. The class that started at 10am and ended at 11am – morning appeared to be the time when students were still alert and not exhausted from the day. As a comprehensive school system takes almost the whole day of class time, by two or three o'clock in the afternoon most of the students would be too tired to follow classroom instruction.

As my name is Turkish and as Lara introduced me as a Turkish American, students and particularly migrants were highly amazed and continuously asked me why I would come to their class. I did not mention my purpose and just said that I was trying to learn from Lara and that I wanted to become a teacher as well. Students were excited and always asked me about the American system. At times, it was hard to be just a participant-observer as students and Lara wanted me to participate wherever I could. I still tried to keep my distance, maintaining limited subjectivity, and be just polite in answering the questions they had. Unlike in the U.S. setting, I was able to audiotape these class sessions, while at the same time I wrote field notes in my journal. Following these

class sessions, I immediately transcribed my tapes, and added researcher insights and comments in the researcher's notebook, written in German to expedite the transcription process. I will address the data collection later in this chapter.

Time Frame for the Study

For the purpose of this study I collected various types of data as Loffland and Loffland (1995) suggest: "Rich data mean, ideally, a wise and diverse range of information collected over a relatively prolonged period of time" (p. 16). Although I had to observe my participants in two different countries, I had plenty of time to be at each site and to gather plenty of data. As I mentioned earlier, I had gained quick access (Flick, 1998, p. 54) to both teachers' classrooms. Once I got to know them, both teachers allowed me to come into their classrooms. I had to admit that I initially had problems locating my German participant; however, once I found her everything went very smoothly. The same is valid for my American participant. I searched for an appropriate participant as soon as I was at the research site, but it was fairly uncomplicated once I met her.

The visits to the German school were in August and in December of 2005. Each visit was for one hour daily in a 7th grade German class. During that time data where collected from the school via personal information from the teacher, daily field notes, audiotapes and videotapes from the classroom. Upon returning, data was synthesized and constant emails and phonecalls to the German teacher ensured the trustworthiness of the data. Likewise, in September and October of 2005 I visited the American teacher. Each visit was for one hour daily in her 7th grade language arts class. Again, daily observations

using the aforementioned data tools occurred. Here, I also was in continuous contact via email to check the data through member checks.

Finally, in January 2006 all data collected needed to be synthesized and some patterns emerged. The data sources are outlined in a more detailed timeline and can be seen in appendices D and E.

Community at Research Sites

In the United States. Midtown, a neighborhood of Atlanta, is where the American Midtown Middle School is located. It is a progressive and affluent area of Atlanta, which is situated close to the downtown, in a large metropolitan area in the southeastern United States. The area as a whole has voted Democrat in the last several elections. From talks I had with Chantelle, my African American participant and people I am familiar with in that area, it appears that most people who live in that part of town are socially liberal. During the time of the study, I saw a number of political signs in front of the houses, especially those of Atlanta minorities, encouraging passersby to vote for Democrats. From my conversations with others, Midtown is the "gay" area of town, with such indicators as local gay cafes and restaurants located in close proximity to the school. Thus, this area of town is mostly liberal and highly progressive with some minorities living together with Caucasians.

Again from conversations with Americans, I found out that residents in many neighborhoods in the South are divided into two main groups, those who have been living there for a long time and those who just moved here due to career opportunities. Close to the school, there are mainly houses rather than apartments, which seem to indicate that Midtown welcomes families with children. Several apartment complexes have been

established in the last few years to accommodate people who move into town and want to live in an apartment. Within walking distance, Atlanta's most prominent bars and cafes are visible and more recently a movie theatre and several restaurants opened up. There are plenty of walking possibilities; the famous in-town park is a ten-minute walking distance from the school.

In Germany. The community of the school, where my German Turkish participant, Lara Cekirdek works, is called Essen and it is mostly a "labor-driven" area (as Germans would call it), with people who come from a mixture of socio-economic backgrounds. The population consists of mostly working-class families, who work nearby a the major steel company. Most people who live near the school have limited schooling and suffer financially. I know this because I grew up in Duisburg and I am very familiar with the socioeconomic level of major inhabitants of the town. From my observations of students and people who walked by the school, I assessed that few Germans lived in this area, only immigrants, migrants and Germans who emigrated from Russia.

The community has a long, well-established site, and has grown over the past ten years with some restaurants close by, a shopping district where people can walk through an arcade, and another elementary school right across from Max-Planck-Comprehensive school. This particular part of town is very poor. The shops are largely discount shops and cheap restaurants. Within walking distance of the school is an old, traditional Catholic hospital which predominantly serves heart patients and patients who suffer from blood diseases.

The families living close by are mostly in project and government sponsored houses. The rents are cheap and the houses are old and dilapidated.

School Research Sites

This study took place in two different environments. One locus was an urban public middle school in a metropolitan area in the southeastern section of the United States. The other setting was an urban comprehensive school in the northern part of Germany. In this study the U.S. school is known as Midtown Middle School, and the German school is known as Max Planck Comprehensive School.

Midtown Middle School

Midtown Middle School started out as an elementary school in 1924, named for a famous civic leader who was passionate about education, philanthropy, and good citizenship. The school has expanded over the years, and in 1978, it was converted into a middle school. Its location is very close to the mid-town area of the city, with easy access to cultural, business, and political sites. Two years ago the school received a grant from the city for renovation. The school used the money for an area of 34,000 square feet.

According to the 2004-2005 teacher handbook for Midtown Middle School, the student body consists of a diverse population of African Americans (55%), Hispanics (2%), Asian and ESOL (1%), American Indian (1%) and multiracial (3%) students and the rest consists of mostly White students (38 %) (Atlanta Public Schools Report card 2004-2005). The school enrollment for the 2004-2005 year numbered 669 students (see Midtown Middle School report card 2004-2005). The Georgia Department of Education just awarded Midtown Middle School for having one of the highest percentages of students meeting and exceeding standards on the 2004-2005 Criterion-Reference Competency Test (CRCT) (Atlanta Public Schools Report card 2004-2005). Most teachers are certified (95.5%) and daily attendance of students is 95.5%. Fourty-four

percent of the certified faculty has Bachelor's degrees, 34 % have Master's, and 6 % have Doctorates. The other 16 % of the teachers work as paraprofessionals or part-time instructors.

Academics are the primary emphasis at Midtown Middle. The core curriculum focuses on math, science, social studies and language arts with the goal of academic excellence and personal character development. This curriculum is enhanced by instruction in art, drama, band, orchestra, chorus, Spanish, French, Latin, German, debate, physical education, health and more. Midtown Middle has implemented the rigorous Core Knowledge Curriculum devised by E.D. Hirsh (Hirsh, 1998). Midtown Middle's gifted and remedial programs offer strong tutorial support, and the school is praised for its excellent after-school programs. This success is supported by administrative leadership, dedicated teachers, active parents and neighborhood and corporate volunteers.

Midtown Middle has a challenge program for gifted children, which is available to all students who qualify. They also provide daily tutorials in each core subject and additional help on Saturdays for improving test-taking skills. They are known for the extensive technological resources that they have. Each classroom has Internet-connected computers, state-of-the-art computer lab and word processing, spreadsheets, desktop publishing and presentation software available for every student.

Max-Planck Comprehensive School

Max-Planck Comprehensive School is situated in the northern part of Duisburg, which is predominantly populated by industrial workers of low socio-economic standing. Founded in 1904 in North-Rhine, Westphalia, it is one of the oldest schools in this region

of Germany. Initially (1904), it was affiliated with the neighboring Catholic hospital to educate mainly boys in science under the supervision of Catholic teachers. After the war in 1945, several schools close by were dilapidated and lots of students settled into the Max-Planck-Comprehensive School. In the 1960's, due to the increase in student body, the school started using classroom space in neighboring schools. In 1980 the school went from being a grammar school to a comprehensive school. In 2004 it celebrated its one hundred years of existence.

In Germany, middle school and high schools are combined together in four different types of schools: Main, Comprehensive, Real, and Grammar School. Depending on student ability and intellectual capacity, which is mainly determined by teachers during primary school, students are placed in one of the four types of schools. I will not elaborate in detail about the different categories of schooling in Germany one more time (see chapter 2) as it will go beyond the scope of this study. For now, I would like to emphasize that the Max Planck Comprehensive School was previously a grammar school, and due to the regional location and a strong minority component in student body, it changed to a comprehensive school. It has been active for almost four years now.

According to the school report card from 2006, the student body totals 1150 for grade levels 5-10 and almost 200 students for grade levels 11-13. The German education system does not differentiate between middle school and high school. All grades continue within one type of school system from either 5-10 or 5-13, if a student wants to continue doing his or her baccalaureate. According to the school handbook from 2004/2005, the school itself has experienced a rapid growth in ethnic minority populations, with an increase in Turkish-descent students (90%), Slavic students (4%), and Russian students

(3%) in the past three years, and only 3% increase in German students. Most students come from the northern part of the Duisburg and live close to the school.

The faculty all have teaching certification and Master's degrees. The German education system does not differentiate between a Bachelor's and Master's degrees; it is a combined program in the university. All but two teachers are German. One teacher is Turkish, and teaches Turkish as a second language while the other, my participant Lara, teaches German to all students, German as a second language to migrant students as well as Turkish for heritage speakers of Turkish descent.

Max-Planck's most important value of pedagogy is the integral component of respect, tolerance, solidarity and careful use of the environment outside the school. Furthermore, the school handbook of 2005 mentions that confidence and independence, decision-making skills, team-work, punctuality and order are central points of its teachers and administrators to make sure that all students learn these important skills in their education. Additionally, creativity is inspired by additional courses in music, circus, cabaret and the school chorus and orchestra. One of the most important aspects of its education is teaching critical thinking and independent work. The German education system also provides the chance for students to prepare either for academics beyond the baccalaureate or to get ready for a professional life. Therefore, Max-Planck provides information sessions and practical internships during school time to learn and understand working life. The nature of a comprehensive school is a day-long school type, where students have classes from 8am until 5pm and have social spare time, such as sports, tutorial sessions, game time, student committee meetings and literacy sessions.

In November, 2005 Max-Planck received a monetary award from Henkel (a German corporation) for excellent support of science education among students. This money supports research and study sessions in science.

The Teachers: Lara Cekirdek and Chantelle Latimer

This study involves two key participants. I will focus on the two participants as I view them from my position as an observer. I will first start with my American participant Chantelle Latimer and then continue with Lara Cekirdek.

Chantelle Latimer. Chantelle Latimer is an African American female who teaches in the American public school system. I met her while I was observing some student teachers who worked in her classroom. As she is of African descent and teaching language arts from 6-8th grade, and a woman I concluded that she would suit this study.

My first impression of Chantelle was very positive. Before even meeting her I saw that she was nominated as the best teacher in the academic year 2005-2006 and I read her teaching philosophy and poem at the entrance of the school. I could see that she was a critical pedagogue with lots of creativity and positive energy towards her students. I will elaborate on that in chapter four with several examples. When I finally met her, I was amazed by her quiet and calming voice, her delicate standard New York accent and use of complex vocabulary (words which I have not heard for a long time in the United States) and her fashionable, however highly elegant style. She was a smart woman with a delicate character and sophisticated manner. She is 5’2”, and slightly overweight with dark skin and beautiful dark hair. Her personality is very caring, warm, and passionate. I noticed that she is not a strict teacher, and calm even if the class is very loud. However, students know just what makes her mad and they know how far they can push her.

Chantelle is single, and she spends her free time mostly reading, preparing for lessons, being with her friends, and writing, as this is one of her favorite hobbies. She agreed immediately to be part of the study, and her subtle smile with her glowing eyes showed her positive willingness and readiness for this study. On the first day, I explained my research questions and methodology. She agreed to participate and suggested several time slots that would be appropriate for my study.

Chantelle has taught language arts for almost seven years at different levels. She finished her education and teaching certificate almost seven years ago and started officially at this Middle School seven years ago. Initially, she wanted to become a journalist; however, it was hard for her to talk about emotional facts when needed. Her personality would not sustain such a pain for a long time, and she decided to pursue another career: "I knew that I could not be a journalist. I cannot be objective and suffer as well when others suffer."(09/05/05) Her passion for teaching came out of her interest in a program for which she received a grant. After college, she applied for funding for a program to assist minority children (mainly African Americans) to educate them about college and the kinds of services and programs colleges provide. She was going to poor families and trying to educate them to send their kids to college. After this experience, she felt sure that she would continue to assist minority students in some way, and teaching was one way to help them.

Chantelle was born and raised in New York. Her parents were poor and she needed to find out about education on her own. Her first college experience was at a primarily white school in New York, and she felt very lonely and misunderstood by her peers and teachers. She told me that she did not feel that she belonged in this particular

school and that teachers did not know a lot about African Americans and their history. After discouraging moments in some lessons, she decided to switch to another predominantly black college. There she realized that she was understood and felt totally comfortable. While she was in college, she wanted to become a journalist. Her interest in writing and reading was immense. As I mentioned before, some professional constraints about that particular job made her not continue in that field, and rather go into teaching and support of minority children. She is very happy in her profession and loves what she does.

Lara Cekirdek. Lara is a female teacher of Turkish-descent who taught German in a 7th grade class in the academic school year 2005-2006. According to Lara, German is a required course for all students throughout their comprehensive school. She has taught German for native speakers, German as a second language, and Turkish for native speakers (5th to 13th grade). She mentioned that there are students with different backgrounds in her class.

I first met Lara, during my initial visit in August of 2005. I was eager to find out what she looked like and what kind of personality she had. She is a beautiful young woman 1.65 cm (5'4") tall, very slim and white skinned with strikingly dark hair. Her fashionable appearance and natural make up made her look very professional. Her nature is very caring, warm, and honest, and she has a good sense of German humor about her life and professional environment. Lara mentioned that she had been married for almost 6 years, and she spent most of her free time reading, preparing for lessons, being with her Turkish friends, attending and supporting the mosque and studying for additional certifications.

During my conversations with Lara and her husband, it was interesting to find out that we had mutual friends from the past. I even knew her husband through some friends whose parties I had attended during my high school years. We immediately became close friends during the months I collected data for this study, and I could see that she wanted to get to know me personally as well. The very first day when I met Lara, she and her husband drove me home to meet my parents and to see where I lived. I believe she just wanted to make sure that she knew me and could trust me. I think that at the beginning she did not know that this could be important research and she was unsure why someone from the States would just come to do research in her class. After getting to know me following several hours of conversation she understood the pertinent nature of the study and was highly energetic and supportive.

Lara is considered a minority teacher in the German public school system, and therefore, she was relevant for my study. She just finished her *Referendariat* (equivalent to student teaching in the United States) and started officially teaching in the fall term in that school. Although she teaches German as a second language, she does have a degree, which is not necessary when teaching this subject to immigrants or migrants. In Cekirdek's case, her Turkish native descent appears to qualify her to teach migrant students.

Lara was born and raised in Duisburg, Germany. When she was one year old, her parents left her in Turkey because there was no one who could take care of her because of their work constraints. Until she was six years old, she went to elementary school in Turkey while living with her grandparents. When she returned to Germany, she could not get along well with her parents and she needed some time to adapt. She was still missing

Turkey. When she came back, learning the German language and culture was initially a struggle. For some time, she had several problems accepting that she was a Turkish girl growing up in a predominantly German environment. For instance, her parents did not allow her to have a boyfriend, to go to the movie theatre, or to have a Kurdish friend. It was a conflict in itself to live in two different cultures. They reminded her that she was not German and she needed to consider and acknowledge her Turkish origin. She struggled with this concept. At one point she mentioned in an interview, "At home I'm like a Turkish girl; however, outside I am acting with a German attitude."(08/02/05) In terms of her education, her parents did not really assist or support her. Her parents wanted her brother to go to the university and did everything to execute this idea. Although she had to help out a lot at home and tutor her brother, she was still very diligent and successful at school and knew from early on that she wanted to study and finish college. The tensions between a traditional world at home and a contemporary world outside emerged while she was a girl.

Entry into the Field

In the United States

Getting access to the field sites was not a problem since I established already my contacts while I was observing my student teachers in Midtown Middle school. Thus, once I gained a verbal agreement from my participant, I applied to the school system for permission to conduct the research. The system's research review committee meets only four times a year, so I sent all documents as fast as possible to plan out my study and to prepare thoroughly to start with my research at the research site. One requirement of the school system is a written permission from the principal of the school. I provided a copy

of my research plans via email for the principal, and she readily approved the study. Having prior consent from the teacher facilitated my approval from both the principal and the system. Another requirement was that I was not permitted at all to tape record at the school site. I mentioned this restriction to Ms. Latimer, and she agreed to meet outside the school for interview sessions. While contacting and asking Chantelle to participate in my research study, I also applied to IRB (International Review Board) at Georgia State University.

In Germany

Entry into Max Planck Comprehensive School in Duisburg/North-Rhine, Westphalia, was easy. I met with the teacher and she introduced me to her principal. He was kind and very supportive, and liked the fact that someone from the United States wanted to do research at his school. Personally, I felt comfortable with the school and the whole environment as it reminded me of my past school years. There are no restrictions or any kinds of formal approval from an outside governmental body. Once the principal and the teacher agree, one can do research in Germany. At Georgia State University, IRB needed approval from Germany. Thus, I kindly asked the principal and the teacher to write a letter in English stating that there are no complications for me doing research at their school sites. Once I gained a verbal approval from the teacher to cooperate with me in the study, I also wrote an official letter to the principal to conduct the research. My initial plan worked out, and I was ready to start my research.

Data Collection

Qualitative research examines the patterns of meaning which emerge from the data and these are often presented in the participants' own words. The task of a qualitative

researcher is to find patterns within those words (and actions) and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world as the participants originally experienced it. Thus, people's words and actions represent the data of qualitative inquiry and this requires methods that allow the researcher to capture language and behavior. In this study I collected several types of data: (1) formal and informal interviews, semi-structured in nature; (2) observations of Lara and Chantelle in their classroom (3) emails (4) telephone conversations (5) audio taped classroom observations and interviews with Lara (only in Germany).

Data collection began immediately the first day when I started my observations in Lara's and Chantelle's classes, and occurred over the length of this study, four months. A complete timetable of my collection and analysis is in the section of the Appendix. Classroom-associated data collection was gathered while I was an observer in each room. Interview data was collected following Lara's and Chantelle's classes. Chantelle had a planning period following my observation, and Lara had her lunch break. In the course of each eight-week period, I observed Lara for 24 class sessions of 50 minutes each, and Chantelle for 24 class sessions of 50 minutes each. I made extensive field notes in each session when I went to their classes. After the interviews and my classroom observations, I collected and constantly compared data (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) so as to direct further data collection and seek out recurrent themes as they emerged in light of my guiding questions. From that I was able to construct new interview questions to probe more deeply into my participants' perceptions of multicultural pedagogy and comprehend how these views might be translated into their classroom practices.

Interviews with my Participants

Qualitative interviews may be used either as the primary strategy for data collection, or in conjunction with observation, document analysis, or other techniques (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Qualitative interviewing utilizes open-ended questions that allow for individual variations. Patton (1990) writes about three types of qualitative interviewing: 1) formal and informal, conversational interviews; 2) semi-structured interviews; and 3) standardized, open-ended interviews. For the purpose of my study, I used formal interviews with both of my participants as I was free to probe and explore within an already predetermined area (Hoepfl, 1997). I knew that I wanted to explore their background, education, and their status as minorities and their perceptions of multicultural pedagogy. Therefore, I had some initial questions, which are indicated in the appendices. Going from there, I explored their views on the abovementioned issues in detail.

The interview itself is one of the most important data sources in qualitative research because it helps the researcher to understand and follow the experiences and beliefs of her participants. According to Mischler (1986), the interview is a form of discourse. Its particular features reflect the distinctive structure and aims of interviewing, namely, that it is discourse shaped and organized by asking and answering questions. Thus, an interview is a *joint product* of what interviewees and interviewers talk about together and how they talk with each other. That is what I felt when I did my interviews with Chantelle and Lara. Seidman (1998) gives further reasons why interviewing is helpful for the researcher:

> Interviewing provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that

> behavior. A basic assumption in in-depth interviewing research is that the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience. . . .
>
> Interviewing allows us to put behavior in context and provides access to understanding their action. (1998, p. 4)

Thus, participants' meaning is not located in "just the facts," but rather the understanding they have that is specific to them yet transcendent of the specific. That is to say, a researcher investigates the relation between what was said, how it was said, what the listener was attempting to ask or hear, and what the speaker was attempting to convey or say. I believe that just as language signifies and is constituted by specifics and abstracts, so too does qualitative research—and interviewing in particular.

There are specific skills, e.g. physical, social, and communicative, that embody the act of interviewing. For example, it makes a difference if you interview at the research site or in a coffee place. Further, some researchers do not look into the eyes of a participant, which makes the interviewing itself somewhat impersonal. Also, just reading questions, and not trying to immerse oneself to the interview, might make the interviewee uncomfortable. I know that although I had plenty of experience doing interviews with informants, undeterminable factors, such as site place, mood of the researcher or mood of the participant will impact the interview. I think that in time and through a trial and error process a researcher may become efficient and knowledgeable enough to figure out if one has understood how interviewing works. Seidman goes on to say:

> Researchers must ask themselves what they have learned from doing the interviews, studying the transcripts, marking and labeling them, crafting profiles, and organizing categories of excerpts. What connective threads are there among the experiences of the participants they interviewed? How do they understand and explain these connections? What do they understand now that they did not understand before they began the interviews? What surprises have there been? What confirmations of previous instincts? How have their interviews been consistent with the

> literature? How inconsistent? How have they gone beyond? (Seidman, 1998, pp. 110-111)

For all of the reasons Seidman outlines above, I could not have conducted this study on attitudes of a German and American minority teacher to multicultural education without interviews with my participants. Through the interview I could investigate all three of my research questions for this study. I discovered three major themes: various life and classroom experiences, many opinions related to differences and similarities, and limited or advantaged subject positions as a female emerged during the coding of the data. The interview was one of the major sources of my data collection.

I conducted five formal interviews with each teacher (see Appendix). My initial interview questions were developed with the help of my major doctoral advisor, while the rest were researcher-created, once topics and themes from classroom observations emerged. My American formal interviews were transcribed with help from a colleague, while I transcribed the German interviews. Both were thoroughly recorded into my researcher's log. See Appendix A for my initial interview questions.

These interviews yielded some of the most important information for my study. In the first and second formal interview, I focused my questions on understanding the background and past experiences of both teachers' growing up as a minority. In my third and fourth interviews that occurred after the 12th and 18th classroom observation, I geared my questions towards their understandings of multicultural pedagogy and how that is demonstrated in their classroom. And my last formal interview occurred during the last week of my classroom observation. The focus of this interview was on gender, and how their gender is depicted in the way that they are in their classroom, their private life and being a teacher in general.

All of my formal interviews took place at school, while others took place at coffee houses in Germany and in the U.S. My rationale for this was to see if my participants respond differently to questions in a more relaxed environment. Personally, I enjoyed the interviews at the coffee houses. I noticed that I can get to know my participants on a more personal level. Their gestures indicated that they were no longer teachers, but rather the persons Lara and Chantelle were in their spare time.

As a researcher I was also concerned about the ethical implications regarding the way I should interview. As Fontana and Frey (2000) point out, it is important to minimize status differences between the interviewer and interviewee and to show as an interviewer his or her "human side" during the interviewing process. That helped to gain the acceptance and interest of the participant. I was highly aware that I should consider with respect the views and individuality of my participants, rather than treating them as objects for my research purposes. Being at a coffee place, talking with them over the phone and inviting them to my home showed that I really cared and did not only "use" them for my study.

Classroom Observations

The classic form of data collection in naturalistic or field research is observation of participants in the context of a natural scene (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Observational data are used for the purpose of description—of settings, activities, people, and the meanings of what is observed from the perspective of the participants. Observation can lead to deeper understandings than interviews alone, because it provides knowledge of the context in which events occur, and may enable the researcher to see things that participants themselves are not aware of, or that they are unwilling to discuss (Patton,

1990). I conducted classroom observations three times per week for eight weeks, for a total of 24 classroom visits. Lara's classes lasted for 50 minutes and Chantelle's for 50 minutes as well. Classroom observations added richness to my research because as Flick states, "Interviews and narratives merely make the accounts of practices accessible instead of the practices themselves" (Flick, 1998, p. 34). At times, my classroom observations helped me see patterns in my participants' perceptions of multicultural education that could otherwise be hidden in interviews. The observations that took place before the interviews helped me focus on the types of questions I might ask , and the observation that took place after the interviews was an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of some of the data I received during the interview stage. Mostly, I was sitting in the back of the classroom and just following the "flow" of the class while trying to capture everything in my field notes. At times, I also enjoyed the classroom observations which were not in the classroom per se. These took place, for example, when Chantelle went with her students to the library, to watch a movie, or to the computer lab. It was nice to see my participant in a different context, when not actually teaching. I noticed that her personality came through more as she was joking more and was more personal. I had plenty of chances to see the classes in both countries, as both teachers were open and flexible about which days and times I could come. It helped me to see major themes in their teaching.

Audio-tapes

Patton (2002) states, "As a good hammer is essential to fine carpentry, a good tape recorder is indispensable to fine fieldwork" (p. 380). According to Bernard (2002), the researcher should not rely on his own memory only during observations. Audio taping

records primary information and records exactly what had been said on a specific day and time. Thus, audio taping ensured an accurate recording of what was said, and what I could have missed while recording field notes during class observations.

Also, the tape recorder itself is very important. If technology were not up to date it might have impacted my interview results. Patton (2002) goes on to cite an example of transcribers at one university who estimated that twenty per cent of the tapes given to them "were so badly recorded as to be impossible to transcribe accurately-- or at all." Surprisingly there is remarkably little discussion of tools and techniques for recording interviews in the qualitative research literature (Modaff & Modaff, 2000). I bought a very good tape recorder, and used high quality tapes to ensure the quality of the outcomes of the recording. I took over a large number of tapes to Germany so that I would not have problems finding good audiotapes. In Germany, tape recorders and the sizes of tapes are different. So, I needed to take into consideration even the differences in devices, particularly within Europe and the U.S. I audio taped all interviews; however, I could only audiotape classes and formal interviews in Germany. I could not use audio tapes at school site in the U.S. due to school regulations. Therefore, interviews were mainly carried out outside school premises in the U.S. Audio tapes were handy and easy to carry everywhere. In addition, audio recorded data was stored in a safe place and easy to organize.

Emails

An email is an on-line written communication medium, where comments and entries are posted and sent to the receiver in an on-going manner (Bernard, 2002). Nowadays, email communication is so common and accepted everywhere as a major

communication tool: it is considered a fast, accurate and easy way to reach a person directly. It makes research easier and helps the researcher communicate in an inexpensive, smooth, and immediate way.

This kind of data source was an advantage with both of my participants, especially with Lara Cekirdek. I sent out multiple emails to my German participant to ensure that my notes are accurate enough. Member checking took place at least once a week. With Chantelle Latimer, I had a chance to show her my notes in person and sometimes I emailed her to check with her if I depicted everything in a right way. Anytime when I needed to ask my participants something I emailed them or if they wanted to share something new in their class they emailed me. Lara and Chantelle contacted me whenever they experienced something about multicultural education in their classrooms. At other times, I encouraged them to go on-line somewhat regularly. They were encouraged to use email as a vehicle to discuss their opinions, problems, and to share things that they learn, or mistakes they might make. I did that only twice during the whole study for both participants. Both times are shown in the Appendix. All in all, email communication provided supporting data for my research questions and helped to keep up the communication continuously with both participants.

All in all, my interviews, observations, emails and audio tapes were helpful tools to help me gain understanding of the types of perceptions both participants have of multicultural pedagogy. Interviews helped me stay focused and find a more detailed groundwork for the questions and cues I need to look for next time in my interviews or my classroom observations. Both tools provided me with detailed understanding of my

research questions. Lara and Chantelle had several different life experiences regarding their challenges as minorities.

Data Analysis

Because research is recursive, in the qualitative paradigm, data analysis is emergent and is best conducted simultaneously with data collection (Merriam, 1988). When analyzing my data I used an emergent design. Loffland and Loffland (1995) define this type of design as " an emergent product of a process of gradual induction" (p. 181). My data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This method involved reviewing data such as interviews and observations and comparing them to other data. Emerging themes are then noted and data are reviewed again. In doing so, I was looking for both similarities and differences to identify tentative patterns, which can then be compared to each other. Afterward, data were grouped according to patterns in order to develop a grounded theory. In order to make these comparisons, data reduction charts were constructed and saved as hard copies for my researcher's notebook as well as transcribed into a word processing document to be stored on the computer. All data were continuously analyzed in this fashion paying particular attention to triangulating data and comparing data across and within participants. Further, member checking and peer debriefing were employed.

Starting with my earliest observations and my first formal interviews, I read over all my notes, copied them and started to look for patterns. Webster dictionary defines pattern as "a reliable sample of traits, acts, tendencies, or other observable characteristics of a person, group, or institution." (Webster, 2005). This means that a consistent sample of tendencies that is seen in the data is constantly showing up. In my case, for instance,

one pattern was critical teaching in the teaching practice category. I saw that multiple times coming out of my data when analyzing Chantelle's interview. I began to see these patterns emerge, and looked for similar patterns in new data gathering. At the same time, I made sure that I was open to patterns that I had not seen previously. Therefore, I established an open coding system for interpreting data on singular and multi-levels that qualitative researchers insist is essential to qualitative inquiry (Glaser, 1978; Merriam, 1988; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Throughout the process, I was prepared to change any assumptions that began to emerge if I saw that these patterns were not consistent with new data gathering. By studying my researcher's log and comparing it against my research questions, I was able to create an image of Chantelle's and Lara's perceptions about multicultural education and its implementation in the classroom.

Charmaz (2000) describes that coding allows for the development of theories that direct the data and guide new data collection, and it permits the researcher continued awareness of a form of intimacy with the data as he or she constructs meaning. To gain this intimacy, I reviewed my data several times before I even attempted to code. I wanted to make sure that I knew the data, and could code with more confidence. I considered data in relation to the literature on multicultural pedagogy and minority teachers so that I could better explain the thinking and actions of my participants.

As I began to code my data, I found frequent themes emerging in Lara's and Chantelle's classroom and one during my informal and formal interviews. For example, struggle and challenges as a minority was a theme throughout my study. As I continued gathering new data such as my formal, informal, classroom observations, emails and telephone conversations, I began to see more themes and sub-themes in the analysis:

participants' perceptions, philosophy of teaching, background, teaching pedagogy, and classroom practices. I continually compared themes within each category to determine findings (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This technique described by Glaser and Strauss (1965) in LeCompte and Schensul (1999) is called "constant comparison." Significantly, the researcher simultaneously codes and analyzes data in order to get a picture of the concepts and ideas of interest. By continually comparing specific items to others, the properties of the items can be determined. The relationships to each other were examined and a coalescence of the items and their relationships have occurred (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

By comparing patterns that emerged, I was able to refine my codes and leave out others that were not relevant for my data. All in all, I was reading, examining, interpreting, and synthesizing common themes all the time in order to comprehend the perceptions and teaching practices of both minority teachers. I discontinued collecting and coding my data once I was satisfied and reached a point of saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). That was the case when I did not see new themes emerging from my analysis.

Data Display and Reduction

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), it is important to organize the data, then reduce it and draw conclusions from the data in a logical way. Data were organized and displayed using the codes formed from each other data sources. Colored post-it notes were used to write the codes from each data source. Categories were written on white chart paper and the colored post-it notes were organized into appropriate categories. Each color (in my case pink and green) represented one teacher. Data were reduced from the

transcriptions, journal writings, and telephone, email conversations to codes using the post-it notes. Chart paper was used to organized the codes from each of the data sources and place each code into an emergent category. The categories in this study emerged from the research guiding the study (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999).

Using Glaser and Strauss's (1965) constant comparative model, I audio taped interviews, wrote transcriptions for each interview and analyzed the rest of my data such as emails, telephone conversations, my own journal writings to detect common themes. Emergent codes were written in the margins of each participant's transcribed interviews. Journal entries were read and emergent codes written in the margins (See Appendix.).

To ensure trustworthiness of data, I checked with my participants by providing each of them with a copy of each interview transcription to see whether my transcriptions and analyses were accurate. Sometimes I called them and emailed them all my journal entries of the day to make sure that I captured all important details.

Member Checks

Member checks were essential during my interview as outlined by Taylor and Bogdan (1998). The purpose of the member checks when working with interview data was to ensure, from the perspective of the participant, accuracy in their statements or intentions. I emailed my transcripts of the interviews to my participants for their review. In order to establish rigor in my analysis, I showed and discussed my findings and observations with Chantelle and Lara. They did not refute or question any notes taken during the study. They actually helped me to better understand my observations in their classroom. Furthermore, two other doctoral students helped me to ensure that the data

which I interpreted were accurate enough. Both helped me throughout my analysis, finding categories and any concerns they had.

Summary

This data analysis provided an attempt to answer the research questions that guided this study. Data were analyzed using both teachers' perceptions, their words and emergent codes. Links from these categories were used to develop emerging themes. Observations, interviews, telephone and email conversations were the main data source and provided an in-depth description of the participants' perceptions. All qualitative data sources were used to confirm and triangulate data and show what kinds of perspectives' an African American teacher and a German Turkish teacher have on multicultural education.

Authenticity of the Study

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described four factors that are especially important to qualitative methodology: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Credibility deals with the truth-value of the reality of the participants. The researcher assures credibility through prolonged and persistent engagement with data. To ensure credibility, I collected data for six months. I focused on establishing an intimate relationship with the participants by visiting their classroom daily and interacting with them by email, telephone and video-conferencing. Audiotapes, field notes and interviews provided sufficient data to make good comparisons (Denzin & Lincoln, 1989). The researcher must show that there is an adequate representation of these multiple constructions, that data are credible to the constructors. Through member checks, I

gained some verification as to what was intended in the interviews by asking my participants if what I have written down is accurate enough. Multiple sources of data (triangulation), which cross-validate each other, provided me with a variety of perspectives for comparison and multiple perceptions of data. This method, clarifying meaning by identifying different ways in which phenomena can be viewed by the researcher (Denzin, 1989), helps to get a richer description of what is transpiring.

Transferability

Transferability in quantitative language means the generalizability of the findings. However, in a qualitative research schema, transferability usually means fitness and applicability. My research was a case study, and one of the prevailing features of this design is to have rich, thick descriptions. My readers are able to vicariously experience the world of my participants through the narrative that I create (Merriam, 1998).

Because this is a qualitative case study that provides unique information (Denmoyer, 1990), this study is not quantitatively replicable. However, qualitative research has value in its ability to relate pertinent information to other situations or in building theory as “one small step toward grand generalization” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). I hope that others may find similarities between this study and their own investigations and that this work can serve to inform future explorations. It is through a thick description that this study can serve as a database that allows transferability to be a judgment call and the responsibility of future researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Also, while these cases are singular in design, the value may lie in the ability to describe events that are not simply or singly caused (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), but may be interrelated, evolving, and introspectively studied in an emic fashion (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993).

Therefore, as the participants related their personal experiences, readers of my study may make comparisons and glean information that can be applicable to their specific teaching/research sites and contexts.

Dependability

Dependability deals with the consistency of the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) discuss a number of methods to support dependability claims. The data derived from several sources over time. Interviews, observations and written responses via email ensured the overlap of both theoretical perspectives and data sources (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Some observations in the classrooms were audio taped in Germany during the period of research. Audio Taping was not allowed in the United States due to the regulations of the county's school district. Therefore, interviews were carried out outside the school premises. Ensuring dependability in my data also was verified through member checks and triangulation of my data.

Confirmability

Confirmability is established by way of an audit of the inquiry, and proper record keeping will serve to ensure this. All data throughout my research was collected and organized in the following way: First I organized my raw data, analysis products, such as coding schema, combinations of codes into categories and any materials relating to the study (personal notes) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Also, during this study the use of the constant comparative method of data analysis was applied to collect data. This method assures that the modification of patterns and definition of emerging theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) derived from the data rather

than as a product of the predetermined opinions of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Limitations and Biases

There were several concerns which need to be discussed and kept in mind throughout the study. I was aware that I could not generalize the study outcomes, as it was a case study using qualitative methodology. Also, although Germany and the United States are culturally, historically and educationally similar, this does not necessarily indicate that I could make assumptions that multicultural education can be seen similarly in both countries. In both countries minorities exist and can be seen in an increasing numbers in the public school systems. Minorities in Germany are differentiated according to their nationality in categories such as Turkish, Spanish, Russian, Bosnian, Italian and Albanian. However, in the United States, most of the time minorities are classified according to their skin color and heritage.

Although in both countries there are similarities in regards to minorities within the public school system, and likewise both countries face similar issues in the multicultural education terrain, I could not make assumptions about how multicultural education should be viewed in one or the other country. As mentioned before, this study was comprised of two case studies of particular and unique classrooms in the US and in Germany. I observed unique perspectives of two individuals during my data collection. In some way, I am hoping that others see themselves in my results and/or learn from my participants.

As much as I had the interest in doing research with a minority teacher in the U.S. and Germany concerning their views and experiences of multicultural education, it is

important to note that I am as well of a minority descent in Germany and may have similar thoughts on multicultural education. This was advantageous at times, regarding sensitivity to the individuals when interviewing them, but by the same token I needed to pay attention not to be biased. Yet, it definitely makes the study more personal, as I can relate to the participants and speak in three languages (English, German and Turkish) not to miss out on any detail.

Writing the Study

I believe writing *per se* is a strenuous task. At times, I was frustrated and could not get anything down on paper. At other times, I was able to write almost thirty-five pages in just two days. I believe that apart from writing itself, I have continuously struggled and lived among the perceptions of both of my participants. I have known them now for almost a year since the time of data collection. Writing about this topic was one of my daily activities. My friends and my husband knew about the discussions and ideas I was creating while reflecting on my data.

Qualitative researchers are bound to many challenges for writing qualitative research when they are immersed in the data (Merriam, 1998). I always paid attention how the data was directing me while keeping my research questions on mind. As a matter of fact, chapters four and five resulted purely from the perceptions of my participants.

When possible, I used the voices of Chantelle and Lara by including their actual statements so readers would be given a glimpse into who they are and what kinds of perceptions they have about multicultural pedagogy. Sometimes, I had to take out some passages of their responses as they would have been too long to document. What to include and what not to include, and who gets to write about whose lives, becomes an

internal struggle for control. I think that this study will have an international impact on educators, and my hope is that it will demonstrate new educational endeavors within the multicultural field and spark compassion to examine the perceptions of minorities throughout the world.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Just like other performers, Chantelle Latimer and Lara Cekirdek talked about their perceptions and pedagogical experiences, and how multicultural aspects in the classroom affected their interaction with a receptive multicultural audience. Both teachers created an environment where the exchanges among their students demonstrated their daily perceived experiences in various ways. This study helped me understand both teachers' daily activities in their classrooms and how their prior experiences enriched their teaching.. Chantelle's and Lara's past experiences, their personalities, and the reflection of their pasts and personalities in the classroom, all contributed to who they are and why they are acting in a certain way. All these factors affect and define how these teachers are perceived with regards to the integration of a multicultural pedagogy in their classroom. These categories are not fixed, and it is not my intent to portray monolithic identities for these participants. As I created these categories and analyzed both teachers' perceptions, I kept in mind their individual characters and different personalities in various situations.

I have organized the data from my study of Chantelle and Lara into two major themes: (1) personal and academic backgrounds and experiences and (2) multicultural approaches to classroom practice. First I describe their personal and academic background and their self-perception. Second, I discuss their multicultural approaches to practices within the classroom, focusing on the relationship between who they are and

how their backgrounds and societal prejudices (like having to work harder as minorities and prove themselves on a daily basis)feed into these practices. This section also describes the teachers' beliefs about multicultural pedagogy and their teaching methods. Finally, I will talk about my themes in detail.

Before discussing Chantelle's and Lara's perceptions in detail, a preliminary description of a representative day clarifies their personas and teaching philosophies. Therefore, each section will begin with a description of a typical school day for Chantelle and Lara in order to illuminate their internal perspective on their own pedagogy, their curriculum and the interaction between student and teacher, as well as their relationships with other faculty members. These descriptions show how both teachers handle their lessons and offer a *petite vignette* of who these teachers are. Their day by day interactions and their various lived experiences demonstrate how they handle, contemplate, and react to certain situations. A unit of study follows each description to offer a more in-depth portrait of how their beliefs shape their practice, curriculum and its delivery via teacher and student-focused instruction and activity.

Significantly, the background of both minority teachers is a woven tapestry composed of their experiences, beliefs, confrontations with racism, as well as their practices. The final, ever-developing, pattern reflects the dynamic development of the individual. Involvement with their families, friends, colleagues, enrich this fabric, as do new endeavors, perceptions and experiences in life. This study can document only a fraction of their various and continuous life experiences and how these affect their views and practice of multicultural education. The remainder of this chapter describes the

results of my two-month observation of these individuals. The themes and categories that arose from the constant comparative method structure this section.

Chantelle Latimer

A Day in the Life of Chantelle Latimer

Each teaching day for Chantelle Latimer beings differently. She normally arrives at Midtown Middle School around 7am to prepare and organize her classes. Sometimes, she uses these early mornings to talk to colleagues and exchange ideas about the day's activities. Class starts at 8:30 am and ends at 2 pm. Around 11 am, just before lunch, Chantelle has a planning period, which allows her not only to organize her upcoming class time but also to rest and regroup.

Chantelle's mornings are busy. During breakfast she checks her email and mail to see if she has received any important information. Then she uses her time before class, to rapidly prepares and think through her schedule. Chantelle uses the computer a lot and is often quick to incorporate it into her lesson plans. On slower days she sometimes reviews the readings or any tasks she has earlier prepared for the day. On the blackboard's right-hand side she records the topic for the day, so the students can start writing when they arrive. On the left she writes down critical statements made by famous people, which the students will consider and discuss during their lesson. She also lists further notes, such as new vocabulary, the agenda for the day, the reading schedule, or other related items on the board. She spends the last few minutes before her first period answering the questions of students who walk by her classroom or just enter to say "Good Morning, Mrs. Latimer."

When the bell rings for the first period, Chantelle stands in front of her class; to await the arrival of her own pupils. Despite the noise, she always smiles and welcomes the students positively. I can still sometimes hear her delicate voice coming through the mass: "Good morning, guys. Hello, how are you doing this morning?" On this particular day, Chantelle was enthusiastic and joked with her students. Her soft-spoken voice always sounds supportive and the students appear to feel comfortable in front of her.

Today's task is related to *Macbeth*.Chantelle has written: "Why are some people greedy and mean? What makes a person that way?" Students start silently writing this down in s notebook devoted to Chantelle's class, while Chantelle walks through the class and answers questions students have about previous lessons. Chantelle collects and evaluates their writing every Friday returns them the following Monday.

Since this class follows a specific teaching structure organized by the principal, Chantelle does not have a lot of time to prepare the whole class session. She needs to adhere to school policy, which emphasizes an authoritative approach to reading, studying, memorizing and answering questions. Although she does not like the way she teaches right now, she still enjoys literature. Her love of literature inspired the class, which was engaged that day and participated actively. asking questions about the characters, like "Mrs. Latimer, who is going to play an important role in this scene? Do we need to mark anything while we read?" As her day progresses, Chantelle continue with the flow of the established class routine, and depending on the lesson or activity, conducts class according to her lesson plan. Just before the bell rings to dismiss class, Chantelle admonishes her students to review their notes and the topics covered about *Macbeth* for the following lesson.

The final class of the day follows the same agenda as the one prior; the only change is in the class's rhythm and/ or the students' attention. I noticed that as it gets closer to the end of the day, the students are not as alert as in the morning. Most days Chantelle's classes begin with the students writing in their journals, then they read aloud and discuss literature. Chantelle likes to express her passion for literature and acts out characters while she reads aloud. Although her passion and joy in teaching are apparent and appreciated by the students, testing phases and teaching reorganizations of the school limit her creativity. I will talk about this particular problem briefly in the second part of review of Chantelle.

Personal Background

Compared to average Americans, Chantelle never realized that she and her family were poor. She only noticed this when she started with school. Their neighborhood was mostly populated by Blacks with a similar socioeconomic level and living standard. Throughout her childhood Chantelle never experienced travel to other states or regular visits to different restaurants. Such luxuries were not part of her everyday life. Certainly, without knowing such opportunities existed, she could not compare her own situation and find it lacking. Once she started undergraduate work in a predominantly White college in New York, she felt for the first time what it meant to be poor. She had to travel for three hours per day to go back and forth from her school to her house. She did not have the financial ability to buy a car. Thus, on top of academic struggle she had to sustain a long drive between home and school. She recalls:

> All these rich kids were able to live on campus; I had to travel almost three hours back and forth from home to school. At times, I felt so exhausted to study and take care of my homework. It was just not fair. I

> did not get any financial support to be able to stay as well on campus. I would not anyways. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Chantelle demonstrates a strong awareness of what is going on in her college life and she reflects on the unequal distribution of wealth among her peers. As Chantelle recounts, she maintains herself without financial support from anyone. She knows that she is on her own and feels neglected and betrayed by the system. At times, I could see the frustration in her expressions and gestures. She could not tolerate the unfair distribution of wealth in American society, but would give exact examples to demonstrate these ideological aspects of American life.

> I was fed up not to be able to connect to White and rich students. When my classmates talked about their skiing holidays, or European vacations I could not keep up with their conversations and was unable to share anything. It was totally clear that I had to work during summer or the weekends. I had no choice. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Thus, Chantelle fashioned for herself a poor and minority persona, which she carried out throughout major portions in her college life. She created a solipsistic environment where she felt uncomfortable and could not find any contacts or relation. This was the first time she had experienced being alone, being a minority and being excluded in the educational system. Being poor she associated with being a minority from a lower socioeconomic background. Thus, her past was still visible in her school life. Chantelle was very clear about her situation and poverty in comparison to her classmates. I found that in Chantelle, being poor manifested itself in not being connected to her classmates, not being understood by her professors, and feeling lonely as a minority. Chantelle mentioned a couple of times that she does not feel that she belong to this particular school, and she had realized that there was some kind of disconnection outside of her control.

Chantelle also told me about her family and the way she was raised. Since neither parent was educated, they could not provide her with much information or feedback regarding education. Chantelle grew up in what today's psychologists and family counselors might regard as a traditional but dysfunctional household. She is the only child, and was raised by two high school-educated and unskilled working parents. Her father, an alcoholic, worked in various positions from a shoe salesman to Popeye's cashier and spent frequent time in prison for a variety of repeated misdemeanors like theft. This meant that her mother had to work more than one job as a waitress and factory worker to support the family. When money was either scarce or non-existent, Chantelle says the family sometimes had to take their belongings and move in the middle of the night to evade unpaid landlords. Chantelle recounts a memory of her impoverished upbringing:

> When money was scarce or we just had to pay rent, we had to get our clothing from discount stores, and I was frequently ashamed and thought everyone knew my clothing came from there. I barely remember having any crayons or board games. I did have a few dolls, but we had no books in my home as I recall. I did not read except in school. (Interview, 09/19/05)

At times the household was filled with various economic, marital, and other domestic tensions, and eventually her mother and father divorced. While not destitute, Chantelle's family experienced considerable financial and familial instability during her formative years in the late 1970s to mid 1980s.

Chantelle claims to have been an average but largely unmotivated learner. She does not recall her parents ever encouraging her in school. In fact, Chantelle states, "I didn't come from a family that valued education, they were neutral and I just kinda did my own think in high school". (Interview, 09/19/05) In spite of this, Chantelle claims that

one of her favorite activities as a child was to play "school," but the inspiration for such did not come from her recollection of influential teachers. She states,

> I can remember we lived across the street from a grammar school in mainly a Black neighborhood. I'd go over there to the dumpster and pull out papers and everything, get my younger sisters to play with me, and when they wouldn't, I'd get my dolls and old stuffed animals and force them to play…by the way, they were the best students I ever had! All through school I did no have one positive experience. I never had one teacher who took any time with me whatsoever. Up until my Black College experience, there I felt literally understood and welcomed. The teacher I remember before…what I remember, rather, from my teachers was they criticized me, they made smart aleck remarks to me that truly hurt my feelings. I think the main reason was because I was black and just wanted to study. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Chantelle claims to have been an overachiever because she was very good in high school and had lots of motivation to learn beyond average requirements. It appears no teachers remain in her memory that motivated or encouraged her particularly in K-12 setting. An incident in elementary school reinforced the lack of teacher support and humiliation she experienced as a fourth grade student. Chantelle states,

> Because my family was really poor, my Mother bought us shoes only in the spring and summer. We wore sneakers because they were cheap in the seventies. It was before sneakers became such a cool icon of this generation. But, I remember in the fourth grade I had on my sneakers, we were out at P.E. and we were running relay races, and I was up against this girl, we'll call her Linda. She had on her P.F. Flyers and her I am with my little skinny legs, and my cheap sneakers. As we get ready to race, the teacher said, "Oh, Linda, don't worry. You can beat Chantelle. She's wearing sneakers. And here I was, a young Black girl who was already insecure, and felt ashamed of my family situation, and when that teacher said that. and I took off running, I knew in my heart that I needed to win. Although, my teacher did not believe in me, I really wanted to win. And so while I was running, my shoes broke, I didn't win, but all that did was tell me "you're not good enough because you don't have P.F. Flyers". (Interview, 09/26/05)

The humiliation Chantelle experienced at recess as a pre-teen would stay with her into her adulthood years. She would use the incident as a mnemonic for self-improvement and self-satisfaction to overcome the rejection and marginalization she felt. She states,

> …When I first started teaching I had a flyswatter that had a sneaker on the end of it that I used for a key chain for many, many years. And it was just symbolic. It was kind of a symbolism to that teacher who put me down so badly. I worked really hard. It didn't matter what she said, but it did hurt my feelings. I went ahead and became proactive in spite of what she said. (Interview, 09/26/06)

When I first met Chantelle at the beginning of my research, I recall seeing the sneaker fly swatter she used as a key chain when I was sitting at her desk during her teaching. The fly swatter key chain subsequently broke from use, but Chantelle never replaced it. From my own observations Chantelle herself wears "sneakers" to school on dress-down days with jeans and T-shirts. Asked about the significance of her choice of shoes she states, "I don't have to race anymore, and I can wear these shoes by choice". (Interview, 09/18/05/2005) Chantelle's sense of control speaks shows that she had asserted herself successfully with her own classroom where "no child will ever be humiliated". (Interview, 09/18/2005)

Chantelle still remembers another meaningful incident in high school connected to her race. Although Chantelle now seems confident regarding her race and relationship with others and her students, past experiences related to her race are still significant to her. Up until high school she never experienced any discomfort from being African American (besides the elementary school occurrence) or more precisely from being a minority, because she was mostly living in a Black neighborhood, and had Black friends and family nearby who lived the same way she did. However, beginning in college where she needed to move and travel back and forth to New York, she realized that she was not just like any other person in the United States. Her color emerged as a hindrance and she suddenly encountered widespread ignorance from other people. She states,

> The first time I noticed that I am different than others was of course in high school. I was never good at math; however, I was trying and studying hard. My

> math teacher never ever encouraged me-- she even said I do not need to work hard as I won't work anyways in a math related job. I never knew what that means at that time, but I felt a little hurt. Later on I noticed that generally with Black students she did not care; we all did not need to get some kind of encouragement, it was anyhow not necessary. She was so prejudiced. Afterwards, in college, I had similar encounters where I felt always awkward and did not get the right directions from either my advisor or any professor. I always wanted to take a class in African American history. The professor did not explain in detail about the real facts. I felt always it was the perspective of a White person talking about African American history. Again, I felt not understood. Also, the financial part was a major one. While other students were talking about their ski trips and vacations, I had hardly money to get any kind of transportation to school. I could not even pay the dorms. I had to travel back and forth during the day for almost two and half hours to school. These were major happenings that made me think and made me transfer to a mainly Black school. Here I felt understood, I had ideals-teachers, professors in front of me, who looked like me and shared similar thoughts. I made contact to new friends immediately. And mostly important, I felt confident and understood. I was definitely in the right place. (Interview, 09/26/05)

Clearly, Chantelle perceived that she was alone in her educational endeavors and only received the bare minimum of acknowledgement from any teacher or professor in high school or college. Because of feeling misunderstood and not sharing common cultural roots with peers and professors, Chantelle rejected her college experience in a White school and returned back to her own roots. She wanted to know more about the Black culture and wanted to feel connected to her peers. Chantelle's disappointment with her teachers and professors has made her feel inferior and disconnected in some way.

Toward a Self Discovery

Despite being poor and not having the same resources and starting points as most White students, Chantelle has formed strong ideas on what to do in her life—including, prominently, going to school. Chantelle remains very independent and has her own ideals and career objectives without any support from her parents. As a result, she is aware of the fact that neither her parents nor anyone else in her family will be able to give her feedback or any advice regarding college and future life. She states,

> Well, my background, I was born in New Jersey from southern parents who migrated there. We were a small family and I was the only child. Neither parent went further than high school education. Extended family, not much high school education, not much other than high school education. Meaning, unusual for anyone to go beyond high school . . . to go off to college. Even though my family was not against me going to college, they didn't have the money. And weren't aware of many resources. I had to educate myself . . . you know, how I would go, what I would do. And they thought at the most, well you know, you're probably smart enough to go, you know, but didn't have a lot of knowledge or resources to share with me. So, in some respect I was limited in that way because it just wasn't there; the resources weren't there. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Chantelle went on to relate how she became inspired and tried to convince her parents of the importance of her educational goals. Being poor, having no support from parents, and realizing that she was left to her own means, strengthened her desire for a college degree. Chantelle's statement refers to two issues that substantiate her independence and her comparative lack of wealth. First, her parents left the decision to attend college to her alone because they trusted her. She was adult enough to decide for herself which college to choose, or whether to go to college at all. Yet, she realizes that her parents could not help her and she knows that she needed to decide on her own. Further, being poor, lacking the resources available to her peers opened up a new *way* for Chantelle and her parents. It was difficult to get some kind of assistance or support as Chantelle and her parents did not know how to go about it. Chantelle states,

> Nearing the end of high school, a lot of my friends were going [to college], and I think I just kind of latched on to people who were going and who had more information that I did. And I did know a few people who'd gone. And that's basically how I, you know, how I learned what I needed to do. You know, I had to sit down with my parents and show them, you know, this is the financial aid application and you have to do this because maybe I can get some money, and this is the college application. And this is where you have to sign, so I guess I found out from . . . from other ways outside of my immediate family, I found out from others. I didn't get a lot of encouragement to go from the counselors at the schools; you know you usually depend on that. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Chantelle's crucial decisions from early on demonstrate that in some way she was okay with the situation and knew that she needed to make all the important decisions in life on her own. She knew that she could not get any support regarding college decisions from her parents. She consequently began observing how others pursued their lives' aims. She assumed the parents' role to her own parents and helped them understand what she needed to do for college. However, in my observations, I noticed that she did not like having to be mature so early. It sometimes bothered her, but for Chantelle that was life; she tried to work with it and make the best out of it. With no real constraints that parents would normally place on their children, Chantelle feels free to decide and plan her career according to her ideals. Regarding her marital status, Chantelle states:

> I never considered marrying, I am happy and totally satisfied with what I am doing currently. There was never ever a possible man, whom I even considered marrying. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Without any responsibilities and no commitment to anyone it was always easier for her to enjoy her independence at a very young age. Switching schools location-wise or coming to Midtown Middle from up north was therefore easy for Chantelle.

Chantelle soon realized after starting college that she did not fit in and that her professors did not understand her cultural background. She transferred to a major Black school. Afterwards she felt more comfortable. Thus, she fashioned her own way to another college, which is predominantly Black, in which she could be freer with the choice of classes, readings and activities the school carries out based on Black student interests. Without strong academic feedback from teachers and professors, teachers like Chantelle may turn inward to advance their own pedagogies. While such a decision may

come with a hidden price, it may also lead to self-satisfaction and an appreciation for a specialized form of critique for educational practices.

Her College Experience

As stated earlier, Chantelle's education was primarily driven and guided by her own desires. No one assisted her or supported her, not even her own parents. She knew early on that she wanted to go further and study; however, she needed to figure out how and with which resources. During college she realized that writing was an important interest. She loved to read and write. Further, she participated in a journalists' club at her college and, full of inspiration for the field, thought that she wanted to pursue a career in journalism. However, after some practical experiences in college and afterwards, she realized being a journalist did not fit her nature or personality. She was not able to cope with negative occurrences or narrate them without emotional attachment. She found the journalistic pursuit hard and psychologically unmanageable. Thus, she sought another career. Chantelle realized that she wanted her work to support minorities in some way: a job that would fulfill her interest and desire to stand up for the rights of minorities and enlighten them about their opportunities. She states: "I was seeking for an opportunity to help the disadvantaged in our society." (Interview, 09/12/05) Thus, she was looking for some governmental opportunities which would help her satisfy her ideal wish. Chantelle learned from her childhood that she needed to inform herself and did not have anyone who could give her some kind of feedback. She delved into her idealistic endeavors and found a way to succeed. Her drive to get things done and seek opportunities without any help has always been there. It is impressive how she handles things and she does not get discouraged. She found out about a project where she can apply to a governmental

agency in order to receive funding to educate minority children about college. According to Chantelle, most minorities—particularly African American children—do not know about their possibilities for attending college, or how to enquire about any kind of funding that would support their schooling. This, for Chantelle was an essential task, to encourage her students' parents to talk to their children and discuss opportunities for college beyond being a "hairdresser or a waiter."

> I wrote a grant, a project discovery and it was designed to have first generation students go to college. It was mainly minority students who never dreamed they would have opportunity to go to a college . . . it was a standing program with a grant to get money from this community action agency that I worked with. And initially, at first it was a small grant, but it gave us opportunity to go into middle schools and high schools in the area and have workshop with students and parents, and have bus trips and take them around different college campuses and have them go to orientations for colleges and show them what college is. And to give some hope that they could go, some motivation that they could go because a lot of them had never dreamed would be able to go because no one they knew went, their parents never went, their other relatives never went , so they thought its an option for other people, its not an option for me. So once, I wish, I still had contact, because one of the things we were to do is have a ten year track to see how many of them went to college, and had good retention in college and actually go there and graduate. Um . . . a lot of students did actually go, after going through the program, some of them stayed in the program for the whole time they were in middle school and high school and they went off. (Interview, 10/03/05)

Having completed such a project, Chantelle was inspired to work with minorities and to influence on them. She enjoyed being in such a position and discovered by chance her new career path and interest. She wanted to combine teaching with supporting and educating minorities about broader educational opportunities. Here, she was able to see vital connections between her interests and a viable career:

> Um, language arts was an easy transition for me because you know I had . . . my background was in journalism, so and I've always had a love for literature and a love for writing. That was just natural, I didn't even have to think about what I would teach, and I think we talked before about how I was working in the school . . . and working with students from a different perspective, working as a counselor

> or advisor for a certain group of students and then when I moved here, um, it seemed an easier thing to do to get into school . . . the program that I worked for before did not exist here. And I knew I still wanted to work with children in some capacity. I wanted to work in the schools. (Interview, 10/03/05)

Chantelle's educational background led to her passion in life. Learning early on from her past experiences in high school and college, she knew that she wanted to make some kind of impact on students. Essentially, her education helped her to find her own niche where she can be happy and supportive of minorities. Chantelle attributes her determination to complete college in her late thirties despite a lack of family persuasion and uneventful elementary, secondary schooling and first college experiences to an internal drive and measure of personal faith. She states, "I guess all my life an' I always said I was going to do better than what I came from, and this is part of democratic beliefs for a human society and partly a mission for me to become a teacher". (Interview, 10/03/05) To Chantelle, how one gets "there"--that is to a place of destiny in one's life--is up to the person, but an ethical, and moral plan to shape who she has become that even included her disappointing youth which "made her stronger". She further credits her knowledge of self and democratic principles for guiding her to become an English teacher and remaining as one until she decides to retire. Such a conclusion is not uncommon as Su (1993) reports that 39 percent of second-career teachers entering the profession come from careers other than secretarial, service, business, and social work. Serow, (1993) categorizing twenty-three second-career teachers into four groups based on their decision to enter the profession, discovered that altruism merged with personal needs for achievement, self-esteem, and self-efficacy as reason to teach. This fits with Chantelle's personal drive for betterment and desire to feel and become independent after leaving home, graduating from a predominantly Black college and running a grant project

for the Black community. Moreover, Post and Killian's (1992-93) research results define adult college students by age and their sense of responsibility, two determining factors for many pursuing teacher education.

Chantelle's first choice of college major was English because of her success and interest in composition and writing. She sometimes questions if her negative experience with the high school teacher in mathematics was the reason why she was never a good student in that field. Not being supported by a teacher may discourage a student. She comments, "Even though I studied and wanted to do a good job, it was real hard, because my teacher did not really believe in me". (Interview, 09/19/05) Research on minority teachers reports that teachers' pursuing a favorite subject over other unsuccessful ones in college becomes a major reason for teaching the favored subject as a career (Su, 1993). Chantelle's success in literature classes marked by her high grades and unconditional interest convinced her that teaching literature would be something "she could do and do well".

A number of observations about Chantelle correspond with research regarding teachers choosing their profession and reflecting the role of self-awareness in teacher development. Lortie (1975) outlined five themes under which teachers claim to enter the profession, the most prevalent being desire to work with children or youth to the final theme of the time compatibility of the profession that fits with female gender roles of wife and mother. Other themes include the teacher's desire to continue in a specific subject matter, having eliminated other ones secondary to the initial choice by some process or need. Such may be the case with Chantelle as the wanted to support children, primarily minority children, and also she always loved journalism, however her

personality was not suited to this filed. Thus, she concentrates further for Language Art, which also became her professional career later on.

Chantelle's college attendance, and later her job as a writer, attests to her multitasking abilities indicative of many qualities of teachers. Her strong personality and her negative experiences in school and college provided the cornerstone for acquiring, understanding, and applying new concepts while she balanced multiple other responsibilities.

Pre-service Experience

After having worked for couple of years as a writer, Chantelle finally realized that teaching was her true desire. She went back to school and took the required student teaching internship at one of the newest schools close to her last college. The demographics, size, and environment of that school were quite different from her current placement. The student body was largely white and rural, and the teachers were mostly white as well-- with only one black female and one Latina female on the staff at the time. Chantelle claims her student teaching internship was a "mostly positive one" except for experiencing the apparent jealousy of one of her mentor teaches who was reluctant to give up total control of her classes. Chantelle explains that one teacher was "very gracious in giving up her classroom and letting it become mine". (Interview, 2005) The other teacher, about Chantelle's own age, remained in her classroom nearly each day, observing Chantelle and noticing the good rapport Chantelle developed with the sixth grade classes. Chantelle says, "I think she is a lot like me in that she thinks of her classroom and her students as being hers". (Interview, 10/03/05) Quickly Chantelle's rapport with the students increased, and the mentor teacher displayed hostility-- ranging

from interrupting the proceedings in the class to disallowing Chantelle to use art and craft materials supplied by the county school system for projects. The disgruntled mentor teacher also prohibited the students under Chantelle's charge to display their projects in the shared classroom.

Chantelle admits some aspects of this exclusion negatively affected her but that she "got the final word" when the students collectively threw a surprise party with balloons and small gifts in her honor at the end of student teaching. Chantelle says the mentor teacher did not attend. Chantelle comments "Student teaching was a positive experience overall to me in spite of that teacher because I knew I had reached the students". (Interview, 10/03/05) Chantelle does not fault herself for the reactions of the uncooperative mentor teacher, but attributes the teacher's responses to her own insecurities and not Chantelle intimidation. " I think she had some areas she needed to work on, and I guess she had lost her enthusiasm for teaching and wanted to try all these great ideas and do things differently but could not. So, I tried to look at the situation that way and not take it personally". (Interview, 10/03/05) From her mentor teacher, however, Chantelle adopted techniques for warm up games and thorough covering of material that continued into her current classroom. Chantelle adds:

> I am not sure if I can call her my mentor teacher today. It has been such a long time but still I need to admit I was using some of her techniques when I first started teaching than I did my own. (Interview, 09/26/05)

Chantelle is confident that her years of experience in the classroom, coupled with her personal belief systems, have worked to distinguish her personal style of teaching.

Chantelle does not recall specifics of her teacher training program outside of student teaching as "it is really not worth to talk about it". (Interview, 09/26/05)

Nevertheless, Chantelle says that only one class that was about diversity "remained and instilled lots of ideas for later on" (Interview, 09/26/05) in her teaching career. Apart of being minority she wanted "to support and scaffold" (Interview, 09/26/05) minority children. In spite of lots of ideas and wishes, Chantelle says she would "still be alive and be realistic in terms of different creative teaching methods" and was sometimes too "critical about teaching methods and rigid lecturing". (Interview, 09/26/05)

All in all, I can summarize some major characteristics based on Chantelle's personal and academic background. She was and still is an independent thinker, who lacked certain critical types of support from her parents and relatives. She is a critical activist, who knows exactly what she wants to do in life and how she can reach her goals, such as supporting minorities in education. She is caring, and that is one of the essential attributes of an educator. She cares for the disadvantaged and does everything possible to support and help them. Chantelle's experiences show that her past is an essential component of her role as a teacher. There is a link between how someone evolved to the person they are today, and how that is also seen in the classroom. For that reason, in my next section, I will discuss her current classroom practice, what she thinks about multicultural education, and how these perspectives are evident in her classroom.

Beliefs as an Educator

Even before I met Chantelle, I was already introduced to her through pin boards right at the entrance. She was chosen as the best teacher of the school year 2005/2006. In addition to pictures with her students, recognizing their various successes, the board also displayed a poem she had written that expressed her rationale for being an African American female teacher. This poem gave me a flashback of her experiences, education

and interests in life and why she is teaching. The most striking part was that her desire was to teach in a creative, critical and educational way to embrace diversity in her classroom. Again, I believe Chantelle knew what she was doing, why she was taking certain steps, and why there were certain aspects in her teaching. Her struggles and negative past experiences led her to understand and to effect social change in her classroom. Having heard this statement from her own mouth, I knew that she had a specific agenda in life: to be an activist, to make things happen, to make things change.

Further, Chantelle expressed that growing up as a minority, and having difficulties at a predominantly White college in New York, instilled a strong desire for her to make a major impact on minority kids. She states:

> I think just the exposure was impact enough. Um . . . because they didn't have, a lot of them in small town, small southern towns just didn't know, and they didn't have people in the school that counseled them and made that a real option for them. Some of them would go maybe to the vocational school and prepare for a job right in the same community, you know, if your dad works on cars, and you are going to go vocational education and you learn how to work on cars. Or you go to vocational education and learn how to work on people's hair, and you go to someone's shop down the street, and their lives were that small. They didn't see beyond that. I mean, and we didn't say you have to do this, if that's what they wanted…go to the community and do hair; that's fine, but what just want you to know you can get out of this if you want to, if you want to do other things. So just exposure of just letting them know . . . To let them know that they did have the option that this is not something that is just for other people; you can go, too. So, when they go to the college campus and they see people like them, and sometimes we would have groups come, like panels come up and talk to them about, yeah, it seems intimidating, but I did it. You see, it's just not for someone else; it's for you, too. If you choose to do that . . . And a lot of times they didn't have, they weren't on the right academic track because they had never, they never knew, well, I need to be taking these classes in order to prepare for college. (Interview, 09/26/05)

She added that this experience made her want to go into the classroom and teach. As a teacher she could instill values and ideas in her students, significantly her Black students.

She always wanted to help children at risk, particularly minority children, who came from poor families and did not receive any guidance in their lives or education. Her activist nature and critical agenda led her to be a teacher. Although she had no support from her parents, her self-driven ideal which she created on her own, comes out in her chosen profession as a teacher. She states:

> I would do something like that forever, I knew after this wonderful experience. There was no option. But by then I was hooked on the children, and that's a big part of why I decided to come into the classroom. And if I would teach anything, it would be language arts. (Interview, 09/19/05)

Chantelle as a Teacher

Beliefs about Multicultural Education that Affect Classroom Practice

Beliefs, perceptions and experiences are integral components of how a person creates his or her environment in society. Based on these experiences, people continue thinking, evolving and changing. Experiences are unique pieces of tapestries reflecting beliefs, practices, and cultural differences—which yet are always changing. Some of us have good experiences, some of us have bad experiences, but regardless of what kind of *strata* the experience produces, it changes something in our being and it helps us to see how we can learn from it. A tapestry like that provides a contextual backdrop that helps people to define and shape where one wants to go and how one wants to establish their goals. These threads of textured and various lived-through experiences reflect/embody *vignettes* of different realities. As mentioned earlier, Chantelle's experiences come together to form her personality, concerns, and professional aims and approach. Chantelle's experiential tapestry conveys her unique perspective on her various lived-through experiences briefly and through various observational data. I believe that her past

is closely linked with her present. Below, I would like to start with major themes that I extracted from her data.

Caring Educator

Chantelle's confident regard for herself carries over into her philosophy on pedagogy. She views herself as a student-centered teacher whose responsibility is to create an educational environment in which students may be nurtured, spontaneous, and productive. Chantelle says her basic personality is a nurturing one, and she thinks of herself as "more of a servant" to her students than an authority figure per se. For example, in opening a lesson about different voices in literature, I observed Chantelle serve grits to her minority students; she used them not only as a food, but also as a mnemonic for recalling elements of Black Voice. Chantelle read an excerpt from some Civil Rights short stories, excerpts she uses to justify certain words in the Ebonics language such as "what's up cuz"? (Interview, 10/10/05) While students served themselves grits from a large crock pot with their choices of butter, hot pepper sauce, salt, pepper, and sugar, she adds,

> I like to serve. I think it is okay for my students. I ask so much of them, and I enjoy giving back. For any relationship there has to be give and take. Also, to give something they culturally see in their homes makes them feel probably more comfortable. (Interview, 10/10/05)

In her responsiveness to her students she "feels good about herself-giving more to students than what they might expect". In addition to providing solid teaching, Chantelle believes her role in the classroom is to exude understanding, empathy, compassion, and care for the individual as well as to provide an educational environment where she can be nurturing, cordial, spontaneous, and solicit student work. Chantelle states,

> I think the whole encouraging and nurturing part is my basic personality makeup anyway. So many students do not get the amount of attention they need at home for a lot of reasons, and many of us teachers are all they have to talk to and listen to them. Knowing that I am not going to embarrass them or threaten them in any way allows my students to learn, grow, and get a sense of who they are and can be. Many work harder and produce better quality work when nurtured and encouraged and in a safe environment. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Chantelle's beliefs is congruent with most feminist pedagogies such as caring (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Collins, 2000; Noddings, 1995), teamwork, and the sharing of control (Ropers-Huilman, 1997). Most feminist scholars point out that caring in a safe environment stems from the mothering nature. Chantelle acknowledges that some of her students come from "terrible" home environments and that her safe classroom may be "the only safe place they have ". (Interview, 09/26/05) Having this secure environment is important to her, as it is an outgrowth of her experiences as a young child. Chantelle explains that she was one of those students who had a bad home life, and that her teachers made fun of her because of it. She states, " From time to time depending on the school, I did not feel safe at school. And I want to bring my experience to the classroom to help my students". (Interview, 09/26/05) Chantelle believes that her classroom reflects her personality, and the kind of attention one puts into the learning environment mirrors the teacher personally and professionally. The room contains scented candles, posters of teddy bears, kittens, and decorative plaques, a student-painted wall mural, lamps, picture collages of former and current students, and pictures of her family members and friends to make the atmosphere as "homey" as someone's den. She offers, " I look at my classroom as my home away from home, since I spend so much time in it, I want it enjoyable for me and my students". (Interview, 10/10/05) The configuration of her room to reflect a type of homelike atmosphere peppered with her own decorations was one

reason why Chantelle was nominated for the Teaching Award. In addition to these home-like accents, Chantelle created an environment where she personally feels safe and comfortable with who she is. For instance, there are a lot of Black female artist posters, such as Oprah on the walls, whom she personally adores and feels connected to. According to Chantelle:"Oprah is a hidden ideal of mine. She is a powerful Black female, who helps people in need". (Interview, 10/03/05) Another Oprah picture sits in the window of her door partially blocking sight into the room so that everyone must see it upon entering. On one of Chantelle's especially difficult days during my observations, she offered students a talk-show viewing in lieu of their regular work to allow her to catch up on grading. Viewing the talk-show was contingent on two criteria: students would have to view an Oprah talk-show from her personal collection and complete the day's assignment for homework. Chantelle's Oprah posters and talk-shows are personal artifacts through which she integrates herself as a member of the class community. Students get another sense of who she is as a person in addition to being their teacher, and her interests are marketed as just as important as those of the students whom she values. The use of the posters and film are ways Chantelle exerts her voice and fosters a sense of kinship with her students that she missed from her teachers and peers in the classrooms from her personal schooling past. Additionally, the wall mural, and the use of lamps demonstrate Chantelle's resolve to accomplish not only what she desires but what she deems important for the enjoyment of her students.

In addition to creating a safe, home-like environment for her students, Chantelle strongly feels that caring is an important component of being a good teacher. Caring is the exact opposite of the attitudes and behaviors she recalls displayed toward her in her

own schooling experiences. To Chantelle, caring is not just a visible behavior or measurable interaction with a student but an attitude that might be met with a reciprocal acknowledgment. She defines caring as a form of rapport building over time that underpins effective teaching. She states,

> Personally, the most important aspect of a teacher is a good communication and a good relationship with your student. I care about her or her and if I show this then they will know and feel it by time. If they know that it is important for me what they think and how they feel then by time I will establish a good relationship. (Interview, 09/19/05)

That students feel safe and cared for as unique people in her classroom allows Chantelle to propel them towards one of her goals of lifelong learning. It is not enough for one to claim he or she cares, one must outwardly demonstrate caring. Noddings (2001) defines a caring teacher as one how possesses more than certain stable and predictable traits that characterize an individual before he or she operates a classroom. A caring teacher is a receptive individual who displays the regular establishment of "relations of care in a wide variety of situations and clearly demonstrates a continuous drive for competence to respond adequately to the recipients of care". (p. 101) (or don't quote it, since it breaks up your prose)/ I observed that when a Black female student was crying due to personal reasons with another classmate, Chantelle suggested excusing her from class and going home for the day to calm her. On another instance, one student's grandmother died and he cried during the class session. Chantelle took him aside and tried to calm her down and asked her several questions about his grandmother. The student felt better and understood. Although, these examples seem to be normal responses, according to Chantelle not all teachers are sensitive enough. Both students seem different and much

more positive towards Chantelle. Chantelle attributes this to her reaching out to the students through compassion that nurtures the rapport she built with both.

Caring is frequently misunderstood as a certain lack of professionalism, and critics suggest that the relationship between care-giver and recipient should be somewhat distant, supervisory in nature, and communicated through an insider's language of clinical jargon. Chantelle's approach to caring is not common in middle school classrooms. Unlike Sears, Kennedy, and Kaye (1992) who found that teaches are often concerned more with intuition and judgment of content that with sensing and feeling with regard to student needs, Cantalle believes that all are essential. In addition, Chantelle sees herself as a caring individual who exudes qualities of intuition, personal commitment, and student focus- all characteristics that emanate from an altruistic belief system that serves as the basis for her behaviors, decision, and attitudes in the classroom (Noddings, 2001). This is seen with a student who entered her classroom trying to raise money for habitat for humanity. Chantelle considers Cindy's situation as unfortunate as her family situation is poor and she hardly finds food herself. However, helping such an individual includes recognizing that she needs help as well. Chantelle's classroom is one outlet for Cindy to feel safe and raise money to help people in need and to feel better herself. Although Chantelle knows that it is against the school's policy to sell items in the classroom, she realizes that there are certain situations which are more important than school policies. She says,

> Although, I know that it is prohibited to sell goods on school ground, I really do not care. Cindy is collecting the money for a good deal. If a student takes her time for that, I as an educator need to do even more. (Interview, 10/03/05)

While Chantelle admits that certain students know how good her heart is, she also shows her limits in the classroom, particularly with minority students:

> I know that my students know how much I love them and how much I do care for them. Apart from the fact that they do respect me, they also know their boundaries. Particularly, with Black male students I have my issues, but they still know that they have limits. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle's behavioral expectations of her students are backed by a combination of written rules in her classroom and introductory remarks she makes at the beginning of each new term. Infractions of these rules are, in her own words, "rare," and she claims to be usually successful in handling them herself by talking with students about their behavior in lieu of writing discipline referrals. Such is not only congruent with the school's policy for teachers to handle as many minor infractions with students on the classroom level as they are able, but is also indicative of Chantelle's desire to create community in her classroom continually, something Greene (1998) states teaches should do on a continuum to mirror and adjust for classroom dynamics (p. 27). Chantelle attempts to create a harmonious community in a number of ways: fostering open communication, working out solutions through mutual concern with her students, and carrying out an agreeable action for them both. She further creates community by being the "servant" to her students and establishing and maintaining the safe environment she believes is vital to learning. Chantelle's deliberate creation of what she deems an inviting, sincere, student-oriented community appears to be an extension of her. Greene (1997) states that there exists a kind of undetectable community of which people want to fell a part, and one that is created by teachers with "high values and a certain way of teaching" (p. 27). Green's notion is in keeping with Chantelle's belief hat the majority of her students both like and responds well to her way of conducting class. Noteworthy is her

thinking that student challenges to her classroom rules are those in which she is personally "not liked," a feeling of rejection Chantelle perceived from her own school experiences. Chantelle's yearning for a positive, mutually satisfying relationship with all her students is thwarted when she is unable to win their affection or cooperation for reasons that may or may not involve her personally.

Critical Educator

Being a minority herself, I noticed during my observations in Chantelle's classroom that she is constantly trying to maintain a harmonious classroom that is attuned to all students' needs where "they feel they have something and someone to relate to and where they may find their own voice". (Interview, 10/24/05) When showing me her personal choice of curriculum I noticed several selections from multiple literacy forms and world literature that reflect multi-ethic voices and visions that expand the concept of a traditional literature canon and the ways of responding to it. Chantelle believes that using this curriculum, in her limited time provided during the scripted program, offers her students the greatest opportunities for understanding "otherness" in the world. By studying the component of "voice" during one reading, students will be attuned to new literacy and cultural perspectives in light of developing some of their own. She states,

> I want them to be aware that anybody has a voice, and that the varieties of voices that they can relate to- and that they can learn about themselves through the books we read. I think if everybody realizes that I care and it is important what they say and contribute- that will further develop the interaction in the classroom. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle understands goes along with major scholars in the field. Eliciting and developing students' voices is part of Rosenblatt's (1938/1995) efferent, personal and aesthetic stances requiring the reader to "live through" an experience with the text.

Further, Langer's view that "we learn best when we are trying to accomplish something that is personally and socially meaningful (1987, p. 14). This approach underlines the fact that all students in her class have the freedom to speak critically and discuss their opinions with other classmates. That in turn is also one of the major underpinnings within the critical theory. It actually allows students to express what they feel and values their cultural heritage and schema (Carell & Eisterhold, 1971). Chantelle responds relatively well to all students in her classroom, not only by listening to their ideas and needs but also by trying to push heir limits regarding their learning. She states,

> They are always asking: "Are we a challenge class?" because they know I am a challenging teacher. They want to be a challenged class. I am just impressed by how hard they try to impress me, and how hard they work because they want that distinction. In my classes they can use their hands to make things. For example, right now we are studying verbals, so they are in the process of creating different children's books that focus on verbals. And we'll continue to do things like that in those classes. Also, you pull what you want to know out of them by prodding them with provocative questions, that's the main thing I do. Yeah. Always some provocative questions. They will sit there for a while and they will say, "I don't know, I don't know what you mean." Because they are accustomed to having a question where there is some answer somewhere. Their is an objective answer somewhere. So even though they resist a little bit, eventually they start evolving into independent thinkers. And I think that's more important than the standards and objectives because it prepares them to learn in a different way. To take control of how they learn, I think that's the most important lesson they get in eighth grade. (Interview, 10/10/05)

As mentioned prior, Chantelle is in her nature a "challenger." Her students know this aspect of her and appreciate it. Chantelle's duty is to keep pace, set a proper leadership example, and continually build community by being the facilitator and active participant in her own classroom. Moreover, because she knows that she has high expectations, she leaves her students the control to realize them. It is the students' responsibility to demonstrate their need to learn. Thus, her keeping abreast of their learning is vital to her ability to facilitate the class. She further notes that African

American students particularly need to be "pushed" even more. Chantelle induces in a critical way the doctrine she believes in, to raise children as independent thinkers and independent activists:

> I feel like this person (African American student), if I push this person, he can do this. You know, so if that young man, I felt like, you know, you can do this! If I give him the opportunity to learn his way, I will, I will do anything to just make him push and try to reach him.
> I try to teach them how to be independent thinkers. Think beyond what's in the book, you know because now in elementary school you regurgitate what's in the book. But when you get to this level you have to start thinking about how you form your own opinions. I always try to coax them to start taking control of their learning and how they think. Multicultural literature is one way how I can do that. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Finally, her "pushing" limits and going along with the background knowledge of the student shows how Chantelle thinks and teaches as an educator, namely critically yet challenging. Chantelle's enthusiasm for the students and minorities likely stems from a number of factors: her having learned the value of education early in life- a difficult time when she was responsible for her own schooling decisions without any help from parents; her school experience when she lacked encouragement from her math teacher to succeed; and later after college when she received the grant to help fulfill minorities' needs by helping them to find out about educational resources. She states, " If I had a teacher growing up such as what I've tried to become for my students, I would more than likely have grabbed onto any opportunity I could have to help myself". (Interview, 10/24/05) In being the person she sees herself as and creating the type of classroom community she does, it is evident that Chantelle works to spare student the difficulty associated with apprehending the value of education later in life as opposed to doing so much earlier when they will have more time and opportunities. Moreover, Chantelle's experiences during her own childhood may bear on her position concerning the minority learners in

her classroom. Chantelle strives to be the "challenger" teacher to all her students. However, when they do not respond to her and the classroom dynamics in a fashion which she expects, Chantelle modifies her teaching according to the needs of her students. She comments,

> As an educator, when you see that you're not reaching them one way, then you try another way. You need to come up with different ways to address the different exceptionalities…sometimes with inclusion, and other times with particular students who may not have that designation. (Interview, 09/19/05)

I saw that core statement manifest in Chantelle's teaching during the two-month observation. As an educator you need to find ways to approach all students. Regardless of their ethnic background, educational level, resources and gender differences. Chantelle created an environment in her class where students were eager to learn and study. I noticed that students loved to write in the beginning of the class, loved to listen to her, and seemed to appreciate her way of teaching. Chantelle was accommodating and constantly changed her class to meet the needs of the students. She understood and welcomed the way particular students want to learn. There was no single approach to her class, but different approaches geared to each student. For instance, in reaching out to special students she knew that they could not write three-page essays, but were able to draw a picture or cut out pictures from magazines to explain their thoughts. To her mind, they were still getting the whole picture and were still able to communicate. Her creative approach means trying to reach out to every need in the classroom. While it may appear that Chantelle would have great empathy for all students in the class, particularly minority students, in reality she is committed to helping them remembering her own days of difficulties she had not being understood or supported by teachers and sacrifices she made for the African American community to help them succeed in college. In essence,

Chantelle's inability to give up on any student does not reflect unprofessional idealism, but a personal one deeply rooted in her unchangeable experience and indelible memory. Thus, Chantelle acknowledges that she is only one component in the complex equation of teaching and learning within her own created community. Further, for Chantelle, teaching is more effective when students have or share a common knowledge and experience base of what Applebee (1996) refers to as a "knowledge in action," knowing based on participation in series of learning traditions and core experiences. Mostly Chantelle provides different "knowledge's" and "pushing the students' limits" she involves the students in their own participation of creating for themselves the knowledge they need to learn. She supports their self-discovery and at the same time is flexible. I saw several times, when one day students did not feel motivated she clearly asked what was going on, and on that specific day rather than writing she suggested reading together. She states,

> Coming up with interesting, engaging activities requires constant thinking on the teacher's part, and that is what I am truly trying to do. I don't think it is impossible, but I know that it requires much more work than some teachers are willing to put out. Good teaching strategies do require a lot of hard work and creativity. (Interview, 10/03/05)

Chantelle not only "pushes the limits of her students" she also pushes her own. She has high expectations of herself and knows that it requires much more work. She acknowledges that it is up to the teacher to try different avenues and techniques to teach the material since not all students learn the same way. Chantelle realizes that teaching requires giving more than what is required nowadays from teachers. As she cares and she wants everybody to succeed in her class including the minorities, she puts every effort into serving the needs of her students.

Apart from being creative, I noticed that she also did some theoretical work to understand why she needs to accommodate the interest and need of the student. In her research she tried to find out why members of a minority group usually drop out of school and have little to no interest in pursuing a career further than school. Chantelle saw correlations between the lack of resources and role models in the school and the lack of interest of these students going to school. She explained to me several times, that minority kids are disadvantaged, not only because of their color, but also because of the resources the schools are providing for them. Therefore, she tried to find any resource available or anything necessary to provide them with opportunities to continue teaching critically and be understood by educators.

Further, by making the students write at the beginning of each lesson, she gives them the chance to listen to what they want to say. Chantelle states:

> And we write a lot! I have them write narrative, persuasive stories, write poetry, and I find that when they are given an opportunity to just express, many things come out that do not come out in the grammar books and the reading books. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Again, through writing she can see how each student thinks and processes the information attained from her class. Some students even speak up, including those who are usually shy and do not want to share their opinions aloud. Particularly with some girls, who have problems with grammar skills, Chantelle noticed that they are much stronger in writing their ideas than in their normal oral class participation. She understands and realizes that everybody has a different way of learning. She explains:

> They are students who can put their ideas on paper in a very creative way. And uh, when we're studying parts of speech there are students who don't always reflect that they get it when they have a written test, but they were able to create a very elaborate song. They composed a song and presented it to the class, and they

> realized they did get it! So, you know, they have different ways of learning. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Chantelle realizes the urgent need to adjust each lesson according to the needs of the students. She is aware that there is always a way to reach a student; depending on a given pupil's physiological needs, learning differences or cultural differences, she changes her teaching style. It is important in this respect that Chantelle receives information from the student in order to determine and check whether he or she understood what she was talking about. Further, she wants the students not only to learn for the moment, but to keep learning, enthusiastically and continuously, even as they progress to high school or college. She also wants to prompt her students to connect the information learned to something else, for instance some related topic in or aspect of society. To achieve this goal she believes that she needs to reach out to the student from their way of learning. She says,

> When they do that, I feel like I've had success, because they do understand something, um, they can make connections, you know, I think most of them can give you an example, uh, of someone that they can identify with currently who, you know, has been a victim of a tragedy…They can get the message about just life in general and human nature. I hope that is coming through in what we teach especially in literature. I hope they are making life connections and that they understand to connect information. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle realizes that literature gives her a creative way to explore and reach out to life connections in each student's realities. She values the importance of literacy and tries to find adequate books to hold students' attention and, again, to give them the opportunity to think critically of important societal topics. I noticed that Chantelle loves the choice of various learning tools to foster a creative learning environment in her class. She gets bored just lecturing and fulfilling the principal's mandate to teach a certain way. Taking away her liberty to teach in her own way gives her headaches; she thus eventually

genuinely suffers from being a teacher. Being a marionette of the school system and not being allowed to teach her own way actually induces the student to learn and accept schooling from an "indoctrinated way." In a similar way, this way of learning only permits learning in a rigid, structured way. Thus, it limits those students who can only learn, or would much more effectively learn, in certain ways, such as Chantelle suggests: girls who might profit from poems and writing, Black students from songs, and special needs students through visual art. Chantelle realizes this particular dilemma; though, from my observations she does not get discouraged. She still knows what her agenda is and in her small lessons continues to explore different varieties of teaching.

Further, she elicits creativity in her students and helps them find their best way to learn and study. At the same time, she tries to initiate a critical pedagogy, in which she capitalizes on the background of the particular student. She makes them think critically about literature, as well as aspects of society, education and also racism. I noticed that Chantelle knows the kinds of values and educative approach she wants to lay out in her class. She mentioned several times that she does not favor the rigid lecture approach, as this approach does not help the student to reflect, think and in turn teach. Chantelle was always trying to find new ways to incorporate her own understanding of how one teaches; namely, critically and based on the student rather than the teacher. I could see in her traces of the Freirean school of thought. Paulo Freire (1978) clarifies in his landmark book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that educators need to start teaching from the background of the student. Educators should not just deposit knowledge like in a bank; they should instead find ways to teach the world rather than only the word to the student. I believe Chantelle unconsciously applies this approach and we can therefore identify her

as a critical pedagogue. Chantelle tries to reach out to all the students in her class, whatever this entails, such as trying to learn with music or literacy or writing, she employs in her class. Furthermore, starting her classes with writing on topics related to those covered in class, or on current political, historical or cultural aspects of news, shows again that she wants her students to think and process information and find their own opinions concerning these topics. Her approach shows directly that she is not a lecture-type educator. In the next section, I elaborate more on her actual teaching methods that explain the themes I explained above.

Classroom Practice

After having seen the threads of Chantelle's past experience, it was interesting how these experiences affected her and show how she perceived multicultural pedagogy in her classroom. The introduction to this chapter explains Chantelle's past challenges and makes explicit the rationale for what she is doing in her classroom. This section will briefly address Chantelle's perceptions of multicultural pedagogy and how these perceptions are manifested in her classroom.

At Midtown Middle, many of Chantelle's teaching days are guided by the teaching philosophy and abrupt policy changes of the principal. Teachers, and certainly Chantelle, have had to dramatically change their teaching styles and reported to me that they are not teaching anymore. At a parent's suggestion the principal bought a "scripted program," which gives each teacher a script and compels them to teach according to what the script says. Only one hour per day is devoted for actual teaching from the teachers' own plan. Although most teachers do not like the new rules, they need to adhere to them if they want to be part of the school. Chantelle states,

> Each teacher hates the scripted program. It is a pilot program and will last for a year. If it seems successful then maybe it will go on. We have a first teacher down the hall that did his student teaching here last year. He was impressed by the ability to come in and teach and have a captive audience who will respond to him. And now with this he's just telling me today "I don't know if I will come back next year because this is draining everything out of me, he says: "It's draining everything." I feel the same way. I think it's so restrictive, and some of the children feel miserable because, first of all it goes against my philosophy about teaching. You know, kids learn the way they want to learn, they are ? more the loss of actual teaching. (Interview, 10/03/05)

Being creative is a great concern to Chantelle and she feels that The No Child Left Behind act and the continuous standardized testing routines impinge on her and her students' creativity. Such changes are not only worrisome for the teachers, they also affect the students. I observed that students were bored and did not like to do memorization based tasks. In such cases, Chantelle intervenes and tries to make jokes and acts very positively.

Chantelle regards the administration's actions as antithetical to her teaching philosophy and goals; they cause her to expend more energy and enthusiasm simply not to get discouraged from teaching *per se*. Her philosophy of teaching actually gives her even more energy to help and support minorities as she believes that they struggle even more during testing. This philosophy is also demonstrated by the extra effort and motivation she puts in class due to the policy changes, which did not direct her away from her teaching goals. She reaches these goals through two emergent themes arising from the observational and interview data. These themes will be discussed in the following sections.

Teaching with difference. Chantelle claims she is particular and her teaching methods differ. As she has been chosen teacher of the year she considers that "whatever I do I do it eventually for my students". (Interview, 10/03/05) Doing right by students is

Chantelle's motto and her practice, and she believes it intimidates others since they have been in education "so long and done their lesson plans the same way for some 20 years," that it must have tweaked some insecurity. (Interview, 10/03/05) To Chantelle, teaching by difference is like a philosophy. She states,

> Teaching by difference takes into account the "Why". I see the role of teacher as being a mother, father, role model, confidant and sometimes friend, psychiatrist, psychologist, and mentor. I feel if I can help students [all students] obtain any better sense of themselves to fit into society, then I have done my job not only as a teacher of language arts, but also as a teacher of life. I view my role as a teacher who has a lot of understanding, empathy, and compassion and care for the individual. It is my job to care for their background and understand their home situations. I don't want to say friend, but that I'm like that mentor, I guess. I am someone students know they can come and talk to if they have a problem and that I genuinely care. That I'm not up here just to teach a vocabulary lesson, but I genuinely care about each one of my students as an individual. Particularly, all minority students as they need even more care and a sense of acceptance and support. (Interview, 10/03/05)

Chantelle observes that other teachers have different mindsets and tend toward a rigid, authoritative and formal way of instruction, which clashes with her philosophic beliefs. She states,

> I have noticed that not all teachers here really care and form relationships to all students like I do. Most teachers are strict, authoritative, and rigid in the way how they approach teaching. Apart from most dislikes of the scripted program, there are teachers who also like the simple way of teaching. Literally turning worksheets and let the students do the work. Most students tell me what they do and say from these other classes don't seem important or they don't remember what they've done, except when they get called on the carpet for something wrong. Many say they don't recall doing anything creative, and they rarely tell me of any activities that don't involve paper and pencil. (Interview, 10/10/05)

To Chantelle, teaching her way is her philosophy and her Teacher of the Year status demonstrates ifs effectiveness:,

> After I received the Teacher of the Year award I noticed lots of other colleagues would come into my classroom and ask for different teaching methods and worksheets. I felt good hearing this. At least I did in some way also have an impact onto teachers. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Chantelle felt accepted and acknowledged by her peers. Although her student teaching experience with the controlling mentor was not a positive experience, her teaching environment is. Chantelle's beliefs and attitudes reflect visible difference in teaching and demonstrates acceptance within her collegial workplace.

Her awareness that her teaching style is different from those of her other colleagues helps her be even stronger as a teacher. Those people, who did not acknowledge her in the past, such as the math teacher, or the elementary teacher who discounted her as a young student from a poor family, or the mentor teacher really could not see her true interest and true self.

Chantelle believes that teaching is making a difference. Difference at the same token is achieved only by literally being present for all the needs of her students. Having lacked support growing up where she needed to do her own thing alone and was not culturally welcomed and understood by teachers demonstrates that her past memories instilled strong desires for herself in her career as an educator. Growing up in a poor family she understands that literacy is a privilege and that is not easy to attain for everybody. Her project grant to support minorities is only one aspect of her philosophy to make a difference.

In the remaining section I will talk about specifics in regards to her respect for difference in teaching.

Scripted program and loss of actual teaching time. At Midtown Middle, most of Chantelle's instructional days are based on a scripted program supported and guided by the principal. This program forces the teachers to use a book that plans out exactly how to teach and what to teach due to a time plan for the whole week. Grammar was the biggest

component of this program. For instance, students must memorize different adjectives based on a text in this book and needed to use different sentences including these adjectives. This recurred daily with different topics in the same scheme.

Against the will and aversion of the teachers, the principal was strict in implementing it. According to Chantelle, the principal even remarked that if someone does not agree or does not like it then she or he should choose a different school. While this statement was definite and forceful within the collegial network it also created a discouraging and a non-creative environment. Chantelle states,

> I really do not like this scripted program. I hope you are not recording this but I am also afraid that someone would listen to this. It takes all creativity from you and it is not teaching. I have only really one or two days per week where I can actually teach what I want. I feel controlled and like a robot in the system. I considered also switching to another school. I don't know what to do. In this semester I have had several students who complained and felt discouraged doing anything in the class. I can see the difference particularly those who complained when I actually teach. There needs to be another way, in my opinion, to handle the scripted program or the scores the principal wants to reach. We need to do something differently. There is too much actual thinking and learning time lost and we are at a disadvantage. (Interview, 09/26/2005)

The loss of thinking and learning time is a great concern to Chantelle as is what she deems mismanagement of the standardized testing that impinges on her and her students. Such rigid instruction takes the place of actual learning per se away and discourages even students who want to learn, not to mention those who do not care. However, the scripted program is not all Chantelle does. Every day after the class period she advises and supports 14 minority students-- mainly African American and two Asians—to keep track of their report cards, schedules, and standardized testing requirements as they move toward high school. The meetings compromise instructional time but are necessary since the school has only three counselors who cannot each handle the academic needs of the

entire student body. After her usual work day, Chantelle remains after school up to two hours as she tutors these students. The students also receive additional information on resources that will help them improve their skills in language arts. Frequently, Chantelle may be seen reading with these students, checking their comprehension level with an oral quiz, where she pays attention to exact pronunciation of standard English. Most of these students use the African American vernacular and need to learn how to code-switch into standard English. Many of the minority students remain after class and use the additional help from Chantelle.

In addition, it is not unusual for Chantelle to attend bi-weekly faculty and staff meetings for any number of reasons. Again, the principal requires every teacher to attend, which does not leave the teacher many options to rethink and reevaluate. Scripted Program and its progressions are always major topics in these meetings. Mostly, teachers report quiz scores and talk about the theoretical assumptions of the positive impacts of the scripted program. Chantelle states,

> These meetings are just for controlling and checking purposes. There is no other reason why we need to talk twice weekly about this ridiculous scripted program. Mostly, teachers talk positively in these meetings and no one really discuss honestly what they really think. It is sad, it is sad to see that teachers can be manipulated and indirectly indoctrinated not to teach how they want to teach. How in the world are we supposed to instruct these children when here again, we are taking away the option to let them think on their own, and to teach just for test purposes? And so to me, our time would be better spent teaching how I want to teach- in a creative mindful way incorporating everyone in the class. It seems that we are worried about test scores than we are about kids. (Interview, 10/03/2005)

While Chantelle dislikes controlled teaching, at times she tries to forget it and uses the time when she actually can teach as productively as possible. It is evident that Chantelle regards the administration's actions as antitheses to her classroom mission, and it actually

encourages her to take a more critical approach to learning. In her non-scripted classroom teaching she implements lots of thinking activities that put more work on top of her work within the scripted program. With days at Midtown Middle frequently controlled with a plethora of requirements of administration onto the teachers, Chantelle demonstrates the extra effort and flexibility necessary to weather the changes as a minority teacher by using her own strength to create her own path to affect her own goals. She accomplishes this through three themes which arise from the observational and interview data.

Teaching methods.

> We have anthologies, you know we have a mixture; we have a mixture of literature where students can see themselves and their culture. We talk about the protagonists in the books and how that relates to their own culture. Students love it, and they can see themselves. We have lots of talks and important discussions. (Interview, 10/24/05)

As mentioned before, Chantelle has various ways to approach the students with her teaching style. Although, momentarily, she is restricted in some ways by the new learning tool, which was required by the principal, she still finds in her limited classroom hours a way to teach and use new methods in order to reach out to each student. I noticed that teaching for Chantelle is more than just giving information in a rigid way. According to Chantelle, teaching is: "To understand the student, the power and leadership, and ambition and what ambition can do to someone." In Chantelle's eyes, students have "minds, actually good minds—whether they can read or not." Chantelle enjoyed what she was doing. Far from just being a teacher, she wanted to give all her pupils a chance to excel. One way I observed her doing this was through her creation of a welcoming environment for all her students. One integral component of her teaching was to incorporate a multicultural environment for each student and to teach multicultural and

adaptively to each student's cognitive learning style. I will elaborate in the next section what I mean by particular "learning style."

Multicultural lessons. Chantelle's beliefs about the purpose of a Language Arts class emanate not only from a curricular stance but a personal one as well. She wants her students to leave her class with a desire to read and see the relevance of reading literature in their own lives and applying it to their lives, "that's the only way how reading becomes interesting and approachable". (Interview, 10/10/05) Chantelle believes the purposes of a language arts curriculum are manifold. She wishes her students to learn about themselves through literature and by tapping into the different voices they have to express themselves given different venues for expression. Perhaps most importantly, Chantelle wants her students to connect with texts not just in an academic manner, but also in a personal one drawing upon their collective experiences to relate to texts while also keeping open-minded to elicit new connections. She offers,

> Their response, their emotions and feelings about the text is highly important for me. Once we talked about it…the specifics come, major protagonists, tone of the text, author's tone. I always want them to connect, tell me a time in your life when you felt like the little Fernanda (character). Tell me a situation where this happened to you and did you respond and if so how? I want them to connect and interact with text. If you literally not push them to connect then I did not really teach them what it means to interact with the text. (Interview, 10/24/05)

With some knowledge of theory, Chantelle realizes that research works. She still is adamant about the fact that she always knew for herself that for understanding you need to connect to the text. She states,

> Just growing up I liked to read, but I always chose books where I could connect as well culturally. For example, reading Esperanza Rising.. I knew how it feels when you are different. I could connect to this girl in the text. It is important that I choose literature where they can connect to. This is crucial and part of learning. For instance, earlier this week I gave an assignment to my students and they had to write about a time when they were in a relationship similar to the one of a

> character in the text. I got the best writings, and they like to share their writings with the class. So, they are relating to the text, and if they do then I know that they are learning. (Interview, 10/10/05)

She believes that the best way for students to learn language arts is through examining different pieces of literature from one's own and then multiple points of view. Chantelle believes that a student may view a piece of literature from his or her own knowledge base and experience, but also "take that same piece of literature and consider it from the viewpoint of someone completely different with a completely different background". (Interview, 10/24/05) Chantelle then asks her students to examine works both universally and personally. She realizes it is challenging for teens to "step outside of themselves because they do not know themselves very well and are still searching for identity". (Interview, 10/24/05) Thus, her view of practicing multiple viewpoints to include the self is one of the most essential skills she wants her students to take away from her classroom experiences. Much of what Chantelle espouses is congruent with the reader response theory of Louise Rosenblatt (1938/1995) who states,

> Teaching becomes a matter of improving the individual's capacity to evoke meaning from the text by leading her to reflect self-critically on this process. The starting point for growth must be each individual's efforts to marshal his resources in relation to the printed page. The teacher's task is to foster fruitful interactions-or, more precisely, transactions-between individual readers and individual literary texts. (p. 25-26)

Chantelle believes that activities directed toward developing students' enthusiasm for continued learning are paramount to simply relaying information and giving some sort of written evaluation. She views learning as a "lifetime adventure" that begins with one's ability to transfer learning from one situation to another, and that such cannot be measured on a multiple choice test. Chantelle comments,

> Important statements in the text should be applied to knowledge of different situations. To me, that's how critical thinking is involved. Yes, I got the knowledge from this text, now I'm presenting it in an entirely different textual situation, and I ask how I can use the knowledge in this text to the other. That's when I see the greatest gain in student learning. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Her idea of what critical thinking involves accords with major scholars of critical theory, such as Tierney and Banks, Paulo Freire, and Paul Mclaren. Particularly Max Horkheimer's (as cited in Peters, Lankshear, & Olssen, 2003) beliefs:

> Critical theory sought to explicate the nature of the relations between part and part, and parts and whole, revealing in addition its own embeddedness in the social matrix from which it arises and operates. In this sense, critical theory incorporates a constructionist dimension not only in that it sees itself as part and parcel of the social reality it seeks to comprehend, but also in that social actors and realities are produced and shaped by historical forces and processes. (p. 4)

Shaped by Horkheimers' thoughts, Chantelle believes that the *raison d'ètre* can only be maintained by continuous critique that entails fundamental ideas of truth, freedom and justice, imperative to this belief is the concept "*to liberate humans from their oppressed conditions"* (Freire, 1977; Peters et al., 2003). She admits that the improvement of the human condition is vital for its existence, and it is vital to search for reasons that are not the case for all humans within the societal structures. Chantelle explained that some of the most relevant aspects of teaching are to implement and create a multicultural environment in her classroom. Whether this is a major change, or a more precise adaptation to the needs of a student, Chantelle tries to do everything to make sure that the student has understood everything. According to my observations in interviews and in class, Chantelle understands multicultural education in a critical way: she is trying to push all student to "think outside the box." The way she creates this environment is unique; her approach helps the student to be critical and thoughtful during lessons. Regardless of which student she is trying to address, or to whom she is accommodating

her teaching, she finds solutions and is clearly sure of her approach. I point out several methods she applies which show a critical, multicultural teaching style:

> I have had special education children in inclusion classes and applied the philosophy and you know, some, it is the difficulty, I think some case is applying thought to paper. You know sometimes they have a problem with process. But they don't have a problem with thinking… I mean, they have wonderful ideas, they have strong thought process, so if you can figure out a creative way to get it, if they have to draw a little picture, that's fine. You know, if they cannot write five paragraph's essay, or three-page essay, but they can draw a picture or cut out pictures from a magazine and post it there and explain their thoughts, then you know, they are still getting the same, they are still getting the same experience. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle understands that special-need children are restricted in some ways from learning in the same way an average student would. She knows and makes clear that they are certainly not handicapped in their way of learning. As an educator, she finds ways to change or adapt her teaching style in order to facilitate their learning. She is aware of their needs, certain she can make an impact, and knows that they can learn. I was often impressed by watching Chantelle go beyond what is necessary to make sure that everybody in the class has understood and feels comfortable to ask questions and otherwise say what they want. Furthermore, she knows that students think that she is "approachable and accessible". Students are aware that Chantelle would understand and would not laugh or be angry if they come up with excuses or questions regarding homework or any task covered in class. I noticed that Chantelle would even break her own rules regarding teaching and sometimes take a chance—as long as she knew that in the end, she would make an impact on the student. According to her: "You've tried; you've given a child a chance, so you haven't lost anything". (Interview, 10/24/05)

When teaching about language in general. She makes sure that everybody in the class is valued based on her accent or language. She makes sure that everybody understands that language is a component of their personality. She comments,

> It's O.K. if they use slang or language that they are used to at home. It is what makes them who they are. It is their culture. But if they are at school or at some formal party they need to know how they can switch back. It is not because nobody values their accent it is actually smart of them to be able to switch in two different ways. They need to understand that they have to learn proper English and when to use it. (Interview, 10/10/05)

For Chantelle as mentioned before a safe and caring environment are essential for a mutual teaching and learning in her classrooms. Apart from a homey environment, each individual's language is highly valued as part of her culture. I noticed one day when a student made a remark to another student as "what's up cuz", she immediately interfered and mentioned that it means "how are you" to everybody in the class. Students wanted to know more about the African American vernacular but she did not delve into it on that particular day.

In addition, she likes to incorporate audio in her lessons for those students, who do not like to read or are not able to read, such as special-need students. She wants to make sure that they understand what she is aiming at. Chantelle likes to incorporate any kind of technology which invites the students into the lesson and ultimately helps them learn. I noticed that she thinks through details and ways she can be more creative and, at the same time, critical in how her pedagogy operates in the classroom. Her main ideal and goal is to teach in an equal and fair manner and to know that everyone in her class has understood.

> Could they get it? No, but they could listen. You know, I would play the audio, they hear it. They understand the things, they can talk about it, and

> they can walk away from this room thinking, you know, I understood that man! (Interview, 10/03/05)

Chantelle has the personality to come up with different ways to address the different needs and particularities that are required in the classroom. Her teaching philosophy reflects this attitude as well. She realizes that an educator can teach and make sure that everybody can be reached in some way; if that does not work, as mentioned before she tries another way until she can be sure that everybody has understood the subject. In addition, literature—simply storytelling—is another way she uses to address different races and ethnicities in the classroom. She celebrates everybody's culture through literature and gives different students opportunities to be included and share their opinions about their cultures. For instance, when discussing Asian folklore, she lets an Asian student lead a group and talk from her own point of view. She wants to make sure that everything said about folklore is not merely what the general populace believes. Chantelle wants to ensure the information provided is accurate and so looks to the Asian student for confirmation. She even let the students create her next lesson plan where she talks in detail about Asian folklore and different related subjects. Through this opportunity, the Asian student had a chance to share thoughts and information about her culture and about herself. Classmates were able to see in this pupil strength that no one knew she had. I noticed that she was animated, while normally she is a very quiet and polite student. Chantelle helped her to break through this silent personality and move to the forefront by letting her share something about her culture. Again, Chantelle wants everybody in the class to talk, be understood and be able to learn. Being critical, and at the same time adaptive to the learning environment and accessible to her students, makes her an educator and encourages the student to learn and undertake new study tasks.

Chantelle enjoys being a teacher who cares and changes according to the needs of the students. On another occasion, she also helped a Hispanic student to share and explore her cultural identity while reading literature.

> When we are reading *My Two Dads* it is a story about a father in China and he has this persona when he is in America. However, when he travels to China he has a completely different persona. In addition, that opens up a whole discussion about how you know there are differences and they are not always evident. It depends on our environment and our situation and you know we can feed off things like that and share things. We talk about it and people like Cynthia who is very quiet and Hispanic, she will get her time to share things and feel like she is included. It is about her and her culture. You have something to share. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle believes that multicultural literature goes far beyond different stories about different people. She is sure that listening to student presentations and their thought processes will show whether they feel themselves to be part of a minority. From my observations, I noticed that she assumed that Black students automatically feel themselves to be members of a minority. For example, she accommodates her teaching style according to their comfort zone. She sometimes encouraged her pupils to practice role playing and role changing. Black or Hispanic students were purposely cast as leaders in class activities, while White students played other roles. She even let students use their hands to make things and be creative while learning about literature or whatever else they are reading in class. For instance, one time they were studying verbals and were in the process of creating different children's books focusing on verbals. Students were getting up, moving around, and presenting their work to the class. Chantelle sometimes encouraged students to exchange and physically move around in the course of their work.

In summary, choosing from among diverse literature for the students to read shows Chantelle's flexibility and student centeredness in framing the literary context of her classroom. Chantelle thrives on creative individuality in her classroom as already

discussed. This is a result of not only her personal and pedagogical growth, but also of her bad experiences in the past. Chantelle also maintains her negativity regarding the scripted program that she believes has no purpose and such a rigid way of controlling the teachers. The choices she makes for herself and her students reflect aspects of her classroom dynamics which she has limited access to within the scripted program. Yet, her creative, critical approach to implementing different teaching methods in the classroom and trying to adapt her teaching style according to the needs of her students shows that her personality is caring and particularly engaged in guiding and helping students. Her background and her past made her passionate today in what she believes and is pursuing:.

> I come up with different ways to address the different exceptionalities, sometimes in inclusion in our classes, and other times just to address to particular students who may not have that designation, but you realize yourself that, you know, there are some differences there that you need to address. And, on an individual basis, formally we have to do that now, but I don't know any good teacher who doesn't do that anyway, I mean its just, something formal, but it's something I feel like we always do anyway. When you see someone there and you know that you're not reaching them one way, then you try another way. That's all it is. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle facilitates students' individual learning activities and supports team and group interrelations as students work collaboratively to study texts in a relaxed, safe atmosphere. Members of the class are celebrated as unique persons with their own voices, and they are made to feel comfortable and important in Chantelle's classroom through her encouragement of student camaraderie and her own personal attention. She carries out textual studies dynamically as conversations among students and herself. Chantelle shares aspects of her life and experiences with the students, mostly as they relate to issues surrounding textual study, and she invites students to do the same given their level of confidence.. Finally, but importantly, she makes critical allowance daily through her

questions on the board, and encourages their personal reflections on the text. Given all of these inclusive and nurturing practices within the walls of her classroom, Chantelle fosters a thoughtful, interactive and creative community within her public school. By the end of the year most students at Midtown Middle have been exposed to myriad forms of literature and various forms of instruction and writing expressions that should optimally prepare them for the learning atmosphere Chantelle effects in her classroom. However, according to research most teaching is focused on "depositing knowledge" (Freire, 1978) and does not engage the student in thought-provoking stance, instead it usually is "answer giving" (Langer, 1995, p. 57) and only superficial in eliciting understanding and involvement. Applebee (1996) goes further and explains that mostly teachers ask questions, student may respond, if not they look to the teacher to provide the answer. Throughout the time I spent at Midtown Middle I observed that Chantelle valued her students' experiences and offered opportunities for interaction, personal response to the readings, and the sharing of their life stories. She believes that it is effective learning if students are engaged with their readings and make connections with characters and scenarios. Chantelle hooks students' imaginations with introductory activities such as writing about the daily questions and tasks eliciting their creative and insightful interactions with texts. By blending student-centered awareness and teaching expertise, Chantelle brings positive, diverse, and engaging literary instruction reflective of numerous best practices for her teaching award and being a reflective educator. Chantelle's beliefs that activities directed toward developing student's enthusiasm for continued learning are more important than simply relaying information and giving some sort of written evaluation. That being said, while trying to stick to her philosophy I

observed as well challenges she encountered during her teaching. In the following, I elaborate on her challenges within her classroom practice as a minority teacher.

Challenges

Chantelle stated that her own past experience led her to consider diversity awareness and the need to support minority students, integral components of her teaching and life. She wrote that she learned to be an initiator of action and to support minorities in need wherever she can, particularly in her classes. Pursuing her own ideals had not been easy; rather, it involved a great deal of challenge and struggle. Challenges were one factor that informed her own critical pedagogy. I will mention two important themes arising from her data: Being a minority herself (specifically, an African-American female); and not having a direct influence on Black male students in the school environment.

African American woman. Chantelle said that she is aware of her minority status and believes it is harder for her to do a good job in comparison to any other teacher; however, she realizes that this has caused her to be a more critical intellectual.

> Yeah, being female and African American female I just, um, I always feel like the expectation is that, you know, even though it may be fallacy, always feel like I have to work extra hard. Extra hard. I always feel like I need to do a better job than the other white teachers do….
>
> I think it is the culture, I think on some, I think on some level, professionally, maybe more so in corporate, but even in education I feel like most of the black women I know feel like they just have to work hard, can't let up because you're going to be compared and just have to make sure. (Interview, 10/24/05)

In my observations I never felt that Chantelle needs to work harder because of her race. During a meeting with the principal I had e a chance to observe the interactions among faculty and the principal. Mrs. Donohue gave explicit instruction about the

scripted program to each teacher the same way. I could not observe any difference in interaction based on Chantelle's race. Also, in the hallways her small-talk discussion with other colleagues always involved different lesson plans and different teaching methods. As a matter of fact, I noticed that couple of teachers came to her and were interested in some lesson plans she had prepared on the topic of Macbeth. They wanted to exchange ideas with her, because they knew that Chantelle was chosen to be the teacher of the year. I noticed that Chantelle was pleased and in some way proud that others were interested in her teaching style. She remarks: "I like it when others are interested in my lessons that shows me that I am actually doing a good job ". (Interview, 10/10/05) The paradoxical relationship between what Chantelle thinks generally of African American females and herself having to work harder versus the reality in her school setting which did not necessarily show any different expectation due to her minority background demonstrated an interesting fact in my observations. One recent study by Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela & Jean A. Madsen (2007) describes the experiences of teachers of color working in suburban desegregated majority schools. It explains that fighting discrepant stereotypes, the underrepresented African American teachers defend their status to have their accomplishments recognized. In their study the teachers reported that their individuality was often overshadowed by their colleagues' stereotypical beliefs about African Americans. Further, male teachers constantly had to refute negative male African American stereotypes, and the women had to deal with proving their worth as "qualified" teachers. Although, it may not be apparent, Chantelle has the urge to prove or show everybody in some way that she is fulfilling the needs what is expected from her. Nobody directly accuses her or directly demands that she work harder due to her race, but

nonetheless she feels this way Chantelle's perception may stem from her childhood, non-supportive teachers in the past, or the current non-supportive environment with the scripted program policy. Additionally, her opportunity working in an urban journalism workshop, and spending a summer in a community action program, helping to write a grant for a project to enable first-generation students go to college, may indicate that she perceives herself working harder than other teachers.

Chantelle's other concerns were not only related to her profession, but also to her private life. She feels that African-American women need to work harder than White women. Many members of Chantelle's family foist a lot of responsibilities onto her, as well. In general, she has more challenges and needs to overcome more obstacles than White women typically do, particularly in her professional role as an African-American female teacher.

> I think students feel more comfortable taking nurturing from me as a female teacher. You know sometimes they just need nurturing. Um, sometimes I can say things to them that maybe other teachers can't say. Um, sometimes, Mr. Knock, a social studies teacher, and he are gay white male. He comes to me and says could you talk to one of the students about something she said, something he overheard or something…You know she has on because they think I can forge a different type of relationship as female[sic]. And it's . It's , there are things I feel that they feel more comfortable coming to about than perhaps some other teacher. Girls and boys when they need a nurturing or they're having certain types of problems they're not going to want...you know. They want a kind of spirit to talk to. They don't want anyone who's going to laugh or brush them off, so I think that's a real advantage being a female teacher. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Chantelle was highly confident being an African American female teacher. She is sure that her nurturing, caring, and being attentive are distinct advantages she offers her students. During class time, she appeared to be approachable and in general a good listener to all her students' needs. Students did not hesitate to ask and suggest anything

new in her classroom. Her extroverted nature and effort to accommodate her students made her a suitable educator and, at the same time, friend to the student. She is aware of the characteristic traits she displays and she works hard to make them even better. She seemed to be comfortable in discussing with me what she does not like about the school administration, and what she would do if she were the principal. However, she never attempted to challenge the administration.. Given that she was critical in most of her teaching and thoughts she did not cross any boundaries and become critical in her actions with the administrative people. Further, her motivating and challenging nature and nurturing personality, allow her to forge an ideal bond with her students. Although her voice is soft and not at all aggressive, students seem to listen and to be attentive to anything she says in class. Yet, although she is understood by her students, she is aware that the administration and society treat her differently for being an African American female. She faced many social obstacles and does not feel treated the same as other teachers—particularly White teachers. In addition, compared to other teachers, she has many other obligations, which she believes are inherent in her cultural background.

> You know, apart from being a teacher and minority, there's a portion of female which is also minority itself. Just being female you feel you were somehow disadvantaged. As African American female I'm exhausted. In private life and in the professional life, I'm just exhausted. All African American females I know work just harder and don't have any spare time. You have a lot of people who rely on you-in my personal life. I have lots of extended family that rely upon me. I always feel like I have to work extra hard compared to my peers in my professional life. Because you are going to be always compared. I think females get caught up in that perception, about black females is the workforce, she's the dominant person on the family, she's the dominant person in the community, and not many men are allowed working. (Interview, 10/24/05)

In recent years, there have been increasing calls to understand the experiences of African-American females from their own perspectives (Hill-Collins, 2000; Giddings, 1984). To

understand fully Chantelle's experiences and perception as an African-American female, it is necessary to underline the multiple forms of oppression she may encounter. As an African American, she is subject to the racism that has been part of the American experience. As a woman, she is subjected to the sexism that women face in the larger population. However, much of the work that takes place on race in the United States ignores the role of gender, and much of the feminist critique of society ignores race (Hill-Collins, 2000). Chantelle realizes her situation being minority in two aspects; as an African American and in addition being minority as a Black female. From these two aspects of her background Chantelle actively engages in multiple forms of personal and professional commitments for herself which she chooses to show by being persistent in her teaching goals. Her caring for all students in the class by modifying her lesson on students' learning styles, her application for a grant to support African American students to attend college and serving as a role model teacher by being Teacher of the Year helps her to work harder then the rest of her colleagues. By doing so she almost seemingly challenges herself and her environment by "pushing the limits". This creates a relationship which she appears to want and need. And in turn, makes her perceive life as harder for herself in comparison to her peers.

In summary, her motivating and challenging nature, springing mostly from her past, is evident and prevalent in her classroom. She does not give up and does not feel discouraged. She tries constantly to find new ways to change her teaching and reach her goal despite being African-American or female.

Influence on Black male students. Chantelle indicated that she does not feel that she has much authority over African American male students. She made several

comments that education needs more African American male teachers as role models for African American male students.

> In many African American families the mother is at home and the father is not. So for them (the students) when they come to school I'm just an extension of their mother. It's still not a male voice. You know and I told the principal, it's like one African American man on this hall, and the kids run down the hall, everyone's running. I say "Stop running", "Slow down" and he comes up like "Gentleman, slow down" and they immediately stop. That's something I've witnessed for myself. African American male students have much more respect and respond differently than to African American female teacher. We need more African American male teachers to have also role models for Black male students. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Chantelle touches here upon an urgent need and believes that she cannot effectively reach out to the disadvantaged group of Black male students. She understands what they need and tries to give suggestions. Again, she is seeing deficiencies in education and what one can do in order to resolve the dilemma. Though she believes she is limited in providing adequate attention to Black male students, she thinks she knows how this challenge can be resolved, and so she provides suggestions to these pupils and remains confident in the potentially positive impact of her experience. Although she knows her advantages as an African American female, she is also in some way paradoxically restricted within her own culture from reaching out to Black male students.

According to a CNN article, Marygrove President Glenda Price Across states: "Only 9 percent of teachers are men and only 2 percent of teachers are African-American men". Chantelle realizes the critical need and acknowledges the interest and desires of Black male students. The lack of African American male teachers in education has been well documented. Chukwunyere E. Okezie (2003) provides reasons for the lack of African American males in the teaching profession:

1) the watered-down education that minority students receive in elementary and secondary schools;

2) strong competition from non-teaching professions that offer higher salaries and better status to top graduates;

3) the increase in testing requirements in many states, which effectively discourages some minority men (those adversely affected by tests) from pursuing teaching careers;

4) and the heavy reliance on loans in college financial aid packages.

Each of these factors can discourage African American males from pursuing postsecondary degrees and joining the ranks of the teaching profession. Yet, the presence of African American males in classrooms is a significant factor in improving the educational outcomes for minority students, since these teachers can serve as important role models. According to Rhonda Wells-Wilbon and Spencer Holland (2001) male teachers instill positive values, pride, and the desire to want to do the right thing even in absence of the role model (p. 5).

Chantelle agrees with the research-indicated need for Black teacher role models for Black male students. Yet, she sees her limits as a Black female teacher not having the authority and respect of her Black male students. I observed one time that Chantelle wanted to call all students back to the classroom after a small break from the hall. Essentially, Anthony and Leroy did not want to come in. Chantelle displayed a natural attitude with these students and later she told me “this is always the same and natural”. (Interview, 10.03.05) In addition, Chantelle frequently acknowledges when Anthony and Leroy are not on task while they keep talking. Such actions and attitudes, although contrary to her philosophy, represent further manifestations of Chantelle’s purposeful

understanding of Black students respect and authority boundaries towards a Black female teacher. Moreover, during the years that Chantelle has been teaching at Midtown Middle and her personal experiences from her family and Black culture may indicate that she has learned not to care about these particular differences in the Black community.

Overall, Chantelle is driven by her unique experience to make a stronger impact on minority kids. She faced many challenges and wants to make sure that children at risk can get a fair chance and guidance in their education. She is a critical educator and seeks to take advantage of each child's' particular fund of knowledge. She is not trying to indoctrinate her students with her views, instead her class is structured in the interest of her students.

Themes in Personal Beliefs and Teaching Practice

Teaching Practice is complex and not easily relegated to neat, consistent descriptors that comfortably categorize the sharing of information and interaction among participants in a classroom. However, interviews, observations, telephone conversations and emails used in this study all provide information that offer unique insight into Chantelle's beliefs and teaching practice., Utilizing a constant comparative method has meant that certain recurrent themes have emerged. These themes are the best possible descriptors of the phenomena occurring around the respondent in her created, lived-through world, but they are not intended to be all-encompassing or static. These themes are perseverance, caring, and multicultural community of learners, three seemingly divergent themes that explain Chantelle's praxis with their students , her working relationships to their colleagues and administration, and at times her relationship to herself, taking into account her personal history and experience.

Perseverance

During her childhood, college experience and working environment at Midtown Middle, Chantelle's experiences shaped her personality that is persistently showing up in the way how she wants to achieve her goals. Only few teachers at Midtown Middle, based upon my observations, are persistent enough to pursue their way or philosophy of teaching, given the time constraints of their daily grind . Moreover, events and actions by the principals molded the strong teachers like Chantelle into what I have named perseverance

From the two major areas Personal Beliefs and Classroom Practice, Chantelle actively engages in multiple forms of personal and professional persistence which she chooses to exercise in regard to her teaching. Chantelle's persistence against the scripted program manifests itself in a number of ways. She chooses her own books in the limited time she has, does not change her intrinsic motivation of teaching, and allows her students how they would like to talk and write regardless what the school policy states. This shows in many ways that she does not acknowledge the principal's approach to the scripted program and she still challenges herself to do a good job when having the opportunity. Clearly, Chantelle disagrees with the academic policies at Midtown Middle and believes that it actually does not contribute to the learning per se of the students. Yet while persisting, Chantelle further alienates herself from the ideas of the school and clearly has demonstrated to them that the scripted program does not work. Her Award for teaching and self-assurance in what she is doing in her classrooms, makes her even stronger in her ideas of her teaching. While she does indeed give of herself as a reflective teacher, an excellent educator, and mother-like teacher, she also places a type of

constraints that is in her own words described as “to push over the limits”. Not only does she pushes the students but in some way also pushes herself to perform and serve as an ideal educator in the classroom. Chantelle’s intentions may indeed be idealistic in achieving her goals to make each student think on his or her own way, that in some way is a memory for her own “push” growing up without support from parents and to seek for her own education with no guidance. Within the persistence/perseverance in her teaching Chantelle has learned how to be persistent in light of a non supportive environment such as the scripted program.

Despite teaching at Midtown Middle for a couple of years, Chantelle has not formed strong relationships with the principal or the administration. While she will attend most required school meetings, will participate in tutoring sessions for students in the afternoon, Chantelle does not agree with the school’s policy about the scripted program and continues teaching the way whenever she can. Such persistence is not by choice but it is developed throughout the years growing up and is prevailing now also in her teaching. The lack of support from the principal not listening to the ideas and interests of faculty, makes Chantelle induce and be persistent in her own critical pedagogy in the classroom. Chantelle states,

> I really would like to leave. I cannot stand this stupid scripted program. While the principal is only concerns of AYP, she really does not care how each individual wants to teach.[concerned]. My goal is to continue and not to change my philosophy in teaching. I want the students to be happy and welcomed in my classrooms. It is so to be the best teacher I can be in my own classroom. (Interview, 10/24/05)

The lack of communication between the administration and Chantelle shows also in some way a negative reaction on her part. Not only do her peers claim and discuss the situation regarding the scripted program, they do not discuss in general curricular issues. However,

in my observations of the faculty of Midtown Middle, most teachers are on their own and do not discuss or do some activities together. In spite of the principal's announcement on the website about that Midtown Middle is a great school because of its urban, family atmosphere, Chantelle or other teachers does not experience such a cooperation and support from the part of the administration. Also, at the end of my observations, I noticed that at least 6 teachers left. Thus, what Chantelle already thought before of leaving must have been an issue also for the rest of the faculty. She states,

> I think most of the teachers think the same way about the scripted program as soon as they have a job they want to leave. Please, do not tell anyone, but it is also one of my concerns. Mmm, I think I am not happy here. (Interview, 10/10/05)

With no real administrative bond for any of her teaching philosophy, Chantelle feels to do the things she want to do during her allowed times that fit for herself and her students. She loves teaching, but would appreciate more a type of support for her teaching that goes beyond a Teaching Award for the year. She remarks,

> I would appreciate it if they could value what I am doing with the kids. I really love teaching. And I think now they can see it. I believe the teaching award was in some way to show them what I value. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Although Chantelle is disappointed with the scripted program, she does not feel responsible of the outcome since this program was imposed on her by the administration . Even though she receives the teaching award, the principal never ever came to her class to ask of her different teaching methods. Clearly, Chantelle perceives she is alone in her teaching endeavors and only receives some administrative acknowledgment. In spite of this situation Chantelle allows herself to do units and activities that may or may not directly reflect mandated school curricula. She fashions her own ideas based on her democratic beliefs and creates a learning environment that welcomes diversity. Her

persistence/perseverance reflects Chantelle's openness to literature study should be an ongoing conversation of a multitude of ideas and approaches for continued literary envisionment. In addition, Chantelle is in tune with what is effective, and she continually listens to her students as the primary source for curricular issues. She states,

> I know what is good for them. They tell me if they don't understand and how they want to learn. I know what works for them. (Interview, 10/24/05)

Even though Chantelle indicated administrative disregard for the work that she does, she did not appear to be proactive in changing the nature of the relationships and procedures within the department of the school. Chantelle seems that she has given up on the prospect of a better teaching setting, and this make her more driven and persistent on her own teaching goals within her four walls (this is reclusive and rebellious behavior not persistent). Chantelle's persistence may stem from her past experiences not voicing out her wants and needs during school and college, or it may be due to her own needs with continuing within a limited time schedule against the administrative mismanagement with Midtown Middle School.

Within the construct of persistence Chantelle has learned how to reflect this in light of her teaching materials, ideas, and workings with the students. Teachers working daily with students and minority students need adult professional relationships, administrative support and understanding, and proper acknowledgment for their academic contributions and individuality as persons. However, when those professional expectations are not met even on a basic level, minority teachers such as Chantelle will find satisfaction in devaluing departmental procedures and will carve out their own comfortable existence as an independent educator within their working space.

Caring

The second theme which embodies the whole concept of a safe environment reflects as well her views of herself as a student-centered teacher whose responsibility is to create an educational environment in which students may be nurtured, spontaneous, and productive. Chantelle says her basic personality is a nurturing one, and she thinks of herself as "like a mother". For example, in opening a lesson about different voices in literature, I observed Chantelle serve grits to her minority students to be used not only as a food, but also as a mnemonic for recalling elements of Black Voice. Chantelle read an excerpt from some Civil Rights short stories, excerpts she uses to justify certain words in the Ebonics language such as "what's up cuz"? (Interview, 10/10/05) While students served themselves grits from a large crock pot with their choices of butter, hot pepper sauce, salt, pepper, and sugar, she adds,

> I like to serve. I think it is okay for my students. I ask so much of them, and I enjoy giving back. For any relationship there has to be give and take. Also, to give something they culturally see in their homes makes them feel probably more comfortable. (Interview, 10/10/05)

In her responsiveness of her students she "feels good about herself-giving more to students than what they might expect". In addition to provide solid teaching, Chantelle believes her role in the classroom is to exude understanding, empathy, compassion, and care for the individual as well as providing an educational environment where she can be nurturing, cordial, spontaneous, and eliciting of student work. Chantelle states,

> I think the whole encouraging and nurturing part is my basic personality makeup anyway. So many students do not get the amount of attention they need at home for a lot of reasons, and many of us teachers are all they have to talk to and listen to them. Knowing that I am not going to embarrass them or threaten them in any way allows my students to learn, grow, and get a sense of who they are and can be. Many work harder and produce better quality work when nurtured and encouraged and in a safe environment. (Interview, 10/10/05)

Chantelle's beliefs is congruent with most feminist pedagogies such as caring (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Collins, 2000; Noddings, 1995), teamwork, and the sharing of control (Ropers-Huilman, 1997). Most feminist scholars point out the caring portion in a safe environment stems from the mothering nature. Chantelle acknowledges that some of her students come from "terrible" home environments and that her safe classroom may be "the only safe place they have ". (Interview, 09/26/05) Having this secure environment is important to her, as it is an outgrowth of her experiences as a young child. Chantelle explains that she was one of those students who had a bad home life, and that her teachers made fun of her because of it. She states, " From time to time depending on the school, I did not feel safe at school. And I want to bring my experience to the classroom to help my students". (Interview, 09/26/05) Chantelle believes that her classroom reflects her personality, and the kind of attention one puts into the learning environment mirrors the teacher personally and professionally. The configuration of her room reflects a type of homelike atmosphere peppered with her own accents. Partly, this was one of the aspects why Chantelle was nominated for the Teaching Award.

In addition to having a safe, home-like environment for her students, Chantelle strongly feels that caring is an important component of being a good teacher. Caring is the exact opposite of the attitudes and behaviors she recalls displayed toward her in her own schooling experiences. To Chantelle, caring is not just a visible behavior or measurable interaction with a student but an attitude that might be met with a reciprocal acknowledgment. She defines caring as a form of rapport building over time that underpins effective teaching. She states,

> Personally, the most important aspect of a teacher is a good communication and a good relationship with your student. I care about her or her and if I show this then they will know and feel it by time. If they know that it is important for me what they think and how they feel then by time I will establish a good relationship. (Interview, 09/19/05)

That students feel safe and cared for as unique people in her classroom allows Chantelle to propel them towards one of her goals for them of lifelong learning. It is not enough for one to claim he or she cares, but one must outwardly demonstrate caring. Noddings (2001) defines a caring teacher as one how possesses more than certain stable and predictable traits that characterize an individual before he or she operates a classroom. A caring teacher is a receptive individual who displays the regular establishment of "relations of care in a wide variety of situations. And clearly demonstrates a continuous drive for competence. To respond adequately to the recipients of care". (p. 101) I observed that a Black female student was crying due to personal reasons with another classmate. Chantelle suggested excusing her from class and going home for the day to calm her. On another instance, one student's grandmother died and he could not avoid his emotions and crying during the class session. Chantelle took her aside and tried to calm her down and asked her several questions about his grandmother. The student felt better and understood. Although, these examples seem to be normal responses for most teachers' reactions however according to Chantelle not all teachers are sensitive enough. Both students seem different and much more positive towards Chantelle. Chantelle attributes this to her reaching out to the students through compassion that nurtures the rapport she built with both.

Caring is frequently misunderstood as a certain lack of professionalism, and critics suggest that the relationship between care giver and recipient should be somewhat

distant, supervisory in nature, and communicated through an insider's language of clinical jargon. Chantelle's approach to caring is not common in middle school classrooms. Unlike Sears, Kennedy, and Kaye (1992) who found that teaches are often concerned more with intuition and judgment of content that with sensing and feeling with regard to student needs, Chantelle believes that all are essential. In addition, Chantelle sees herself as a caring individual who exudes qualities of intuition, personal commitment, and student focus- all characteristics that emanate from an altruistic belief system that serves as the basis for her behaviors, decision, and attitudes in the classroom (Noddings, 2001). Such is seen with a student who entered in her classroom trying to raise money for habitat for humanity. Chantelle considers Cindy's situation as unfortunate as her family situation is poor and she hardly finds food herself. However, helping such individual is recognizing that she needs help as well. Chantelle's classroom is one outlet for Cindy to feel safe and raise money to help people in need and to feel her as well better. Although Chantelle knows that it is against the school's policy to sell items in the classroom, she realizes that there are certain situations where she prioritizes the situation as much more important than school policies. She says,

> Although, I know that it is prohibited to sell goods on school ground, I really do not care. Cindy is collecting the money for a good deal. If a student takes her time for that, I as an educator need to do even more. (Interview, 10/03/05)

Chantelle's behavioral expectations of her students are backed by a combination of written rules in her classroom and introductory remarks she makes at the beginning of each new term with new groups of students. Infractions of these rules are, in her own words, "rare," and she claims being usually successful in handling them herself by talking with students about their behavior in lieu of writing discipline referrals. Such is

not only congruent with the school's policy for teachers to handle as many minor infractions with students on the classroom level as they are able, but is also indicative of Chantelle's desire to continually create community in her classroom, something Greene (1998) states teachers should do on a continuum to mirror and adjust for classroom dynamics. (p. 27) Chantelle attempts to create a harmonious community in a number of ways: having open communication, working out solutions through mutual concern with her students, and carrying out an agreeable action for them both. She further creates community by being the "mother" to her students and establishing and maintaining the safe environment she believes is vital to learning. Chantelle's deliberate creation of what she deems an inviting, sincere, student-oriented community appears to be an extension of her.

Learning Environment

The Learning Environment theme embodies concepts of activism, student's interaction, diversity, acceptance of individuals, tolerance of class members, multicultural lesson all carried out within a synthesized school framework and Chantelle's beliefs and experiences. Chantelle facilitates students' individual learning activities and supports team and group interrelations as students work collaboratively to study texts in a safe atmosphere. All students are valued and celebrated as unique persons with their own voices, and they are felt comfortable and important in Chantelle's classroom with her encouragement of collaborative work assignments and the giving of personal attention. She allows students to discuss their origin and values each input student gives to learning. By sharing her own experiences and giving her own reflections on readings she also invites the class to feel confident enough to talk and share about their own experiences

and reflections about the readings. Lastly, she critically reflects on classroom practices and modifies teaching towards the needs of the students. By “pushing their limits” she not only challenges her own educational practice but also challenges the students to think and apply knowledge of their own. Given all of these inclusive and nurturing practices within her classroom, Chantelle fosters a unique environment where each individual is valued and understood. Chantelle’s construction of her teaching philosophy is congruent with Donaldo Macedo’s (1997) notion of emancipatory education:

> Educators take the stand that they are *empowering students.* Empowerment does not come *from* the educator *to* the educand. This is a paternalistic view which perpetuates the oppression which Freire calls this "colonizing"--the educator/oppressor assumes to know what the educand/oppressed needs and provides it for him or her. But what is actually being provided is a *benevolent form of oppression*. (p. 3)

What Macedo proposes to circumvent importation/exportation of methodology is an anti-method pedagogy. "The anti-method pedagogy forces us to view dialogue as a form of social praxis so that the sharing of experiences is informed by reflection and political action". (p.8) Emancipatory education must enable students to name their world and make meaning out of obscurities. Accomplishing such is possible through a variety of academic opportunities, one being the vehicle of valuing different learning styles in the classroom and discusses literature. Within the setting of persistence/perseverance and caring, Chantelle works with students to emancipate their thinking. She does so through my observations that emerged in this study.

Her classroom. Chantelle’s classroom praxis manifests itself through the scripted Program, which are requirements adopted by the principal, her own beliefs and experiences involving students in her classroom to think and apply. One central tenet of her teaching is centered around emancipatory education, which draws from critical

theory, feminist pedagogy, and post-structuralist theories, to develop pedagogical practices that foster emancipatory learning. The major assumptions underlying these practices are empowerment, teacher as learner, joint knowledge construction, critical reflection, student voice, and dialogue (Durie 1996; Ellsworth 1989; Hart 1990; Tisdell 1998). Essentially, focus is on the student and their collaborative work. Their particular voice impacts how ideas are shaped and consumed in her classroom. Chantelle scaffolds learning in a nourishing environment. Further, her past and lived-through experiences shape her approaches, choices, and intended outcomes. While keeping that on mind, she does not forget that a caring and a valuing environment where all "funds of knowledge" of each student is welcomed are crucial for her classroom.

Chantelle's teaching incorporated several components that were evident while I was observing:

Warm-Up Activities: Beginning activities preparing students for the topic of the day. Questions, Articles, or TV programs.

Readings: Literature discussions, that encourage students to reflect and analyze across different texts and engage in group work.

Group Work: Paired activities to foster cooperative learning, and present to class. I will talk, elaborate more on these components with couple of examples in the following section.

Warm-up activities. Chantelle begins each class with essential questions that focus on various aspects of learning that students should reflect on and write in their daily writing journals. Usually they are written in the left corner of her blackboard indicating as well the date for the day. The questions usually are centered around critical subject

matters that cover variety of topics related to the content of the day. Such questions include student's ideas and knowledge of themselves, socio-political and democratic issues emanating from the topic of the day. Chantelle's introductory questions are essential prior to connect to their own understanding and self-awareness of the topic, the text or group work. Chantelle's questions at the beginning provide for what Rosenblatt (2000) refers to as the beginning of the journey of transactional experience involving any number of personal, textual, and contextual factors that will result in a certain reading of material by the reader at a certain time in his or her life. Further, as a reader, you are not a passive participant, but an active constructor of meaning (Macedo, D.(1997) p. 3). Critical scholars such as Donaldo Macedo believe that exhibiting an inquisitive, "critical" attitude towards what one reads will make anything one reads richer and more useful to oneself in ones classes and ones life. Such is significantly achieved by Chantelle through engaging with text and making text meaningful for the student.

One day, for instance, Chantelle captures the interest of her students by trying to connect the question to the readings of Shakespeare's' Macbeth. Chantelle's essential question is, "One of the organizing themes of *Macbeth* is the theme of manliness, what do we really mean when we use the word in praising someone? Explain." Chantelle wants their initial reaction before starting to write in their daily journals. When students are inviting to share their opinions, this eventually creates a dialogue among the students where I noticed Chantelle listens and gives additional prompts to think about. Such as: "Why don't we use the word womenness?" After having listened to different perspectives in the class they start writing about these questions. This time Chantelle has later the chance to see how much of an impact the collegial discussion among their peers made in

order reflect on their questions. Other times, Chantelle wants them to create a small scene out of the text on their own and creatively to act it out in front of the class. During my observations, I noticed that students were very pleased by demonstrating their personal skills of acting. They felt much more connected to the text and Chantelle often would get better responses to her questions: “How would you feel if that happened to you?” Chantelle engages the student in critical questions and captures students interests by letting them interact among each other and carefully think through the assignments. She scaffolds consciously their success and monitors their learning through their daily writings.

Readings. Literature readings were also a component of Chantelle’s teaching. Although, limited in her time she had started her own curriculum choosing her own books. In her book selections Chantelle paid attention that her book compromised lots of multicultural perspectives. Usually, the book talk sessions, which lasted 60 minutes, fostered the interest of her students that reflected "the diverse life experiences, traditions, histories, values, world views, and perspectives of the diverse cultural groups that make up a society" (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 185). I noticed also that her book list consisted of one gay literature. When I asked Chantelle what she thinks of “Am I blue” she answered without hesitation: “It is part of my diversity selection, and I love it.” Taxel (1995) describes a trend toward addressing "the interests, concerns, and experiences of individuals and groups considered outside of the sociopolitical and cultural mainstream of American society". (p. 155) Interest has also grown in children's books with accurate, respectful portrayals of gay/lesbian people, women, people with disabilities, and religions other than Christianity. (p. 155) Chantelle’s choice of literacy selection includes most of

Taxel's (1995) description of the trends. In her classroom, Chantelle sits as part of the circle with the students and everybody faces each other when the discuss their readings. It is very important for Chantelle that students recognize that she is not only the instructor but also one additional person part of the classroom. Book talks usually start with Chantelle's remarks of what they found interesting and what kinds of details they want to share with the class. Her approach is congruent with Rosenblatt's (1939/1995) transactional theory where starting with student's impressions and feelings as opposed to mere information is called an aesthetic stance- the reading of literature from one's own personal experiences and impressions. Chantelle remarks,

> I really want my students to feel like the character Francisco in a Day's Work. They can only do that if there is something they can relate to. Even if they mention small details like that they like the pictures and the language. At least I know that there is something which sparks interest. (Interview, 10/10/05)

I noticed also that at times Chantelle was just sitting and listening to the discussions of her students, sometime nodding and valuing the information what they have been talking. This type of approach is highly student-centered which goes with the Freirean understanding and includes also constructivist beliefs such as the professor only intervening when necessary but most work is carried out by the students. Langer (1995) notes:

> That such class interaction and sharing the ideas legitimates students as thinkers in their classrooms and unhesitant invites them to further develop their understandings. students take ownership for their own developing ideas; they use the knowledge they came to school with to make sense, observe others, and seek assistance when they think they need it. (p. 57)

When students realize that they have the role of leading the discussions it helps them to gain more self confidence and assist their learning process. Also, different perspectives in schema help them to develop and see different angles from their classmates. Thus, the

focus is on the students rather on Chantelle, which helps them to advance their own understandings.

I would like to describe one class session in order to show how a book club talk operates, for the book *A Day's Work* by Eve Bunting (1994). This particular day, students start the discussion by asking Chantelle about the title of the book and the picture on the front cover. A student makes jokes about the boy on the picture, Chantelle does not listen to her and takes on the discussion to ask more questions regarding the title and the picture. After couple of responses, Chantelle invites the students to imagine what the book is going to be about and discuss this with their partners. Afterwards, student share their discussions and Chantelle starts reading the book. Chantelle remarks,

> I want them to really think about each detail of the book. The title, the pictures, their imaginations. Yep, their imaginations are really important to me. It really tells me how much they connect. (Interview, 10/10/05)

I believe that it is important to summarize the reading as it is important in order to understand the responses of the students:

When *A Day's Work* begins, Francisco and his grandfather stand with other day laborers in a parking lot, waiting for work. Francisco is a boy of indeterminate age, perhaps between 8 and 10. In the second paragraph, he reveals three facts to this group of strangers: first, that his father has died, leaving his family in financial trouble; second, that his grandfather has recently arrived in the United States to help them; and third, that he plans to use his own English skills to help his Spanish-speaking grandfather find work.

Without telling his grandfather, Francisco decides to lie to a potential employer about his grandfather's skill as a gardener. He and his grandfather hurry to the employer's van, and the boy pushes away another man who tries to get in with them. The employer, Ben, takes them to an embankment to pull weeds and drives away. The two work all day

in the hot sun. As they are congratulating themselves on a beautiful job, Ben returns and is outraged to find that they have pulled all his ice plants and left the weeds. Over Francisco's protests, Abuelo offers to repair the damage and remove the weeds without pay. Ben sees that Abuelo is honorable, allows them to come back the next day, and hints that he might hire the grandfather for more than just day labor.

After having read, Chantelle asks the students what they think of this piece. Laura, a student who always leads the group discussions, explicitly states that it is describing a story what we already know about Mexicans. Chantelle looks very quickly to me and smiles. I think it was a smile referring to a "AHA" enlightment. Chantelle goes further "What do you know about Mexican Americans?" (Interview, 9/24/05) Chantelle affirms that it is important to understand what message an author may be suggesting, especially as he or she uses literary devices, and what motivates a character that advances a storyline. Then she remarks to think of the stereotypes we have and if they are replicated in this piece. She states:

> *A Day's Work* is entirely in English, with the exception of the words abuelo, senora, gracias, bueno, and two two-word phrases. The text refers to Abuelo's having come from Mexico but does not really specify what part of the country. There is some reference to the tortillas Francisco's mother sends for their lunches and to the chorizo the boy wants to buy with their earnings. And then Abuelo praises Francisco's English skills. So What? We see the kind of role reversal many immigrant families experience, in which a child who is able to speak English becomes a go-between for the family and the dominant culture. One also sees the boy taking the lead in finding work, to the point where he lies and pushes away a full-grown man in order to get it. Although Francisco's mother is mentioned, readers see and hear only males in this representation of Mexican Americans—hard-working manual laborers. (Interview, 10/10/05)

While reiterating her personal understanding about this book I noticed that her thoughts go along with major critical theorist such as Ira Shor, McLaren, and Paulo Freire

regarding questioning text and trying to pinpoint what the author's message is. Ira Shor (1999) describes what critical literacy is:

> Critical literacy thus challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative paths for self and social development. This kind of literacy--words rethinking worlds, self dissenting in society--connects the political and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity. Critical literacy, then, is an attitude towards history, as Kenneth Burke (1984) might have said, or a dream of a new society against the power now in power, as Paulo Freire proposed (Shor and Freire, 1987), or an insurrection of subjugated knowledges, in the ideas of Michel Foucault (1980), or a counter-hegemonic structure of feeling, as Raymond Williams (1977) theorized, or a multicultural resistance invented on the borders of crossing identities, as Gloria Anzaldua (1990) imagined, or language used against fitting unexceptionably into the status quo, as Adrienne Rich (1979) declared. (p. 14)

From this perspective, *literacy* is understood as social action through language use that develops us as agents inside a larger culture, while *critical literacy* is understood as "learning to read and write as part of the process of becoming conscious of one's experience as historically constructed within specific power relations" (Anderson and Irvine, 82). Consequently, Chantelle's question, "What do you know about Mexican Americans?," leads in some way to question, "How have you been shaped by society to think that way? Chantelle understands language use as a social force constructing us, and she is trying to find ways how to teach oppositional discourses to understand the rationale behind. She describes:

> I want them to really analyze what kind of text they are reading and what kind of message the author want to give us. If I have students who can relate to the characters in the text- I know then they really can relate and talk about their feelings when reading such a book. (Interview, 09/27/05)

Chantelle believes that personal story-telling is one way how each individuals perception is valued and emphasized. In addition, Chantelle knows that students really want to share if they can relate to the character in the text. As most critical race theorist support the use

of storytelling as it privileges the voices of "the other" (Lynn, Yoss, Solorzano, & Parker, 2002), Chantelle may also be creating a learning environment that is on a more personal level.

Group work. Related to the topic of the study, Chantelle always created group work assignments. These assignments include a variety of peer discussions, writing tasks, readers' theatre, crafting, internet, technology-based activities and creative ones. As Chantelle realizes the more she involves the students personally to the writing activities the more are they engaged into the topic. With *A Day's Work* reading students had a variety of task to do within a group. On this special day, students needed to create 3-4 people within a group and needed to choose one topic out of four listed on the blackboard. One group needed to do research about the Latino community regarding their increase within the US, and what type of Latino leaders there are including the Women. Another group needed to role plays certain parts and add on their own creativity at one point. Another group needed to create discussion questions that critically analyze the text. And others were having discussions about certain questions Chantelle wrote on the board. In any group students were asked to present their discussions orally and/or visually for the class. Each presentation became interactive and all the others were able to discuss and share. Some of the students were reading aloud their answers to the questions. By sharing their written portion to the question they literally open up their own opinions about the text, Chantelle tries to connect her students to the text. As priory mentioned her motive is congruent with the transactional theory of Rosenblatt (1939/1995). The students' answers lend credence to an interpretive reading and that in turn lays meaning within the readers and their transactions with the text.

The sharing of all work within the group expands different perspectives to the same reading. Consequently, students are exposed to different work habits and create a unique environment were all the individuals get to know them better. While this is not veraciously a crucial part of a language arts curriculum, it certainly helps to combat stereotypes and create an environment were differences in cultural backgrounds are welcomed.

On another occasion Chantelle gives the students the opportunity to reiterate through any kind of media a selected passage of Macbeth. Chantelle remarks:

> By giving them the opportunity to choose how they want to portray themselves I really can see how they really want to learn. It is amazing to see the variety of ideas. For instance, Cindy, she usually never talks always has great ideas through Hip Hop music. (Interview, 10/27/05)

Chantelle uses these kinds of activities for a plethora of reasons. First, to asses the knowledge of their readings, their analysis skills, their preference of presentation, and their ability to be creative. Chantelle's assessment of the students' work stems always back to a cooperative discussion of the whole class. Thus, it is not only based on her own assessment.

At the end, students discuss and reflect about the different presentations and give feedback if necessary. Students are engaged and are highly active in presenting their own stance. Clearly, Chantelle knows how to approach to the individual student and how to accommodate their learning. Generally, her approaches within her language arts class is rooted in her past and her persistent nature to help minorities, what suits best for each student, and be critical in the way how she teaches. Chantelle has created a vivid environment, where different voices are important to listen to, where she creates task that

are meaningful for the students, and where each individual is accommodated according to their learning needs.

The themes persistency and the learning environment, serve to frame her nature to keep up her goals, such as supporting minorities within an intellectual environment. Although, her intellectual goals for her students are in some way restricted within the scripted program, she still enjoys a student-centered, scaffolded, highly thoughtful and creative learning environment.

Lara Cekirdek

A Day in the Life of Lara Cekirdek

Each teaching day for Lara Cekirdek starts out differently at Max Planck comprehensive school. She normally arrives around 7.30 am to prepare and organize her classes that day. In Germany, teachers do not stay in the classrooms the whole day; they have a teachers' room where they can go, talk to other faculty and do all preparation from there. Lara usually copies in the faculty room, which is a long walk from the building where she teaches. Also, she does not always teach in the same room. As teachers do not have their own classrooms, they change rooms depending on the grade they teach. Thus, the students do not come to the teacher; the teacher goes to them.

On this morning, after having copied her class assignments for the day, we sit together in the faculty lounge and have a coffee before going to class. Lara usually talks and shares her thoughts with the other Turkish teacher; they speak in Turkish. Thus, the other teachers do not understand what they are talking about. She does not do that on purpose, as she code-switches from one language to the other.

Generally, I noticed that Lara's mornings start with lots of activities. She never has breakfast and never checks her emails or her paper mail to see if she has received any important information. She usually is very fast in organizing her day. She prepares and thinks through her ideas extensively before class starts. Also, during her morning times I noticed that Lara never uses the computer. At school, she does not have time for it and, in any case, it is always running very slowly. However, that does not mean that she does not use the computer for her classes; she always prepares from home, extensively researching lesson plans and activities related to her classroom topic. It is 7:55 am and Lara looks at the time table one last time to verify in which classroom she is teaching. We walk together through the break hall outside and while walking, I notice that lots of Turkish students greet her in Turkish and admire her dress while responding to them with: "Tesekkürler" (=Thank you, in Turkish). She blushes a little and says nothing in response. Arriving at the classroom, everybody is already seated; simultaneously all the students say with a very load voice: "Good Morning, Mrs. Cekirdek." Class is somewhat noisy; Lara is trying to calm them down and indicates to particular students to be silent. Normal teaching days begin with reviewing homework. Students need to take out their homework and the textbook and Lara goes around and checks their work. Afterwards they all share their assignments together in class.

That particular teaching day was devoted for grammar only. Students were starting to learn about the active and passive voice. Lara opened up the textbook and tried to introduce the topic. While explaining the differences between the active voice and the passive voice, Lara was at the same time finding examples to write on the blackboard. She asked a student to explain one more time what he understood. Other students

continued to make noise. Lara reminded them to be silent. While she was saying that, she looked at me; I could tell that she was a little embarrassed and perhaps did not want the class to behave that way in front of me. Class continued with several tasks from the book to practice the new grammar. She wanted the students to work on their own and gave them almost 10 minutes for each task. Afterwards, they shared their results together and Lara corrected them if necessary. The bell eventually rang, and Lara wrote on the blackboard what the students had to do for their homework. She stated: "Vergesst nicht eure Hausaufgaben zusätzlich in euer Hausaufgabenheft zuschreiben. Ich werde es kontrollieren und sicher gehen, dass ihr sie dort hineingeschrieben habt." [Don't forget to write the homework as well in your homework notebook. I will check and make sure that you wrote it in there.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

Lara mentions after class that she is still finding new ways to create a much more valuable and creative grammar session. She checks the technology and feels the students' boredom and lack of enthusiasm when she discusses grammar. As her day progresses, Lara continues on with the routine lesson plan for that day, and at lunch time we go together to the cafeteria to have a hot chocolate: "Did you miss drinking German hot chocolate?" I respond: "Certainly." Lunch time takes about one hour. Again all faculties meet in their lounge and share with one another their lesson plans and the days' happenings. Lara communicates with an older colleague who is about to retire. They exchange some ideas on how to teach the active and passive voices.

The final class of the day follows the same agenda as the one before, but the intensity of grammar instruction varies depending on the grade level. Her books, too, are

different depending on the grade level. She ends the last class with a smiling face and reminds the students not to forget to do their homework for the following day.

Personal Background

Being left behind in Turkey for a while by her parents, and attending school in Turkey for two years in her youth, have left some dark nuances and painful emotions in her personality. As a matter of fact, she actually felt embittered and could not understand how her parents could leave her with her grandparents in their hometown in Turkey. The rationale was mainly due to their work. As her mother worked even on the weekends, and her father equally lacked the time to care for her, leaving Lara with her grandmother was the only feasible solution. While telling me of her past, I could tell from her facial expressions that this topic is still an uncomfortable one to talk about.

When recalling her childhood an experience living in Turkey, Lara remembers the strict education and rigid rules of her grandparents. Growing up in the suburbs of Eskişehir, girls were bound to specific cultural traditions within Turkish customs. For instance, she remembers the dress code at the school she went to and the way how girls needed to act among people in society according to her grandmother. She recalls,

> Es war ganz anders zu begreifen, dass wir Dress-Codes hatten und jeder musste die gleiche Kleidung tragen. Schwarze Anzüge mit weißen Hemden für Männer und schwarze Röcke, die bis unter die Knie gingen, mit weißen Hemden für die Mädchen. Kein Nagellack oder irgendeine Art von Accessoire. Und die Haare waren zu einem Pferdeschwanz gebunden. Ich erinnere mich, es war schwierig für mich, weil ich diese Art von Dress-Code, zurück in Deutschland, nicht gewohnt war. Ich habe niemals gefragt wieso, aber es erschien mir fremd! Ebenso war ich nicht fähig unter Freunden und Nachbarn laut zu lachen. Meine Großmutter pflegte mir zu sagen, dass diese Art von Benehmen nur “wertlose“ Mädchen haben. Ich habe mich oft gefragt was sie meint. Allerdings erinnere ich mich wie von mir verlangt wurde zu sitzen, immer die Knie überschlagen.

> [It was very different to realize that we had dress codes and everybody had to wear the same clothing. Black suits with white shirts for men and black skirts longer then the knee with white shirts for girls. No nail color or any kind of accessory. And the hairs were bound to a pony-tail. I remember that it was awkward for me as I was not used to this kind of dress code back in Germany. I never asked why but it seemed strange. Also, I was not able to loudly laugh among friends and neighbors. My grandmother used to tell me that these kinds of behavior only "cheap" girls do. I always wondered back then what she meant. Certainly, I remember how I was supposed to sit, always both knees on top of each other.] (Interview, 08/15/2005)

Certainly, without knowing what these rules meant back at that time, and seeing that each girl was behaving "according to the rule", Lara could did not question her own situation and was just obeying her grandmother and the school policy. She was young and certainly accepted to the general society's rules about certain behavior of woman. Egyptian feminist Nawal El Saddawi (1980) finds that the oppression faced by women is 'not essentially due to religious ideologies . . . but derives its roots from the class and patriarchal system'. (p. 110) Islamic history paints a picture of pre-Islamic society where women's sexuality is 'chaotic, all-embracing, rampant promiscuity whose essence is woman's self determination' (Mernissi, 1987, p. 166). Therefore, the male is left with a lack of initiative, and is unable to control relationships through a position of privilege. Such fears are usually behind the construction of Muslim sex roles, which find their basis in the assumption that proper social order relies on the curtailment of female sexuality. Lara is in some way how Saddawi describes oppressed by society to conform according to the rules of a machistic society. She points out that she feels "strange" compared to her prior German experiences but she adheres to the rules without questioning. It may be that her age prevents her thoughtfully examining her situation and as each women conforms in a similar way nothing seems awkward. By the time she got used to the Turkish societal rules and got comfortable with her grandmothers' Turkish customs. During that time she

was talking over the phone with her parents but always felt neglected and cold to her mum. She states: “Ich habe mich immer gefragt. Wie konnten sie mich in der Türkei zurücklassen?” [I always asked myself. How could they leave me in Turkey?] (Interview, 08/15/2005) Her facial gestures portray an immediate sadness when asking this question. Clearly, Lara has not forgotten her pain and she still remembers how she felt. Most cognitive psychologists agree that painful memories in the past are hard to forget (Bartlett, F. C. (1932); Heller, M. F.,(1986). They name them flashbulb memories, memories that include lots of emotional pain and most people remember each detail what, how and where they have experienced it. Lara, although, very young, was disappointed to be neglected and truly remembers how she felt. She recalls,

> Ich bin jetzt schwanger. Ich kann mir nicht vorstellen in der Lage zu sein mein Baby alleine, in einem total anderem Land, zu lassen. Wie um alles in der Welt war meine Mutter fähig das zu tun? Ich habe von dem Erlebnis noch immer innerlichen Schmerz und Hass gegen meine Mutter. Mehr gegen meine Mutter als gegen meinen Vater. Sie wissen nicht wie viel Schaden sie angerichtet haben. Ich erinnere mich an die meisten Kindheitserlebnisse in der Türkei. Obwohl es nur für zwei Jahre war, es war sehr hart für mich von meinen Eltern verlassen zu werden und mich einem neuen Umfeld, einer neuen Kultur und Tradition anzupassen.
>
> [I am pregnant now. I cannot imagine being able to leave my baby in a totally different country. How on earth was my mum able to do that? I still experience internal pain and hatred to my mum. More to my mum then to my dad. They don’t know how much damage they did. I remember most of my childhood experiences in Turkey. Although it only was for two years, it was very hard for me to be left by my parents and to adapt to a new environment, culture and tradition.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

After having stayed for two years during elementary school in Turkey, Lara returned to Germany. She was afraid and did not know how she could handle another change of locations and cultures. Additionally, she still was embittered and could not feel connected to her parents. It was a hard time to go through and, according to Lara; she

actually did not want to return to Germany. Her new place and mother country was now Turkey. She remarks,

> Ich erinnere mich, nicht wieder zurück nach Deutschland gewollt zu haben. Ich hatte mich tatsächlich an meinen Freunden, meiner Schule und meinen Großeltern angepasst. Und ich wollte meine Familie gar nicht sehen. Wie konnte ich bloß zeigen, dass ich Kälte für sie empfinde? Und ich konnte nicht glauben, dass sie mich in der Türkei zurück gelassen hatten. Alles war ein derartiger emotionaler Kampf. Aber eine neue Lebensreise hat für mich nun begonnen.
>
> [I remember not wanting to return to Germany. I really got used to my friends, school and my grandparents. And I really did not want to see my family. How could I just pretend that I felt cold to them? And I could not believe that they left me back then in Turkey. Everything was such an emotional battle. But a new life journey for me started again.] (Interview, 08/15/2005)

During the time her parents left her in Turkey, she claims that she became frustrated and missed her parents. She went through an adjustment period when she started to grammar school in Germany. She spoke no German and struggled at the beginning. In the transcription below, Lara discusses her adaptation time and how she grew up and became the person she is today:

> Meine Mutter war 18 Jahre alt, als sie meinen Vater nach Deutschland gebracht hatte. Sie hatte in der Küche gearbeitet und mein Vater hat Gemüse als Landwirt verkauft. Meine Mutter hat sehr hart gearbeitet; sie hatte zwei verschiedene Jobs am Tag. Deshalb konnten sie nicht auf mich aufpassen und sie schickten mich, bis zu meinem 10. Geburtstag, zu meiner Großmutter. Ich ging zwei Jahre lang in der Türkei zur Grundschule. Ich fühlte eine starke Bindung zu meiner Heimatstadt in der Türkei und am Anfang hatte ich keine gute Beziehung zu meinen Eltern. Ich war irgendwie frustriert.
>
> [My mum was 18 years old when she brought my dad to Germany. She was working in the kitchen and my dad was selling vegetables as a farmer. My mum was working very hard; she had two different positions during the day. Therefore, they could not take care of me and they sent me to my grandparents until my 10th age to Turkey. I went two years of elementary school in Turkey. I felt a strong bond with my hometown in Turkey and at the beginning I did not have a good relationship to my parents. I was kind of frustrated.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

Before entering grammar school in Germany, Lara never realized that she would feel uncomfortable, struggle with the German language, and, more importantly, have difficulty adapting to the German culture. Lara states: "Jetzt geht's wieder los, ähnliche Erfahrungen noch einmal!" [Here we go again, similar experiences one more time!] (Interview, 08/15/05) Now having been accustomed to Turkish values and traditions it was very hard for a young female to adjust one more time to a new culture and new school. Turkish values and Turkish schooling is very different than the German one. For instance, in Germany men and women are regarded as equal. In Turkish law that is the case, too. However, if you observe the people there are still major differences in the treatment of women and men. Depending on the regional location or family views it can change from not being allowed to attend school as a female until being able to live with one's boyfriend. Thus, Lara having lived only two years in Turkey this experience has already made a great impact on her cognitive development. Female and male differences were already visible for her in early years. Essentially, the early years of development until pre-teen life are critical ones. To switch from one culture into the other without really having adapted one yet, can have serious consequences for the development (Daniels, M.C., (2005). Lara may be experiencing this dilemma, as she was still establishing her own self and may be probably confused to which culture she belongs and should relate with. It is not only a painful memory but also a hard adaptation process she is going through.

In spite of it, Lara claims to have been an enthusiastic learner. She does not recall her parents ever encouraging her in school. In fact, Lara states, "Obwohl meine Familie alles getan hat um mich zu entmutigen, dass ich studiere, gab ich nicht auf! Es war der

einzige Weg, wie ich selbstständig aufstehen konnte." [Although my family did everything to discourage me studying, I did not give up! It was the only way how I could stand up on my own.] (Interview, 12/05/05) Yet, Lara claims that one of her favorite activities as a child was to read a lot, but the inspiration for such did not come from her recollection of influential teachers. She states,

> Ich erinnere mich, dass ich sehr nah an einer Bücherei gewohnt habe. Eines Tages hat mich eine Freundin, Sandra, gefragt, ob ich nicht mit ihr hingehen möchte. Ich wusste nicht, ob ich es wirklich mögen würde. Aber, als ich realisiert habe, dass ich Kassetten und Bücher umsonst ausleihen konnte, wollte ich gehen. Einmal in der Woche lieh ich 3-4 Bücher aus. Mein Lieblingsbuch war: „Die Wassermänner". Interessanterweise hatte ich nicht mal ein positives Erlebnis mit einem Lehrer, dass mich angespornt hatte zu lesen oder so. Ich habe es selbst gemacht. Vielleicht sollte ich Sandra danken. Die meisten Lehrer haben nicht darauf geachtet, ob ich lese oder nicht. So weit ich mich erinnere haben sie nie wirklich meine Eltern gefragt, wie es mir geht und sie haben sich nie erkundigt über etwas, was ich gerne machen möchte. Es hat irgendwie meine Gefühle verletzt. Ich denke der Hauptgrund war, dass ich türkisch bin.
>
> [I remember living very close to a library. One day a friend- Sandra- asked me to go with her. I did not know if I really would like it. But, then realizing that I could borrow tapes and books for free, I wanted to go. Once a week I borrowed 3-4 books. My favorite ones were "Die Wassermann." Interestingly, enough I did not have one positive experience with a teacher that encouraged me reading or so. I did it on my own. Perhaps I should thank Sandra. Most teachers really did not care if I read or not. As I recall, they never really asked my parents how I did and they never enquired about anything what I liked to do. It hurt in some way my feelings. I think the main reason was because I was Turkish.] (Interview, 12/15/05)

Lara soon realized after middle school that she went through an adaptation process trying to learn the German language and the German culture, and certainly in making abrupt changes between educational systems. Apart from trying to get used to her parents again, she felt also that her professors did not understand her cultural background and the transition she was working through. She went to a primarily German grammar school, which is the highest and most difficult of German schools. She had no instruction

in Turkish culture or language. Everything she needed to learn was a totally new concept and she struggled a lot at the beginning. As there were hardly any immigrants at the school, being Turkish was not regarded as being from a different culture, so that additional instruction in a student's native language of the student was considered unnecessary. Lara went through difficult times and tried to adapt as quickly as possible. After some time she felt more comfortable.

Though she nowadays seems confident about her relationships with Germans (her students and others), she still recalls certain experiences related to her background. Until high school she never experienced anything painful for being a Turkish minority, as she was mostly living in her primary school years in Turkey. By the time she started grammar school, in sixth grade; she was living in a mainly German environment and attending a predominantly German school. Trying to adapt to a new educational system, friends and language was hard at the beginning.

Being among mainly German neighbors, though, and living in a socioeconomic milieu similar to other German children, she tried to adjust to her new environment. At the same time, however, grammar school brought the realization that she was different, had been raised differently from other German children. For instance, she was initially not allowed to go on week-long class trips other cities; she was not allowed to date; and she was not allowed to go out in the evening to parties with German friends. Her parents were afraid that she would get "Germanized" and would forget Turkish traditions and customs. Her German friends kept asking her why she would not resist her parents, and act upon her own decisions. Lara repeatedly told them that such resistance was difficult. In the Turkish culture girls and boys, but especially girls, are usually taught to listen to

their parents and cannot just do whatever they want. Realizing the differences in the rights and customs of German girls, and knowing that she could not engage in the same activities as her peers, made her understand that, whatever her friends and schooling, she was not German. Her personal environment and the way she was raised were not comparable to a German girl's. In many ways she was restricted and constrained to obey her parents. Thus, although she almost never had any overt problems with her friends and in her school environment, being Turkish she struggled internally. She believes that living in two different worlds and systems of understanding, led her to emerge as a rebel. She no longer wanted to listen to and do whatever her parents wanted her to do. Her German friends understood but could not see why Lara would not act upon on her nascent, internal rebellion. She states,

> Das erste mal, dass ich erkannt habe, dass ich anders als Andere bin, war natürlich auf dem Gymnasium. Ich hatte versucht mich dem neuen, deutschen Umfeld und natürlich der Sprache anzupassen. Es war hart und schwierig. Ich hatte keine Hilfe; dort waren kaum Ausländer oder andere türkischen Studenten. Wir lebten in einem nur überwiegend deutschem Umfeld. Niemand hat mich jemals ermutigt; ich musste die ganze Arbeit alleine machen. Mein Eltern waren nicht gut in der deutschen Sprache, beide nicht, so musste ich mich hinsetzten und lernen. Ich bin abseits und anders als deutschen Mädchen aufgewachsen, ich durfte nicht zu Feiern gehen und keine Jungen treffen und natürlich, wir haben wöchentliche Schulausflüge gemacht, haben meine Eltern mir nicht erlaubt mitzugehen. Ich realisierte, dass obwohl ich versuchte mich dem neuen Umfeld anzupassen, meine Herkunft und eigentliche Kultur verschieden waren. Ich wollte es nicht verstehen, aber ich musste.
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> [The first time I noticed that I am different than others was of course in grammar school. I was trying to adapt to the new German environment and certainly the language. It was hard and difficult. I did not have any support; there were hardly migrants or other Turkish students. We lived only in a predominantly German environment. No one ever encouraged me; There was one instance where I felt so discouraged and at the same time it opened up my eyes. One teacher, Frau Ehrlich always corrected my German if I wanted to talk. I hardly had time to think. She kept pointing at another person without letting me even think. I needed to do all work on my own. My parents were not good in the German language, either, so I

> had to sit down and study. Apart from differently raised than German girls, I was not allowed to go to parties and date boys and, of course, anytime we were going on weekly school trips, my parents did not want me to go. I realized, although I was trying to adapt in the new environment, my background and original culture were different. I did not want to understand but I had to.] (Interview, 12/05/05)

Her broken relationship to her parents, her being left alone going through a new adaptation process in a totally new culture, her trying to find friends, and most importantly realizing that Frau Ehrlich did not give her a chance in German comprised a difficult period. However, it made her learn two different cultures and experience it as a female from two different ways. It seems like that she needed to learn how to "code-switch" from one culture to the other.

Lara also told me about her family and the way she was raised. Since neither parent was educated, they could not provide her with much information or feedback regarding education. They actually did not want her to pursue her education as they wanted her to financially assist them as soon as possible. Lara grew up what today's German people might consider a typical Turkish *Gastarbeiter* family, that carry out traditional and conservative values of Turkish culture. Most German views on Turkish families are superficial and are based on observative aspects within the German society. For instance, most Germans believe that Turkish woman are suppressed and are not allowed the same rights like Turkish men. And most females are most of the time housewives and do not support the household. Based on a study how Germans perceive Turkish people in Germany, it was mainly mentioning this major differences, that is that Turkish females are suppressed and do not have equal rights (Hotaman, S, 2003). Lara may have been viewed that way at the beginning from her classmates when starting at the

grammar school. Being unfamiliar with German traditions and not being able to speak the language may also have increased cultural misunderstandings. Lara states,

> Ich habe mich alleine gefühlt und konnte mich meinen Klassenkameraden nicht anschließen. Stellst du dir das vor? Ich konnte mich nicht wirklich mit ihnen verständigen. Ich konnte sie nicht zu mir nachhause einladen und ich fühlte mich soooo alleine. Alle meine Freunde waren in der Türkei. Alles war anders. Schule, meine Kollegen, die Lehrer, das Umfeld, alles. Darüber hinaus war natürlich meine Familie anders. Ich war noch immer nicht glücklich mit meinen Eltern, weil sie mich für eine lange Zeit in der Türkei gelassen hatten. Glücklicherweise war ich in der Lage mich mit der Zeit zu integrieren und lernte Freunde kennen. Ich ging hauptsächlich zu deutschen Schulen und war immer eine der einzigen, der Kinder mit ausländischer Abstammung, in der Klasse. Ich lernte von früh auf, dass ich dachte und mich geistig wie ein deutsches Mädchen verhalte; obwohl ich zuhause traditionell aufgewachsen bin und ich nicht die gleichen Dinge tun konnte wie meine deutschen Freunde. Ich durfte zum Beispiel nie einen Freund haben. Ich hab das nie verstanden.
>
> [I felt lonely and could not connect to my classmates. Imagine it? I could not communicate really with them. I could not invite them to my home and was felt soooo lonely. All my friends were in Turkey. Everything was different. School, my peers, the teachers, the environment everything. On top of everything of course my family was different. I still was not happy with my parents because they left me for a long time in Turkey. Luckily, I was able to integrate by time and was connecting to friends. I mainly went to German schools was always one of the only migrant descent children in the class. I learned from early on, that I thought and intellectually acted like a German girl; however, I was traditionally raised at home and could not do similar things like my German friends. For instance, I was not allowed to have a boyfriend. I never understood that.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

Lara was experiencing what a leading scholar Calvero Oberg (1954) calls a cultural shock. Not being able to connect and feeling like a stranger made her realize that she was different. Further not being able to speak the language puts further a strenuous component to adjust to the new environment. Lara was realizing it and was feeling lonely.

Lara has a brother who is 6 years younger. They were raised by two high school-educated and unskilled working parents, who speak broken German. Her father worked in

various positions from different warehouse positions up to clerk positions in a supermarket. He hardly spent time with his family and kept working even at the weekends in order to save money. Their parents' goals were congruent with other Turkish families in Germany- to save money and to go back to Turkey at one point. It is in some way comparable with the Mexican situation in the United States. However, similarly, immigrant families forget that their children grow up in a society where they carry similar values and customs. Therefore, most minority or migrant children prefer staying and not returning back- either to Turkey or Mexico (Landner, M., 2007).

Lara's mother also worked in various odd jobs; cleaning at department stores, help at airports, etc... Saving money was always the most important aspect what Lara remembers growing up. She recalls,

> Ich sah meine Eltern kaum. Wir haben uns nie wirklich unterhalten. Sie haben mir nie mit meinen Hausaufgaben geholfen. Sie haben nie etwas gefragt. Sie waren immer damit beschäftigt auszurechnen wie viel sie noch sparen müssen, bis sie ein Haus in der Türkei kaufen können. Wir wahrten Lebensmittel bei *Aldi* und *Lidl* zu kaufen. Gerade mit Essen sparten wir eine Menge. Meine Eltern hatten manchmal mehrere Stellen auch an den Wochenenden. Ich musste mich immer um das Essen und den Haushalt kümmern. Und natürlich musste ich auf meinen Bruder achten.
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> [I hardly saw my parents. We really never talked. They never helped me with my homework. They never asked anything. They always were busy calculating how much they still need to save until they can buy a home in Turkey. We kept buying groceries always at *Aldi* and *Lidl.* Even with food we saved a lot. My parents sometimes had multiple positions even on the weekends. I always had to take care of the cooking and the household. And certainly I needed to take care of my brother.] (Interview, 12/05/2005)

Lara mentioned that she did not receive any support from her family, either growing up or during college. Additionally, her parents were occupied just with saving money. Since she was the only girl in the family, her mother always expected her to help take care of

her brother and tutor him. Her work duties and her non-supportive family created a rebellious behavior. She did not want to listen anymore. She comments,

> Heranwachsend realisierte ich, dass ich eine Art Rebell war, obwohl mir meine Mutter mehrere Dinge nicht erlaubt hat, wie spät abends ausgehen mit Freunden, einen Freund haben, kurdische Freunde zu haben. Ich widersetzte mich und ich diskutierte mit ihnen. Glücklicherweise genug, sie hatte nicht so viele türkische Freunde, so war ich froh das sie nicht viel Beeinflusst wurden. Ich denke, ich fühlte mich sehr stark um mein kulturelles Erbe. Und zur gleichen Zeit, durchgehend meiner deutschen Ausbildung, fühlte ich mich sehr sicher und stark weiblich zu sein und fähig zu sein für meine Rechte zu stehen. Ich konnte das nur tun, indem ich weiter studierte.
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> [Growing up I realized that I was kind of a rebel, although my mum did not allow me several things, such as going out late with friends, having a boyfriend, having Kurdish friends. I resisted and I kept discussing with them. Fortunately enough, they did not have so many Turkish friends, so I was lucky they did not get influenced that much. I think I felt very strong about my cultural heritage. And at the same time throughout my German education, I felt very confident and strong of being a female and to be able to stand up for my rights. I could only do that by continuing to study.] (Interview, 08/05/05)

Lara was sure that she wanted to study and get a thorough education so she could earn her own money and be independent. It was her own desire to attend grammar school, the highest level of high-school education in Germany. Neither of her parents supported her desires for schooling, and she received no tutoring—in contrast to her brother. Regardless, she was expected to cook, take care of and tutor her brother. She did not complain at the beginning because she knew her parents would not approve. At some point, she could not bear it anymore and started to rebel. She did not want to continue as she was and provoked her parents by expressing her desires. Although Lara rejected the docility and role that Turkish culture demanded of her, internally she rebelled. She did not want to obey Turkish customs and realized that some of her German sensibilities put her on the spot. Her parents' main goal was to let her study and to eventually become a

good housewife; more broadly, more importantly, they still wanted to be able to control and exert power over her.

At the university, in addition to her studies, she had five jobs and often worked from 8 until 6pm daily. Her parents did not realize that she needed to study as well, so they wanted her to help in the household all the time. It was interesting to see how she handled her personal issues and was still dedicated to pursuing schooling and making enough time to continue studying. Again, her strong personality, motivation, and determination to stand on her own are all apparent.

> Ich hatte nicht viele Gespräche mit meinen Eltern; jedesmal, wenn ich anfing zu reden, hatten wir jede Menge bittere Gespräche. Ich war ein Provokateur und ich wollte nicht einfach dienen, kochen und im Haushalt helfen. Meine Eltern nahmen nie wahr, dass ich studieren musste und es war schwer für mich in 5 Jobs zu arbeiten und noch weiterhin zu studieren. Es wurde einfach erwartet. Mein Bruder dachte nie daran zu arbeiten und sie wollten, dass ich ihn während seiner Ausbildung unterrichte. Es war unfair. Er wurde immer von meinen Eltern unterstützt und verstanden. Die einzige Sache…was meine Eltern wollten, was ich bin, war nicht nur eine gute Studentin, sondern eine gute Hausfrau.
>
> Sie waren manchmal verärgert, dass sie nicht fähig waren, mich zu kontrollieren, so dass ich ihnen immer widersprach. Ich fühlte mich sehr unbeholfen und nicht sicher über mich selbst, weil Leute in der Universität immer dachten, dass ich arrogant bin und nicht mit jemandem sprechen möchte. Ich denke, ich hatte mein Selbst-Mechanismus dort… ich fühlte mich nicht selbstsicher und hatte mit so vielen Problemen zu tun.
>
> [I did not have a lot of communication with my parents; anytime I started to talk we had lots of severe conversations. I was a provocateur and did not want to just serve, cook and help in the house. My parents never realized that I needed to study and it was hard for me to work in five jobs and be able to still continuing to study. It was all the time just expected. My brother, though never needed to work and they wanted me to tutor him throughout his education. It was unfair. He was always supported and understood by my parents. The only thing . . . what my parents wanted me to be was not only a student but be a good housewife. They were sometimes annoyed not to be able to control me as I was always contradicting them. I felt very clumsy and not sure about myself, as people were always thinking that I was arrogant at university and not wanted to

> talk to anyone. I think I had my self mechanism there . . . I felt not confident and I had so many problems to deal with.] (Interview, 12/1205)

Lara' s struggle being of Turkish origin, and her parents wanting her to be and act the Turkish way at home, made her struggle with her identity. She realized that internally she was rebellious and wanted to contradict her parents. It may also be that the German culture and education system also influenced her character and personality. She was aware of the differences between Turkish customs and German customs, and she knew that she needed to adhere to her elders' rules, in which adherence is imperative, and a strong component of the Turkish culture. Lara's crucial decisions from early on demonstrate that in some way she was content with the situation and knew that she needed to do all important decision making for her own life. She thought that she could not learn anything from her parents and started observing how others were pursuing their lives. In particular, she started getting feedback and pieces of advice from her German school friends. Lara states,

> Ich erinnere mich, Christiane fragte mich, ob ich mit ihr in den Urlaub komme. Durch sie realisierte ich, dass mein Alter geeignet war, um mit ihr in den Urlaub zu fahren. Ich meine, es war komplett normal in die Osterferien mit unseren Freunden zu gehen. Wie auch immer, ich weiss, dass es schwer werden würde, es meinen Eltern zu erklären. Sie würden es niemals verstehen. Ich bewunderte meine Freundin. Sie durfte an den Wochenenden mit Freunden ausgehen, sie durfte einen Freund haben und so weiter. Sie sagte mir immer, dass sie es nicht versteht. Warum würde ich sie nicht einfach fragen? Sie verstand offenbar nicht, was es in türkischen Familien hieß, ohne elterlicher Erlaubnis auszugehen. Deutsche Mädchen konnten es wirklich nicht verstehen. Meine Eltern erlaubten mir auch nicht, dass ich kurdische Freunde hatte oder mich in kurdischen Orten aufhielt. Ich durfte spät abends nicht ausgehen und durfte nicht in den Urlaub fahren und auf Klassenfahrten ins Ausland mitmachen. Ich diskutierte immer mit meinen Eltern und si wollten, dass ich ein traditionelles Mädchen bin, dass ihrer Mutter im Haushilft, noch zur Schule geht und gute Noten hat. Obwohl ich immer tat was sie sagen, weil ich es lästig war immer zu streiten, fühlte ich mich innerlich wie ein Rebell. Ich wollte es nicht verstehen und manchmal gehorchte ich! Ich erinnere mich, dass alles während der Schule und der Hochschule von mir

> verlangt wurde und ich musste arbeiten (ich arbeite an 5 Plätzen) und unterrichtete meinen Bruder und half meiner Mutter im Haus. Obendrein war ich trotzdem gut in der Schule. Sie haben sich jedenfalls nicht darum gekümmert, ob ich lerne oder nicht.
>
> [I remember Christiane asking me to go with her to vacation. She made me realize that my age is appropriate to go on vacation with her. I mean, it was completely normal to go to Easter holidays with your friends. However, I knew that it would be hard to explain this to my parents. They would never understand. I admired my friend. She was allowed to go the weekends out with her friends, she was allowed to have a boyfriend and so forth. She always told me that she does not understand. Why wouldn't I just ask them? She obviously did not understand what it meant to go out without parental permission in Turkish families. German girls really could not understand. Also, my parents did not allow me to have Kurdish friends, or hang out in Kurdish locations. I was not allowed to go out late and go to vacations and school travels abroad with my classmates. I always argued with my parents and they always wanted me to be a traditional girl helping her mom at home and be still going to school and having good grades. Although I always did what they said because I was sick of arguing, internally I felt like a rebel. I did not want to understand it and obey sometimes! I remember, everything during school and college was requested from me, and that I needed to work (I worked at 5 places!) and tutor my brother and help my mum in the house. On top of it, be still good at school. They did not care anyways if I studied or not.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara's frustration is evident as she is living between two cultures. She wants to go on vacation with her friend Christiane but realizes that it will not work with her parents. Turkish feminists Seyra Ates, Necla Kelek and Serap Cileli (2005) describe under what constraints Turkish girls live in Germany. Most Turkish girls are living two different lives. Their switch from one persona into the other sometimes makes them realize that they live two different roles. Lara is culturally aware that she is bound to the Turkish traditions at home, but at times she clearly does not want to realize. She appreciates the liberty of her German friend and in some way admires her situation. Thus, she fashions her own ideal to be resistant and rebel against her parents, in which she can be freer with the choice of liberties and activities she want to carry out based on her interests.

Lara realized many times that she does not want to adhere anymore to her parents' rules. She believed that she gave her parents much-needed support around the home, and knew that she needed to stand up to them and make them realize what she wanted from college and in life. However, in my observation of Lara, I noticed that she did not like to be forced into such an early maturity and into assuming the role of an adult. It sometimes bothered her, but for her that was life. She needed to work with it and make the best out of it. With no sense of connection to her parents and no worries over any comments they might make regarding her decisions, Lara feels strong and independent; she decides matters for herself, and plans her career according to her own ideals. Although her parents did not directly guide and support her, neither did they interfere with her schooling, as long as she was adhering to the rules in their house. That is what Lara did until she got married.

Toward a Self Discovery

The rigid control of her parents on Lara's personal life and on her freedom, as well her early realization on that she was rebellious and did not want to adhere to anything her parents demanded with which they did not agree, led her to understand that she was selecting her benefits in life from both cultures. Lara is internally driven by her independence and autonomous analysis of her situation. She clearly knows that her parents were trying to indoctrinate their worldview onto her. Although her German education allowed her to gain independent and critical thinking, her cultural background and nationality both interfered in her development. Clearly, she realized that she was switching back and forth between two different cultures. While being rebellious to some Turkish traditions, her internal need to support migrant students and support the

development of the biggest mosque in Europe was contradicting her rebellious behavior. At some point, she was acknowledging her cultural heritage. She may be torn where she mainly belongs to and intellectually she may also be resistant to see that woman cannot speak up with Turkish values. Lara comments,

> Ich realisiere jetzt, dass ich aktuell zwei Leben lebe. Meine Freunde, die mich wirklich kennen, wie Christiane, sagen mir immer, dass ich emotional, wie ein türkisches Mädchen und intellektuell wie ein deutsches Mädchen bin. Was bedeutet das? Irgendwie, wenn ich drüber nachdenke, ist es ein Vorurteil, das deutsche gegen türkische Leute haben. Weil sie an türkische Frauen denken, die ungebildet und verschleiert sind. Und natürlich bin ich nicht so, dass ist, warum ich deutsch bin! Es ist irgendwie ein Kampf mit dir selbst, um rauszubekommen wozu du gehörst.
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> [I realize now, that I actually live two lives. My friends who really know me like Christiane, they always tell me that I am emotionally like a Turkish girl and intellectually like a German. What does that mean? In some way, if I think about it, it is again a prejudice what Germans have towards Turkish people. Because they think of Turkish woman as uneducated and veiled. And of course I am not that way, that's why I am German! It is in someway a battle with yourself, to figure out where you belong to.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

While acknowledging that she may experience a personal crisis where she belongs to she also was aware of the fact that being Turkish places her at a disadvantage compared to her German friends in society. Lara told me in one instance how her Turkish culture also sometimes asserted a force on her which she could not and did not want to comprehend. She explained:

> Als ich Ilkay, meinen gegenwärtigen Ehemann, traf, hatte ich manchmal auch Schwierigkeiten mit seinen Eltern. Sie kommen aus einer sehr traditionellen Stadt in der Türkei, dort haben normalerweise die Ehemänner im Haus mehr zu sagen. Mein Ehemann ist nicht so; jedoch, seine Eltern waren manchmal sehr streng in ihren Gebräuchen. Ich erinnere mich, als wir einmal in ihrem Haus waren, waren dort auch einige andere Besucher. Frauen und Männer saßen getrennt und natürlich waren in diskussions Punkten nur die Männer am reden und redeten über Politik. In einem Punkt war ich dagegen und erwähnte, dass ich nicht so denke. Jeder war leise und niemand sagte irgendetwas und bloß ich redete weiter. Ich bemerkte, dass es unangebracht war bloß eine Erwähnung zu haben

> oder einem Punkt zu widersprechen. Wieder hatte ich innerlich den Drang mich zu befreien und zu reden was und wann immer ich möchte.
>
> [When I met Ilkay my current husband, I had sometimes also difficulties with his parents. They come from a very traditional city in Turkey, where usually the husband has more to say in the house. My husband is not that way; however, his parents were very strong in their customs sometimes. I remember, when we were at their house one time there were also some other visitors. Women and men were sitting apart and of course in discussion points only men were talking and discussing about politics. At one point I was disagreeing and mentioned that I do not think that way. Everyone was silent and no one said anything and just continued talking. I noticed that it was awkward to just having mentioned or contradicted a point. Again, internally I had always the urge to liberate and talk whatever I want to whenever.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Again, her internal drive to resist was greater than the situation could bear. Lara was in a continuous struggle rebelling and trying to make her voice to be heard. One clearly understands that whenever she felt something was not fair and right according to her beliefs, she stood up for her personal freedom, rights and views. Lara told me that she did not care what others thought of her. She spoke up critically when necessary in any situation regardless of what traditional Turkish beliefs or customs imply. After having found herself Lara was able to explain to herself that it was not fair and correct to merely obey and speak up whenever it is necessary.

When describing in detail how she met her husband and if their wedding was mostly traditional in Turkish she kept smiling. She states in Turkish this time: " Davul ve Zurnayla" (literally with Trommel and Trumpet, which means everything what it entails). (Interview, 12/12/05) According to Lara marrying a Turkish husband was also partly enforced by her parents. He had to be as well "Muslim, educated like her and Turkish". (Interview, 12/12/05) Although primarily rebellious towards her parents she still married a Turkish husband. Lara realized it would be just easier. At least she has chosen on her own her husband, which most Turkish friends of hers nowadays are doing. She states,

> Es gibt noch immer türkische Mädchen dort draußen, die den Mann heiraten müssen, den ihre Eltern ausgesucht haben. Ich war trotzdem glücklich, obwohl ich solch strenge Eltern hatte, Ich war glücklich, dass ich meinen Ehemann am Kollege kennengelernt habe. Zuerst dachte ich wirklich, dass er deutsch ist, er schien nicht so sehr türkisch und masochistisch. Tatsächlich spielte er in einer Band als ein Schlagzeuger. Wie interessant! Ich ging um ihn ein paar mal zu sehen und verliebte mich. Er war eben sehr interessant. Ich bemerkte, dass er nie türkisch mit mir redete. Wir unterhielten uns immer auf Deutsch.
>
> [There are still Turkish girls out there, who have to marry the man their parents choose. I was still lucky although I had such strict parents. I was lucky that I met my husband at college. First, I really thought that he is German, he did not seem to me very Turkish and machistic. As a matter of fact, he was playing in a band as a drummer. How interesting! I went to see him couple of times and fell in love. He was just very interesting. I noticed that he never spoke Turkish to me. We always talked in German.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara went on to relate why she became inspired of his educational goals. They were very similar to hers. Being Turkish, having no support from parents, and realizing that he was left to his own means, made him even stronger in life. Now being with the person she loved made her even clearer to finish soon with her teaching degree. Lara's statement references two issues that substantiate her rebellious nature and her intuitive drive to succeed at school. First, her parents left her on her own without any guidance and support for financial need for college. She was adult enough to decide for herself which college to choose, and as well which husband. Yet, she realized that her parents enforced her that he needed to be educated, Muslim and Turkish.

Apart from her family Lara has had negative experiences in her education, student teaching, and even in her professional teaching career. She was constantly compared to German teachers and professors, and was always corrected in light of, or checked against the ability of these natives to teach their mother tongue. Also, she mentioned a couple of incidents where she was classified not only as the Turkish migrant student teacher, but

also as a guest worker. This status emphasized her place in the lowest category of socioeconomic status. It was comparable to the working class and people would immediately know what it referred to. Lara remained confident and tried not to get discouraged by any such judgments or labels. She recalls,

> Einmal, während einer Vorlesung an der Hochschule, bezeichneten ein paar deutsche Kollegen die ausländische Studenten an Schulen, als Gastarbeiterkinder. Obwohl, es ist wahr, aber verletzt auf die eine oder andere Weise wirklich meine Gefühle. Eigentlich sehen wir für sie aus, wie Einzelne, die in Deutschland geboren und aufgewachsen sind, trotzdem betrachteten sie uns und markierten uns als Kinder von Gastarbeitern. Ich schätze, sie redeten auch irgendwie so mit mir.
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> [One time during a lecture at college couple of German peers referred to the migrant students at the schools as Gastarbeiter children. Although, true but in some way it really hurt my feelings. Rather looking at them as individuals who were born and raised in Germany they are still considered and marked as Gastarbeiter children. I guess they were talking also in some way to me.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Research describes the negative perceptions of German towards migrants in Germany. Clearly, Lara was aware that no matter how advanced her education is and how much she can relate to German friends and master the German language she still looks like a Turkish girl. The image of a “Gastarbeiter” child may instill several components of prejudice and discriminatory elements in her. It may be that she does not want to belong into this category as she does not feel like a “Gastarbeiter” child. It may also remind her of her initial memories when she came back from Turkey trying to adjust to the new culture. Perhaps she knows what it means like to be different and unable to connect and be regarded as foreign. Her rebellious nature may stem from her initial negative experiences trying to figure out in which culture she belongs to. She feels that her friend Christiane speak for her soul. Emotionally she acts like a Turkish girl but intellectually she is German.

Educational Experience

As stated earlier, Lara's education was primarily driven and guided by her own desires. No one assisted her or supported her, not even her own parents. She knew early on that she wanted to go further and study; however, she needed to figure out how and with which resources. During college she realized that reading was an important part of her major interests. She loved to read and write. Further, she participated in a Turkish literature book club at her college and, full of inspiration for different authors, she felt that she wanted to take Turkish as a minor during her teacher training. However, after some negative experiences with couple of Turkish peers in that book club she stopped participating in it. She recalls,

> Ich Lieb Orhan Pamuk. Er ist die liberalste, progressivste Person, die ich unter den Autoren kenne. Natürlich, nur weil er die Bemerkung gemacht hat, dass wir die Kurden unterstützen sollten, es war nicht vorgesehen, dass wir seine Bücher lesen. Wie dumm ist das? Es ist jedem sein Ding, zu sagen was sie denken. Er hat natürlich etwas gegen die Türken gesagt. Ich konnte nicht nur da sitzen und nichts sagen. Ich machte schroffe Kommentare und andere Klubmitglieder konnten meine Haltung nicht verstehen.
>
> [I love Orhan Pamuk. He is the most liberal, progressive person I know among the writers. Of course, just because he made the remark that we should support the Kurdish people, we were not supposed to read his books. How stupid is this? It is each individual's cup of tea to say what they think. Of course, he said something against the Turks. I could not just sit and not say anything. I made harsh comments and other club members couldn't belief my attitude.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara liked to join the book club, but soon after she realized that most of the members are politically against some writers she did not wanted to participate further. Lara states: "It is so interesting some Turkish people are so critical about political views of certain people. There is no way that you can say anything against the country." Lara opened her eyes and wanted to make her opinion visible by not participating in this club anymore.

She partly made a point by not acknowledging the viewpoints of the members. Through my observations of Lara I noticed that she is definitely open to different views. Her democratic values may stem from her German education, as it induces a critical evaluation of different information. I noticed also on another instance that Lara asked a student why she does not like "Pollman" (a Turkish district in Duisburg). Sandra's responses just centered around the fact that there is lot of Turkish people. Lara was nodding but was acknowledging what she said. Interestingly enough, nobody in the class made any comment although most of the students were of migrant descent. Clearly, Lara let this little girl speak up. Later she told me: "Jeder sollte sagen, was er sagen möchte! Wir müssen es tolerieren!" [Everybody should say what they want to say! We need to tolerate it!] (Interview, 12/12/05) Essentially, Lara was talking from her soul. Her democratic stance is much higher than her intuitive support of migrant students. In some way that is paradox and it shows actually that she values each voice and acknowledges each person's point of view in class. Just because she is Turkish does not necessarily mean that she will not listen to a German students' point of view of Turkish people. On another instance, she remembers the perceptions of other students and professors during her college years. Lara states,

> Ich erinnere mich, dass ich immer eine schwierigere Zeit während meiner Ausbildung an der Hochschule, meinem Referendariats und jetzt in meiner Laufbahn als Lehrer, als deutsche, studentische Pädagogen, hatte. Leute testeten immer, ob meine Sprachfähigkeit und mein grammatisches Wissen fehlerfrei war. Jeder versuchte mich ununterbrochen zu testen, ob ich alles über die Regeln der deutschen Sprache wusste, ob ich korrekt spreche und ob ich sogar fähig war über Goethe zu unterrichten. Ich war nicht deutsch, und Deutsche dachten, dass es irgendwie sonderbar ist. Gerade, weil ich dunkles Haar habe und sehr türkisch aussehe, machen deutsche Lehrer Verdächtigungen, ob ich in der Lage bin zu unterrichten. Außerdem nicht nur deutsche Lehrer, sondern auch türkische Professoren an der Universität sahen auf türkische, eingewanderte, studentische Lehrer

> hinab. Ich erinnere mich, ein Vorfall, bei dem eine türkische Professorin während der Unterrichtszeit zu einem anderen deutschen Professor erwähnte, dass er uns nicht die kulturellen Bestandteile einer Oper erzählen muss, weil wir nicht in der Lage wären, irgendetwas zu verstehen. Wir sind nicht kultiviert genug. Ich setzte meine Studien dennoch fort und war hoch energisch und willig jedes Beliebige zu lernen, was ich konnte.
>
> [I remember that I always had a harder time than German student teachers throughout my education at college, my student teaching and now in my teaching career. People always were checking if my language abilities and my knowledge of the German grammar were accurate. Everybody was continuously trying to test me if I knew about all German language rules, if I do talk correctly and if I was even able to teach about Goethe. I was not German, and Germans thought that this is kind of weird. Just because I have dark hair and look very Turkish made German teachers suspicious if I am be able to teach. Also, not only German teachers but also Turkish professors at the university were looking down on Turkish migrant student teachers. I remember one incident where a female Turkish professor was mentioned to another German professor during class time that he does not need to tell us about cultural components of opera because we won't be able to understand anyways. We are not cultured enough. I still continued with my studies and was highly energetic and willing to learn about anything I could.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Due to her experiences at college, Lara realized that she wanted her work to support minorities in some way: a job that would fulfill her interest and desire to stand up for the rights of minorities and enlighten them about their opportunities. She states: "Mein Herz war mit den Benachteiligten in der Gesellschaft." [My heart was with the disadvantaged ones in society.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

On another occasion she recalls another experience during college. Lara perceived herself as alone in her educational endeavors. She received only the bare minimum acknowledgement from any teacher in high school or professor in college. Feeling misunderstood and unable to share common cultural roots with peers and professors, Lara tried to adapt, with literally no one supporting and guiding her in the German school, and tried more specifically to connect to the new environment. She adjusted eventually and

found several new German friends. Lara's disappointing experiences with professors in college hurt her; they prompted her to realize in some way that she is Turkish regardless of her education. She recalls,

> Persönlich bekam ich keine Beleidigungen, weil ich türkisch bin, von Kollegen oder Lehrern ab. Ich arbeitete hart und in der Schule war ich wie jemand von ihnen, glaube ich. Später, ich glaube in der Hochschule, hatte ich mehrere Begegnungen, bei denen ich mich immer ungeschickt fühlte und realisierte nicht, dass einige deutsche Dozenten, sogar türkische, feindlich zu Gastarbeiterkindern waren. Ich studierte, um an Sekundarschulen die deutsche Sprache und Türkisch zu unterrichten. Die meisten Professoren waren unhöflich und die meiste Zeit machten dir eine schwere Zeit in den Unterrichtsstunden. Ich fühlte, dass sie nicht wollten, dass wir unseren Abschluss schaffen. Es war schwer für die meisten deutschen Professoren zu sehen, dass dort eventuell Ausländer mit türkischer Herkunft einmal Deutsch in dem Schulsystem unterrichten werden. Ich erinnere mich an mehrere praktischen Besuchen von deutschen Professoren, um mich zu kritisieren und mein Wissen über die deutsche Grammatik zu testen. Ich denke, die meisten von ihnen wollten mir Angst bereiten und entmutigen. Aber ich zeigte ihnen niemals, dass ich es war, ich zeigte mich immer sehr überzeugend und ungezwungen, wie mit einigen Situationen umging. Auch einige türkische Professoren, die aus der Türkei in unser Programm kommen, waren sehr unhöflich. Obwohl sie aus der Türkei kommen, sahen sie uns immer als Gastarbeiterkinder, die aus einer armen sozioökonomische Herkunft kommen und nichts kulturelles und geschichtliches wissen. Ein türkischer Professor war sogar schlimmer. Er bot mehreren türkischen Studenten an, einen one night-Stand zu haben, um die Prüfungen zu bestehen. Es war furchtbar und es zeigte eben, wie türkische Leute und Hochschullehrer türkische Einwanderer in Deutschland sehen.
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> [Personally, I did not get any offense from peers or teachers being Turkish. I was working hard and in school I was like one of them- I believe. Afterwards, I believe in college, I had several encounters where I always felt awkward and did realize that some German professors, even Turkish ones, were hostile to Guest worker children. I studied being a teacher in secondary schools in German language and Turkish. The professors were rude and most of the time gave you a hard time in the classes. I felt that they did not want us to graduate; it was hard for most German professors to see that there will be eventually Turkish migrant descent teachers teaching German at one point in the school system. I remember several practical visits of German professors criticizing me and checking on my German grammar knowledge. I think most of them wanted me to get scared and discouraged. But I never showed them that I was; I always carried myself as very confident and comfortable to handle

> any situation. Also, some Turkish professors coming from Turkey in our program were rude. As they come from Turkey, they always saw us as the *Guest worker* children, coming from a poor socioeconomic background and not knowing anything cultural and historical. One Turkish professor even was worse. He offered several Turkish students to have one night-stand in order to pass exams. It was horrible and it showed even how Turkish people and academics view Turkish migrants in Germany.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Without strong academic feedback from teachers and professors, teachers like Lara may turn inward and develop and implement their own pedagogies. While such may come with unknown hidden costs, it may also lead to self-satisfaction and an appreciation for a specialized form of critique for educational practices.

Clearly, Lara learned during college that she needed to inform herself and did not have anyone who could give her constructive feedback. I believe it is a characteristic trait she needed to learn while growing up. Her drive to get things done and seek for opportunities without any help has always been there. It is impressive how she handled things and how she did not get discouraged. She was helping out in the biggest mosque of Europe by collecting money for the people who work there and teaching some courses for immigrants in German as a second language. According to Lara, most minorities—particularly Turkish —do not know German well and do not know how to figure out about any kind of resources and funding they have from the city. The German government provides lots of financial support for poor families, who cannot support their children at school with additional materials. This, for Lara was an essential task, to encourage and discuss with migrant families about opportunities they have for themselves and for their children." Lara comments,

> Es war erstaunlich, wie viele Leute ich in der Moschee traf. Die meisten von ihnen waren türkische Leute. Einige von ihnen kamen gerade neu in diesen Land und wussten nicht alles. Ich versuchte ihnen zu helfen sich anzupassen und manchmal übersetzte ich ihnen Briefe, die sie bekamen,

> von deutsch in türkisch. Du kannst dir nicht vorstellen, wie selbstbereichernd das war. Sie dankten mir so sehr. Ich erzählte ihnen manchmal über die AWO (Arbeiterwohlfahrt). Sie haben eine Menge finanzielle Hilfe für Einwanderer, die zum ersten Mal nach Deutschland kommen. Es gab auch viel Geld von der Stadt für Schulsachen. Die dankten mir immer sehr viel und beteten für mich. Aktuell sind ihre Gebete die gnädigsten Dinge, die ich bekomme. Es behielt mich in Betrieb. Gelegentlich weinte ich für sie. Ich erzählte ihnen auch, wie sie ihren Kindern helfen können, damit sie sich an das deutsche Schulsystem anpassen können. Eine Menge lesen und sie könnten sie zur AWO zu Programmen nach der Schule schicken, um Deutsch als zweite Sprache zu lernen.
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> [It was amazing how many people I met at the mosque. Most of them were Turkish people. Some of them just came new to this country and did not know anything. I was trying to help them to get adjusted and sometimes I was translating letters they have received from German into Turkish. You cannot imagine of self rewarding this was. They thanked me so much. I sometimes told them about AWO (Arbeiterwohlfahrt). They had lots of financial assistance for immigrants you come for the first time to Germany. Also, there was lots of money from the city to give for school supplies. They were always thanking me a lot and were praying for me. Actually, their prayers were the most gracious thing I got. It kept me going. At times I was crying for them. I was telling them also how they can help their children to adjust to the German school system. Lots of reading, and they could send them to after school programs for German as a second language at AWO.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Having done such a project, Lara was inspired to work with migrants and immigrants. She enjoyed being in such a position and discovered by chance her new career path and interest. She wanted to combine teaching with supporting and educating migrants about broader any information they need and with educational opportunities. Here, she was able to see vital connections between her interests and a viable career. Lara mentioned several times that it was self rewarding and so satisfying to experience someone else gratitude. She realized that this was it. Lara found what she wanted to do in life. She comments,

> Ich habe meine Leidenschaft gefunden, welche meine eigene Vergangenheit irgendwie reflektiert. Ich wollte denjenigen helfen, welche Unterstützung brauchen und Hilfe wegen den Sprachbarrieren und kulturellen Missverständnissen. Ich dachte mir, woher kann ich so viel Befriedigung und sofortige Belohnung für mich selbst, wo ich wirklich

> dachte, dass ich einen Unterschied machte. Das war es!! Unterrichten war mein wirklicher Wunsch. Ich wusste, wie viele Einwanderer mit Sprachproblemen kämpfen und wie viele von ihnen die Sekundarschule abgebrochen haben, weil sie nicht von ihren Lehrern oder Eltern unterstützt wurden. Sie wissen nicht, ihre Eltern wissen nicht, dass es sich lohnt zu studieren. Die Meisten von ihnen wollten bloß eine Ausbildung, nur weil sie auf der Stelle einen Job wollten. Und nur weil jeder das tut. Ich denke in meiner Generation fangen türkische Leute auch an irgendetwas zu studieren. Ich hoffe, dass sich das vorsetzen wird. Aber es ist immer noch nicht genug. Wenigstens hoffe ich, dass ich eine Wirkung zeigen kann, wenn ich unterrichte. Bloß einen Studenten sehen, der weiter studiert ist etwas. Denke ich.
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> [I found my passion which reflected my own past in some way. I wanted to help those who needed support and help due to language barriers and cultural misunderstandings. I figured where I can get so much satisfaction and immediate reward for myself where I really think I made a difference. That was it!! Teaching was my true desire. I knew how much migrants struggle due to language problems and how many of them drop out from high school because they do not get support by their teachers or families. They don't know, their parents don't know that it is worthwhile to study. Most of them just want to do an apprenticeship just because they want a job right away. And just because everybody is doing that. I think in my generation Turkish people started somewhat also to study. I hope this will continue. But it is still not a lot. At least, I hope that I may make an impact when I teach. Just seeing one student continue study is something. I think.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara's experiences in the past led to her actual passion in life. Learning early on from her past experiences in high school and college, she knew that she wanted to make some kind of impact on students. Her struggles and challenges are apparent. Her interest and goals for life are apparent. Essentially, her education helped her to find her own niche where she can be happy and supportive of Turkish students. Her reflective and driven nature made ideals possible for her in life. Lara attributes her determination to complete college despite a lack of family persuasion and uneventful schooling experiences to an internal drive and measure of personal faith. She states, "Ich glaube, dass deine Vergangenheit dich etwas lehrt. Ich möchte immer etwas aus meinen Erfahrungen für die Zukunft lernen." [I believe that your past teaches you something. I

always wanted to learn from my experiences for future.] (Interview, 12/12/05) To Lara, how one get "there"-that is to a place of *kismet* in one's life. She is not fatalistic and believes that everybody has a path to go. Thus, experiences where predetermined and teach you. At the same time further experiences will lead you to other ones. She believes that her reflective, just and need for democratic values further showed her to become a German teacher. As Serow, (1993) describes, teachers have many rationales why they want to teach, some of them are based on personal needs for achievement, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Such is fitting with Lara's personal drive for betterment and desire to feel and become independent by studying in a predominantly German environment, living and experiencing two different cultures and helping in a mosque for newly arrived immigrants.

Lara's first choice of college major was German because of her success and interest in reading and writing. She sometimes wonders if her negative experiences realizing that initially she was not a good student in Germany were reasons why she focused so much in this area. She comments, "Ich wusste früh, dass mein Deutsch besser werden wird. Ich kämpfe dafür einen guten Job zu machen. Ich erinnere mich nicht an irgendeinen guten Lehrer, der wirklich versucht hat mir zu helfen." [I knew early on that my German has to become better. I was struggling to do a good job. I do not recall any good teachers who really tried to help me.] (Interview, 12/12/05) Research on minority teachers reports that teachers' pursuing a favorite subject over other unsuccessful ones in college becomes a major reason for teaching the favored subject as a career (Su, 1993). Lara's success in composition classes marked by her good grades and interest convinced her that teaching about language would be something "she would be interested in".

A number of observations about Lara correspond with research regarding teachers choosing their profession and reflecting the role of self-awareness in teacher development. Lortie (1975) outlined five themes under which teachers claim to enter the profession, the most prevalent being desire to work with children or youth to the final theme of time compatibility of the profession that fits with female gender roles of wife and mother. Elsewhere in the theme list appears the teacher's desire to continue in a specific subject matter, having eliminated other ones secondary to the initial choice by some process or need. Such may be the case with Lara as she wanted to support children and primarily minority children, however due to her experiences having to do well in Germany she may have studied even harder. Thus, Lara concentrated further for the German language, which also became her professional career later on.

Lara's college attendance, while she was working in five different jobs, assisting her mother in the household, tutoring her brother in his homework, teaching German as a second language in a mosque, attest to her multitasking abilities indicative of many qualities of teachers. Her strong personality towards achieving her goals, her negative experiences in school and college provided the cornerstone for acquiring, understanding, and applying new concepts while she balanced multiple other responsibilities.

Preservice Experience

Lara's student teaching experience happens to be the same school where she is currently working. When the principal hired her he was desperate to find somebody who was also able to speak the student's language. As Max Planck Comprehensive had a lot of Turkish students, Lara was lucky to get a job offer during student teaching. She was

the only migrant teacher at the school. The entire faculty was German and she recalls "annoying" looks at her even during student teaching. Lara states,

> Ich war nervös. Es war wirklich das erstemal, dass ich unterrichtete und es geschah in der Nähe meines Hauses. Ich bin mir ziemlich sicher, dass sie mich an dieser bestimmten Schule platziert haben, wegen der hohen Anzahl an ausländischen Schülern. Ich erinnere mich, dass die Meisten der Lehrkörper kaum Guten Morgen zu mir sagten. Gewiss, der Grund war, dass sie eine zusätzliche türkische Person hatten- jetzt sogar unter den Lehrkörpern. Ich fühlte auch, dass sie auch nicht wirklich erfreut waren. Ich versuchte ihnen nicht zu zeigen, dass sie meine Gefühle verletzten. Ich musste stark bleiben.
>
> [I was nervous. It was the very first time that I was teaching and it happens to be close to my house. I am pretty sure that they place me to this particular school due to the high amount of migrant students. I remember that most of the faculty hardly said Good Morning to me. Certainly, the reason was that they had an additional Turkish person-now even among the faculty. I just felt that they really weren't that much pleased. I tried to not show them that it hurts my feelings. I needed to be strong.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara claims her student teaching internship was "okay" except for experiencing the apparent jealousy of many teachers who could not sustain the good relation Lara had with her students. Lara explains that one teacher was "immer sicher ging, dass ich nicht auf Türkisch mit meinen Schülern reden". [Always making sure that I do not talk in Turkish to my students.] (Interview, 12/12/2005) One of the mentor teachers, much older than Lara, remained in her classroom nearly each day, observing Lara and noticing the good rapport Lara developed with the sixth grade classes. Lara says, "Ich bin froh, dass wenigstens mein Beratungslehrer nicht neidisch war und sehr freundlich war". [I am glad that at least my mentor teacher was not jealous and was very friendly.] (Interview, 12/12/05) Quickly Lara's rapport with the Turkish students increased, and most faculty displayed hostility from reminding to their "German only" policy to verifying Lara's knowledge about the German language. One particular teacher, Mrs. Rotterdam even

forbade the students while Lara allowed students to display their paintings in the shared area . Lara states,

> Ich erfahre immer noch eine Menge Vorurteile in der Schule, in der ich arbeite. Ich kann es sehen und spüren. Zum Beispiel bin ich jung, smart und ich kann den Kontakt zu meinen Schülern eher aufbauen als meine Kollegen. Da wir eine Menge von ausländischen Schülern haben, verstehe ich sie besser und deswegen werden andere Lehrer eifersüchtig.
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> [I am still experiencing lots of prejudice in the school I am working. I can see and sense it. For instance, I am young, smart and I can connect to the students more easily than my colleagues. As we have lots of migrant descent students, I understand them better and because of that, other teachers get jealous.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara admits some aspects of this exclusion negatively affected her, but she tried not to demonstrate her emotional part until her Turkish and German students collectively threw an Advents party with a Santa Claus and small gifts in her honor at the end of student teaching. Lara says that most German faculty did not attend. Lara comments "Ich liebte die Referendariatszeit. Ich lernte eine Menge neben einigen negative Verhalten von den Lehrkörpern zu mir. Trotzdem liebten mich die Schüler." [I loved student teaching. I learned a lot besides some negative behavior of the faculty to me. Regardless the students loved me.] (Interview, 10/03/05) Lara does not fault herself for the reactions of the uncooperative faculty, but attributes the teacher's responses to their own insecurities and not because Lara intimidated her. "Ich glaube, die meisten von ihnen waren neidisch. Ich war jung, war in der Lage den Kontakt zu ausländischen Schülern herzustellen und ich denke, dass ich smart bin. Deshalb versuchte ich die Situation auf diese Weise zu sehen und es nicht persönlich zu nehmen." [I believe most of them were just jealous. I was young, I was able to connect to the migrants and I think that I am smart. So, I tried to look at the situation that way and not take it personally.] (Interview, 12/12/05) From her

mentor teacher, however, Lara learned several activities for introducing new hard words that continued into her current classroom. Lara adds:

> Mein Beratungslehrer war fantastisch. Wenigstens war er nicht eifersüchtig. Er gab mir so viele Ideen und half mir Fähigkeiten das Klassenraummanagen zu verbessern.
>
> [My mentor teacher was awesome. At least he was not jealous. He gave me so many ideas and helped me improve in my classroom management skills.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara is confident that her years of experience in the classroom, coupled with her personal belief systems, have worked to distinguish her personal style of teaching. Lara's teacher training program was theoretical, outside of student teaching she could not rely on any practical material. She states,

> Ich konnte jedes Material, das wir in der Klasse aufgehängt haben, nicht nutzen. Ich erinnere mich nur, dass ich Kurse belegte, meine Prüfungen absolvierte und ein paar Präsentationen machte. Ich würde wirklich wünschen, dass sie uns mehr auf das Referendariat vorbereiten könnten. Ich hatte keine Idee.
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> [I really could not use any material we covered throughout our classes. I only remember taking courses, passing my exams and doing couple of presentations. I would really wish they could prepare us more for student teaching. I had no idea.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Nevertheless, Lara says that only one class that was about migrants in the school system "remained and instilled lots of ideas for later on" (Interview, 12/12/05) in her teaching career. She knew that she will be one of the first migrant teachers in North Rhine Westphalia, and she was somewhat ready for it. Although, Lara had already ideas how she wants to create her own classroom, she still "musste mehr nach mutikulturelle Literatur suchen". [needed to search for more multicultural literature.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

All in all, I could see and summarize some major characteristics based on Lara's personal and academic background. She was and still is an independent rebel, who hardly had any support from her parents or relatives. This was evident throughout her schooling. She did not believe that her parents cared if she was studying what she wanted to do after high school and did not provide financial support throughout her education. Further, Lara needed to help all the time in the household holding her away from doing her own work for school. Regardless of how hard her life was she still did the goals she was aiming at, such as schooling or if she was disagreeing with her parents she was confrontational. Lara experienced two culture clashes that shaped the way how she thinks and behaves. Her struggle to understand in which culture she belongs to and her negative experiences by German peers made her to synthesize critically what she wants to do in life and how she wants to pursue her goals. As most migrant students come from poorer and non educated backgrounds that lack certain critical types of support from her parents and relatives, she is devoted to assist them within education. Additionally, she cares, and that is one of the essential attributes of an educator. She cares for the disadvantaged and does everything possible to support and help them. I believe I can see from Lara's experiences that her past is an essential component for being a teacher. I believe that there is a link between how someone evolved to the person they are today, and how that is also seen in the classroom. For that reason, in my next section, I will discuss her current classroom practice, what she thinks about multicultural education, and how these perspectives are evident in her classroom.

Beliefs as an Educator

I recall just from my memory, listening one day to her favorite song in Turkish by Sertab Erener. This song, which is called "Buyude gel Cocuk" literally states that this little girl has to grow. When I asked her why she favors this song, Lara described that she can relate to this song and feels emotionally sad when she listens to this song. She did not tell me her specific rationale, but just by translating the song and trying to comprehend why it makes her sad, I concluded that this little girl had to grow up (meaning maturing) so many times while living in Germany. All her experiences from her past, the cultural clash, the negativity towards migrants and immigrants may have leaded her to continue her passion. When asking Lara why she wanted to become a teacher, she recalls,

> Wie dieses kleine Mädchen in dem Lied, ich möchte denen helfen, die die gleiche emotionale Achterbahn wie ich erlebt haben. Ich möchte ihnen helfen. Sie können auch studieren und von selbst herausfinden, wer sie sind und wozu sie gehören. Ich meine, Lehrer sein ist an erster Stelle diesen Kindern und ihren Familien helfen. Ich möchte einen Unterschied auf dem Weg machen, wie ich meinen Klassenraum gestalte und wie ich unterrichte. Ich möchte unterrichten, dass meine Studenten realisieren, dass ich ihnen helfe, diese Vorurteile und die diskriminierenden Gedanken zu überwinden.
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> [Like this little girl in this song, I would like to help those who experience the same emotional roller coaster I had experienced. I want to help them. They can also study and find on their own who they are and where they belong to. I figured being a teacher is the first step in helping those kids and their families. I want to make a difference in the way how I create my classroom and how I teach. I want to teach that my students realize that I help them overcome these prejudice and discriminatory thoughts.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara expressed her rationale for being a teacher. This statement showed how her own experiences shaped the way why she wanted to teach. The most striking part was that her desire was to teach in a creative, critical and educational way to embrace diversity in her classroom. She added that her experiences made her want to go into the classroom and

teach. As a teacher she could instill values and ideas in her students, significantly her Turkish students. She always wanted to help children at risk, particularly migrant children, who came from poor families and did not receive any guidance in their lives or education. Her rebellious and at the same time caring nature created the desire to be a teacher. Although she had no support from her parents, her self-driven ideal which she created on her own, comes out in her chosen profession as a teacher. She states:

> Ich denke jemanden genau von deiner eigenen Nationalität zu sehen ist Einfluss genug. Diese Kinder sahen niemals irgendeinen türkischen Lehrer, der ihnen irgendetwas unterrichtet. Sie können mit mir in ihrer Muttersprache reden, fühlen sich wohl und sahen in mir irgendeine Art Vorbild. Ich konnte ihnen etwas Rückhalt geben und ihnen zeigen, dass es möglich ist, Erfolg im Leben zu haben. Die meisten dieser Kinder haben eine Herkunft mit einer niedrigen Sozioökonomie. Ihre Eltern arbeiten für Thyssen und die meisten von ihnen denke nicht daran, weiter zu studieren. Sie wollen nur eine Ausbildung bekommen und anfangen zu arbeiten. Sie schauen nicht darüber hinaus. Ich meine, die meisten deutschen Lehrer sich nicht kümmern und nichts erwähnen, was sie im Leben, abgesehen von arbeiten, als ein Arzthelfer oder ein Verkäufer. Ich glaube, auch meine Gegenwart ist ein Einfluss und Einwirkung genug.
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> [I think just seeing someone from your own nationality is impact enough. These children never saw any Turkish teacher teaching them anything. They could talk to me in their native language, felt comfortable, and saw me in some way a role model. I could give them some feedback and show them that it is possible to succeed in life. Most of these children come from low socioeconomic background. Their parents work for Thyssen and most of them do not think of continuing to study. They just want to get an apprenticeship and start working. They didn't see beyond that. I mean, and most German teachers do not care and do not mention anything what they can do in life besides working as a doctor's assistant or shop assistant. I believe, just my presence is impact and exposure enough.] (Interview 12/12/05)

She added that this experience confirmed her desire to go into the classroom and be a teacher. As a teacher, she could instill the values and ideas she had onto her students, significantly onto her Turkish students. She always wanted to help children at risk, particularly migrant children, who came from low socioeconomic backgrounds and did

not receive any guidance in their lives or education. While she had little support and guidance from her parents, her self-driven nature, which she created on her own, showed that teaching is her passion and only profession to pursue. She states:

> Ich liebe, was ich tue, obwohl es manchmal anstrengend sein kann. Ich habe eine Menge von wundervollen Erfahrungen mit diesen Kindern und ich fühle, dass ich helfen und sie unterstützen kann. Manchmal, wenn sie mit persönlichen Belangen kommen, sehe ich, dass sie mir vertrauen und mehr als ihren Lehrer in mir sehen.
>
> [I love what I am doing, although sometimes it can be strenuous. I have plenty of wonderful experiences with these children and I feel I can help and support. Sometimes, when they come with personal issues I see that they trust me and see more than their teacher.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

I believe Lara knew what she was doing and why she was taking certain steps and maintained certain aspects to her teaching. Her struggles and negative past experiences with German professors, and being the only Turkish girl in a German environment, led her to understand and make social changes happen in her classroom. By observing her and being around her for two months, I constructed a view of what she wanted to accomplish in life and in her teaching career. As the German educational system requires the students to decide right from the beginning what they want to study, she already knew and signed up for the subject she would eventually seek to teach. In her first year of college her primary goal was to be a grammar school teacher, which would have the benefit of supporting and teaching migrant students both in their native language and in the German language. She expressed how she became a teacher and how she came to this point in her life. She chose teaching for the additional reason to secure her job situation and at the same time find a job, which permitted her to be a mother and to take care of her children. She loved being around children, tutoring and helping them. She wanted to

influence minorities, particularly migrant students (mainly Turkish students). Going for a career as a teacher was one goal towards her dreams.

Lara as a Teacher

Beliefs about Multicultural Education that Affect Classroom Practice

Beliefs, perceptions and experiences are integral components of how a person creates his or her environment in society. Based on these experiences, people continue thinking, evolving and changing. Experiences are unique tapestries, which consists of small piece of mosaic reflecting beliefs, practices, and cultural differences. These tapestries are coherent and yet always changing. Some of us have good experiences some of us have bad experiences. Regardless of what kind of *strata* the experience lays, it impacts a plethora of feelings, new thoughts, and helps us to see how we can learn from it. A backdrop like that helps people to define and shape where they want to go and how they want to establish their *meta.* These threads of textured and various lived-through experiences demonstrate vignettes of different realities. Lara's beliefs and experiences yield the image outlined above. A brief review of observational data sheds light on Lara's experiential tapestry, and her unique perspective on the sorts of events she has lived through. I believe that her past is closely linked with her present. Below, I would like to start with major themes emerging out of her data.

Bilingual and Bicultural

Lara knows her advantages; due to her language abilities, she comprehends the language barriers of migrant children and is able to assist them. Although her peers do not like her speaking Turkish to the students, she knows that it is very important to reach them and make sure that they understood everything she taught. She wants to introduce

Turkish customs and culture by means of diverse cultural textbooks to initiate discussion in the classroom. Further, although she has endured hard times being Turkish, Lara also recognizes major benefits to being Turkish; she is able, for instance, to switch between the two cultures easily, even at school. She understands how crucial it is to be an educator and to understand the children of migrant descent.

While she sometimes feels internally frustrated by her German peers, studying and teaching German at a public school has never discouraged her. She mentioned a couple of examples occurring in the classroom where she used her particular background to help students understand better the assignment. Anytime Lara teaches Turkish to heritage speakers, she sees and assists the Turkish migrant students in their mistakes. She comments,

> Türkische Schüler neigen dazu deutsche Verben mit türkischen Konjugationsendungen zu verwenden, wenn sie sich auf türkisch Unterhalten. Sie neigen auch zu code-switch, sie verwenden verschieden Wörter in zwei Sprachen und konzentrieren sich nicht auf eine alleine, wenn sie reden. Ich spreche hauptsächlich mit ihnen Deutsch, aber wenn ich mit ihnen Türkisch rede, dann möchte ich, dass sie ebenso auch nur auf Türkisch mit mir reden. Es ist schwer für sie und ich erzähle ihnen immer unmittelbar das Wort, das sie benutzen müssen in der Sprache, in der sie sprechen. Es ist manchmal so lustig, was für Wörter sie kreieren.
>
> [Turkish students tend to use German verbs with Turkish conjugated endings when they talk in Turkish. Also, they tend to code-switch using different words in two languages not focusing on one only, when they talk. I always talk to them mainly in German, but if I talk in Turkish than I want them to talk only Turkish with me as well. It is hard for them and I always tell them immediately the word the need to use in the language they speak. It is so hilarious sometimes what kinds of words they are creating.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

She mentioned on more than one occasion that the students often transfer German sentence structure or grammar into Turkish sentence structure. Any time they have to write or speak in Turkish, Lara knows exactly where the mistakes lie and why the

students have made these mistakes. I noticed in a couple of classroom sessions that she even gives examples in German in order to make her point better understood in her Turkish class. I could evaluate and observe from their facial expressions and gestures that they appreciated Lara switching from one language to another.

> Ich weiss, dass es meinen Schülern hilft, zu wissen, dass ich türkischer Abstammung bin. Ich kann ihnen in meinem Unterricht nicht nur sprachlich, sondern auch psychisch helfen. Ich helfe ihnen bei jeder falschen Sprachübersetzung oder bei gammatischen Fehlern. Ich helfe ihnen auch bei ihren Bedürfnissen, ihre Anteile ihrer kulturellen Herkunft zu verstehen. Zum Beispiel kommen manchmal meine türkischen Schülerinnen mit ihren persönlichen Problemen in ihrer Familie zu mir. Meistens ist es kulturell. Es ist schön zu wissen, dass ich ihnen helfen und sie unterstützen kann. Sicherlich ist mein Alter auch ein Vorteil. Ich kann mich so wie sie kleiden und auch wie sie sprechen. Sie identifizieren sich durchaus mit mir.
>
> [I know that it helps my student knowing that I am of Turkish descent. I can help them in my classes not only linguistically but also psychologically. I assist them in any wrong language translation or grammatical mistake. I help them also in understanding their needs due to their cultural background. For example, my Turkish female students sometimes come with their personal problems in their family. Mostly, it is cultural. It is nice to know that I can help and support. Certainly, my age is also an advantage. I dress and can also speak like them. They relate well.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

In her German-as-a-second-language classes, Lara even transfers knowledge in Russian and some Czech. She does not know these languages; still, she states that she noticed certain mistakes of these students by time and understood why they were making these mistakes. Lara comments,

> In Russisch gibt es zum Beispiel mehrere Fälle als im Deutschen. Manchmal sind Studenten verwirrt und versuchen den ablativen Fall zu benutzen, den es im Deutschen nicht gibt und ich bekomme mit, dass sie manchmal Fälle erfinden. Sie haben genauso eine schwere Zeit wie die türkischen Schüler, die sich an die Artikel erinnern. Mann, Deutsch ist schwer für einen Ausländer, man muss drei Artikel lernen, den männlichen, den weiblichen und den sächlichen.

> [In For instance, in Russian there are more cases than in German. Sometimes students get confused and are trying to use the ablative case where German does not have this case and I realize that they are inventing cases sometimes. They also have a hard time like the Turkish students remembering the articles. German is hard, man, for a foreigner you need to study three articles, the masculine, feminine and neutrum.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

After analyzing their native languages, she could help and explain why they make various mistakes in German. I could see that she cares, not only for the Turkish students but also for other migrant students. I have not seen other German teachers particularly trying to assist their migrant students in a similar way. Lara also said that other migrant students like her as well; they can relate to her and are understood by her. It was interesting to note that Lara was not formally educated in teaching German as a second language. It is a very different career and study program at her university. However, just coming from a migrant background made her appropriate for that position. Although it seems that this is not adequate, the principal and the other German teachers did not mention anything regarding it.

In her German language-arts course teaching a whole class, Lara tried to be very strict and did not allow any communication in Turkish or any other foreign languages. According to her, that is "die Politik der Schule". [the policy of the school]. (Interview, 12/12/05) Although, she told me that, I realized that most of the time that she switches into Turkish when students talk to her in Turkish. On one instance, I noticed that a student asked Lara in the hall how her weekend was in Turkish, while seeing Mr. Rosenthal, another teacher passing by, she did not even switch to German. It was as if she did not care what he would possibly think. On another occasion, couple of students came into her break room and asked her in Turkish about a homework task. Again, Lara continued in Turkish without even paying attention to the other German faculty and what

they might think. Lara's indifferent attitude demonstrates that she may not support the policy of the school and continues her own philosophy. She comments,

> Zweisprachig zu sein ist ein Abenteuer. Ich sehe es jedesmal und ich weiss, dass meine türkischen Schüler sich sehr gut mit mir in Verbindung bringen. Wenn ich weiss, dass ich ihnen helfen kann, dann spreche ich in der gleichen Sprache, in der sie mit mir sprechen. Wie ich sie einschätze, möchte ich, dass sie wissen, dass ich auch die Sprache schätze, die sie benutzen.
>
> [Being bilingual is an advantage. I see it each time and I know that my Turkish students relate with me very well. If I know that I can help them than I talk in the same language they talk to me. As I value them I want them to know that I value also their language that they use.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

In spite of her switches in between to Turkish, she mainly talked in German in her classroom instructions. Her German was very clear and was mainly focused on grammar from the book. Sometimes I noticed that she would give hints to help migrant students in the class to understand the differences or similarities in their own mother tongue. In my personal conversations with some German students sitting next to me, I noticed that they sometimes found it peculiar that a Turkish teacher was teaching them their own German language. A student's comment,

> Wenn ich ehrlich sein soll, es ist seltsam, dass Frau Cekirdek Deutsch unterrichtet. Als meine Eltern das rausfanden, waren sie nicht sicher, ob sie in der Lage ist Deutsch zu unterrichten. Ich fühle mich ein wenig unterrepräsentiert. Es gibt so viele Türken und Russen in meiner Klasse und wir sind nur drei Deutsche. Und jetzt ist mein Türkisch Lehrer außerdem türkisch. Es ist merkwürdig und auf eine Art ulkig.
>
> [If I need to say the truth, it is strange that Mrs. Cekirdek is teaching German. When my parents found out about it, they were not sure if she is able to teach in German. I feel a little underrepresented. There are so many Turkish and Russians in my class and we are only three Germans. And now my Turkish teacher is as well Turkish. It is strange and kind of weird.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

While recording the comments the student was making, I noticed couple of grammatical mistakes when he was talking. It seemed that Lara's presence is not only regarded by faculty in a negative way, also German students seemed skeptical about her being able to teach. Yet, Lara was highly confident and presented a self-assured and knowledgeable image towards the students in all of her class sessions. She could answer questions about any declination and conjugation without hesitation and was very keen to let the students know about key grammatical aspects of the German language. According to Lara, she knew that the German language is a very difficult language to acquire, and, as she herself had struggles getting adapted and learning the German language after the 6th grade, she knows where migrant students have a hard time and why they make certain mistakes. At times, I could see Lara's passion to do a good job teaching and, particularly, in teaching migrants extensively about the German language. She was going above and beyond, making sure that the students understood her. After each class session she offered and asked one more time if they needed to meet with her to discuss anything they did not understand. She states,

> Ich möchte sicher gehen, dass alle von ihnen die Unterschiede in allen Punkten und die Aspekte der Deklination der deutschen Sprache verstanden hat. Die türkische Sprache, ebenso Teile der russischen Sprache haben nicht soviele Endungen für die Deklination. Wichtiger ist, dass die Konjugation und die Zeiten im Deutschen für ausländische Schüler sehr schwer einzuprägen sind. Nicht nur die ausländischen, sondern auch die deutschen Schüler mühen sich damit ab. Wie du weisst kommen die meisten von ihnen aus einem niedrigen, wirtschaftlichen Status. Ihre Eltern sprechen ein gebrochenes Deutsch und ihre deutsche Sprache beinhaltet mehrere Fehler, wenn man das analysiert.
>
> [I want to make sure that all of them understood the differences in all articles and declination aspects of the German language. The Turkish language, parts of the Russian language as well, does not have so many endings for declination. More importantly, conjugation and tenses in German are very difficult to memorize for migrant students. Not only migrant students but also German students struggle. As you know, most of

> them come from low economic status. Their parents speak also broken German, and their German language contains several errors when analyzed.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara also knows and realized her advantages during *Elternsprechtag* (parental conferences). Most migrant parents do not even come to school, as they are not able to communicate with the German teachers. As she can speak Turkish, she calls them in advance and makes sure that they attend and listen to her concerns about their children. She even goes to their houses. She mentioned a couple of times that such home visits are very common, and that Turkish parents feel delighted to invite her to their homes for Turkish tea. As Lara understands the cultural differences, she did not see the invitation as raising a question of boundary issues; she knows and respects the Turkish cultural traditions and customs. Lara acts as a liaison in some way between the migrant students, their parents, and the school. The administration, the German teachers, and the principal are aware of these facts and now accept Lara as occupying this position. Sometimes she complains and wants to be seen as any other teacher. She would have loved to teach in a grammar school where lots of migrants do not necessarily attend. She still feels it is in some way prejudiced; most teachers with a migrant background are placed into schools with more migrant students, rather than into jobs reflecting higher intellectual criteria and academically higher levels, such as a grammar school. Lara states,

> Ich liebe die Tatsache, dass ich helfen kann, besonders ausländischen Schülern. Jedoch wundere ich mich immer, warum alle meine türkischen Freunde nur an Hauptschulen oder Gesamtschulen angestellt sind. Gewiss hat es was mit der Anzahl von ausländischen Schülern in den Schulen zu tun. Ich wünsche mir, ich könnte auch manchmal in einer Oberschule neben den Lehrern unterrichten.
>
> [I love the fact that I can help- particularly migrant students. However, I always wonder why all my Turkish friends are placed only in *Hauptschule* or Comprehensive Schools. Certainly, it has to do with the number of

> migrant students in the schools. I wish I could also teach sometime in a grammar school, by the teachers.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

On one hand, Lara appreciates her advantages and loves the fact that she can help migrant students. On the other hand, I wondered sometimes if she got frustrated knowing that she was placed in a predominantly migrant school. She is skeptical of how she is considered and valued as a German teacher. Sometimes in our conversations I had the feeling that she viewed herself more like a tutor or supporter for migrant students in need. Regardless of how much Lara loves it, one aspect is crucial to consider: Why are most teachers of migrant descent placed in such schools?

Apart from struggling with why she was placed in such a school, she also endured sometimes hostile reactions regarding her religious beliefs. Though Lara is not strongly tied into her religious beliefs, she still practices the essential aspects of the Moslem religion, such as fasting, not eating pork, and not drinking alcohol. She also does not celebrate Christmas and values her religious holidays and tries to celebrate them with her Turkish students. During Ramadan she explained in detail why Moslems celebrate this holiday; every student knew, moreover, that she was fasting. Lara brought to class many articles and some short stories introducing Ramadan. According to her, it was amazing that she and her class can talk about any questions and concerns they had together. She mentioned that lots of unknown topics about Islam were discussed and questioned. It was a one-time opportunity to talk about prejudiced thoughts, and Lara stated that it was nice to see students interested and asking questions among themselves. She mentions,

> Während Ramadan hatte ich die Möglichkeit über die muslimische Religion zu reden und Fragen angehen, die Schüler haben könnten. Es war schön zu sehen, dass die Klasse sich engagierte, diskutierte und Fragen unter sich selbst stellten. Nichtsdestotrotz, obwohl ich innerhalb der Klasse immer Interesse sehen konnte, schienen mich meine Kollegen nicht zu unterstützen und respektvoll gegenüber meinem religiösen Glaubens zu

> sein. Mehrere Male haben meine deutschen Kollegen an dieser Schule versucht mich zu überzeugen, dass ich das Fasten während Ramadan aufgebe. Ich sollte in inzwischen mehr deutsch sein. Ich wurde immer verärgert, sie sollten mich unterstützen und nicht vor mir essen oder trinken; sie taten es gerade mit Absicht. Ich merke manchmal die Ignoranz und Intoleranz von ihrer schrecklichen Haltung.
>
> [During Ramadan I had the opportunity to talk about the Moslem religion and address any questions students might have. It was nice to see the class engaging, discussing, and asking questions among themselves. Yet, although I can see always interest within the class, my colleagues do not seem to support and be respectful of my religious beliefs. Several times my German peers at this school were trying to convince me that I should give up fasting during Ramadan. I should be more German by now. I always get upset and they should support me and not eat or drink in front of me; they just do it on purpose. I feel sometimes the ignorance and intolerance of this awful attitude.] (Interview, 08/08/05)

The fact that Lara could approach and understand migrant students better than German teachers, created a plethora of hostile and jealous reactions among her German colleagues. German teachers could see that most migrant-descent students relate well to Lara and feel understood culturally. It appears that teachers were trying to find openings to discourage and frustrate Lara by making derogatory comments about her language knowledge or by not respecting her religious beliefs. As she seemed confident and emancipated as a German-educated young teacher, they immediately assumed that she is now German, and not Turkish anymore. Misunderstandings and misconceptions therefore arise when German peers see that she remains relatively steadfast in her cultural and religious beliefs. Lara did not show her discouragement; she carried herself as a very confident and stable personality. Internally, she battled with these issues and sometimes she got frustrated. She constructed a world knowing that there are prejudiced beliefs around her, but trying to overcome it by not showing anyone that this can hurt her.

In summary, Lara experienced negative moments throughout her educational and professional life due to her migrant background. She mentioned difficult situations and

tried to find encouragement in her own ways. She was strong and did not get discouraged. She is trying to do her best to help migrant students in ways appropriate to them.

Critical Educator

Being a migrant herself, I noticed during my observations in Lara's classroom that she was constantly trying to maintain a harmonious classroom that was attuned to all students' needs where "Schüler sich akzeptiert und geschätzt fühlen in ihrer kulturellen Herkunft". [students feel accepted and valued in her cultural heritage.] (Interview, 12/12/05) When showing me her personal choice of curriculum I noticed several selections from world literature that reflects multi-ethic voices and visions that expand the concept of a traditional literature canon and the ways of responding to it. Lara believes that using this curriculum, offers her students the greatest opportunities for understanding "different voices" in the world. By studying the component of "voice" during one reading, students will be attuned to new literacy and cultural perspectives in light of developing some of their own. She states,

> Es ist wichtig, dass sie sehen, dass ihre Stimme wahrscheinlich Stücke der Literatur wiedergibt, die wir gelesen haben. Verschiedene Perspektiven helfen ihnen zu sehen, dass ihre Werte in Ordnung sind und sie ebenso die Literatur, die wir lesen, akzeptieren. Wir reden und diskutieren über sie.
>
> [It is important that they see their voice probably reflected in the literature piece we read. Different perspectives help them see that their values are okay and accepted even in the literature we read. We talk and discuss them.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara's understanding is consistent with major scholars in the field of response to literature. Eliciting and developing students' voices is part of Rosenblatt's (1938/1995) efferent, personal and aesthetic stances requiring the reader to "live through" an experience with the text. It is also consistent with Langer's view that "we learn best when

we are trying to accomplish something that is personally and socially meaningful (1987, p. 14). This approach underlines the fact that all students in her class have the freedom to critically speak and discuss their opinions with other classmates. That in turn is also one major underpinning within the critical theory. It actually allows students to express what they feel and values their cultural heritage and schema (Carell & Eisterhold, 1971). Lara responds relatively well to all students in her classroom, not only by listening to their ideas and needs but also in some way she always tries make them reflect in their learning. Lara states,

> Es ist so wichtig für mich, das sie realisieren, dass ihre Meinung wichtig ist. Und ihre Stimme auch einen Anteil des Unterrichts ist. Ich bemerkte zum Beispiel, dass sie sich aufregen, wenn wir türkische Gewohnheiten diskutieren. Studenten sind so engagiert und können ihre eigenen Erfahrungen wiedergeben. Ich höre nur im Hintergrund zu und beobachte, wie sie sich gegenseitig beeinflussen. Wenn dort stille ist, versuche ich einzugreifen und versuche mit fördernden, offenen Fragen weiterzumachen. Weil sie diese Art vom gegenseitigen Beeinflussen mögen, arbeiten sie richtig. Ich habe bemerkt, dass sie wirklich denken. Ich habe bemerkt, dass sie wissen, dass ich ihnen folge. Ich weiss, dass sie wissen, dass ich streng bin.
>
> [It is so important for me that they realize that their opinion is important. And their voice is important to be shared in class. For example, I noticed that they get excited when we discuss Turkish habits. Students are so engaged and can reflect about their own experiences. I am just listening in the back and observing how they interact with each other. When there is silence. I intervene and try to continue further with open questions. Because they like this kind of interaction they really do work. I noticed that they really think. I noticed that they know that I am also following. I know that they know that I am hard.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

As mentioned prior, Lara defines herself as “rebellious.” Although I have not observed rebellious behavior in her teaching environment, I can see why she sees herself due to our conversations of the past. Her continuous challenge living in two cultures, and battle with her parents induced her to be rebellious to her environment. Her classroom interactions with her students do not reflect this part of Lara’s personality. But the part

where she relates well to her students and values their cultural heritage in some way demonstrates her "rebellious" aspects within a non-supported environment such as Max Planck Comprehensive. Lara's duty is to keep pace, set a proper leadership example, and continually build community by being the facilitator and active participant in her own classroom. Moreover, because she knows that she has high expectations, it is interesting to note that she leaves them the control to realize. It is the students' responsibility to realize how they lead the discussions. Thus, her keeping abreast of their learning's is vital to her ability to facilitate the class as much as it is to continually establish an environment where they realize how learning occurs. Lara acknowledges that particularly migrant students need to feel that "die Lehrer nicht denken, das seiner von ihnen unschätzbar ist". [the teacher does not think of them as invaluable] (Interview, 12/12/05) Lara induces in a critical way the doctrine she believes in, to raise children as valuable citizens in a society where everybody appreciates their voice. She lets them individually explore their thoughts and reflect independently on classroom discussions. Within our discussions I noticed that it is crucial for her that they realize their own cognitive learning. She mentions:

> Jedes Individuum kann denken und kann sich kritisch mit Informationen beeinflussen lassen. Ich möchte, dass meine Schüler sich mit Literatur beschäftigen und die Absicht des Autors und deren Anliegen. Ich habe bemerkt, dass die Schüler es heutzutage nicht gerne lesen. Besonders haben die ausländischen Schüler eine schwere Zeit. Es ist mein Job alles zu tun, um sie wieder an die Literatur ran zu bringen. Ich schätze die Kultur jeden Schülers. Ich möchte, dass sich jeder Schüler beteiligt und deren Hintergrund teilt. Eine Menge der deutschen Schüler haben stigmatisierte und stereotypische Sichten von Ausländern in Deutschland. Ich mag es über sie zu reden und sie im Unterricht aus zu diskutieren. Manchmal wird es ein wenig nervenaufreibend; obwohl ich die meiste Zeit den Enthusiasmus und die Zufriedenheit der Schüler sehe. Es ist eine Chance sie zu untersuchen und andere an sich teilhaben zu lassen. Sie

> wissen es nicht; allerdings mache ich das absichtlich. Ich möchte eine Umgebung ohne ohne voreingenommene Vorstellungen schaffen.
>
> [Each individual can think and critically interact with information. I want my student to engage with literacy and understand the purpose of the author and what his or her agenda is. I noticed that students don't like to read nowadays. Particularly, migrant students have a hard time. It is my job to do everything to connect them to literacy again. I value each student's culture. I want each student to participate and share his/her background. Lots of German students have stigmatized and stereotypical views of foreigners in Germany. I like to talk about them and discuss them in class. Sometimes it gets a little nerve-racking; however, most of the time I see the enthusiasm and happiness students share. This is one chance to explore and share. They do not know; however, I do this on purpose. I want to create an environment without prejudice beliefs.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara's enthusiasm to feel obliged to make migrants connect to literacy may stem from her initial experiences realizing that this was lacking when she went to school. She wants the students to critically engage with text and comprehend the purpose of the author. Lara's thoughts for the students likely stems from a number of factors: her having learned the value of education early in life- a difficult time when she was trying to study without any help from parents; during school when she needed the push from her German teachers to accomplish; and later during college when professors pointed out that Turkish migrants are "Gastarbeiters" anyways. She states, " Ich wünsche mir, dass ich einen Lehrer gehabt hätte, der mir gezeigt hätte, dass meine Stimme wichtig ist". [I wish I would have had a teacher who was showing me that my voice is important.] (Interview, 12/12/05) Further she states,

> Du weisst wahrscheinlich, dass es selten ist einen türkischen Lehrer sieht, der Deutsch bei deutschen und ausländischen Schüler unterrichtet. Ich hasse es zuzulassen, dass ich es manchmal nicht mehr ertragen kann, dass meine Kollegen immer meine Fähigkeiten in der deutschen Grammatik, besonders die Deklination der Substantive und die Konjugation der Verben getestet haben, sie sind präzise. Ich kann nicht verstehen, warum sie immer vorsichtig und misstrauisch sind. Ich bin hier, wie ein deutsches Mädchen, aufgewachsen und lernte mein ganzes Leben in deutschen

> Schulen. Diese Zweifel sind nicht berechtigt und es geht mir manchmal auf die Nerven. Ich zeige jedoch meine Emotionen nie. Ich sah, dass das auch während meine Hochschulzeit geschah. Manchmal während meinem Referendariats haben die Professoren mich getestet und mich korrigiert, wenn es nötig war. Ich denke- man könnte denken, um…das ich mich inzwischen daran gewöhnt haben sollte. Aber ich habe es nicht.
>
> [You probably know that it is rare to see a Turkish teacher teaching German to German and migrant students. I hate to admit that sometimes I cannot bear it anymore that my colleagues always check my abilities in the German grammar, particularly the declination of nouns and conjugations of verbs, are accurate. I cannot understand why they are always cautious and suspicious. I grew up here like a German girl and studied all my life in German education. These doubts are not right, and it sometimes gets on my nerves. However, I never show my emotions. I saw this happening also during my college education. Sometimes during student teaching, professors were checking and correcting me if necessary. I think-you might think, um...that I should have gotten used to it by now. But I haven't.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

In being the person she sees in herself and creating the type of classroom community she practices, it is evident that Lara works to spare students the difficulty associated with apprehending the value of education later in life as opposed to doing so much earlier when time and opportunity might be easier to manage and obtain. Moreover, Lara's experiences during her own childhood being left in Turkey, her own schooling with uninvolved parents, her experiences in schooling as a student, and currently with the current negativity of the faculty may bear on her position concerning the migrant learners in her classroom. Lara strives to make them engage with text and make them think. However, when they do not respond to her and the classroom dynamics in a fashion which she expects, Lara realizes that she needs to modify her teaching according to the needs of her students. She comments,

> Ich habe Zeiten, in denen meine Absicht nicht funktionieren. Das ist in Ordnung. Wie vor kurzem, als die Schülererschöpft von einer Prüfung aus einem anderem Unterricht waren. Ich ließ sie über ihre vergangene Lesung nachdenken und ließ sie bloß schreiben. Ich spielte Musik und wollte nur, dass sie erfahren wie wichtig es ist nachzudenken. Ich möchte bei meinen

> Schüler das Lernen nicht erzwingen. Ich denke, Lernen ist nur möglich, wenn du das willst. Heutzutage haben wir nicht das Vergnügen einfach zu denken und über unser Lernen nachzudenken. Es ist alles mehr als Noten und Prüfungen.
>
> [I have times where my agenda does not work. This is okay. Like the other day, students were exhausted from an exam from another class. I let them reflect on their past readings and just let them write. I played music and just wanted them to experience how valuable it is to reflect. I do not want my students enforce learning. I think learning is only possible if you want. Nowadays, we do not have the pleasure to just think and reflect on our learning. It is all about grades and exams.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

I saw that core statement manifest in Lara's teaching during the two-month observation. As an educator you need your students to realize that learning is not enforced. Lara created an environment in her class where students were realizing the pleasure of learning. I noticed that students loved her approach of teaching. For instance, relaxing and just reflecting in their journals along with music seemed to accommodate their interests. Lara was accommodating and constantly changing her class to meet the needs of the students. She understood and welcomed the way particular students want to learn. There was no single approach to her class, but different approaches to each student. For instance, by creating cooperative learning groups, she mixed on purpose veiled female students with German students. To her mind, through discussions and questions in a smaller circle they would have opportunities to get to know each other better than in open discussion sessions. Lara's philosophy goes along with major learning theorists in the field. As Bartlett (1932) suggests, cooperative learning assists in exchanging ideas and valuing each others' information. I found that Lara is creative in the way she creates her lesson plans by trying to reach out to every need in the classroom. Lara works on it and tries to offer access and approachability to everybody in the classroom. While it may appear that Lara would have great empathy for all students in the class, particularly

minority students, in reality she feels commitment and in charge remembering those own days of difficulties she had not being understood or supported by teachers and sacrifices she made for the Turkish community. In essence, Lara's inability never to give up on any student is not a reflection of a professional idealism, but perhaps a personal one deeply rooted in her unchangeable experience and indelible memory. Thus, Lara acknowledges that she is only one component in the complex equation of teaching and learning within her own created community. Further, for Lara's, teaching is more effective when students share a common knowledge and experience base of what Applebee (1996) refers to as a "knowledge in action," knowing based on participation in a series of learning traditions and core experiences. By providing different "knowledge's" students can evolve their thought processes on their own and in turn learning for themselves the knowledge they need to learn. She supports their self-discovery and at the same time, when she realizes that it does not work, then she is trying to modify her teaching. Lara not only "let them evolve on their own," she also challenges herself. She has high expectations of herself and knows that it requires much more work. She acknowledges that it is up to the teacher to try different avenues and techniques to teach the material since not all students learn the same way. Lara realizes that teaching requires giving more than what is required nowadays from teachers. She cares and wants everybody to succeed in her class including the disadvantaged ones.

Apart from being creative, by making the students write when they need a break due to exhaustion, she gives them the chance to listen to what they want to say. Lara states:

> Schreiben ist eine Pause. Eine Pause für sie das zu begreifen, dass ich sie verstehe und nicht möchte, dass sie sich vom lernen trennen. Es ist für sie das Vergnügen, die Literatur zu genießen.
>
> [Writing is a break. A break for them to realize that they I understand and want them not to disconnect from learning. It gives them the pleasure of enjoying literacy.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Again, through writing she can see how each student thinks and processes the information attained from her class. Some students even speak up; those who are usually shy and do not want to share their opinions aloud. Particularly with some Muslim girls, who have difficulties in German grammar, Lara noticed that they improved and have one way to say aloud they opinion. She mentions that Muslim female tend to be more anxious in talking in front of the class. She understands and realizes that everybody has a different way of learning. She explains:

> Ich schätze jede Stimme in der Klasse. Schreiben stellt deine Stimme auf dem Papier dar. Ich habe gemerkt, dass es für einige Schüler schwer fällt vor der Klasse zu sprechen. Es ist schön ihre Überlegungen auf dem Papier zu sehen. Es ist ihre Art die Gespräche mit mir aufzunehmen, wobei ich sehen kann was sie für Sorgen haben. Ich wünsche, dass alle Lehrer einfühlsamer wären.
>
> [I value each voice in the class. Writing is portraying your voice on paper. I noticed that some students have a hard time speaking in front of the classroom. It is nice to see their reflections on paper. It is their way in keeping up the conversations with me, where I can see what their concerns are. I wish all teachers would be more sensitive.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara realizes the urgent need to adjust each lesson according to the needs of the students. She is aware that there is always a way to reach a student; depending on a given learning differences or cultural differences, she changes her teaching style. It is important in this respect that Lara receives and understands information from the student in order to determine and check whether he or she understood what she was talking about. Further, she wants the students not only to learn for the moment, but to keep learning,

enthusiastically and continuously, even as they progress to high school or college. She wants also to prompt her students to connect the information learned to something else, for instance some related topic in or aspect of society. To achieve this goal she believes that she needs to reach out to the student from their own worldview. She says,

> Ich hoffe, dass sie wahrnehmen, dass ich einer von ihnen bin. Ich zeige ihnen nicht, dass mein Wissen oder was auch immer ich im Unterricht erwähne, wertvoller ist als ihres. Ich möchte, dass sie sehen, dass ich mich wirklich darum sorge, wie die Dinge sehen. Nur wenn ich wirklich bemerke, dass ich ein Teil von ihrem Kreis bin, weiss ich, dass ich mich mit ihnen verbinden konnte. Das Reden über unsere Schreibereien hilft mir ihre Sicht der Welt zu verstehen.
>
> [I hope they realize that I am one of them. I am not showing them that my knowledge or whatever I mention in class is more valuable than theirs. I want them to see that I really do care how they look at things. Only when I truly realize that I am part of the circle I know that I have connected to them. Talking about our readings help me to understand their worldview.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara realizes that literature gives her a creative way to explore and reach out to life connections in each student's realities. She values the importance of literacy and tries to find adequate books to hold students' attention and, again, to give them the opportunity to think critically of important societal topics. I noticed that Lara loves the choice of various learning tools to foster a creative learning environment in her class. She gets bored just by lecturing. Letting the student "evolve" on her own and realizing the pleasure of learning demonstrates her philosophy in teaching. Learning should correlate with the student's velocity of learning and should not take their pleasure away to enjoy learning-not only for grading purposes. While putting herself on the same stage as the student she tries to connect and value their worldview. In a similar way, this way of learning demonstrates that the teacher is part of the "circle, the community" of the learners. Further, teachers should not put authority and take their own words as more important

than the students'. Thus, it helps students to be valued as individuals. A class which is based on this kind of philosophy creates an educational environment in which students may be nurtured, spontaneous, and productive. Lara says her basic personality is a nurturing one, and she thinks of herself as “dedicated” to her students than an authority figure per se. For example, in discussing in groups about different voices in literature, I observed Lara serve *borek* to her minority students to be used not only as a food, but also as a mnemonic for recalling elements of *Istanbul memories* by Orhan Pamuk. Lara read an excerpt from this book, excerpts to demonstrate Turkish values such as respect towards the parents and elderly people. While students served themselves borek with some Turkish Shepard salad, she adds,

> Ich liebe zu kochen und jemanden einzuladen. Wie du wissen dürftest bin ich türkisch, wir haben immer Besuch und wir kochen immer. Diese Art von türkischer Gastfreundlichkeit ist auch ein Teil meiner Unterrichtsphilosophie. Zum Sprachenlernen gehören nicht nur Wörter, es ist genauso die Beziehung zur Kultur. Meine Stchüler lieben mein Borek.
>
> [I love to cook and invite. As you might know being Turkish, we always have visitors and we always cook. Sharing this kind of Turkish hospitality is also part of my teaching philosophy. Language learning is not only words it is also connected to culture. My students love my borek.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

In her responsiveness of her students it is natural for her to cook for them. In addition to provide solid teaching, Lara believes her role in the classroom is also to connect the students to culture not only via literacy but through actual “artifacts” of the culture. It is natural for her to care and nurture her students. Lara states,

> Meine Schüler wissen, wie sehr ich es liebe zu kochen und das Essen aus unserer türkischen Küche mitzubringen. Sie wissen, dass ich es liebe mich um sie zu kümmern und für sie zu kochen. Ich denke, das lässt sie einsehen, dass ich ihr Lehrer bin, aber auch auf einer Weise wir ihre Mütter, ich lasse sie sich sehr viel behaglicher in diesem Klassenraum fühlen.

> [My students know how much I like cooking and bringing in food from our Turkish cuisine. They know that I love to take care of them and cook for them. I think just making them realize that I am their teachers but also in some way like their mums, make them feel much more comfortable in this classroom.] (Interview, 12.12/05)

Lara's beliefs is congruent with most feminist pedagogies such as caring (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Collins, 2000; Noddings, 1995), teamwork, and the sharing of control (Ropers-Huilman, 1997). Most feminist scholars point out the caring portion in a safe environment stems from the mothering nature. Having this secure environment is important to her, as it is an outgrowth of her experiences as a young child being torn in two different countries.

Further, she elicits creativity in her students and helps them find their best way to learn and study. At the same time, she tries to initiate a critical pedagogy, in which she tries to capitalize on the background of the particular student. She makes them think critically about literature, as well as aspects of society, education and also racism. I noticed that Lara knows the kinds of values and educative approach she wants to lay out in her class. She mentioned several times that she does not favor the rigid lecture approach, as this approach does not help the student to reflect, think and in turn teach. Lara was always trying to find new ways to incorporate her own understanding of how one teaches; namely, critically and based on the student rather than the teacher. I could see in her traces of the Freirean school of thought. Freire (1978) clarifies in his landmark book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that educators should not only teach how to read a word but also how to read the world. Further, lecturing (in his words, "depositing knowledge") does not help the student critically think through the material and apply his or her understanding in order to learn. Like Chantelle, Lara appears to apply this pedagogy unconsciously. I believe Lara unconsciously applies this approach and we can therefore

fairly identify her as a critical pedagogue. Lara tries to reach out to all the students in her class, and whatever this entails, such as trying to learn with music or literacy or writing, she employs in her class. Furthermore, allowing a break for her students when they needed it, letting them reflect on past readings, shows again that she wants her students to think and process information and find their own opinions. She wants them to be thinkers, to autonomously weigh and compare crucial information. Her way of inducing this kind of approach shows directly that she is not a lecture-type educator. In the next section, I elaborate more on her actual teaching methods that explain the themes I explained above.

Classroom Practice

After having seen elements of Lara's past experiences, it was interesting to see how these experiences affected her and how these experiences are evident in the way she perceived multicultural pedagogy in her classroom. The introduction to this chapter leads the reader to Lara's past challenges and provides a rationale for what she is doing in her current classroom. Briefly, I will mention in this section about Lara's perceptions of multicultural pedagogy and how this is reflected in her classroom.

One of the more intense observations I made was Lara's continuous struggle to be competent as a German teacher. She told me several times that she can feel that some of her peers cannot realize that she can teach German being of Turkish origin as well. She works constantly to check on her language skills and make sure she is conjugating and declining words correctly. At times she can manage not to show any anger or frustration, at other times, she wants to make some comment to show her colleagues that she knows what she is talking about.

> Ich bin deprimiert über die ununterbrochene Kontrolle, ob ich lesen und schreiben kann oder fähig genug bin, deutsche Kinder in ihrer Muttersprache zu unterrichten. Ich bin hier aufgewachsen, ging hier durch die Ausbildung, spreche ohne irgendeinen Akzent Deutsch, warum würde ich nicht in der Lage sein, ihnen auch Deutsch zu unterrichten? Ich kann manchmal an den Gesichtern sehen, wer glaubt, dass ich es verdiene und welche verängstigt sind, dass Ausländer beginnen im Bildungswesen zu unterrichten. Es ist manchmal frustrierend. Ich versuche es jedoch nicht zu zeigen.
>
> [I am fed up with the continuous check if I am literate or able enough to teach German kids their native tongue. I was raised here, went through schooling here, speak without any accent German, why wouldn't I be able to teach also German then? I can tell sometimes from the faces who believe that I deserve it and who are afraid that foreigners are starting to teach in education. It is frustrating sometimes. However, I try not to show it.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Although she is highly confident in her teaching and her knowledge, she still has to combat prejudice and the stereotypical perceptions of her peers. That is the reason she sometimes feels unconnected to and not understood by her peers. Particularly, one teacher always comes up to her and asks what she has taught today and how she felt about it. Lara is always very positive and kindly responds to all questions that have been addressed to her.

While Lara may regard this kind of behavior as part of her profession, at times it drives her to accomplish even more and become still more proficient in her field. It is evident Lara regards the negative attitudes of the administration and her peers as a bias against her ethnicity, and it causes her to expend more energy and work harder to perform better and do an excellent job. With days at Max-Planck Comprehensive frequently entailing several uncomfortable moments, Lara demonstrates the extra effort and flexibility necessary to weather the changes as only a Turkish teacher can, pulling from within herself the strength to forge her own path and achieve her own goals. Lara reaches

this place from the emergent themes arising from the observations and interviews I had with her, discussed above.

Teaching with attitude. Lara claims she is particular and different in the way how she teaches and does her own thing in regards to different teaching methods. As she is the only Turkish teacher at Max Planck Comprehensive she considers that "egal was ich tue, es ist für das Wohlbefinden der ausländischen Schüler". [whatever I do, it is to the well-being of the migrants students.] (Interview, 12/12/05) Teaching for the disadvantaged in society is Lara's motto and her passion for practice. She believes it intimidates her colleagues since they have been "eine lange Zeit ein Teil der Max Planck Gesamtschule und kümmerten sich nicht wirklich um die türkischen Schüler", [a long time part of Max Planck Comprehensive and did not really care for the Turkish students] (Interview, 12/12/05) that it clearly has bothered them. To Lara, teaching with attitude is a kind of philosophy. She states,

> Unterrichten mit einer aufrichtigen Einstellung, reflektiert deine Absicht im Unterrichten. Jeder hat eine Absicht. Du unterrichtest nicht nur für nichts. Jeder Lehrer hat einen Vorsatz. Meine Rolle im Unterricht, die Methode, wie ich meinen Unterrichtsplan integriere, die Methode, wie ich mich an meine Studenten richte, die Methode, wie ich meinen Klassenraum dekoriere und am wichtigsten, die Methode, wie demokratisch ich scheine, und menschliche Werte in meinem Unterricht sind selbsterklärend für mein Grundprinzip. Wenn ein Schüler wirklich lernen möchte, wenn ein Schüler sich in dem Lernstoff von selbst involviert und wenn sie wirklich nachdenken und sie über das Thema nachdenken, dann habe ich meine Arbeit getan. Ich möchte, dass sie von selbstkritisch ihr Lernen wahrnehmen. Ich möchte, dass sie sich mit den Informationen beschäftigen, überwachen was sie lernen und über ihren Erfolg nachdenken. Zur gleiche Zeit beachte ich, dass ich möchte, dass sie fühlen, dass ich ihre Methode das Leben wahrzunehmen nehmen spüre. Lediglich, wenn ich mir erlaube, zu verstehen wie sie die Dinge sehen, kann ich wirklich mein Teil erreichen. Ich weiss du könntest fragen, wie das möglich ist, ich versuche es und manchmal weiss ich, wenn ich es getan hab. Bloß die Antworten zeigen mir, ob ich es getan habe. Sie

> sollten wahrnehmen, dass ich mich um ihre Eltern sorge, ihre Sprache, ihre Kultur und ihre einmalige Stimme als ein Individuum.
>
> [Teaching with attitude truly reflects your purpose in teaching. Everybody has an agenda. You do not just teach for nothing. Every teacher has a purpose. My role in teaching, the way how I incorporate my lesson plans, the way how I address to my students, the way how I create my classroom and most importantly the way how I reflect democratic, just and human values in my class are self explanatory for my rationale. If a student truly wants to learn, if a student involves on his or her own in the subject matter, and if they really reflect and are thoughtful about the topic then I have done my job. I want them to critically be aware of their learning per se. I want them to engage with the information, monitor what they are learning and reflect on their success. At the same time, I care I want them to feel, that I am sensing their way of perceiving life. Only, if I allow myself to understand how they look at things- I truly achieved my part. I know you may be asking how it is possible- I am trying and still sometimes know if I did. Only the responses show me if I did it. They should realize that I care for their parents, their language, their culture, and their unique voice as an individual.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara observes that other teachers have negative opinions toward a migrant students which she silently takes in and contradicts her philosophy in teaching. Lara states,

> Ich habe bemerkt, dass sich keiner richtig um die Ausländer kümmert. Sie unterrichten wirklich nur hier am Max Planck bis sie eine andere Stelle in einem anderen Bezirk bekommen. Sie hassen diese Schüler buchstäblich und reden vor ihnen negativ über ihre akademische Situation und schreien sie an, wenn sie in ihrer Muttersprache reden. Sie lehnen sie ab und wollen ihr Kulturerbe nicht schätzen und geben ihnen bloß Arbeitsblätter, die sie täglich machen müssen. Ohne einem Grundprinzip und einer Bestimmung. An einem anderem Tag erzählte mir Ayse, eine türkische Studentin, dass mein Unterrichten einfach anders ist. Ich mach es kreativ und mit Spaß. Andere Lehrer, wie Mr. Rosenthal redet selbst nie, er liefert bloß die Hausaufgaben ab.
>
> [I have noticed that no one really cares about the migrants. They are really only teaching here at Max Planck until they get another position in another district. They literally hate these students and talk in front of them negative about their academic situation and scream at them if they talk in their mother tongue. They deny and do not want to value their cultural heritage and just turn in worksheets for them to do daily. Without any rationale and purpose. Ayse, the other day a Turkish student just told me that my teaching is different. I do it creative and with fun. Other teachers, such as Mr. Rosenthal never even talks he just turns in homework assignments.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

To Lara, teaching her way is her philosophy and getting appreciation and immediate motivating statements by her students demonstrate her that her "agenda" works. Lara comments,

> Wenn Lehrer wahrnehmen, dass Schüler während den Pausen für Fragen zu den Hausaufgaben zu mir kommen oder mir auf dem Flur Fragen stellen, zu dem was ich unterrichte, bemerke ich die neidischen Blicke von einigen von ihnen.
>
> [When teachers noticed that students come to me during breaks for homework questions or ask me questions about anything what I teach in the hall, I noticed the jealous looks of some of them.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara did not feel accepted and loved by her collegial environment. Although her student teaching experience with the mentor was a positive experience, her collegial environment was not. Lara's beliefs and attitudes reflect visible difference in teaching and demonstrates jealousy within her collegial workplace.

Aware that her teaching style is different from those of her other colleagues acknowledges her philosophy and helps her be even stronger as a teacher. Those people, who did not acknowledge her in the past, such as the college professors, or some German friends who could not understand her cultural background, her book club members not accepting her democratic values, teaching experience within a non-supportive environment really could not see her true interest and true self.

Lara believes that teaching is having an agenda. At the same token this is only visible by the way how she teaches and how she incorporates her lesson plan. Having lacked that need growing up where she needed to do her own thing alone and was not culturally welcomed and understood by teachers demonstrates that her past memories instilled strong desires for herself in her career as an educator. Growing up in a Turkish family she understands that being educated is a privilege and not easy to attain for

everybody. Her support for immigrants in the mosque is only one way how she demonstrates her agenda in life.

In the remaining section I will talk about specifics in regards to her difference in teaching.

Chaotic Turkish program and scepsis in her language abilities. At Max Planck Comprehensive, most of Lara's instructional days are based on various teachings in Turkish for heritage speakers German as a second language, and German as a language arts class. As none of the teachers are certified for teaching Turkish for heritage speakers and German as a second language (including Lara), Lara has to teach just because she is Turkish. Although, Lara has graduated from German language with Turkish as a minor for specifically comprehensive and grammar schools, her main teaching duties exceed her capacities. As most German educators do not know Turkish and therefore are not able to teach it, the school considers someone like Lara as she comes from a migrant descent and is familiar with migrant student's language background. Yet, most teachers of Max Planck Comprehensive are not truly satisfied with her German language skills and constantly verify her abilities by asking her grammatical questions. Clearly, too many varieties of classes are required to teach and at the same time a constant verification of her credibility is taking place, which makes Lara at times uncomfortable or totally indifferent.

For instance, it is completely normal that during a break in between the classes another German language arts teacher asks her the conjugation of "werden" (become) in the imperfect tense. I could observe at times that Lara would get highly energetic and would immediately give exact responses and tell them in addition the Plusquamperfect

tense of the word. At other time, she would say that she is tired and cannot really think. The hard teaching workload and the skeptical environment created a very hard working and competitive environment where Lara feels alone and keeps an indifferent attitude to the outside. Lara states,

> Einfach weil ich türkisch bin, muss ich alle türkischen und/oder ausländischen Studenten, in allen erdenkbaren Klassen, unterstützen. Ich habe nie im Leben Deutsch als eine zweite Fremdsprache gelernt und muss es jetzt trotzdem unterrichten. Mensch, hin und wieder denke ich, es ist nicht wirklich wichtig wie man unterrichtet- ich meine den pädagogischen Teil- es ist, ob du einer von ihnen bist oder nicht. Außerdem hasse ich es und möchte es ihnen nicht wirklich zeigen…die ganze Zeit Annette- eine andere deutsche Lehrerin- versucht immer meine Fähigkeiten zu kontrollieren. Wofür? Denkt sie, ich bin nicht fähig Deutsch zu unterrichten? Oder ist es vermutlich Eifersucht?
>
> [Just because I am Turkish I need to assist all the Turkish and/or migrant students in any imaginable classes. I have never ever studied German as a second language and still need to teach it. Man, at times I feel like it is really not necessary how to teach- I mean the pedagogical component- it is whether you are one of them or not. Also, I hate it and do not really want to show them…all the time Annette- another German teacher- always tries to check on my abilities. For what? Does she think I am not able to teach German? Or is she probably jealous?] (Interview, 08/15/2005)

The major workload and verification of her German language abilities is a great concern for Lara as is what she deems as the negative attitude towards migrants and no support from a collegial environment that impinge on her and her students. Such negative behavior discourages her at times and takes her even more away from the collegial environment. Further, the negativity is not only sensed by her but also students (mostly migrant students) sense who really cares for them and who do not.

However, the negativity is not all. Three times a week after the class period she advises and supports 5-6 migrant students mainly Turkish and two Bosnians to keep track of their grades, their German language and she assists them in their homework assignments. Again, as nobody really thinks that they can assist these students Lara as a

native of Turkey is the only person who can really assist these students. Lara is not compensated for these; she tutors just because she loves her students, and she knows how much help they need. Most of these children cannot get additional help from their families as they do not speak German themselves. After her usual work day, Lara remains after school up to 2 hours as she tutors these students. The students get also additional information on resources how to study and improve their skills in German. Frequently, Lara may be seen reading with these students, checking their homework assignment, and practicing orally couple of German hard words. Most of these students speak broken German and usually talk German grammatically wrong or use Turkish words in between the language. In addition, it is also not unusual for Lara to attend faculty meetings in short notice. Usually, the faculty meetings compromise detailed descriptions on different parental meetings, preparations for different presentations for parents and up to date conversations on specific students who do not follow the classroom guidelines. [Please note that I have translated all of Lara's quotations from German to English.] Lara states,

> Ich mag die Tatsache, dass wir immer Sachen für die Eltern zum zusehen vorbereiten. Unsere Treffen sind alle über verschiedene Partys, Präsentationen und Ferienvorbereitungen. Selten sprechen wir über verschiedene Sorgen, Sorgen unserer eingewanderten Studenten. Niemand möchte wirklich drüber reden. Und das ist wirklich interessant, da unsere Schule zu 90% aus ausländischen Studenten besteht. Mir ist immer zumute, als ob die Lehrer immer wegrennen, wenn sie ein Problem betrachten und wollen nicht wirklich drüber reden, wenn sie zusammen treffen. Eigenartig!
>
> [I like the fact that we always prepare things for the parents to see. Our meetings are all about different parties, presentations, and holiday preparations. Rarely, we do talk about different concerns our migrant student concerns. Nobody really wants to talk about it. And that is really interesting as our school consists of 90% of migrant students. I always feel like teachers are running away what they consider a problem and really do not want to talk about it when they get together. Strange!] (Interview, 08/15/2005)

While Lara may not like the collegial environment and the agenda of her faculty meetings, she still enjoys teaching to her students and at times she tries to forget it and be indifferent. I heard her one time saying: " Es ist mein Job. So schaut es aus." [It is my job. That's what it is.] (Interview, 08/08/05) It is evident that Lara regards the administration's actions as disrespectful to her origin and not caring towards the migrant students at her school. However, it does not discourage her ability to teach these students and it actually causes in her a more critical approach to learning. In her very few classroom teaching she implements lots of thinking activities that put more work on top of her work. With days at Max Planck Comprehensive frequently negative towards the diverse student body with plethora of negativity Lara still demonstrates the extra effort and flexibility necessary to weather the changes as a migrant teacher can by pulling from within herself the strength to create her own path to affect her own agenda. She accomplishes such through three emergent and distinct themes arising from the observational and interview data.

Teaching methods.

> Ich versuche eine diverse Literatur in meinem Klassenraum aufzuführen. Da wir am meisten Schüler mit ausländischer Herkunft in unserem Klassenraum haben, ist es unbedingt erforderlich, dass wir Literatur verwenden, bei der sie sich selbst sehen können und über das Lesen reflektieren. Es hilft so viel Diskussionen über voreingenommene, kulturelle Stereotypen zu erschaffen. Besonders religiöse Missverständnisse hatten sich durch die Literatur geklärt.
>
> [I try to implement a diverse literature in my classroom. As we have mostly migrant-descent students in our classroom, it is imperative that we use literacy where they can see themselves and reflect on the reading. It helps so much to create discussion about prejudiced cultural stereotypes. Particularly, religious misunderstandings have been clarified through literature.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Although Lara is a novice teacher, her cultural background is already reflected in her teaching style and use of teaching methods. She tries to implement any tools that help migrant students to understand the German language and their native language better. As she has the advantage of seeing from the perspective of the migrant students, she can help and assist them during class time and give them opportunities to improve their skills through specific grammar practices. I noticed that for Lara teaching means more than "depositing knowledge" *per se.* Teaching is: "To let the student know that you care and want to help and guide them." As Lara carried herself in a very extroverted and strong posture in her classes, I noticed that anytime she introduced a new topic, she made sure that everybody was listening and following her attentively. The way she made sure that everybody was listening was by pointing to specific students to repeat what was going on in the session. During my observations, I could see that she enjoyed what she was doing. Her positive nature and easygoing style towards the students made her more approachable. Students saw and valued this. She wanted to give all students a chance to do a good job. The students all appeared to be comfortable and at ease in her presence, and her classroom reflected that attitude. One way she created the welcoming environment was to incorporate a multicultural environment for each student and to adapt her teaching style according to their learning level. I will elaborate in the next section how Lara created such an environment.

Multicultural lessons. Lara is similar to Chantelle in her teaching style; she addresses important issues about multicultural education in her classes especially to support migrant students. She mainly uses literature that reflects migrant culture and language. Therefore, she makes sure that she values each culture in the classroom and

tries to find literature that is familiar and interesting to the class. She even knows a little Russian, and understands Russian cultural differences. Lara offers,

> Meine Schüler lesen wesentliche Bücher, welche kulturelle Literatur vorstellen. Wir lesen und diskutieren und genießen die Lesungen. Ich weiss, dass die deutschen Schüler genauso interessiert sind, deshalb stelle ich immer Fragen, ob sie einige beschriebene Aspekte im Buch nicht verstehen.
>
> [My students are reading essential books which introduce cultural literature. We read and discuss and enjoy the readings. I know that the German students are interested as well, so I always ask questions if they do not understand some aspects described in the book.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara's beliefs about the purpose of a German language arts class emanate not only from a curricular stance but a personal one as well. She wishes for her students to leave her class with a desire to read and see the relevance of reading literature in their own lives and applying it to their lives, "Wenn sie das Gelesene auf ihr eigenes Leben beziehen können, habe ich mein Ziel erreicht". [If they can relate the reading to their own lives, that I achieved my aim.] (Interview, 08/15/05). Lara believes the purposes of a German language arts curriculum are manifold. She wishes her students to learn about themselves through literature and by tapping into the different voices they have to express themselves given different venues for expression. Perhaps most importantly, Lara wants her students to connect with texts not just in an academic manner, but also in a personal one drawing upon their collective experiences to relate to texts while also keeping open-minded to elicit new connections. Lara states,

> Das verstehen der Literatur bringt für mich die Verbindung zum Text mit sich und ist in der Lage die eigenen Erfahrungen mit dem Text zu teilen. Ihre persönlichen Gefühle, ihre persönlichen Reaktionen und ihre persönliche Einstellung sind wichtig für mich. Wenn sie sich mit Orhan Pamuks Lebenserfahrungen in Europa in Verbindung bringen lassen, dann fühlen sie sich wahrscheinlich wie er sich gefühlt hat, als türkische Person, die im Ausland lebt.

> [Literacy understanding for me involves connecting to text and being able to share ones' own experiences with text. Their personal feelings, their personal reactions and their personal attitude are important for me. If they can relate to Orhan Pamuk's experiences living in Europe, then they probably feel how he felt as a Turkish person living abroad.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

While studying about theoretical aspects in her courses during her education, Lara loved reading about reading theories particularly about second language reading theories. She still is aware that she always knew for herself that for understanding you need to connect to the text. She states,

> Ich weiss, es ist heutzutage schwer die Schüler mit einem Text zu verbinden. Wie die Pisa Studie zeigt, mögen Schüler es nicht zu lesen und es wird schwerer für uns Lehrer Wege zu finden um die Schüler mit einem Text in Verbindung zu bringen. Wie ich schon erwähnt habe, ein Weg ist es sie mit dem Text zu verbinden. Wenn die türkischen Mädchen in meiner Klasse sich mit der Hauptfigur Nadia Osman in dem Nomaden Buch verbinden können und ihr Sichten, wie sie sich in dieser speziellen Situation fühlen würden, interessiert teilen, dann habe ich meine Arbeit getan. Ich gebe eine Menge Aufgaben, die ihnen eine Menge persönliche Fragen zu ihrem Lesen stellen. Nur so kann ich ihre Interessen erreichen und sicher gehen, ob wirklich über das Material nachdenken.
>
> [I know it is hard nowadays to connect the students to text. As the Pisa study showed students do not like to read and it is getting harder for us teachers to find ways how to make them connected to text. As I have mentioned before, one way is connecting them to text. If the Turkish girls in my class can connect to the protagonist Nadia Osman in the nomads' book, and interestingly share their views how they would feel in this particular situation, I have done my job. I give plenty of assignments asking them personal questions to their readings. Only like this I can achieve their interest and make sure if they really think through the material.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

Lara believes that the best way for students to learn German is through the practice of literature discussion through cooperative learning. According to Lara:

> Kooperatives Lernen ist eine Strategie, in der kleine Gruppen eine Variante der Lerntätigkeiten verwenden um ihr Verständnis für ein Thema zu verbessern. Jedes Mitglied der Gruppe ist nicht nur dafür zuständig, was das Lernen beibringt, sondern den Mitspielern beim Lernen helfen, auf diese Weise erschaffen sie ein Leistungsklima. Die Schüler arbeiten

> solange an ihrer Aufgabe, bis alle Gruppenmitglieder sie erfolgreich verstanden haben und sie beendet haben.
>
> [Cooperative learning is a strategy in which small teams use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara believes that a student can understand and reflect a reading from different discussion points. Through cooperative learning students receive the responsibility "um ihr Verständnis für einen Abschnitt zu wiederholen und ihre Sicht mit denen der anderen Menschen zu vergleichen". [to reiterate their understanding of a section and compare their own view to other peoples' view.] (Interview, 12/12/05) Lara then suggests that her students analyze certain literature within the migrant literature and offers students "um ihre Meinungen innerhalb der Gruppe zu teilen, was die von dem Stück halten". [to share their opinions within their group what they thought of the piece.] (Interview, 12/12/05) Thus, her view of practicing multiple viewpoints to include the self is one of the most essential skills she wishes for her students to take away from her classroom experiences. Much of what Lara espouses is congruent with the reader response theory of Louise Rosenblatt (1938/1995) who states,

> Teaching becomes a matter of improving the individual's capacity to evoke meaning from the text by leading her to reflect self-critically on this process. The starting point for growth must be each individual's efforts to marshal his resources in relation to the printed page. The teacher's task is to foster fruitful interactions-or, more precisely, transactions-between individual readers and individual literary texts (p. 25-26).

Lara believes that activities directed toward learning are paramount to simply relaying information and giving some rigid instruction. She views learning as a "continuous goal"

that begins with one's ability to transfer learning from one situation to another, and that such cannot be measured on a multiple choice test. Lara comments,

> Wenn sie Texte lesen, werden verschiedene Kenntnisse an die Oberfläche kommen und die Studenten teilen ihre Kenntnisse mit den Kenntnissen der anderen, ich nenne es irgendwie Kenntnisaustausch, der auch Wissen über den Kenntnissen hinaus anstößt. Man sieht verschiedene Informationen in verschiedenen Formen. Und offensichtlich denkt man darüber nach, ich stelle es in Frage.
>
> [When reading text different knowledge's will come on the surface and students share their own knowledge with someone else knowledge, I call it in some way the knowledge exchange that triggers also knowledge on top of the knowledge. It is seeing different information in various forms. And obviously you think through it, question it.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

Her idea of how to create some information is congruent with major scholars of critical theory, such as Tierney and Banks, Paulo Freire, and Paul Mclaren.

Raison d'ètre can only be maintained by continuous critique that entails fundamental ideas of truth, freedom and justice, and very imperative to this belief is *to liberate humans from their oppressed conditions* (Freire, 1977; Peters et al., 2003). Lara mentioned one time that "ihr Job lehrt ihnen Verstehen und Denken". [her job is making them learn, understand and think.] (Interview, 12/19/05) Additionally, she explained that some of the most relevant aspects of teaching are to implement and create a multicultural environment in her classroom. Whether this is a major change, or a more precise adaptation to the needs of a student, Lara tries to do everything to make a point and make sure that the student has understood everything. According to my observations in interviews and in class, Lara understands multicultural education in a critical way: she provides the resources and students need to "denken und wiederspiegeln". [think and reflect] (Interview 12/19/05) The way she creates this environment is unique; her approach helps the student to be critical and thoughtful during lessons. Regardless which

student she is trying to address, or to whom she is accommodating her teaching, she finds solutions and clearly is sure about what she is doing. Her classes are geared towards migrant students' needs and address important aspects in their learning. For instance, she is teaching them their native language Turkish in one of her heritage-language classes. She is familiar with the current second language research and knows how important literacy skills in the first language are. They transfer also to the second language. Lara states: "Die Bildung der ersten Sprache in die Fähigkeit in der zweiten Sprache zu lesen und schreiben verlegen. Auf diese Weise, wenn ein Schüler nicht in der ersten Sprache lesen und schreiben kann, ist es schwer für den Schüler in der zweiten Sprache hervorragend zu sein". [First language's literacy transfers to the second language literacy. Thus, if a student cannot read and write in the first language, it is hard for the student to excel in the second language.] (Interview, 12/12/05) It is interesting that Lara follows research and knows how important it is that migrant students learn their native language. I point out several methods she applies which show a critical, multicultural teaching style.

> Ich kann die Schwierigkeiten sehen, die meine Schüler in ihren Übersetzungen haben und in ihrer ersten Sprache. Ich kann ihnen helfen und sie in ihrem Türkisch unterstützen und auch in Deutsch, ihrer zweiten Sprache. Normalerweise machen sie die Zeiten und Deklinationen falsch. Deutsch ist eine schwierige Sprache und wenn du die Artikel nicht von Kindheit an gelernt hast, kann dich das genauso durcheinander bringen. Sie wollen immer mit mir Türkisch reden; ich versuche die ganze Zeit mit ihnen Deutsch zu reden, so wie das die Regel in der Schule ist. Deutsche Kollegen von mir mögen es nicht, wenn ich vor ihnen mit meinen Schüler Türkisch rede. Andere Lehrer denken, wenn die Schüler nicht die ganze Zeit Deutsch reden, dann wird er oder sie es niemals lernen.Ich stimme dem nicht überein, da sie in ihrer ersten Sprache genauso Schwierigkeiten haben; sie müssen die Fähigkeit zu lesen und zu schreiben nicht nur in meinem Türkischunterricht trainieren, sonder die Sprache auch manchmal sprechen. Laut Forschung überträgt sich die Ebene der Belesenheit in deiner ersten Sprache in die zweite Sprache. Ich versuche sie immer zu

> unterstützen wo ich kann. Sie würden es viel besser machen, wenn wir sie genauso in der ersten Sprache unterstützen würden.
>
> [I can see the difficulties my students have in their translations and in their first language. I can help and support them in their Turkish and also in their second language in German. Usually, they do tenses and declinations wrong. German is a tough language, and if you do not learn the articles from your childhood that can mess you up as well. They always want to speak to me in Turkish; I try to speak all the time in German, as that is the rule in the school. German peers of mine do not like it if I speak Turkish in front of them with the students. Other teachers think if the student does not speak German all the time, then he or she will never learn it. I do not agree with that, as they have difficulties in their first language as well; they need to practice not only literacy in my Turkish classes but also spoken language sometime. According to research, the literacy level in your first language transfers as well into the second language. I always try to support them where I can. They would do much better if we would assist them as well in the first language.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Lara understands that migrant children are not permitted to speak their own mother tongues. She is familiar with research and acknowledges that first language literacy transfers to second language literacy. At the same token, she points out that faculty does not pay attention to research. Lara knows and makes clear that there is a need to support their first language acquisition. As an educator, she realizes what her migrant students need and is ready to facilitate their way of learning. I was often impressed to watch Lara go beyond what is necessary to make sure that everybody in the class has understood and feels comfortable to ask questions and otherwise say what they want. I observed that students are aware that Lara would always nicely listen to their concerns whether it is personal or school related. I noticed one time that Lara would even make a break in between her class sessions just because a student wanted to talk to her in private. She would make her students feel cared and important. Her body language would support also how she would treat them. For instance, while talking to this student she would have one hand on his shoulder and look directly to his face while listening. According to her:

“Meine Schüler sind meine Familie, wenn sie mich brauchen, möchte ich, dass sie wissen, dass ich da bin”. [My students are my family, if they need me I want them to know that I am there.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Apart from noticing that she cares for her students, Lara even mentions that most teachers in her school do not. They even prohibit migrant students from speaking aloud in their native language. Lara gets disturbed by this fact; and, although she does not let the students speak in Turkish talk in her German language-arts class, it is okay if they speak Turkish in the German-as-a-second-language course. She tells me that she can understand and talk about the specific reasons why students make mistakes even in their native language. Lara is familiar with her advantages, and internally she believes that most teachers are jealous and do not want her to use her beneficial credentials. Though Lara did not mention that, I could tell just by observation in the teachers’ lounge. For instance, she was talking in Turkish to me and one student who came in into the lounge. Allthough, she was familiar about the language policy she did not pay attention. Her strong personality does not leave her, and she does not care what other German teachers think.

> Ich weiss, dass meine Kollegen es nicht mögen, wenn die türkischen Schüler in den Unterrichtsstunden türkisch reden. Sie wollen es wirklich verbieten und können nicht verstehen, dass es ein Teil ihrer Identität ist. Meine Schüler fühlen sich in meiner Gegenwart viel entspannter. Ich kann ihnen bei ihrer Grammatik helfen und ihnen helfen zu verstehen warum sie ein paar Fehler machen. Ich weiss und kann sehen, dass es ihnen definitiv hilft, dass ich beide Sprachen kann.
>
> [I know my peers do not like it if the Turkish students in the classes are talking in Turkish. They actually want to prohibit it and cannot understand that it is part of their identity. My students feel much more relaxed in my presence. I can help them in their grammar and make them understand why they are making some mistakes. I know and can see that it definitely helps them that I know both languages.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Further, Lara acknowledges that she is still new as a teacher, and she wants to learn and create a multicultural environment as much as she can. As she grew up bilingual herself, she surely possesses the abilities to use her skills and assist her migrant students. In her classes she tries to incorporate important learning styles, such as multicultural literacy, storytelling, and critical discussion of cultural differences, and difficulties of translation from the migrant languages to German. This approach becomes evident in her German as a second language course and Turkish for Turkish heritage speakers. Her teaching centers on literature and storytelling. Lara likes to discuss with her students and at the same time learn from them:

> Ich möchte mehr als nur ein Lehrer für meine Schüler sein. Ich möchte, dass sie wissen, dass ich es mag, die Themen, über die sie gerne sprechen möchten, mit einzubeziehen. Ich denke, es ist wichtig mit meinen Studenten über diese Themen zu sprechen, speziell im Moment, da die Diskriminierungen in Deutschland zunehmen. Ich glaube, ich versuche sie, durch die Literatur und dem Geschichtenerzählen, zu ermutigen über diese Themen nachzudenken und sie zu diskutieren. Manchmal reden wir über Stereotypen und über die muslimische Religion. Es ist immer interessant zu sehen, wie Deutsche unsere Religion wahrnehmen. Sie scheinen zu denken, dass wir als Frauen keine Rechte haben. Ich leite manchmal Fragen und kritisches Denken in die Wege, wie und wo diese Aussagen herkommen. Normalerweise diskutieren wir es in unserem Unterricht und meine türkischen Schüler reden über ihre Religion – über die wahren Punkte in unserer Religion. Außerdem ist unsere Ausstattung des Klassenraumes sehr komfortable. Ich habe eine Menge Bilder in meinem Klassenraum, die verschiedene Kulturen repräsentieren und ich versuche offen für neue Bilder und Poster zu sein.
>
> [I want to be more than just a teacher for my students. I want them to know that I like to incorporate the topics they like to talk about. I think it is important to talk about these issues, with my students, especially right now as discrimination is on the rise in Germany. Through literature and storytelling, I believe I am trying to encourage them to think about and discuss these issues. Sometimes we talk about stereotypes and about the Muslim religion. It is always interesting to see how German students perceive our religion. They seem to think that we as women do not have rights. I sometimes initiate questions and critical thinking on how and where these statements come from. Usually we discuss it in our classes, and my Turkish students talk about their religion – about the right aspects

> of our religion. In addition, the classroom environment is very comfortable. I have lots of pictures representing different cultures, in my classroom, and I try to be open to new pictures and posters.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Moreover, when teaching about language in general. She makes sure that everybody in the class is valued based on her accent or language. She makes sure that everybody understands that language is a component of their personality. She comments,

> Ich bin total damit einverstanden, wenn sie wie Erkan und Stefan (Fernsehsendung) reden. Du dürftest über die Proletenserie Bescheid wissen, welche türkische Menschen mit verschiedenen, grammatischen Fehlern darstellt. Urkomsich! Du musst es sehen. Was ich sagen möchte ist, dass niemand in der Klasse lacht oder auf diese auf diese Art von Sprache schaut, da sie minderwertiger ist.
>
> [I am totally okay if they talk like Erkan and Stefan (TV Show). You may know about this red neck show which portrays Turkish people with various grammatical mistakes. Hilarious! You need to watch it. What I want to say is that I tell them in class that nobody laughs or looks at this kind of language as inferior.] (Interview, 10/10/05)

For Lara each student's language is highly valued as part of her culture. I noticed one day when a student started laughing when Ibrahim said: "Alter, Ich bring' mein Familie". Student kept laughing and reminded him of the correct German way. Lara immediately intervened and could not hide her emotions. She mentioned that "es ist respektlos jemanden wegen seiner Sprache zu verspotten. Die Sprache ist deine Kultur!" [it is disrespectful to mock at somebody due to his language. Language is your culture!] to everybody in the class. (Interview, 12/19/05) Everybody was silent and they continued with a special topic. It was interesting to see Lara's eyes when mentioning this statement in a higher voice. Lara made sure that all students had the opportunity to share insights about their culture and themselves. The class can see the differences and ask questions that otherwise would remain hidden behind stigma and stereotypes. Lara helps both

groups to break down these misconceptions and ask each other why certain aspects of the culture apply:

> Wir haben eine so verschiedene Gruppe von Schülern in der Klasse – Bosnier, Russen und Kroaten und natürlich Türken. Die Mehrheit der Studenten in der Klassen sind von ausländischer Herkunft. Die meisten meiner deutschen Studenten mögen es nicht in unserer Schule zu unterrichten. Ich liebe es tatsächlich; ich fühle mich angenehm und ich weiss, dass ich nicht nur von der Schule, sondern auch von den Schülern gebraucht werde. Ich kann ihnen helfen zu übersetzen, sie unterstützen mit der Grammatik und ihnen helfen, sich in das deutsch Leben zu integrieren. Wir machen eine Menge Rollenspiele und Spiele in der Klasse. Wir lesen eine Menge und teilen ähnliche Gedanken. Eine Menge Zeit über sprechen meine Schüler nur Türkisch oder Deutsch mit türkischem Akzent mit mir. Ich erinnere sie nicht zu sprechen, obwohl ich innerlich weiss, dass sie sich äußern möchten und sie in meiner Gegenwart behaglich fühlen.
>
> [We have such a diverse group of students in the class – Bosnians, Russians, and Croatians and, of course, Turks. The majority of students in the class are of migrant descent. Most of my German peers do not like to teach in our school. I actually love it; I feel comfortable, and I know that I am needed not only by the school but also by the students. I can help them translate, assist them with grammar, and help them integrate into German life. We do lots of role-play and games in class. We read a lot and share similar thoughts. A lot of times, my students just talk to me in Turkish or in German with a Turkish accent. I remind them not to talk, although internally I know that they want to express themselves and feel comfortable in my presence.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Lara's immediate reaction towards the laughter of one student showed that she cannot sustain any kind of discrimination in her class. Rather than dismissing the student she gave the opportunity to discuss this instance within the whole class. Again, Lara's reaction not only displays one more time a caring aspect of her teaching she also implements critical discussions around stereotypical occurrences. By doing this, students can exchange ideas and give immediate solutions to discriminatory behavior.

Thus, being critical, yet at the same time adaptable to the learning environment and accessible to the student makes her an educator and helps the students learn new lessons. Lara enjoys being a teacher who cares and who changes according to the needs

of the students. She believes that multicultural literature is more than just an exchange of cultural differences. Such literature allows us to talk about profound acts of stigmatization and prejudice. Lara observes that the migrant students' presentations and their thought processes show that they feel inferior and sometimes uncomfortable when talking about these issues: "Besonders meine weiblichen, türkischen Schüler fühlen sich manchmal geniert über ihre Situation zuhause zu sprechen". [Particularly, my female Turkish students sometimes feel embarrassed to talk about their situations at home.] (Interview, 01/02/06) Lara has the personality to come up with different ways to address the different needs and particularities that are required in the classroom. Her teaching philosophy reflects this attitude as well. She realizes that an educator can teach and make sure that everybody can be reached in some way; if that does not work, as mentioned before, she tries another way until she can be sure that everybody has understood the subject. In addition, literature—simply storytelling—is another way she can be certain to address different races and ethnicities in the classroom. She celebrates everybody's culture through literature and gives different students opportunities to be included and share their opinions about their cultures. For instance, when discussing "Doner and Candlelight, she lets a Turkish student lead a group and talk from her own point of view. She wants to make sure that everything said about that genre is not merely what the general populace believes. Lara wants to ensure the information provided is accurate and so looks for confirmation for the Turkish student. The book talks about the faux pas of Turkish females in German society. For instance, Asli, a Turkish female student mentions:"Dieses Buch ist lustig, es erwähnt wirklich irgendwelche mögliche Situationen, was türkische Eltern denken könnten, wenn man einen deutschen Typen

trifft“. [This book is funny, it really mentions any possible situation what Turkish parents might think when you date a German guy.] (Interview, 12.19/05) The book mentions that all parents require circumcision from males when they marry. Class started discussion the pros and cons for circumcision. Topics that are critical and socially taboo are natural to be discussed in Lara’s class. I noticed during my two month observations that is was normal and part of her philosophy. All students listened attentively to Asli and it was interesting to listen to this debatable topic from a Turkish female stance. Again, Lara wants everybody in the class to talk, be understood and be able to learn. Being critical, and at the same time adaptive to the learning environment and accessible to her students, makes her an educator and encourages the student to learn and undertake new study tasks. Lara enjoys being a teacher who cares and changes according to the needs of the students. Lara believes that multicultural literature goes far beyond different stories about different people. She is sure that listening to student presentations and their thought processes will show whether they feel themselves to be part of a minority. From my observations and our discussions, I noticed that she assumed that Turkish students are automatically regarded as disadvantaged and inferior in society than German students. For example, she incorporates in her teaching style lots of appraisal and appreciation when Turkish or other migrant students comprehend immediately and important task. She mentions: “Ich weiss, dass sie denken, dass sie es nicht tun können, ich bin hier um ihnen zu zeigen, dass sie es können”. [I know that they think that they cannot do it, I am here to show them that they can.] (Interview, 01/02/05) For instance, one time they were studying the passive voice and were in the process of writing different sentences in passive on paper. As soon as they got a sentence right Lara was distributing candy and

giving them lots of praise. I noticed that they loved it, not because of the candy only, but also because they could understand a hard topic such as the passive voice.

In summary, choosing from among a variety of diverse literature for the students to read shows Lara's flexibility and student centeredness in framing the literary context of her classroom. Not surprising is her idea that "going along with their background" is a goal of her teaching. Lara thrives on creative individuality in her classroom as already discussed. Such is not only a personal and pedagogical outgrowth of whom she is, but also is a result of her bad experiences in the past. Lara also maintains her feelings towards the faculty for herself, however still continues talking in Turkish regardless of what they believe in front of other teachers in the hall. The choices she makes for herself and her students reflect aspects of her classroom dynamics which are based on her own teaching philosophy. Yet, her creative, critical approach to implementing different teaching methods in the classroom and trying to adapt her teaching style according to the needs of her students shows that her personality is caring and particularly engaged in guiding and helping students. Her background and her past made her so passionate today in what she believes and is pursuing. *De facto*, Lara's teaching philosophy mirrors her teaching style. Her philosophy as an educator is based on the assumption that she welcomes any individual regardless of his/her nationality or ethnic background, and implements different teaching methods to accommodate that idea. She realizes that an educator can teach and make sure that everybody can be reached in some way; if that does not work, she tries a different approach until she can relax and be sure that everybody has understood the subject. By using literature and storytelling, she can be sure to address the different races and ethnicities in the classroom. She celebrates

everybody's culture through literature and gives different students an opportunity to be included and share their opinions about their culture. For instance, when talking about Turkish families living in Germany, she lets a Turkish student talk about his or her family even if it is different from what is described in the book. It is important to get each student's point of view. She wants to make sure that statements about Turkish culture are correct and objective, and not reflective of general beliefs and stereotypes. Lara, therefore, ensures that the information provided is accurate and confirmed by a Turkish student. She even forms groups, which are asked to role-play situations depicted in the book. Usually German students get to see and act the Turkish family, and other migrant students take the German part. Through this opportunity, both parties realize how one can feel being in a particular situation and understand alternatives and cultural differences.

By a personalized blending of student-centered awareness and teaching expertise, Lara brings positive, diverse, and engaging literary instruction reflective of numerous best practices for her teaching award and being a reflective educator. As prior mentioned, Lara's beliefs that activities directed toward developing student's enthusiasm for continued learning are paramount to simply relaying information and giving some sort of written evaluation. That being said, while trying to stick to her philosophy I observed as well challenges she encountered during her teaching. The next section will describe the challenges of Lara being of Turkish-German descent.

Challenges

Lara noted that her own past experiences made her think of diversity and the need to support minority students by including an integral component of multicultural teaching in her class. She learned from her past, and her current actions are mostly driven by her

prior experiences. Although she experienced many challenges growing up and during her studies, she still remained faithful to her ideas and was persevering enough to keep pursuing her ideals. These challenges are a crucial part of who she is today: she now knows what to accomplish in her teaching career. There are two important themes arising from her data: being a woman of Turkish-German descent, and being Moslem. Both of these themes were apparent in her classroom teaching.

Turkish-German woman. Lara said several times that although she felt integrated in the German society for the most part, she was still aware that it was harder for her to do a good job and be considered like any other German teacher. The continuous verification of her education credentials as well as negative and hostile remarks regarding her culture and religious beliefs, made her work even harder and become more critical towards anything concerning the school environment. Her only goal was to be knowledgeable and highly competent in her teaching in order not to expose any vulnerability to her German peers and the German principal. Even in her class, she was aware that her German students might be skeptical of her teaching and knowledge. She noted that even some German parents were astonished that a Turkish teacher might be teaching German to their children. Her crucial role as mediator between students, parents and school authorities put high pressure on her teaching capabilities and personality. Her continuous attempt to do a good job was, in the long run, a hard goal to accomplish. I could see that Lara was sometimes frustrated and fed up with the whole situation. This was apparent in our telephone conversations when she told me about unfair situations with which she could no longer deal. However, for the outside world, she put on a strong and confident face. Lara states,

> Weil du Türkin bist, ist es nicht automatisch angenommen, dass du genauso viel weisst oder auf die gleiche Weise gelernt hast, wie deine deine deutschen Lehrerkollegen. Obwohl ich nicht so denken sollte, kann ich nichts dafür. Es ist die ganze Zeit in meiner Interaktion in der Schulumgebung offenkundig sichtbar. Ich gewöhnte mich daran. Ich lebe eben damit. Ich fühle immer, dass ich extra schwer arbeiten muss. Ich fühle immer, dass ich einen besseren Job machen muss, als die anderen deutschen Lehrer ihn tun.
>
> [Because you are a Turkish female, you are not automatically assumed to know as much or to have learned in the same way as your German teacher colleagues. Although I should not think that way, I cannot help it. It is blatantly apparent all the time in my interactions in the school environment. I got used to it. I just live with it. I always feel that I have to work extra hard. I always feel that I need to do a better job than the other German teachers do.] (Interview, 01/02/05)

Lara also gave several examples of her negative experiences in the comprehensive school, which were caused by German teachers with whom she now works. For instance, there was an older woman teacher who continuously compared herself to Lara. She repeated several times that she was immersed in culture and that she has seen the world. She also underscored her expertise in the German language field. Lara believed that, indirectly, she was trying to show Lara that she is highly educated and had the money to go abroad and experience different cultures. Lara knows that Germans are reiselustig (enjoy traveling) and that they are able to afford it. As Lara was growing up earning money for her own education, there was hardly any means left to travel and experience different cultures. Sigrid, the German teacher, wanted to make the point that she is cultured enough and knows how to treat different students with migrant backgrounds. Lara just listened and did not comment. She just added, “Wenn jemand hart versucht zu zeigen, was er oder sie über ein besonderes Thema weiss, dann bin ich immer misstrauisch mit dem, das sie versuchen zu sagen”. [If someone tries hard to show what he or she knows about a particular subject, then I am always suspicious of what they are

trying to say.] (Interview, 08/15/05) She explained that she could clearly see which teacher cared for his/her students and which one was just pretending. Lara indicated, that most German teachers in her school do not like to work in this school due to the lower intellectual capacity of the students and the high percentage of migrant students. This did not bother Lara; she was still acting highly confident, as she knew what Sigrid was aiming at. She connected well with her students due to her young appearance, style of clothing and ability to converse in their native, Turkish language. She learned to get used to such hostile, negative comments by her German peers and therefore did not feel discouraged:

> Sigrid, eine ältere Frau, die in unserer Schule arbeitet, erzählt mir immer wie viel sie weiss und wie gut sie in so viele verschiedene Kulturen weltweit eintauchen kann. Sie sagt mir, dass es ihr definitiv hilft um äußerst sensibel im Klassenraum zu sein. Manchmal bemerke ich, dass sie testet, ob meine deutschen Qualitäten gut genug sind. Es stört mich nicht mehr; ich weiss was sie davon hat. Ich bin sehr überzeugt davon, wer ich bin und stolz auf das, was ich bis jetzt in meinem Leben erreicht habe. Wenn ich anfing meine Leistungen abzufragen oder wenn sie sehen könnten, dass sie mich verletzen, dann würde es nicht gut für mein professionelles Leben sein.
>
> [Sigrid, an older lady working in our school, is always telling me how much she knows and how well she is immersed in so many different cultures throughout the world. She tells me that this definitely helps her to be highly sensitive in the classroom. At times, I notice that she checks to see if my German skills are good enough. It does not bother me anymore; I know where she is going with that. I am very confident with who I am and proud of what I have achieved so far in life. If I started questioning my achievement, or if they could see that they hurt me, then this would not be good for my own professional life.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

Lara added that it is rare for German educators to see Turkish migrant teachers in the public school system. Not only was there no discussion as to why the system did not have more teachers of different ethnic backgrounds, but education and administration also made it harder for such teachers to get good jobs in the public school system. Most

migrant descent teachers are placed in either *Hauptschule* or Comprehensive schools, which are regarded as academically inferior to *Realschule* or grammar schools. Lara believes that, regardless of how well she knows her subject, it is simply hard for Turkish-German teachers to be placed in a grammar school with mostly German students of a wealthy background. Lara observes,

> Ich denke das, ungeachten wie gut ich mein Gebiet kenne, wegen meinem Namen, meiner Kultur, meiner Herkunft und Religion, ich will nicht den gleichen Ausgangspunkt von der Universität, wie meine deutschen Kollegen, die Abschlussprüfung zur selben Zeit bestanden haben. Es ist nicht bloß ein Zufall. Es ist offenbar, dass die meisten deutsch-türkischen Lehrer in armen Gegenden und an akademisch untergeordneten Schulen platziert sind. Ich muss bloß härter arbeiten und kann nicht aufgeben, weil ich werde verglichen werden.
>
> [I think that, regardless of how well I know my field, due to my name, my culture, my background and religion, I won't have the same starting point as my German peers graduating at the same time from university. It is not just a coincidence. It is apparent that most Turkish-German teachers are placed in poor areas and academically inferior schools. I just have to work harder and can't give up because I'm going to be compared.] (Interview, 01/02/06)

Researching the literature I could not find any documentation as to why Turkish teachers are placed mainly in *Hauptschule* or *Gesamtschule.*Obviously nobody so far did any research on this field. To some degree most migrants are placed in the latter and it seems reasonable to place migrant teachers serving as role-models in such schools. On the other hand, in order to combat stereotypical views on migrants and see migrant people not only as "Gastarbeiters" it is also crucial to employ them to predominantly German schools such as *Realschule* und *Gymnasium*. As most American literature points out how important it is to have minority role models as teachers; likewise I am pointing out that this is also crucial for the German school system. Further, Lara adds that she sees herself

as a competent Turkish-German teacher, and she is sure that she is as proficient in German as any German teacher. She worked hard and excelled in her studies.

Regardless of the bad experiences concerning the stigma of her ethnic background, she wanted to guide migrant students and give them pieces of advice wherever she could. Thus, they would be prepared for their jobs or any obstacles after graduating from school. Growing up as a migrant and having difficult experiences throughout college years helped her to realize that she can make a positive impact on minority children. As mentioned above, Lara believed that she needed to work extra hard as a Turkish-German female teacher. Similar to Chantelle,worked extra hard in both her professional and private life. Generally, she felt that Turkish-German women need to work harder than German women. All in all, she had more challenges and needed to overcome more obstacles than any other German women, especially in her field as a female German-Turkish teacher.

On the other hand, Lara was aware of her advantages as a German-Turkish woman, such as the ability to nurture her students and be attentive to their cultural and religious concerns. During class time I noticed that she was very approachable and in general a good listener to all the needs of her students. Lara indicated, that student felt comfortable and did not hesitate to ask and suggest anything new in her classroom. Her dynamic nature and ability to accommodate her teaching to the students' needs made her a competent and caring educator. She was aware of all the problems and she still worked hard to make things better. She told me that she was very comfortable in discussing with me her experiences in the school environment, involving the principal, administration and her German colleagues. Her positive nature and nurturing personality made her an ideal

teacher and facilitated a good relationship with her students. Although she sometimes made sarcastic and ironic comments to her students when they did not listen or did not do their homework, I observed that the students, in general, were very attentive to anything she taught. She knew that within the four walls of her classroom was her only secure place, one where she would not be under surveillance. Although she got along with her students, she was aware of the fact that the school administration and society in general were still not comfortable with the idea that a Turkish-German teacher might be teaching German students the German tongue. She had and still has obstacles and did not feel treated like any other teacher. In addition, compared to other teachers, she has many other cultural obligations, which are just seen as normal in her background.

> Ich weiss, dass ich mich damit befassen muss ein Einwanderer in einem Deutschen Umfeld zu sein, eine Frau in zwei verschiedenen Kulturen zu sein. Beide Situationen bringen mich in eine benachteiligte Situation. Als eine türkisch-deutsche Frau muss ich mich meiner rebellischen Natur von Zeit zu Zeit unterwerfen und bestimmte Traditionen und Bräuche in der Kultur akzeptieren. Als eine junge, ausländische Frau in einer professionellen Umgebung muss ich gewisse Stereotypen und Missverständnisse über meine intellektuelle Aufnahmefähigkeit von meinen Kollegen tolerieren. Das ist nicht gerecht. Ich weiss, dass alle türkisch-deutschen Frauen härter arbeiten müssen und keine Freizeit haben. Das ist nicht fair.
>
> [I know that I have to deal with being a migrant in a German environment, being a female in two different cultures. Both situations put me in a disadvantaged position. As a Turkish-German female, I have to subdue my rebellious nature from time to time and accept certain traditions and customs in the culture. As a young migrant female in a professional setting I have to tolerate certain stereotypes and misconceptions about my intellectual capacity from my peers. It is not fair. All Turkish-German females I know have to work harder and don't have any spare time. It is not fair.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

To sum up, although Lara feels comfortable and understood within her four classroom walls, with her students, outside of the classroom she has many hurdles to overcome. Again, her positive nature comes through and prevails in her classroom. She does not

give up or feel discouraged. She has a strong personality, and comes across as competent and emancipated.

Moslem. Aside from Lara's difficulty concerning her experiences as a female in two different cultures, her attitude remained positive for the most part. It seemed at times that she was trying to calm down and live with the load of problems from the past. Her constant assertions that she likes the advantages of being female, young, beautiful and dynamic demonstrates that she is comfortable with her gender and uses it for certain aspects of her profession. I would like to elaborate on these aspects in more detail by citing excerpts from my observations of her classes along with telephone, email, and interview conversations.

> Als eine Aufständische in dem türkischen Milieu muss ich sicher gehen, dass ich nicht direkt zeige was ich denke. Ich hatte das auch ein paar Male während der Begegnung mit der Familie meines Mannes gemacht. Es war nicht als gewöhnlich und richtig angesehen worden. Ich habe es genau gefühlt. Obwohl ich eine deutsche Einstellung habe und eine intellektuelle Ausbildung, muss ich noch immer den Regeln der türkischen Kultur folgen. Ich erkannte das, während ich in meiner Familie aufwuchs. Mein Eltern wollten mir türkische Gewohnheiten und Bräuche einflößen; jedoch war ich rebellierend!
>
> [As a female rebel in the Turkish milieu, I need to make sure I do not directly show what I think. I also did this a couple of times during encounters with my husband's family. It was not regarded as common and right. I just felt it. Although I have a German attitude and intellectual training, I still need to obey the rules of Turkish culture. I realized this growing up in my family. My parents wanted to instill Turkish habits and customs in me; however, I was rebelling!] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Lara also feels that she can relate well to Turkish Moslem students, because she can understand their process of cultural adaptations and the resulting problematic situations in their families. She herself grew up in such a cultural gap and can assist the female students understand their needs, thoughts, and actions:

> Im Allgemeinen denke ich, ich identifiziere mich nun mit meinen Schülern, weil sie sehen mich als einen Teil von sich selbst. Ich habe einen türkischen Namen, eine türkische Kultur und Sprache und kann ihre Witze verstehen, weisst du. Ich muss es zugeben, obgleich, dass ich mich besonders mit weiblichen, muslimischen Studenten in Beziehung bringen kann. Zum Beispiel gibt es ein paar türkische Studenten, die in meinem Unterricht einen Schleier tragen, der sich manchmal unangenehm anfühlt und missverstanden von ihren Kollegen. Ich versuche sie zu unterstützen und mit ihnen zu reden, um ihnen in der Klasse zu motivieren und ich lasse sie vor ihrer Klasse sprechen um kulturelle Unterschiede klarzustellen und für das Verständnis für sie muslimische Religion. Ich bin mir ganz schön sicher, dass sie nicht für eine Woche wegfahren dürfen, außerhalb ihres Landes oder sogar in eine andere Stadt für eine Übernachtung mit der Klasse. Jedoch will ich alles tun, um ihre Eltern zu überzeugen. Ich bin mit dem selben Problem aufgewachsen und ich möchte nicht, dass sie Kinder darunter leiden. Und ich denke, türkische Eltern verlassen sich auf mich, sie wissen, dass sie sich mit mir in Verbindung setzen können und mit mir in ihrer Sprach reden können. Ich fühle das. Ich denke, dass ist ein anderer Vorteil, besonders in der Zeit, in der ich meinen türkischen Schülerinnen beistehen muss.
>
> [Generally, I think I relate well to migrant students, because they see me as part of themselves. I have a Turkish name, culture and language and can understand their jokes, you know. I have to admit, though, that I relate particularly well to Moslem female students. For example, there are a couple of Turkish students wearing a veil in my classes who sometimes feel awkward or misunderstood by their peers. I try to support and talk to them to give them motivation in class, and I let them talk in front of their students to clarify cultural differences and understanding of the Moslem religion. I am pretty sure that they won't be allowed to go on one-week trips outside the country or even to another city for a sleepover with the class. However, I will do everything to convince the parents. I grew up with the same problems, so I do not want the children to suffer. And I think Turkish parents rely on me, knowing that they can relate and talk to me in their language. I feel this. I think it is another advantage, particularly in terms of assisting my female Turkish students.] (Interview, 01/02/06)

Lara still sees herself as very naïve and idealistic. However, she enjoys being a teacher and passing on to them what she has learned, which, in turn, pleases her very much. Lara told me that several times she was annoyed that other teachers tried to convince her that Ramadan was nonsense and wondered how she could endure teaching while not being able to eat and drink. Most German colleagues tried to convince her then that she is like a

German girl and therefore does not need to stick to her religious beliefs. This paradox behavior is misleading. As her colleague do not value her Turkish origin, they still keep on denying it by making her belief that she is German and therefore do not need to belief in her religion. While she was describing the situation, I noticed her frustrated mimic and gestures. Lara could not bear the fact that Germans in general could not understand that a Turkish girl can be educated and emancipated at the same time. If that is the case, then she must be German. At times, I could see that she was fed up with the whole "pseudo" culture and that she was sticking more to her own background. As she was constantly around Turkish friends and family, I noticed that she only has one or two German friends. Thus, her only encounter with Germans is in her profession. It is interesting that she values German education and knows that she gained a lot from the educational system. However, she feels more Turkish, and I guess that causes her dilemma. She stated several times that she is a rebel, and I think that her continuous struggle to switch between the two cultures reflects her rebellious nature.

Overall, Lara has a strong personality which she developed growing up in two different cultures. Her unique advantage of enjoying both cultures' advantages helps her to make a stronger impact on minority children. She went through many challenges and wants to make sure that migrant children can get a fair chance and guidance in their education. She is a critical educator and accepts each child's fund of knowledge. She is not trying to impose her views in the classroom. Her class is structured around the needs and interests of her students.

Themes in Personal Beliefs and Teaching Practice

Teaching Practice is complex and not easily relegated to neat, consistent descriptors that comfortably categorize the sharing of information and interaction among participants in a classroom. However, interviews, observations, telephone conversations and emails produced from this study all provide information offering unique insight into Lara's beliefs and teaching practice, and from utilizing a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) certain recurrent themes emerged. These themes are intended as the best possible descriptors of the phenomena occurring with and around the respondent in her created, lived-through world, but they are not intended to be all-encompassing or static. These themes are persistence, caring, and multicultural community of learners, three seemingly divergent themes that explain Lara's praxis with their students , her working relationships to their colleagues and administration, and at times her relationship to herself taking into account her personal history and experience.

Perseverance

During her childhood, college experience and working environment at Max Planck Comprehensive, Lara's experiences made her develop a kind of personality that is persistently showing up in the way how she wants to achieve her goals. Only few teachers at Max Planck Comprehensive, based upon my observations, are creating a classroom environment such as Lara's. Moreover, negative perceptions towards migrants in general by the faculty and their stereotypical views on Turkish people encourage strong teachers like Lara to pursue their teaching ideals into what I have named persistence.

From the two major areas Personal Beliefs and Classroom Practice, Lara actively engages in multiple forms of personal and professional persistence which she chooses to exercise in regard to her teaching. Lara's persistence against the faculty and school policies manifests itself in a number of ways. She chooses her own books, does not change her intrinsic motivation of teaching, and allows her students how they would like to talk in Turkish regardless what the school policy states. This shows in many ways that she does not acknowledge the administrative policies toward a diverse education and she still challenges herself to do a good job when having the opportunity. Clearly, Lara disagrees with the academic policies at Max Planck Comprehensive and believes that it actually does not contribute to the learning per se of the students. Yet while she silently persists, she further alienates herself from the ideas of the school and the faculty. At the same time, she clearly demonstrated to faculty and to the school that she has established her own philosophy of teaching and connected highly well to the migrant students. Her confident approach and self-assurance in what she is doing in her classrooms, makes her even stronger in her ideas of her teaching. While she does indeed give of herself as a reflective teacher, an excellent educator, and mother-like teacher, she also places constraints that, is in her own words, can be described as "rebellious." Not only did she experience a challenge in two different cultures she continues these challenges reflected as well in her four walls. Lara's intentions may indeed be idealistic in achieving her goals to make each student think on his or her own way, that in some way is a memory for her own "challenges" growing up without support from parents and to seek for her own education with no guidance. Within the persistence in her teaching Lara has learned how

to be persistent in light of a non supportive environment such as the negative perceptions of the German faculty.

Despite teaching at Max Planck Comprehensive for a couple of years, Lara has not formed strong relationships with her faculty peers. While she will go to most meetings, Lara does not really communicate with most of her peers and continues teaching the way how she believes is right. Such persistence is not by choice; it is developed throughout the years growing up and is prevailing now also in her teaching. The lack of support from the collegial environment towards migrant students helps Lara to create and continue her philosophy of teaching. Lara states,

> Ich weiss, dass die meisten meiner Kollegen mich nicht mögen. Ich kann es spüren und fühlen, durch die Kommunikationen, die wir haben. Meinetwegen, ich mache mein eigenes Ding und ich weiss, dass die Schüler mich lieben und schätzen. So lange ich meine Arbeit mache, geht mir gut.
>
> [I know that most of my peers do not like me. I can feel it and sense it through the communications we had. I don't care, I do my own thing, and I know that students love and appreciate me. As long as I do my job I am okay.] (Interview, 08/15/05)

The lack of communication between the administration and Lara shows also in some way in a negative reaction on her part. Not only do her peers claim about the increase of migrant students and "laziness and stupidity", (Interview, 12/19/05) they do not find solutions or ideas how to better approach them. However, in my observations of the faculty of Max Planck Comprehensive, most teachers are on their own and do not discuss or do some activities together. Lara never even mentioned that she received help for lesson plans or that they exchanged ideas for lessons with faculty. Also, I noticed couple of times that teachers mentioned that they would prefer working in other schools, but they could not find any openings. It seems that most faculty would fluctuate if they would

find another position. Thus, their negative reactions being surrounded by mostly migrant students also reflect their motivation for teaching in such an environment. Lara mentions,

> Einige der Lehrer wollen wirklich nicht hier sein. Sie sind froh einen Job zu haben. Aber, wenn sie morgen wüssten, dass sie verlegt werden könnten, würden sie es sofort machen. Sie sorgen sich nicht darum, was mit den ausländischen Schülern passiert.
>
> [Some of the teachers really do not want to be here. They are glad to have a position. But, if they would know tomorrow that they could transfer. They would do it immediately. They don't care what happens with the migrant students.] (Interview, 01/02/06)

With no real faculty bond, Lara feels to do the things she wants to do without sharing or telling the faculty about it. She loves teaching, but would appreciate more a type of collegiality and tolerance from the administration and the faculty. She remarks,

> Ich liebe meine Kitz und will alles tun. Ich wünsche manchmal, ich würde genauso glücklich mit den Leuten sein, mit denen ich zusammenarbeite. Ich vermute, dass das nicht so wichtig ist, aber dennoch würde ich es lieben, wenn ich meinen Unterrichtsplan oder meine Ideen mit jemanden teilen könnte.
>
> [I love my kids and will do everything. I wish sometimes I would be also happy with the people I would work. I guess that's not so important, but still sometimes I would love it if I could share lesson plans or ideas with someone.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Lara's disappointment with the faculty has made her feel less responsible to them for their negative perception of migrant students. Even though she receives plenty of appreciation from her students, the principal or any faculty members never came to her class to ask her of her different kinds of methods. Clearly, Lara perceives she is alone in her teaching endeavors and only receives some administrative acknowledgment. In spite of this situation Lara allows herself to do units and activities that may or may not directly reflect mandated school curricula. She fashions her own ideas based on her democratic beliefs and creates a learning environment that welcomes diversity. Her persistence

reflects Lara's openness to literature study that should be an ongoing conversation of a multitude of ideas and approaches for continued literary envisionment. In addition, Lara is in tune with what is effective, and she continually listens to her students as the primary source for curricular issues. She states,

> Ich höre auf meinen Leuten zu. Ich weiss, wann auch immer sie fühlen, dass sie bekommen. Ich versuche meine Stunde zu verändern, solange sie es verstehen.
>
> [I listen to my folks. I know whenever they feel that they are not getting it. I try to change my lesson, as long as they get it.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Even though Lara indicated administrative negative perceptions being the only migrant teacher, she did not appear to care and presents herself as confident around faculty members. It seems that Lara seems has given up on the prospect of a better teaching setting, and this makes her more driven and persistent on her own teaching goals within her four walls. Lara's persistence may stem from her past experiences not voicing out her wants and needs during her childhood, or it may be due to her own needs to combat against the prejudiced attitude of faculty at Max Planck Comprehensive. Within the construct of persistence Lara has learned how to reflect this in light of her teaching materials, ideas, and workings with the students. Teachers working daily with students and minority students need adult professional relationships, administrative support and understanding, and proper acknowledgment for their academic contributions and individuality as persons. However, when those professional expectations are not met even on a basic level, minority teachers such as Lara will find satisfaction in not respecting departmental procedures and will carve out their own comfortable existence as an independent educator within their working space.

Caring

The second theme that embodies the whole concept of a safe environment reflects as well her views of herself as a student-centered teacher whose responsibility is to create an educational environment in which students may be nurtured, spontaneous, and productive. Lara says her basic personality is nurturing. For example, in opening a lesson about different voices in literature, I observed Lara serve bőrek (Turkish feta-cheese millefeuille pastries) to her minority students to be used not only as a food, but also as a mnemonic for recalling elements of *Istanbul Memories* by Orhan Pamuk. While students served themselves borek from a large pot she was showing the book. In her responsiveness of her students she loves to cook for them. She likes to show "ihre Sorge" [her caring] (Interview, 12/12/05) in this way. In addition to provide solid teaching, Lara believes her role in the classroom is to show compassion, connection, and care for the individual as well as providing an educational environment where she can be nurturing, cordial, spontaneous, and eliciting of student work. Lara states,

> Ich möchte, dass die wissen, dass ich mich wirklich sorge und ihnen helfen möchte, wann immer ich kann. Ich bin kulturell wie sie und ich weiss was sie denken und wie sie fühlen in bestimmten Situationen. Ich möchte, dass sie wahrnehmen, dass ich mich wirklich sorge. Ich bin da, wenn sie mich brauchen.
>
> [I want them to know that I really care and want to help them wherever I can. I am culturally like them and I know what they think and how they feel in certain situations. I want them to realize that I really do care. I am there when they need me.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

Lara's beliefs is congruent with most feminist pedagogies such as caring (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Collins, 2000; Noddings, 1995), teamwork, and the sharing of control (Ropers-Huilman, 1997). Most feminist scholars point out the caring portion in teaching part of the female gender. Being in an environment where students regardless of their

background are appreciated is important to her, as it is an outgrowth of her experiences as a young child. Lara explains that she was one of those students who had to struggle due to a different background and therefore did not know to which culture she belongs to. She states, “Ich erinnere mich, dass ich mich manchmal selbst frage, wohin ich gehöre”. [Sometimes I remember asking myself where I belong to.] (Interview, 01/02/06). Lara believes that her classroom reflects her personality, and the kind of attention one puts into the learning environment mirrors the teacher personally and professionally. The configuration of her room reflects a type of homelike atmosphere peppered with her own accents.

In addition to creating an environment where her students are valued and appreciated, Lara strongly feels that caring is an important component of being a good teacher. Caring is the exact opposite of the attitudes and behaviors she recalls displayed toward her in her own schooling experiences. To Lara, caring is not just a visible behavior or measurable interaction with a student but an attitude that might be met with a reciprocal acknowledgment. She defines caring as a form of equal acceptance, where students feel comfortable and secure. She states,

> Wenn sie mich schätzen möchten und sich um mich sorgen, dann muss ich ihnen auch das gleiche Verhalten zeigen. Würdigung kann sich nur von beiden Seiten entwickeln. Wenn ich sie liebe und es ihnen zeige, dann werden sie es schließlich genauso tun.
>
> [If they want to appreciate me and care for me than I need to show this same behavior also to them. Appreciation can only develop from both sides. If I love them and show this to them they will eventually do as well.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

When students feel safe and cared for as unique people in her classroom that allows Lara to propel them towards one of her goals for them of lifelong learning. It is not enough for one to claim he or she cares, but one must outwardly demonstrate caring. Noddings

(2001) defines a caring teacher as one who possesses more than certain stable and predictable traits that characterize an individual before he or she operates a classroom. A caring teacher is a receptive individual who displays the regular establishment of "relations of care in a wide variety of situations", and clearly demonstrates a continuous drive for competence, "to respond adequately to the recipients of care" (p. 101). I observed that Lara was helping to sell Turkish food with her students on school grounds. She mentioned that "das Geld wird zu der neuen Moschee gehen". [the money will go to the new mosque.] (Interview, 12/19/05) Lara suggested to provide all food from her own source and helped students to set up the stand. On another instance, during Ramadan one student was not feeling well due to fasting. Lara took her aside and suggested that she should leave for home. Esin felt better and left for the day. Although, these examples seem to be normal responses for most teachers' reactions however according to Lara not all teachers are sensitive enough. Both students seem different and much more positive towards Lara. Lara attributes this to her reaching out to the students through compassion that nurtures the rapport she built with both.

Caring is frequently misunderstood as a certain lack of professionalism, and critics suggest that the relationship between care giver and recipient should be somewhat distant, supervisory in nature, and communicated through an insider's language of clinical jargon. Lara's approach to caring is not common in middle school classrooms. Unlike Sears, Kennedy, and Kaye (1992) who found that teaches are often concerned more with intuition and judgment of content that with sensing and feeling with regard to student needs, Lara believes that all are essential. In addition, Lara sees herself as a caring individual who focuses on the student- all characteristics that emanate from her

teaching beliefs that serves as the basis for her behaviors, decision, and attitudes in the classroom (Noddings, 2001). Such is seen when she collaboratively raises money for the mosque by selling borek on the school grounds. Lara considers this situation as important and necessary as the mosque needs funds to establish a new school for praying. However, helping indicates a need for Lara to receive in some way an appreciation Lara does not get from her own peers at Max Planck Comprehensive. Through her continuous effort to create an "appreciative" environment for her students, Lara manifests such through critical topics, such as Muslim females in society, religion and Turkish and German relationships, to be discussed. Lara's deliberate creation of what she deems an inviting, sincere, student-oriented community appears to be an extension of her.

Learning Environment

The Learning Environment theme embodies concepts of student's interaction, diversity, acceptance of individuals, and tolerance of class members, multicultural lesson all carried out within a synthesized school framework and Lara's beliefs and experiences. Lara facilitates students' individual learning activities and supports team and group interrelations as students work collaboratively to study texts in a safe atmosphere. All students are valued and celebrated as unique persons with their own voices, and they are encouraged to feel comfortable and important in Lara's classroom with her encouragement of collaborative work assignments and the giving of personal attention. She allows students to discuss their origin and values each input student gives to learning. By sharing her own experiences and giving her own reflections on readings she also invites the class to feel confident enough to talk and share about their own experiences and reflections about the readings. Lastly, critical reflections on classroom practices and

her modification of her teaching towards the needs of the students demonstrates that she not only challenges her own educational practice but also challenges the students to think and apply knowledge of their own. Given all of these inclusive and nurturing practices within her classroom, Lara fosters a unique environment where each individual is valued and understood. Lara's construction of her teaching philosophy is congruent with what I have mentioned also when describing Chantelle's philosophy. Her notion of emancipatory education mirrors Macedo's (1997)idea of it. Clearly, Macedo proposes to circumvent importation/exportation of methodology is an anti-method pedagogy. "The anti-method pedagogy forces us to view dialogue as a form of social praxis so that the sharing of experiences is informed by reflection and political action"(p.8). Emancipatory education must enable students to name their world and make meaning out of obscurities. Accomplishing such is possible through a variety of academic opportunities, one being the vehicle of valuing different learning styles in the classroom and discusses literature. Within the setting of persistence and caring, Lara works with students to emancipate their thinking. She does so through my observations that emerged in this study.

Her classroom. Lara's classroom praxis manifests itself through her own beliefs and experiences involving students in her classroom to think and apply. One central tenet of her teaching is centered around emancipatory education, which draws from critical theory, feminist pedagogy, and post-structuralist theories, to develop pedagogical practices that foster emancipatory learning. The major assumptions underlying these practices are empowerment, teacher as learner, joint knowledge construction, critical reflection, student voice, and dialogue (Durie 1996; Ellsworth 1989; Hart 1990; Tisdell 1998). Essentially, focus is on the student and their collaborative work. Their particular

voice impacts how ideas are shaped and consumed in her classroom. Lara scaffolds learning in a nourishing environment. Further, her past and lived-through experiences shape her approaches, choices, and intended outcomes. While keeping that in mind, she does not forget that a caring and a valuing environment where all "funds of knowledge" of each student is welcomed are crucial for her classroom.

Lara's teaching incorporated several components that were evident while I was observing:

Warm-Up Activities: Beginning activities preparing students for the topic of the day. Questions, Articles, or TV programs.

Vocabulary study: Students study vocabulary in authentic context via writings in forms of essays or reflections.

Readings: Literature discussions, that encourage students to reflect and analyze across different texts and engage in group work.

Group Work: Paired activities to foster cooperative learning, and present to class. I will talk elaborate more on these components with couple of examples in the following section.

Warm-up activities. Her warm-up activities are centered around either new topics that are important in the next few lessons to come or subjects that have been priory discussed and need a review now. Similar to Chantelle, for Lara, the introductory activities may cover a variety of topics germane to the unit content. For example, selected questions may investigate literary elements, student opinions and knowledge of the self, political or social issues, or ideas and concepts emanating from the selection contents. Lara's introductory questions are essential prior to connect to their own understanding

and self-awareness of the topic, the text or group work. Lara's questions at the beginning provide for what Rosenblatt (2000) refers to as the beginning of the journey of transactional experience involving any number of personal, textual, and contextual factors that will result in a certain reading of material by the reader at a certain time in his or her life. Further, as a reader, one is not a passive participant, but an active constructor of meaning (Macedo, (1997, p. 3). Critical scholars such as Donaldo Macedo believe that exhibiting an inquisitive, "critical" attitude towards what one reads will make anything one reads richer and more useful to oneself in one's classes and life. Such is significantly achieved by Lara through engaging with text and making text meaningful for the student.

One day, for instance, Lara captures the interest of her students by trying to connect the question to the readings of *Istanbul Memories* by Orhan Pamuk. Lara's essential question is, "One of the central tenets of Orhan Pamuk is his memories in his childhood. Do you think that your experiences shape who you are today? Tell me?" (Interview, 12/19/05) Lara was very melancholic when asking this question, it seemed that she was asking this question also to herself. One moment she paused and was reflecting on it as well. It appeared that she was trying to capture her part to the answer. When students are invited to share their opinions, this eventually creates a dialogue among the students where I noticed Lara listens and gives additional prompts to think about. Such as: "What happened in your childhood that changed the way how you are today?" After having listened to different perspectives in the class they start sharing their opinions within their group. This time she starts sharing her personal opinion about her question: "I think because I lived in Turkey for two years, I think this taught me a different perspective to who I am today." Students attentively listen to her and try to

understand what she means. While continuing to work within their groups, they are motivated to share their own life stories. Other times, they have to write their responses in their notebooks. During my observations, I noticed that some students do not share their personal opinions in class. Lara states:" Wenn ich realisiere, dass ein Schüler verlegen ist um über seine oder ihre persönliche Meinung zu reden, dann ist Schreiben immer noch eine Lösung". [If I realize a student is embarrassed to talk about his or her personal opinion than writing is still a solution.] (Interview, 01/02/06) To begin a warm up activity within *the nomad* literary piece, Lara engages students with a cozy task. She turns on music very light in the back of the room, and distributes statements of the book in many strips of paper to the students. Students kept asking where the statements are coming from but Lara was silent and did not give a response. Each of the statements relate to major ideas in the book. As they start reading the book students need to comment on the significance of the statements in relations to the reading. Warm up activities to readings serve two purposes. Lara purposefully launches thoughtfully and engaging questions to capture the interests of the students, and she sets the foundation for cooperative working within their groups. She scaffolds consciously their success and monitors their learning through daily interactions.

Vocabulary study. During the vocabulary study students are required to analyze the words in the readings of different literary pieces. When I asked Lara what she believes is the best way to acquire vocabulary she went: "Lesen, Lesen und Lesen ist ein zuverlässiger Kontext!" [Reading, Reading and Reading in authentic context!] (Interview, 01/02/06) In class she asked several times why she thinks German vocabulary learning is necessary, and she explores alternatives to testing how students can learn a

vocabulary. Students have to sign up once a month what they do apart from learning at home in order to apprehend vocabulary. For instance, they could go to watch a movie and retell the story to Lara as a written assignment or listen to music, go to a presentation in order to see how different words are used in context. She has sign up sheet and students write down what they want to do for that month in particular. Students seemed to love this option and according to Lara "sie lieben es zu teilen, was sie machen". [they love to share what they did.] (Interview, 01/02/06) Lara constructs vocabulary lessons in a variety of forms. She takes words from the context of the reading material herself as she reads, or looks the words up in some *Langenscheidt* dictionaries she carries in class. In one approach, Lara reads vocabulary words in an oral lesson calling on students to guess meanings given context clues and synonyms germane to the novel or some aspect of their adolescent lives. Other lessons may occur on paper by way of handouts to word matches, and students work in pairs or small groups to complete the activity. Almost all lessons have a word study component as she knows how much this is necessary particularly for those migrant students who struggle in the German language.

For Lara the importance of thinking and writing is a central tenet in her teaching. She encourages student to develop their creative voices and statements of words to text when answering the questions. In doing so, Lara is continually challenging students to be creative, use the right-side of their brain by their use of music and other literary genres as text to add to their experiences. She also tells them they may combine questions of a related topic such as those that address the topic. When Lara offers choice in how students respond and to which questions, she demonstrates the importance of providing

freedom for individual written expression with their variety and also with the requirement for creative or symbolic representation.

In my observations, I had an opportunity to examine student journals, many of which showed that students took great care to arrange their ideas and craft a visual that was congruent with or mirrored ideas in the journal response symbolically, metaphorically or both. For instance, one Turkish student wrote about why she had certain memories in this particular city, and embellished the page with a number of symbolic pieces she believed characterized her memories. A picture of her parents with her dad staying in the middle and embracing her, a picture of her dog carrying an evil eye on his neck, and a picture of her favorite street "The Cadde" in Istanbul covered with full of shops represented her memories and experiences in that city. The written portion described this student's artworks, which made this writing meaningful to the respondent both personally and academically. The integration of creativity and writing enables Lara to carry out her teaching philosophy of personal student development, as well as her interest in helping students develop their creativity. She states,

> Heutzutage ist Kreativität kein wirklich charakteristischer Handel, nach dem wir suchen und Lehrer sind bereitwillig sich in unseren Schülern zu entwickeln. Wir versuchen tatsächlich Individuen zu kreieren, die exakt die gleichen sind mit diesen dummen Noten und Prüfungen. Ich mag es, dass meine Schüler schätzen, dass Kreativität in meinem Unterricht würdigend ist und es eine Art von Ausdruck für ihre Ideen und Gefühle ist. Sie sollten wissen, dass kreativ sein Spaß ist und ihnen hilft ihr eigenes Lernen zu entwickeln.
>
> [Nowadays, creativity is not an actual characteristic trade we are looking for and as teachers are willing to evolve in our students. We actually try to create individuals they are exactly the same with all this stupid grades and exams. I like my students to value that creativity is appreciated in my class and is a type of expression of their ideas and feelings. They should know that being creative is fun and helps them develop their own learning.] (Interview, 01/02/06)

In this statement, Lara suggests that people must have more freedom to think, do and say as they believe. The establishment of a norm for some aspects of life, especially creativity, is too restricting. She believes especially for her maturing students that exploratory activities such as the writing validate their responses and themselves individually and prevent them from becoming "the same" person. While writing offers a range of experience for her students, they nevertheless require of Lara a vast commitment for reading and evaluating. She remarks working long hours many times into the weekends evaluating the writings with a holistic rubric so that she may return them to students to work on for the next week's submissions. Lara is basing her grading on a holistic one as she reasons that this type of grading helps the student to monitor their writing on their own and helps them learn in steps. She states,

> Das Schreiben, dass ich verlange, ist eine kleiner Teil ihrer Noten. Obwohl es eine aufbrauchende und sehr erschöpfende Zeit für mich ist, möchte ich, dass sie verstehen, dass ich mich darum kümmer, dass sie etwas von ihrem Schreiben lernen. Vokabeln lernen geschieht zum Teil bloß beim benutzen der Wörter, die sie gelernt haben. Ich möchte, dass sie die Wörter in Zusammenhang mit ihrer eigenen Sprache und Ideen verwenden. Während sie diese Schreibereien machen, gebe ich ihnen eigentlich die Gelegenheit die Wörter, die sie gelernt haben, im Zusammenhang mit ihrer eigenen Auswahl benutzen.
>
> [The writing I require is a small portion of their grade. Although, it is time consuming and very exhausting for me, I want them to understand that I do care that they learn a lot from their writing. Vocabulary learning also happens partly just by using the words they have learned. I want them to use the words in context with their own language and ideas. While doing these writings I actually give them the opportunity to use words that they have learned in context of their own choice] (Interview, 01/02/06)

By writing, Lara's students learn to interact with texts based on their own experiences and thoughts to create responses purposefully and selectively that result in the continual growth of their linguistic abilities. This type of journaling reflects Rosenblatt's (2005) notion of "individual linguistic capital" (p. 16), or what students bring to the blank page.

Based upon their previous language experiences, their transaction with a new text will always depend upon this relationship. Like the reader, the writer's products are meanings constructed a new from on-going personal, social, and cultural influences at a moment in time. In her classroom, such transactions are essential if they are to learn to use language as a toll for learning about content, about life, and about themselves. She comments,

> Für gewöhnlich gebe ich ihnen Möglichkeiten für das, über was sie schreiben können und dann können sie es normalerweise mit ihren Eltern mitteilen und es später mit ihrer Klasse teilen.
>
> [I usually give them options of what they can write about and then they can usually share with their partners and share later on with the class.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

Paired thinking and writing are important in students' development as writers. Lara believes that it takes the same steps for a writer, just as it does to build a reader. Supporting one another's literacy is foundational in her sense of learning.

In this part of the lesson Lara supports the development of students' language, both written and oral. Not only do they learn to become strong writers, but they also become apprenticed into the discourse of German, and aspect that is essential from Rosenblatt's perspective.

Readings. Literature readings were also a component of Lara's teaching. In her book selections Lara paid attention that her book compromised lots of multicultural perspectives. Usually, the book talk sessions, which lasted 45 minutes, fostered the interest of her students that reflected "the diverse life experiences, traditions, histories, values, world views, and perspectives of the diverse cultural groups that make up a society" (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 185). I noticed also that her book list consisted of one Moslem female literature. When I asked Lara what she thinks of "Aisha or the sun of life" she answered without hesitation: "We have lots of Muslim females in

the class. It is a great book to open up their views on sexuality." Menekse Cagliyan (2005) describes societal relevance concerning the restricted sexual development of Turkish females and that they cannot live independently how they want to live. Cagliyan states (2006):"Ihnen wird bereits in der Kindheit vermittelt, dass sexuelle Befriedigung nur Jungen zustehe". (p. 8) [During childhood it is already taught that sexual satisfaction is only allowed for boys] She also talks about the double standards that boys are allowed to have sex prior to marriage and girls not. Limiting female presence in sexuality and allowing males has a "crucial impact on the sexual development of Turkish females. Lara's choice of literacy selection includes most of Cagliyan's (2006) description of the trends. Her selection of books may render a hidden in Lara's own words "rebellious" act on reflecting on her own youth growing up with rigid rules from her parents. Her choice of this particular book can open up forced rituals of parenting and may create a discussion among Turkish girls in her classroom. Lara sits as part of the circle with the students and everybody faces each other when they discuss their readings. It is very important for Lara that students recognize that she is not only the instructor but also one additional person part of the classroom. Book talks usually start with Lara's remarks of what they found interesting and what kinds of details they want to share with the class. Her approach is congruent with Rosenblatt's (1939/1995) transactional theory where starting with student's impressions and feelings as opposed to mere information is called an aesthetic stance- the reading of literature from one's own personal experiences and impressions. Lara remarks,

> Um unantastbare Themen zu teilen, wo die meisten meiner Schüler, besonders türkische Schülerinnen, ihre Meinung nicht mit irgendjemanden teilen können, gebe ich ihnen eine Gelegenheit, sie widerzuspiegeln und in einer Umgebung zu besprechen, in der sie wissen, dass ich sie akzeptiere

> und ihre Ansicht verstehen würde. Weil ich auch türkisch bin, können sie mit mir in Verbindung stehen. können denken, dass ich ähnliche Probleme erfahren habe.
>
> [To share taboo topics where most of my students- particularly Turkish female students cannot share their opinions with anyone, I give them an opportunity to reflect and discuss in an environment where they know that I will accept and understand their view. As I am also Turkish they may connect with me. They may think that I have experienced similar issues.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

I noticed also that at times Lara was just sitting and listening to the discussions of her students, sometime nodding and valuing the information what they have been talking. This type of approach is highly student-centered which goes with the Freirean understanding and includes also constructivist beliefs such as the professor only intervening when necessary but most work is carried out by the students. Langer (1995) notes:

> …that such class interaction and sharing the ideas legitimates students as thinkers in their classrooms and unhesitant invites them to further develop their understandings. Students take ownership for their own developing ideas; they use the knowledge they came to school with to make sense, observe others, and seek assistance when they think they need it (p. 57).

When students realize that they have the role of leading the discussions it helps them to gain more self confidence and assist their learning process. Also, different perspectives in schema help them to develop and see different angles from their classmates. Thus, the focus is on the students rather on Lara, which helps them to advance their own understandings.

I would like to describe one class session in order to show how a book club talk operates, for the book *Doner with Candlelight* by Asli Sevindim (2005). This particular day, students start the discussion by asking Lara about the title of the book and the picture on the front cover. A student makes a remark that he knows the author, Lara

smiles and confirms the same way. She adds that she has studied with Asli, “a highly humorous girl”. After couple of responses, Lara invites the students to imagine what the book is going to be about and discuss this with their partners. Afterwards, student share their discussions and Lara starts reading the book. Lara remarks,

> Dieses Buch ist für mich ganz besonders, weil ich den Autor kenne. Es porträtiert die türkische Kultur von einer anderen Perspektive mit etwas Humor. Auch das Cover ist sonderbar. Ich wählte zweckmäßig dieses Stück, weil ich will, dass meine Schüler die türkische Kultur von einem anderen Winkel sehen.
>
> [This book is very special to me as I know the author. It portrays the Turkish culture from a different perspective with a touch of humor. Also the cover is funny. I purposefully chose this piece as I want my students to see Turkish culture from a different angle.] (Interview, 12/19/05)

When *Doner with Candlelight* begins, students are silenced and listen to the reading of Lara. The story talks about a Turkish girls experiences marrying a German guy. Her cultural clashes regarding family values, different customs and societal views on German traditions are described in a humors way.

After having read, Lara asks the students what they think of this piece. Murat, a student, an extravert, explains that he confirms that he calls Germans “Kartoffel” (Potato) as well. Lara looks very quickly to me and smiles. It is common that Turkish migrants call Germans potato. The whole class laughed and discussed if that is a stereotype or why German are called that way. Although, she smiled initially she made sure that it is not funny. Additionally, she affirms that it is important to understand what message an author may be suggesting, especially as he or she uses literary devices, and what motivates a character that advances a storyline. Then she remarks to think of the stereotypes we have and if they are replicated in this piece. She states:

> Mehr, dass wir Deutsche Kartoffel nennen. Außerdem ist die Art, wie Deutsche von türkische Familien denken, stereotypisch. Zum Beispiel

> spricht das Buch über Beschneidung, und dass alle türkische Familien nicht vertrauen, weil sie Schweinefleisch essen. Es ist ein komischer Weg über die verschiedenen Perspektiven zu reden, ob sie wahr sind und warum? Ich habe nette Klassenzimmer-Diskussionen und wir sprechen wirklich über reale Wahrnehmungen.
>
> [More that we call German Kartoffel. Also, the way what Germans think of Turkish families is stereotypical. For instance, the book talks about the circumcision and that all Turkish families do not trust Germans because they eat pork. It is a funny way to talk about the different perspectives if they are true and why? I have nice classroom discussions and we actually talk about real perceptions.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

While reiterating her personal understanding about this book I noticed that her thoughts go along with major critical theorist such as Ira Shor, McLaren, and Paulo Freire regarding questioning text and trying to pinpoint what the author's message is. Ira Shor (1999) describes what critical literacy is:

> Critical literacy thus challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative paths for self and social development. This kind of literacy--words rethinking worlds, self dissenting in society--connects the political and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity. Critical literacy, then, is an attitude towards history, as Kenneth Burke (1984) might have said, or a dream of a new society against the power now in power, as Paulo Freire proposed (Shor and Freire, 1987), or an insurrection of subjugated knowledge's, in the ideas of Michel Foucault (1980), or a counter-hegemonic structure of feeling, as Raymond Williams (1977) theorized, or a multicultural resistance invented on the borders of crossing identities, as Gloria Anzaldua (1990) imagined, or language used against fitting unexceptionably into the status quo, as Adrienne Rich (1979) declared (p. 14).

From this perspective, *literacy* is understood as social action through language use that develops us as agents inside a larger culture, while *critical literacy* is understood as "learning to read and write as part of the process of becoming conscious of one's experience as historically constructed within specific power relations" (Anderson and Irvine, 82). Consequently, Lara's question, "Why do Turkish people call Germans potato?," leads in some way to question, "How have you been shaped by society to think

that way? Lara understands language use as a social force constructing us, and she is trying to find ways how to teach oppositional discourses to understand the rationale behind.

Group work. Related to the topic of the study, Lara often created group work assignments. These assignments include a variety of peer discussions, writing tasks, internet, technology-based activities and creative ones. As Lara realizes the more she involves the students personally to the writing activities the more are they engaged into the topic. With *Doner with Candlelight* reading students had a variety of tasks to do within a group. On this special day, students needed to create their own family tree and then share the responsibilities of each family member. While listening to the different responsibilities of family members it was interesting to view the cultural differences between German families and Turkish ones. Students shared their family tree and talked about their family. Afterwards Lara asked:" Was ist wichtiger als ein Wert in deiner Familie?" [What is important as a value in your family?] (Interview, 12/19/05) Again students were in groups and were talking to each other about their family values. Also they needed to discuss if their family values correspond to the values depicted in the book. Another group needed to create discussion questions that critically analyze the text. In any group students were asked to present their discussions orally to the class. Each presentation became interactive and all the others were able to discuss and share. Some of the students were reading aloud their answers to the questions. By sharing their written portion to the question they literally open up their own opinions about the text, Lara tries to connect her students to the text. As previously, mentioned, her motive is congruent with the transactional theory of Rosenblatt (1939/1995). The students' answers lend

credence to an interpretive reading and that in turn lays meaning within the readers and their transactions with the text.

The sharing of all work within the group expands different perspectives to the same reading. Consequently, students are exposed to different work habits and create a unique environment were all the individuals get to know them better. While this is not veraciously a crucial part of a language arts curriculum, it certainly helps to combat stereotypes and create an environment were differences in cultural backgrounds are welcomed.

On another occasion Lara gives the students the opportunity to role play situations from the text. Lara remarks:

> Sie lieben, zu handeln. Besonders können sie sich etwas darauf beziehen. Es ist erstaunlich, wie viel Spaß sie haben. Ebru verwendete neulich Drama, als sie ihren Freunden erzählt hatte, dass sie einen deutschen Freund hat.
>
> [They love to act out. Particularly something they can refer to. It is amazing how much fun they have. Ebru, the other day, was using drama when telling her friends that the has a German boyfriend.] (Interview, 12/12/05)

At the end, students discuss and reflect about the different presentations and give feedback if necessary. Students are engaged and are highly active in presenting their own stance. Clearly, Lara knows how to approach to the individual student and how to accommodate their learning. Generally, her approaches within her language arts class is rooted in her past and her persistent nature to help minorities, what suits best for each student, and be critical in the way how she teaches. Lara has created a vivid environment, where different voices are important to listen to, where she creates task that are meaningful for the students, and where each individual is accommodated according to their learning needs.

The themes persistency and the learning environment, serve to frame her nature to keep up her goals, such as supporting migrant students within an intellectual environment. Although, her intellectual goals for her students are regarded negatively from her peers she still enjoys a student-centered, highly thoughtful and creative learning environment.

Summary

The major findings of this study will complement well the body of existing research, which will be discussed in Chapter 5. As this tapestry is woven, and the figures emerge, there are dark shadows and radiant light. A number of themes emerged as I attempted to answer my research questions. The first theme is that several life experiences were interwoven with all subsequent experiences and directly affected the construction of their current identities. The challenges experienced by both teachers were linked to their individual life experiences. Both participants' critical personalities developed as a result of their unique background experiences. That, in turn, sheds light on their teaching practice. The second theme is that several opinions on similarities and challenges on multicultural principles emerged. Although each country deals with different ethnically diverse student populations, each country also deals with similar aspects of stigmatization and the specific challenges of teaching minorities and migrants. As members of a minority and/or citizens of migrant descent, both participants had bad experiences in their lifetime. Both participants know how minorities and migrant descent students struggle. The teachers' similar experiences help them to create an environment which helps each student to feel welcome and learn in his/her own unique way. Although the teachers are in two different loci, their purpose is the same: to create a multicultural

environment. It becomes apparent that minority and migrant teachers face different challenges from those faced by White or German teachers. Both participants had additional hurdles to overcome throughout college and are still experiencing many challenges due to their ethnically or racially different backgrounds. Having a different cultural heritage and, in addition, being a woman sheds a different perspective and creates additional challenges for both teachers.

In the next chapter, I will explain how my research extends the current theory, and can be used as an instrument of change in the preparation of future educators.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

"You did then what you knew how to do. When you knew better, you did better."

Maya Angelou

The teaching tapestry of Lara and Chantelle is a woven artwork of experiences, beliefs, and practices that are culturally and historically positioned, and ever-evolving, due to their unique background experiences. Their constant self-awareness and meta-reflection has helped them to become critical pedagogues. Similarly, their solid endurance and caring towards minority students has made both practitioners multicultural. It is what they have experienced before that makes them challenge the status quo in a non-supportive environment. Finally, their perseverance allows them find space, even within their constraints, to push against these challenges. These unique tapestries represent multiple realities along a continuum of consciousness and interplay.

Finally, their different tapestries justify their existence and their philosophy of life, namely being a critical practitioner to challenge the status quo.

Through dialogue with my participants in combination with a review of scholarly literature, observations, and rigorous journaling, I came to an understanding of what it means to be positioned as a minority teacher in society and how this positioning impacts different approaches to teaching. Further, I was able to analyze the various beliefs that an American minority teacher and a German migrant teacher held about themselves and

investigate how this reflects their backgrounds in multiple ways and feeds into their daily teaching practice. While certain aspects of their individual stories were unique, much of what I observed and recorded fit well into the body of existing research.

In both countries student populations have become and are still becoming more diverse; therefore, it is imperative for teachers to interact effectively with all students. Migrant children in Germany and minority children in the United States have experienced a long history of underachievement. The problems include low-grade enrollment, high attrition rates, high rates of illiteracy, and under-representation in higher education (Banks, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Luchtenberg, 2004; Valdés, 2003). Since minority teachers often serve as role-models for minority children (Carrington 2002), it is necessary to listen and pay attention to what they think about multicultural principles in the classroom. Although there is no single theory that takes into account the many factors that contribute to poor school performance of minority or migrants students in each country, this study has identified a number of factors. These include family income, family characteristics, language background, teacher-student interaction, school and class composition (e.g., segregation and tracking), and school financing (Valdés, 2003). While many of these factors—such as family income, family characteristics, and language background-- can not be controlled or adjusted, the remaining factors should be scrutinized and retooled to better meet the needs of all students. As Romo (1999) observed, “All along the way, U.S. schools lose talented students who could have achieved more if the right supports and programs had been in place when the children needed them”(p. 10). Minority or migrant descent teachers can help to alleviate this achievement gap, by supporting minority or migrant students in their educational studies,

serving as role models, providing motivational support, and understanding the cultural backgrounds of minority teachers (Carrington, 2002).

Both minority teachers in this study acted in some way as a role model and provided plenty of motivational and cultural support to their minority students. As critical educators, Chantelle and Lara provided an enriching learning environment for their students. They demonstrated a keen desire to fulfill minority students' needs by understanding each student's cultural knowledge and providing a plethora of learning methods to induce critical learning. Both teachers' past experiences taught them how best to support their students and helped them to understand what minority students need.

Yet, most minority teachers are not viewed by the general public as beneficial contributors to classroom practice. Societal perceptions obviously affect such attitudes. Social capitalization ensures that there will be a barter of skills and services- a symbiotic relationship. In social decapitalization, on the other hand, if a group is perceived to have nothing of value to trade, yet possesses great needs, the relationship is considered parasitic (Valenzuela, 1999). Given this perception, minorities are considered a problem—or at best a challenge to society—particularly immigrants or people of minority descent (Orellana, 2001). I believe that education can be a way for minorities to acquire social capital. Teaching from a minority or migrant perspective that challenges the status quo critically in a non-supportive environment is necessary for this.

Students learn from and value each other's language and life experiences in classrooms where they speak a language and possess a cultural capital that matches those of the society at large, in these cases the Anglo-Saxon and German cultures. In order to be successful, the culturally different person in that society should be given the same

opportunities. Minority and Migrant experiences in the US and Germany and cultural capital need to be counted as strengths. Having a Turkish teacher teach Muslims about Muslims in Germany will provide a different perspective and establish a direct dialogue with the students. The same goes for an African American teacher teaching about the Civil Rights. The incorporation and esteem of the teachers' language, cultural capital, and experienced knowledge should not conflict with societal prejudices.

Theoretical Applications

As Maxine Greene (1973) points out we must be highly conscious of phenomena and events around us in order to perceive ourselves, create multiple realities, and make meaning for our existence. She urges us to think critically about those events, to evaluate them deliberately in order to clarify their meanings, and when necessary, consider how background consciousness and boundaries provide information on "what might be, what could be, and the forging of ideals" (p. 7). Chantelle and Lara practice their own philosophies in their own classrooms as a product of their pasts which have allowed them to find personal meaning in teaching critically. They construct ideals and patterns for their students that encourage them to become democratic and citizens engaged in life-long literacy pursuits among diverse communities.

Teachers' perceptions of multicultural principles are generated from their life experiences and backgrounds (Sipress, 2003). If they experienced a struggle during their lives, then this is evident in their classroom. Banks (2004) states that while most scholars research minority teachers' advantages or perspectives in the classroom, they do not look at the teachers' psychological situation or their struggles before coming to the classroom. Critical theorists, such as Peter McLaren and Paulo Freire, believe that this struggle is

also apparent in all educational settings. It is not only minority students who show their "struggle" in the classroom by not receiving the same educational tools and resources or acceptance. Minority teachers are involved in a similar "struggle."

This study indicated that Lara and Chantelle strive to support and "liberate humans (in this case minority students) from their oppressed conditions" (Freire, 1977; Peters, Lankshear & Olssen, 2003) by challenging them and giving them support and motivation throughout. As Chantelle indicated, she is a challenger and critical educator. Only by engaging the cultural knowledge of her students can she empower them and encourage them to think through material. As Tierney (1991) describes, "Empowerment concerns the liberation of individuals, so they are capable of understanding their relationship to the world and complex organizations in which they reside (pp.6-7).

Additionally, Critical Theory focuses on the ideology or cultural conditioning that lies behind education. This silent promotion of mainly rich and White students in education is observable via the hidden curriculum, the selection of literature and policies among teachers, principles and administrators. Bowles, Gintis and Meyer (1999) describe the power struggles between the dominant class and the subordinate classes. They emphasize that this struggle occurs within three spheres of influence: the workplace, the family, and in school. Indirectly, this suggests that the dominant cultures' beliefs and ideologies concerning different class structures in our society can be directly transferred to and be seen in our public school system. In interviews, Chantelle indicated that some of her teachers had not supported her because she was African–American. That is why she applied for funds for a program, which assisted minority students to go to college.

Chantelle's emphasis on creating an environment where students are understood and accepted rather than just teaching out of the book, indicates that she rejects the critical method that Paulo Freire (1998) calls "the banking strategy", when teachers just "deposit knowledge" to the student without any involvement and critical thought of the student. In this case, reaching out to all students, regardless of religious, racial or class differences, *is impossible as it is impeded by the action of others* (Freire, 1970). Likewise, Lara's focus on helping her migrant-descent students to become literate and study more than is necessary for success is yet another emphasis of critical thinking. She uses multicultural literature in order to talk about prejudice and negative experiences with foreigners in Germany and support migrant students.

A critical race framework can be used to discuss the daily realities of racism and how racism continues to privilege Caucasian Americans--or in this case also Germans. Essential to this paradigm is storytelling and sharing the experiences of minorities. In this study, Lara and Chantelle made crucial connections with their pasts. Both mentioned they had not received the education they needed because they were African American or Turkish-German. It was harder for them to succeed, and they saw that they needed to work more than their peers. Their experiences support the conclusions of most research. . According to research in both countries, race has played a fundamental role in shaping relationships of power and notions of citizenship through inclusions and exclusions (McDonald, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Nebeker, 1998)). By listening and observing my two participants, I could see how race and ethnicity were important components of their identities.

Chantelle did not discuss what her gender meant in the educational arena. She did say it is more difficult for an African American woman teacher than for a White woman teacher, since African American females are often responsible for the whole private household and the education of their children. In addition, they need to work harder at their profession. According to Chantelle, all these aspects put African-American women at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their White contemporaries. Black feminist scholar Patricia Collins (2000) suggests that race, class and gender, should be regarded as interlocking modes of oppression, not as separate entities.

Chantelle indicated that gender and race might work differently in an African-America context:

> My black students do not listen to me the same way that they would to a black male teacher. I can see that we need more black male teachers than we have today. In order to support black male students we need to provide also ideals and role-models for them.

Following this line of thought, Clenora Hudson-Weems (2003), the founder of Africana womanism, believes that gender differences between black men and black women are not as significant as they are between white women and white men. She says, "Africana men have never had the same institutionalized power to oppress Africana women as white men have had to oppress white women" (p. 158). Although research states that gender differences between African-Americans and Whites exist, Chantelle believes that being a minority female does not allow her to reach out to all minority students. If education wants black male students to succeed, more black male teachers need to be employed (Jordan & Cooper, 2003).

Lara pointed out that she is a rebel and that she does not agree with some Turkish traditions or religious beliefs. She agrees that the central tenet of Islamic feminism in the

Qur'an affirms equality for all human beings. However, gender equality has been subverted by patriarchal ideologies and practices within Muslim societies and Islamic fundamentalist states (Schmitz ET all, 2004). Throughout this study, Lara gave examples where she felt that she is reacting intellectually like a German; however, traditionally, she needs to behave like a Turkish girl. She not only realized this dilemma growing up within her family traditions but also within her marriage. Germans tend to consider Turkish women as victims of a patriarchal society shaped by religious beliefs," points out Canan Topcu (2005, p. 5). She further adds, "Female Muslims are believed to be oppressed, forced into marriage and beaten by men. The media nurture such clichéd prejudices. Therefore, head scarves and Turkish women have become synonymous in Germany, even though only a minority of women from Turkey cover their hair" (p. 5). Although Lara does not cover her hair, she still thinks that she needs to explain to her peers and friends that she is a typical Turkish woman and that most Turkish women are like her.

She still feels highly confident and states that being female, young, beautiful and smart puts her in an advantaged position. She can understand Turkish female students better and can psychologically support them; thus, she emphasizes caring, teamwork, and the sharing of control – central components of feminist pedagogies (Beauboeuf – Lafontant, 2002; Collins, 2000; Noddings, 1995; Ropers-Huilman, 1997).

The link between the experiences of the participants and critical theory, critical race and feminist theories support many of the claims made in this study regarding these two minority teachers' perceptions of multicultural education. This study encouraged the participants to think about what it means to be a minority or of migrant-descent and how it is replicated in the classroom, and finally what that means for teaching

multiculturalism. As both teachers participated in this research, it became apparent that they were constructing ideas on race and multicultural education throughout this project.

Addressing the Research Questions

Based on critical, critical race and feminist theories the study enabled me to frame and address three questions:

1. What are the challenges and/or support experienced by a German and an American female minority teacher teaching in a predominantly White and German environment?
2. What are the similarities and/or differences experienced by a German and an American female minority teacher regarding the implementation of multicultural principles into their practice?
3. To what extent are the teachers' beliefs and actions shaped by their subject positions as minority females teaching language arts in their classrooms?

These questions provided the basis for the collection and analysis of data. The site locations of the study were racially diverse middle schools in both countries. Hollins (1999) suggests that teachers' perceptions guide their classroom practices and therefore is important to analyze them. In order to explore these perceptions this study analyzed the participants' backgrounds, schooling experiences and professional preparation. Finally, the findings suggest that the participants' perceptions about multicultural principles and their dedication towards minority students were affected by prior experiences in life, school and education. I used data gathered from journal entries, interviews, observations, telephone conversations and through emails to address the research questions.

Personal Understanding from Past Experiences

As minority teachers, Chantelle and Lara give personal meaning to their teaching. Most of their teaching is a direct reflection of events from their past they have critically contemplated. According to Greene (1973) reality is a "mediated, selective process" (p. 10) of negotiation closing gaps, drawing conclusions, and codifying the world. Chantelle's selective process of meaning making is evident in what she chooses to reveal about her past. Chantelle's marginalization as a child of poverty whose two parents had only a high school background makes her critically aware of students from similar backgrounds. She uses her experience of poverty to explain both her work on a grant to educate minority parents about educational resources for their children and collection of donations from faculty and parents for personal school supplies for poor students. Chantelle's visible determination to improve and advance herself without any support from family is rooted in her character and is now apparent in the way she shows this respect to her students. Likewise, Lara's success in balancing an immense workload and her studies is rooted in her experience in a family that restricted her in her endeavors. Her understanding of differences between her and a German female growing up also made her aware of students with similar backgrounds. Her recollection of these restrictions and her poverty inspired her to call the Turkish parents of one female student to convince them to allow the student to come on a one week trip to Austria and to collect money for a family who could not buy school supplies for their children during Ramadan. Lara's apparent understanding of how females are viewed in the Turkish culture is rooted in her own personal struggle as a teenager who had to work various jobs while assisting her

brother and had to confront her parents about differences between Turkish traditions and German traditions.

Chantelle and Lara construct personal meaning in their teaching by reflecting upon how prejudice affected encounters with peers, colleagues or faculty as young students, teenagers and college students. The humiliating scenario in Math class in which Chantelle's teacher told her not to worry about not being able to comprehend math as she would not need it in the future furthered Chantelle's belief in a democratic and socially just environment where every student is valued and no one is disgraced. Chantelle's inquisitive nature comes out of her career path and has encouraged her to adapt her classes to the learning scale of her students, and become a critical, supportive and, dynamic practitioner.

Teaching as an Emotional Component

Creating personal meaning in teaching through experiences, beliefs, and community is closely linked to emotional factors that allow teachers like Chantelle and Lara to connect with their students on deeper levels. Teaching is a highly emotionally-charged endeavor (Hargreaves, 1998), and the emotional element is virtually impossible to remove from the teacher-student relationship. The emotional element in teaching included various degrees of caring for students as well as passion for ideas, enthusiasm for inquiry and discovery, experimentation, and amusement in the classroom (Woods & Jeffrey, 1996). Often women exhibit a more caring orientation with teaching in general and with their students (Noddings, 1992; Hargreaves, 1998). Chantelle's background as the eldest of three siblings, her perception of the lack of caring in her formative years at a predominantly White school, and her desire to be liked and cared for in return by her

(mainly minority) students as she relates with them in the classroom setting all inform her caring nature. Chantelle's desire to be liked by her students is incumbent upon a type of emotional understanding in which participants enter into each other's fields of experiences through subjective interpretation (Denzin, 1984). Further, Chantelle believes that she needs to work harder as an African-American female teacher than her peers do. Also, because of her background, she believes that she needs to prove herself and needs to work extra hard in order to succeed. Regardless of gender, she thinks minority students need to work harder and she connects well emotionally with black female students. This assumption is also consistent with research that shows that minority teachers connect well with minority students (Carrolton & Skeleton, 2004). Chantelle supports black female students whenever she can. For example, according to her experience, female students like to use rap as part of their speech and she supports this kind of learning. Recent research states that learning styles and learning environments are continuously changing and should be adapted to the new generation of students (Salmon, 2006).

Chantelle often expressed the need to employ more male teachers in order to assist and understand black students. From her past experience, she believes that black students have more respect towards African American male teachers. She said that she hardly has influence on African-American males due to her gender. Within her black community, she perceives that black males are more respected than black females. James (2002) describes the different notions of the kind of roles a black teacher has and his perspectives towards teaching and education**.** Chantelle concluded that she does not have as much influence on males and that education needs more black male teachers in order

to support black male students. This is also one aspect that James (2002) has indicated in his research, namely that education needs to be diverse and requires black male teachers as well. Research mentions that the numbers of minority teachers in the classrooms are declining (NEA, 2005), male African-American and Asian teachers are particularly needed in US classrooms.

Similarly, Lara's support in schooling and care for her brother, the lack of caring shown in her college years by her professors and her desire to do a good job and be liked by her students (also mainly by Turkish students) in classroom setting inform her caring nature (Denzin, 1984). Kelek (2006) talks about the different life situations that Turkish women are exposed to growing up bilingual and bicultural in Germany. Stereotyping and not knowing the different culture informs opinions of Germans towards Turkish females in Germany. Since Lara knows what Muslim females students are experiencing and what kinds of embarrassment they might encounter in school settings, she can relate well to them and tries to understand their situation. As a female teacher, she is well liked and considered to have a dynamic personality and teaching style.

Regarding her teaching style, she supports and motivates the students. She stated that Muslim females who wear scarves during class time need more support and motivation. According to El-Najjar and Symonds (2003) Muslim women are portrayed as second class citizens in the classrooms due to their veils and shy behavior. Therefore, according to El-Najjar et al (2003) they need more support than other students in the class. They feel particularly lonely and stigmatized by their peers. Lara tries to overcome these obstacles by letting the Muslim female students talk about their ideas and passions and share their experiences with their classmates. As Lara has fashioned meaning from

her past and meaning from the lack of support towards Muslim students at Max Planck Comprehensive, she has equally fashioned pedagogical meaning in a curricular framework that is uniquely hers. When discussing the place of the veil within the school she explains why it is not possible in Turkey and why she welcomes it in Germany. Lara is firm and emotionally stable about her religious beliefs and support for the rights of Muslim women. Greene (1973) mentions that a teacher who is aware is "primed to do philosophy" through critical attentiveness and conscious "choosing to what to appropriate and what to discard" (p. 10) as she makes meaning along the continuum of teaching and living.

The emotional side of Chantelle and Lara's teaching is evident through their student relationships and behavior towards their classes. Nurturing students (particularly their minority students) by being attentive to their physical and affective needs in and outside of class beyond what teachers must do is a form of emotional communication that Chantelle and Lara engage in purposefully. In turn, the students' positive reactions to their emotionally-influenced attitudes and behaviors further fuel the dynamics of the community of learners and their own self efficacy as teachers. Chantelle's sharing of personal stories, for example, creates an emotional intelligence between her and her class members (Goleman, 1995). Lara's sharing of similar experiences growing up as a Turkish female with her Turkish female students when discussing a book about Muslims in Germany also creates an emotional link between herself and her students. Such emotional intelligence expresses Chantelle's and Lara's competence and deliberate, personal choice through self-reflection to exhibit affectively as both teacher and participating member of the learning community. The emotional side of teaching

engenders a phenomenon that is unique to the community of learners. Ongoing and positive emotional communication with the entire group means that even former students return to be a part of Chantelle's and Lara's learning environment. Chantelle in essence "spoils" her gifted students with treats and favoritism because of her class's small size and population of honors students whom she regards as "more motivated" to carry out instructional tasks over that of general level students. Metz (1993) explains this phenomenon as a teacher's providing something in exchange for her student's cooperation. Further, Lara provides additional help and support to other grades where German teachers have problems communicating with migrant gifted students. She provides additional conferencing for these students and additional assignments in their favorite subjects. Chantelle's and Lara's achievement of the community of learner's cohesiveness and apparent success with the group as a whole opposes Lortie's (1975) contention that a teacher's proudest moments are measured by individual student success.

In addition, Chantelle's and Lara's emotive expressions, while they are sincere, serve another purpose that appears to fulfill both a personal and professional need for reinforcing their self-esteem. Their lack of esteem as a young minority student and particularly with Lara under pressure from her colleagues at the school causes Chantelle and Lara to rely on their students for a form of emotional support. Chantelle's sharing of sometimes intensely personal stories from her childhood tend to blur the lines between mutual confidence and professionalism to outsiders, but for her it is an essential part of revealing herself as human and creating her carefully crafted community of learners. When teachers are displaced intellectually, they may rely on students to provide the

intellectual and emotional support they need, even though the power balance between adult and child may be imperfect and potentially socially demeaning (Metz, 1993).

Controlling Expectations

Chantelle has been forced to change her teaching style due to a scripted program induced by the principal at Midtown Middle. This program has caused disappointment as her expectations of support and acknowledgement for her teaching have gone unmet. As she likes to be creative and critical in her teaching style this newly adapted "worksheet in and out" (in her own words) kills and takes all creativity away from the teacher. Chantelle has to teach solely based on a book provided by the principal, as she is controlled by administrative tests that are carried out bi weekly in the school. She just has only one hour per week where she can be creative and critical in nature to teach a class her own way. Her restricted autonomy forces her to teach against her philosophy and think reflectively on those days where she can teach her own way taking into account all diversity in the class. Again, Chantelle's developmental past aids her internally to motivate herself to succeed in a non-supportive collegial environment. In turn, Lara was always controlled and expected to speak and know all grammar like a German teacher throughout her formative college experience and also at Max Planck Comprehensive School. This continuous verification of her knowledge and her peers not being able to accept that her knowledge in German is equal to a German teacher has caused disappointment as her expectations of support and acknowledgement by her peers in her teaching have gone at times unmet. Lara depends only on herself for support in her teaching endeavors, as she does not feel connected and understood by her collegial network. Likewise with Chantelle she therefore does her own philosophy and thinks

reflectively and critically on her teaching practices which work for her and her students. Lara's first attempts at teaching during her student teaching challenged her to be shunned and thwarted by a seemingly jealous German mentor teacher. The fact that she was Turkish descent made the mentor teacher feel at times uncomfortable. Thus, Lara's first exposure to collegial relations was hostile as she dealt with unsympathetic and unreceptive teaching colleagues. Such beginnings for collegial resistance bear examining, especially when teachers are not readily welcomed into the profession by other teachers. In her case especially, it is rare to see a Turkish descent teacher coming into the profession teaching German to German students. Lara may have needed much more support and guidance in practice to build more confidence, especially from someone who did not have prejudice towards other new migrant descent teachers. However, Lara, now more confident and experienced when left to her own devices, constructs her own professional meaning when none is scaffolded for her in her past and at Max Planck Comprehensive School. Her continuous remark "I do not care and I can do it on my own" elucidates that her expectancies of support and assistance remain unfilled and shows further lack of trust in those who should support her endeavors. Her self driving nature to do her best is critical and understandable in such a non-existent collegial network. In addition, with no departmental support, Lara becomes more reclusive for obtaining her own professional needs with other migrant teachers, whom she knows throughout her studies at college. It is a self supporting circle where they share new lesson plans, ideas and support each other emotionally. With Chantelle and Lara it is evident that disdain and criticism from fellow teaching colleagues leads to an independent, critical, activist teacher, but one many scholars caution may alienate teachers like them further having

possible implications for achievement of school goals (Metz, 1993). Such may partly manifest itself in resistance to school policies such as submitting weekly lesson plans and with Lara disregarding the principal's request not to speak Turkish to students.

Even though both teachers exhibit a certain level of confidence and activist nature in their teaching, it is not without its price of a past history of singular survival-mode mentality and an almost non-existent support of administration and collegial understanding. Such evidence suggests that a school administration should be proactive and responsive to a migrant teacher's needs, especially as they come from an emotional-laden background and need additional support and understanding from the schools where they are going to work. An understanding, supportive administration that recognizes diverse needs and creative ideas in teaching towards minorities creates less tension minimizing the likelihood of minorities to be on their own. That in turn, creates the teacher to withdraw professionally in largely unconstructive ways in the work environment (Hargreaves, 1993).

Critical Practice

As Chantelle and Lara fashion meaning from their past and meaning from the lack of administrative support, they have equally fashioned pedagogical meanings in curricular frameworks that are uniquely theirs. It is built from personal need, professional space, self-reflection, and democratic principles placing the minority student and his or her learning experiences as central. It is furthermore built from experience as new ideas are added and old constructs are eschewed according to the needs of classes and the social dynamics of the entire community of learners. Chantelle and Lara alter existing activities and blend new information into them, keeping multicultural literary connections

fresh and in tune with the diverse population of their teaching environment. Although, Chantelle does not have a plethora of options to implement all she wants in her teaching, she still does whatever she can in her limited time. Such changes occur only when the teacher is thoughtful about the backgrounds and schema of her students in order to make new connections to learning. That is veraciously evident in both participants as their self reflective and critical portion in teaching comes out in the social interaction with schooling.

The curricular framework of Lara is not subject to the mandates of a one-size fits all curriculum, but tuned surprisingly to current teaching theory of knowledge in action (Applebee, 1996), literary envisionment (Langer, 1993), and reader response (Rosenblatt, 1939/1995) largely without Lara's awareness for lack of a good theory education during her educational years. In light of those theories, Lara chooses a variety of multicultural texts and genres that students may manipulate, synthesize, organize, and present based on their individual and collective impressions and personal backgrounds. Such allows students to make larger connections to their lives and world issues requiring students to broaden their perspectives and consider multicultural literature form multiple interpretations. A curricular framework embracing democratic elements in Germany is essential and part of the curriculum. Further, such framework can emerge as a result of a teacher's purposeful knowledge of self and reflection upon what she does towards the forging of ideals for her students to acknowledge.

Although, at Midtown Middle similar democratic principles are visible in the framework, it is actually not seen in the praxis. Due to the rigid implementation of the scripted program, there is little time to connect to these theories by the students.

Particularly, the literature component does not leave space for reflecting and understanding the crafting nature of a piece. Chantelle is aware of it and uses her limited time to provide literary envisionment as part of critical growth during her actual teaching time. Daily, questions as starting writing assignment aid students to connect to the literature previously discussed. Again, a curricular framework encompassing diverse, democratic and socially just elements can emerge as a result of a teacher's purposeful knowledge of self and reflection upon what she does, that in turn forges ideals for her students to acknowledge.

Such forging, however, is not without its risks. Part of Chantelle's and Lara's critical philosophy is incumbent on academic and some personal needs of her students, but it is also subject to their levels of maturity and quests to find themselves, sometimes a dangerous prospect for young adults without solid role models or stable home environments. Teachers are open to various forms of boundary testing from their students (Metz, 1993). With teachers such as Chantelle and Lara always striving to have a multicultural classroom, such challenges to boundaries may not be welcomed. When they occur, the equilibrium Chantelle and Lara perceive they have established become over tuned, and they are then forced to deal with a negative circumstances that leave them personally and professionally vulnerable, especially if they fail to receive professional support of their efforts. Unpleasant incidences such as non collegial support, prejudiced remarks by peers, scripted program associated with being minority in a predominantly White and German environment have caused Chantelle and Lara to ponder how to be self-protective, even though their personal and teaching natures are ones of openness and altruism. Hence, their statements that Lara does not care and just works for her own, and

does not take into account prejudice remarks of her peers, and Chantelle doing "her own thing" when time permits and having a negative attitude towards the principal attest to their reflection upon self-preservation and recalculation of trust they place with the general milieu. Chantelle and Lara are keenly aware of how they grasp the reality of their greater teaching world by virtue of the experiences they have lived.

Implications for Practice

In 1992, Jacqueline Joyner Irvine observed:

> [In the twenty-first century], nonwhite public school children will be instructed by white, female teachers who were trained in conventional teacher education programs, many of which will not have significantly changed since the 1960s. The schools will operate with anachronistic administrative structures and hierarchies designed in the 1900s and will depend on the financial support of an aging, white, middle class population. (pp. 79-80).

I concluded from this study several points that are important to address. I will start out first with the implications of this current study and then will suggest ways on how we can improve and find solutions for the problems mentioned.

Dr. Irvine was uncanny in the prediction of the type of teachers and population that exist today, and as can be surmised from the experiences of the informants in this study. There is hardly diversity in the faculty of schools and there is no incentives of making today's schools more diverse. This is not only visible within the US but also in international settings, such as in Germany. I do not intend to start public school bashing in the US or in Germany. I am an educator myself, as are many of my friends. I recall what some migrant students said to me in Germany that "we need someone, who is similar like us and literally understands our culture". It is my belief, to paraphrase Maya Angelou, if we know better, we can do better.

That being said, I would like to point out some important implications. First, both teachers faced obstacles throughout their lives, both personally and professionally. It was harder for both of them to become a teacher and to be valued by their peers as a teacher. Their background information yields very important facts which are important to know and visible which feeds into their practice. There is hardly any research on minorities' emotional and past experiences before coming into the classroom (Banks, 2004). Teachers will teach as they see fit based on experience, beliefs, and their view of themselves as practitioners. With this in mind, minority teachers need to know themselves and reflect metacognitively and critically about their practice, considering their past history and experiences that might determine outcomes for the classroom and the nature of relationships with their students. This is crucial, as they can share their own experiences with current educators. As both participants went through their own education, they know what is important to address and how we can support minorities in the classroom. Their own personal experience might aid to comprehend what educators can do in the classrooms. Teachers should be critical in the ways they teach and flexible to the needs of a diverse student body, the characteristics of the collective class and to changing their teaching practices as those practices develop along a continuum of time and place. Such practices will enforce language instruction as dynamic and matched to the learner creating new contexts with various forms of text thereby broadening opportunity for students to master and utilize the discourses of English and German across a number of literacy communities.

Second, both teachers served in some way as role models towards their students and particularly towards their minority and migrant students. According to Carrington

and Skeleton (2004) it is imperative to listen to minority teachers' viewpoints as they serve as role models, mentors, and activists (Carrington & Skeleton, 2004). Moreover, they can assist students in their particular needs and motivate them in their educational progress (Carrington, 2003) and can make an impact on their expectations (Carrington & Skelton, 2002). Generally, teachers' expectations of minority students tend to be more negative. I remember comments of migrant students in Germany that German teachers tend to make derogatory remarks about students to other teachers in the halls of the school as if they were not there. I noticed this also in the US while I was doing my student teaching in a predominantly Latino elementary school. Therefore, it is crucial to have minority teachers as role-models, supporters and caring individuals in a non-supportive environment for minority students. Romo (1999) discovered: "Teachers' negative feelings about immigrant students tend to be reflected in their expectations of immigrant pupils." This may be one reason that Turkish students and Latino students are so poorly represented in gifted programs and accelerated classes. When I asked Chantelle and Lara why minority students are not usually in the gifted programs I was told by Chantelle that they need to make qualifying scores over a number of years, in case it was a mistake, or the child had copied someone else's paper. Lara mentioned that they are not supported by the system and the teachers. They are not aware of their situations. That rationalization was not given to Caucasian parents. However, Minority parents seldom inquired about special programs for their children, probably due to lack of knowledge of their existence. Particularly, the Max Planck Middle School in Germany was less welcoming for migrant students by the German teachers. The negative remark about migrant students and direct confrontational questions to Lara about her culture was

always apparent. Therefore, Lara, who served as a primary role and support model for migrant students, was the only person who gave constructive information regarding important tools for schooling and was a role model for the migrant students to see that it is possible to become an educator within a predominantly German environment.

Further, the two minority teachers in this study cared, which is important when serving a diverse population in the classroom. Lara and Chantelle demonstrated a positive attitude and supporting nature towards their students. In a predominantly White and German ambiance it is imperative that minority teachers are also represented in the schools to show that diversity is valued and accepted. Teachers need to be aware of a students' "present realities" (Orellana, 2001). That is one integral aspect of the value of minority teachers, which places them as role models. Lucas, Henze, and Donato (1990), in their study of six high schools in California and Arizona, found eight key features that promoted the achievement of language minority students. They are as follows:

1. Value is placed on the students' language and cultures.
2. High expectations are made concrete by tangible actions, and rewards.
3. School leaders make the education of language-minority students a priority.
4. Staff development is explicitly designed to help teachers and staff serves students more effectively.
5. A variety of courses and programs for language-minority students is offered.
6. A counseling program gives special attention to minority students.

7. Parents of minority students are encouraged to become involved in their children's education.
8. School staff members share a strong commitment to empower minority students through education.

Third, to return to critical theory, particularly to Freire's (1970/1999) words, "Those who through reflection perceive the infeasibility or inappropriateness of one or another form of action (which should accordingly be postponed or substituted) cannot thereby be accused of inaction. Critical reflection is also action" (p. 109). As teachers, I do not believe that it is our place to try to indoctrinate what students think, but it is definitely our responsibility to show students how to think. I believe that a classroom that provides opportunities for students to discuss issues of difference, including differences highlighted through their backgrounds, will be a classroom where students truly learn critical thinking. Chantelle and Lara's continuous effort to adjust their teaching to the needs of the students and discuss topics that are critical in nature served as a positive environment were critical thinking was part of the daily conversation. Particularly, Chantelle mentioned many times that teaching is adjusting and letting the student think and find out information on his own. For the realm of teacher education, teacher educators must continually strive towards meeting the needs of minority students, and school systems must be attuned to the changing demographics, cultures, and social forces that inform school atmosphere and be prepared to assist teachers in adjusting to the various demands associated with that change by employing more diverse faculty.

Teacher educators can argue that no one formalized training program can ever suit the needs of every potential or minority teacher and his or her unique classroom or school

situation. However, courses may be designed that allow teachers to examine and investigate issues germane to themselves as minority professionals much like the studies done to investigate teacher's beliefs prior to service (Nespor, 1987; Elbaz, 1983; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991). Such investigation and creation of a study program or series of courses may reveal why teachers engaging certain teaching practices tending to be more proactive and critical in their nature of teaching, or why teachers need newer approaches to teaching curriculum within their individual settings beyond a new "trick" with which to reach minority students.

Fourth, both teachers promoted a positive understanding of diversity and multicultural concepts in the classroom. Multicultural classes should teach more than food and holidays. They should teach not only tolerance, but appreciation of differences. A great deal of time should be devoted to the "present realities" of the type of children who will be taught by teachers in today's classrooms. Teachers need to have some knowledge of what a child's life is like away from school. Chantelle and Lara knew that it is essential to reach out to everyone in the classroom and be sensitive to race, religion and culture of each individual. Chantelle and Lara both aimed to demonstrate to each member of the class that they are appreciated, accepted, and understood by the teacher. To showcase themselves as a positive person coming from a different culture helps promote diversity and diminishes misunderstandings of other cultures. Further, it combats stereotypes and helps reduce prejudice towards any race, culture and religion.

Having summed up the implications for this study, I would like to suggest the following:

In order for minority teachers to be listened to by others in the educational arena, educational programs should make more scholarships available for minority student teachers to become teachers. Financial dependability should not be an issue for minorities when applying to the Schools of Education. Both of my informants had to work hard in order to study. They came from poorer conditions. According to NEA (2005), there is a deficit of minority student teachers in schools of education. Rather than concluding and talking about final outcomes; rationales and reasons should be considered in order for educational programs to be more diverse.

The curriculum of diversity education for preservice teachers should include attention to the particular needs of minority students in the classroom. For example, minority teachers could be part of the curriculum as guest speakers, or education should address them within the multicultural education courses. While inviting minority teachers to classes at the university, student teachers could ask questions and minority teachers could discuss valuable information.

In public or private schools, minority teachers should be an integral part of the faculty. Thus, students become familiar with minority teachers and might address questions they have and discuss prejudice in classrooms. Therefore, not only student teachers, but also practicing teachers might benefit from more focused dialogue on minority students and teachers' needs, including understanding the significance of being of minority or migrant descent. If teachers or student teachers gain more knowledge in this particular field, they will gain more insight. Thus, they would essentially understand what is necessary to reach minority students and their particular needs.

Schools of education should provide resources to help both student teachers and inservice teachers gain an understanding of different races and their relationship to education. By providing resources that require them to explore student needs and to understand minority teachers' perceptions as related to their identity, their abilities as teachers in diverse schools may be enhanced.

It is evident from the study that minorities experience similar issues regardless in which country they are. Thus, comparing situations and encountering different perspectives should be an essential component of teacher education. For instance, this task can be carried out by placing student teachers directly with minority teachers to observe how they approach diversity in the classroom and how they carry out their lesson plans. Likewise, it could be an integral component of the university's curriculum to send teachers out on exchange programs through Fulbright. As the international experience and teaching abroad might enhance the acceptance of diversity naturally and might teach a different perspective of education. Further, it will enhance and make them more sensitive towards the different needs of diverse student bodies. Finally, it might be a sound idea to do a pre-test for student teachers on what they know about diversity before entering into the education programs. Consequently, professors and/or advisors can suggest what kinds of courses they need to take in order to broaden their multicultural understanding.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given the nature of this case study and the developments in the data as presented, the need and usefulness of further research are apparent. An international comparison about minority teachers' beliefs manifesting themselves into practice is still a nebulous

construct culturally, biographically, and historically situated varying according to the individual teacher as she creates meaning within the world of lived-through experience. That meaning is not always apparent by observation but may only come about through interview and philosophy.

Internal Motivations of Minority Teachers

To extend the research that was done in this study, I have the following suggestions. For teacher educators more research into the internal motivations and thoughts of teachers to practice what they do in light of or contrary to formal teacher training programs or what occurs as a result of background or experiential phenomena in addition to teacher training are warranted. Each of these situated phenomenon – culture, biography, and history – calls for further investigation to understand more deeply the locus of control and praxis of minority teachers working and living in conflicted teaching milieus such as Chantelle and Lara. Such investigation will likely reveal information on how teachers' background and instructional settings shape their praxis and whether the praxis changes across a range of effects or possibilities. Although challenging, further study into the roles teachers' personal pasts and experiences play in shaping and informing their praxis is essential to explain behavior and attitudes, especially in minority teachers acclimated to their teaching settings. Furthermore, comparisons internationally could be beneficial for any nation to see and evaluate how other countries are dealing with similar concerns. I am curious to see how Brazil, Turkey, and other European countries such as Netherlands, France and Britain are doing investigations on minority teachers and how their backgrounds feed into their teaching practice.

Changing Demographics and Non-supportive Environment

Further study into the perceptions of minority teachers concerning rapidly changing school demographics and how to weather such in a non-supportive atmosphere is warranted as is study into teacher perceptions of and praxis against a weak or flailing administrative staff. Research into minority teachers' level of individualism within teaching environments lacking in collegial networks bears investigation, especially where school goals are established and either are or are not being affected. Additionally, research into minority teacher's collegial perceptions, particularly in Germany, and their practice would clarify issues surrounding not only the welcoming of new teachers into the field, but also elucidate the appropriateness of collegial relations in established settings among minority teachers. This line of inquiry could broaden to a higher level of administrators and higher educational understandings of minority teachers in German public school system. It is one aspect to just look into a glimpse of a classroom; however another when I analyze closer and understand what is going on in the whole German educational system. This will require several interviews with administrators and faculty in higher education.

Focus on Germany

In the future I may use more Turkish migrant participants as minority teachers. My focus will continue in Germany as I will do pioneer work there. Nothing yet has been done in this particular field. As more and more migrant teachers in Germany will start in the education arena, more research is needed to see their experiences reflected in the classroom. It is also important to analyze how they are accepted and tolerated by their students at the school. Moreover, views about German students and what they perceive

about their minority teachers could be another research area to focus and analyze. I noticed during my research in Germany that it was still a new phenomenon that a migrant teacher was teaching German to German students. It would be worthwhile to see how this understanding will develop.

Another possibility of research would be to track schools in Germany that employ minority teachers to understand their particular needs and why they think minority teachers are relevant to employ. During my interviews with Lara I noticed that she preferred to teach in a mainly German school. However, she implied that, because she is of migrant background, she was placed in an only migrant dominated school. What is the rationale of the administration and why would she not be able to teach in a mainly German school? Such questions remain still open and could be important to research.

Finally, as diversity in both countries continues to increase, all these aspects are important to understand of minority students and their particular needs in the classroom. As a result of this research study, I recommend that education programs in the United States and Germany assist student teachers and that public and private schools in both countries employ and support the understandings and needs of minority teachers and students. German schools have hardly any teachers of migrant descent on their faculty. Similar issues occur in the United States. In the U. S. there is even a decline of minority teachers going into the educational teaching profession (Singh, 1996). Helping to foster and give minority student teachers the opportunity to go into the teaching field will enhance the general understanding of minorities respectively in both countries.

The Study of Minority Teachers

The two case studies examined the personal and pedagogical beliefs of an American and German minority teacher and how those beliefs transfer into practice with additional consideration to her teaching milieu. What I gleaned from this study working with the data for 6 months exceeded my expectations and broadened my perspectives of the art of teaching and its myriad complexities.

First, the study confirmed what I strongly suspected: teaching beliefs seep their way into practice in sometimes tacit and other times overt ways, and those beliefs are not easily changeable, even when one is presented with various educational and personal challenges taxing the belief system. Beliefs are rather firmly established and may only change after one has engaged in a practice that works according to the instructor's meaning-making over time. As I got further ingrained in the study, I observed that teaching is intensely personally driven, at least in the case of my respondents who teach with sincerity and heartfelt concern for their learners under their charge. This observation further grounded my belief that minority teachers bring to their classrooms personally and professionally constructed approaches. These approaches may be based on any number of phenomena to include beliefs, experience, their unique pasts as students themselves, and interaction within a particular teaching venue. Furthermore, these phenomena may influence teachers in either country, whether the United States or Germany.

Common sense dictates that teachers adapt and change over time in their practice. Highly effective teachers, such as the respondents, adapt and revamp their teaching according to the needs of the students, curricular demands, and past successes. However,

not all adaptations may be viewed as constructive ones for maintaining a place among the greater teaching community unless the adaptations are fostered by a strong administrative presence. Teachers may become more insular over time given perceptions about administrative and collegial relations and the effectiveness they feel within their teaching setting, especially when they sense a lack of support. Equally, what became apparent was that even when teachers are afforded small opportunities to join the collegial network, they may still be empowering due to their past experiences and highly critical and activist orientated in regard to their teaching.

From a researcher's perspective, I realized there is no real objectivity in observing another person and that, intentionally or not, I do become a part of the research landscape. My relationship with the respondents both grew and took on new meanings between us as educators as I elicited information from them and attempted to portray them as accurately and fairly as I could. Most of all, this research demonstrates that it is possible to observe and admire a minority teacher of a different instructional style without forfeiting my own held beliefs and practices or feeling threatened by her successful methods that work for them to maintain their teaching community. In the realm of education, we would learn so much more if educators would be more interested in different teaching styles, international different perspectives in teaching and non-biased cultural relevant teaching.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study have several limitations. For example, it is conducted only in one school with one minority teacher in Germany and one in the United States. A case method of inquiry was selected because the study is bound by time and by the

participants. Furthermore, Merriam (1988) describes a case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (p. 21). Therefore, I cannot generalize the outcomes; rather, I can see it as an enriching and detailed experience of the perceptions of two individual teachers bound in time and space. Thus, both teachers do not represent all minority teachers. They are two examples of minority teachers in their school systems.

Another limitation of the study concerns the possibility that the participants were uncomfortable discussing personal racial issues and may have told me what they believed I wanted to hear. Particularly with Lara, it might have been at times uncomfortable as I am a Turkish-German researcher and, therefore, this might be embarrassing for the participant. Also, with Chantelle, I could see that she sometimes was concerned about my taping our meetings. As she was mentioning several negative comments about the principal, she was afraid that she might find out at one point. Although I could relate to Lara, my racial background with Chantelle was different. This might have been another limitation towards the study. Chantelle might have been influenced by this difference.

I developed a professional relationship with both teachers throughout my data collection. Therefore, I hope that both participants spoke openly in reference to their perceptions about multicultural education due to our intensive and close relationship. During our study, the focus was always on them and not me. At the same time, the length of this research and the different types of data sources seem to be adequate to analyze each minority teacher's perspective.

As a person of foreign descent in the United States, and as a minority in Germany, I was able to gain a rapport with each participant. By the same token, there might be a

researcher bias, as I wanted to see things how I wanted to see them. In order to avoid bias, I used member checking with each participant. For a detailed description how I used member checking, please refer to chapter three. Therefore, they were able to evaluate and view my interpretations of their perspectives on multicultural education.

Epilogue

Today Chantelle and Lara continue to teach at Midtown Middle School and Max-Planck Comprehensive schools in the same room. Chantelle added afternoon English Literature and ESOL assistance to her teaching repertoire, something she considered as a challenge for a while. Just through coincidence, I was able to talk to one of her ESOL students and he mentioned to me that this particular class was helpful and he was able to learn new vocabularies in English. Further, Chantelle endured a personal hardship with the loss of her father, whom she was close to, early in the school year. During that time Chantelle missed several days and was emotionally distracted. I noticed that colleagues, such as Mrs. Naylor, were very supportive by providing her lesson plans and ideas to help her during that time.

Since the study, Chantelle's school replaced its principal. While I was at the school I sporadically was listening to the complaints of Chantelle and many other teachers, who did not support her teaching philosophy and the way she incorporated the scripted program in the school. Chantelle one time even mentioned that this could be a reason why she would leave the school. The new principal seems more caring with the teachers and listening to their needs.

Lara just started again to teaching from a maternity leave after the birth of her baby in the summer. I was able to talk to her on the phone while she was pregnant. As I

was pregnant as well we could share lots of similar concerns and joys about our future babies. According to her, she does not want to teach currently. She could still further be with her baby. However, due to her school regulations she need to start at least part-time and now continue after a one year rest. Yet, she still is nervous and happy to start her teaching again. She told me that she has a new classroom and her students missed her during her maternity leave. The principal, administration and her colleagues welcomed her. There were no major changes and some did not even notice her being gone for a while.

I started a position at Kennesaw State University. It seems that I will be teaching mostly Reading classes in the Early Childhood Department. I am trying to communicate and keep up with my respondents nowadays by email or by phone. They are always very nice and apart from the study I just like them as colleagues and friends. I will also like to keep up communicating in future with them. At least, Lara's baby and my baby hopefully will become good friends.

A Final Word

This investigation was rewarding as it allowed me the opportunity to discuss race, multicultural issues, migrant issues and stigma with my participants. I was able to see similarities in the United States and Germany, and unfortunately, I found that prejudice towards stigmatized groups is evident regardless of the locus of research. As education is continuing to address issues, we need to start rethinking as educators and pinpoint all discrimination at the global level. Understanding all students begins with understanding racially diverse students and migrant descent students.

The world and each country are getting more diverse in the school systems with different backgrounds and cultures. Yet, we still do not debate and discuss stigmatized groups within our society. As educators, we know and have made commitments to teach and value each student's cultural heritage. With a critical eye and ongoing attention to each student's needs and customs, we will create a more humane world, a more egalitarian society, and greater justice for all students in our classrooms. Let us continue the endeavor.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Proposed Interview questions for the teachers at Atlanta Middle School and Duisburg Comprehensive School

1. How has your classes been so far?

2. Tell us about your language arts class.

3. Describe a typical day in your class.

4. Tell us what you like most in this class. Why?

5. Tell us what you like least about this class. Why?

6. How would you describe the different cultures representing this class and how this reflects your teaching style?

7. Describe anything what you would like to change if you were an administrative person or the principal of the school?

8. Why did you become a teacher and why did you choose teaching language arts?

9. Do you see any ways in which the things you are teaching in this class are useful to the students now or will be useful to them in the future?

10. Tell me a little how you think the students perceive you as a teacher? In what way can you determine that?

11. How do you feel about yourself when you are in this class?

12. Tell me what you understand about multicultural education?

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL

Georgia State University

College of Education

Middle Secondary Education and Instructional Technology Department

Teachers' Informed Consent Form
Study of Teachers' Perspectives' on Multicultural Education
Principal Investigator: Yesim Canga-Ozbarlas

The purpose of this research is to understand the experiences of teachers on multicultural education in schools. The researcher will observe you for one class period daily during your teaching-schedule for a two-months period (May/June of 2005). You will be interviewed informally before or/and after your class period for 10-15 minutes and there will be 3-4 formal interviews of one hour across the time period. The formal interviews may be audiotaped and transcribed. Audiotapes will be destroyed upon completion of the study. All tapes and written transcriptions will be kept in a locked place. Also, formal interviews will be at a place of your convenience. You may turn in lesson plans to the researcher upon her request and in addition to that emailing and some phone conversation will occur during the research period.

You are being kindly asked to volunteer for this research study. Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. The researcher will keep your records confidential. The researcher will give you the option of whether you wish to have your

name or identity used in any written reports or publications. If you choose to use a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be used on all documents and records and your real name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when the researcher presents this study or publishes its results. You will not be identified personally.

Call Yesim Canga-Ozbarlas at (404) 432 51 46 and/or email: yozbarlas@aol.com or Dr. Mary Ariail at (404) 651 0177 and/or email: mbroughton@gsu.edu if you have any questions about this study.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is in charge of the protection of research participants. Susan Vogtner can be reached at (404) 463-0674.

I will give you a copy of this consent from to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____ _____

Participant Date

_____ _____

Principal Investigator, Yesim Canga-Ozbarlas Date

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL

Georgia State University

College of Education

Middle and Secondary Education and Instructional Technology Department

Teachers' Informed Consent Form
Study of Teachers' Perspectives' on Multicultural Education
Principal Investigator:.....Yesim Canga-Ozbarlas

The purpose of this research is to understand the experiences of teachers on multicultural education in schools. The researcher will observe you for one class period daily during your teaching-schedule for a two-months period (September/October of 2005). You will be interviewed informally before or/and after your class period for 10-15 minutes and there will be 3-4 formal interviews of one hour across the time period. The formal interviews may be audiotpaed and transcribed. Audiotapes will be destroyed upon completion of the study. All tapes and written transcription will be kept in a locked place. Also, formal interviews will be at a place of your convenience. You may turn in lesson plans to the researcher upon her request and in addition to that emailing and some phone conversation will occur during the research period.

You are being kindly asked to volunteer for this research study. Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. The researcher will keep your records

confidential. The researcher will give you the option of whether you wish to have your name or identity used in any written reports or publications. If you choose to use a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be used on all documents and records and your real name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when the researcher presents this study or publishes its results. You will not be identified personally.

Call Yesim Canga-Ozbarlas at (404) 432 51 46 and/or email: yozbarlas@aol.com or Dr. Mary Ariail at (404) 651 0177 and/or email: mbroughton@gsu.edu if you have any questions about this study.

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I will give you a copy of this consent from to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____

_____

Participant Date

_____

_____

Principal Investigator, Yesim Canga-Ozbarlas Date

Appendix C

Time-line for Data Collection & Analysis Portion of Research Study for Chantelle

Task	9/05	9/12	9/19	9/26	10/3	10/10	10/17	10/24
Formal Interviews			x	x	X	x		x
Class Observations	x	x	x	x	X	x	X	x
Follow-up discussion/interviews and member checks		x	x	x	X	x		
Email			x			x		
Telephone Conversations			x		X			
Data Management	x	x	x	x	X	x		
Collect	x	x	x	x	X	x		
Enter		x	x	x	X	x		
Analyze		x	x	x	X	x		
Fine-tune findings			x	x	X	x	X	
Preliminary Report					X	x	X	x

Adapted from: Handwerker, W.P. (2002). Quick ethnography. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press. P. 10

Appendix D

Time-line for Data Collection & Analysis Portion of Research Study for Lara Cekirdek

Task	7/25	8/01	8/08	8/15	12/12	12/19	12/26	01/02
Formal Interviews			x	x	X	x		x
Class Observations	x	x	x	x	X	x	X	x
Follow-up discussion/interviews and member checks		x	x	x	X	x		
Email			x			x		
Telephone Conversations			x		X			
Data Management	x	x	x	x	X	x		
Collect	x	x	x	x	X	x		
Enter		x	x	x	X	x		
Analyze		x	x	x	X	x		
Fine-tune findings			x	x	X	x	X	
Preliminary Report					X	x	X	x

Adapted from: Handwerker, W.P. (2002). Quick ethnography. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press. P.