Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

Culturally responsive teaching in Dutch multicultural secondary schools
Theeuwes, B.C.

Chapter 2

Teachers and their culturally diverse classrooms in Dutch secondary education

"The relationship with students is, of course, always important, but for our school, it is crucial. Students are very sensitive to this. With the attitude of: 'Listen, I am here to teach my subject', it is impossible to function well."

--- German language teacher at school 1 of this study ---

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Abstract

This explorative study describes how expert teachers of multicultural classes in secondary education consider students' cultural diversity in their teaching. Based on analyses of in-depth interviews with 13 teachers at three multicultural schools, teaching practices could be clustered into five categories: (1) fostering interpersonal relationships with students; (2) preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour; (3) fostering social cohesion; (4) fostering personal development; and (5) fostering students' learning process. Each category was illustrated with reasoned practices and specific examples. Teachers emphasized the interpersonal relationship with their students. Furthermore, teachers' reasoned practices did not seem specific to culturally responsive teaching but what made them specific was a cultural lens through which they seemed to consider everything they did. Moreover, culturally responsive teaching practices were implemented differently, depending on teachers' educational goals and beliefs about diversity and integration. The results of this study could be helpful for teacher educators when preparing their students for teaching in multicultural classrooms.

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2.1 Introduction

With increased cultural diversity in society, teachers, especially in urban schools, are increasingly faced with a variety of students' sociocultural backgrounds, values, beliefs, and cultural identities. Previous research has revealed that student teachers do not feel well prepared for teaching in this multicultural classroom context (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). They find it difficult to relate to the socio-cultural background of their students (Carter & Darling-Hammond, 2016), feel restrained by their own values and beliefs (Leeman, 2003) and have low self-confidence regarding teaching classes of students with many cultural differences (Gay & Howard, 2000). In this study we aimed to gain insights from expert teachers working in Dutch multicultural secondary schools so that these insights can inform teacher educators regarding what to focus on in teacher preparation programs. The concept of culturally responsive teaching is used as a theoretical framework.

2.2 Culturally responsive teaching

In this study we define multicultural classrooms as classrooms with students from different ethnic-cultural, sociocultural and/or religious backgrounds. Students in such classrooms have a variety of norms, values, habits, customs, and prior knowledge, which are known as 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992). This can be challenging for teachers who are trying to foster an equitable learning environment for all students. Indeed, to provide students with relevant and effective learning experiences, it is imperative, from a constructivist perspective on learning (Bransford et al., 2005), that teachers align their teaching with their students' prior knowledge and experiences. For the multicultural classroom, this implies that teachers should also consider the variations in their students' cultural knowledge, experiences, and frames of reference in their teaching. This approach is called culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2018) and applies to several dimensions of education, such as pedagogy, classroom management and citizenship education.

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2.2.1 Culturally responsive pedagogy

The pedagogy dimension of culturally responsive teaching concerns how the curriculum can be presented in a culturally responsive way. Broadly, three principles can be distinguished within this context: (1) content integration, (2) knowledge construction, and (3) equity pedagogy (Banks, 1993; 2014; 2019).

Content integration refers to incorporating examples and content from a variety of cultures in teaching. This implies that teachers should be able to break away from the textbooks and shape their lessons more autonomously. The learning objectives can provide guidance in this respect (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

The second principle of knowledge construction refers to helping students to get to understand, investigate, and determine how knowledge is constructed and influenced by culture. With this in mind, teachers should provide different perspectives on the subject matter and current affairs topics and let students reflect on them (Banks, 1993; 2014; 2019; Gay, 2010). Themes well suited for this purpose are, for example, the diaspora and the discussion of cultural traditions and oppression (Gay, 2010). These themes are relevant to numerous ethnic and cultural groups, albeit often differing in origins and consequences. When addressing these themes, both cultural differences and commonalities can be highlighted.

The third principle of equity pedagogy stresses the importance of modifying teaching methods to enable students from diverse cultural groups to attain equitable learning outcomes (Banks, 1993; Gay, 2010). In the literature on differentiation, this is called convergent differentiation (Bosker, 2005). The underlying notion is that beliefs regarding knowledge and effective learning are culturally determined (Gay, 2010). For example, if students have been culturally ingrained with the belief that effective learning involves reproducing knowledge and the teacher provides constructivist, active learning-focused activities, this misalignment might hinder learning. Gay (2010) lists several learning activities that can be used to familiarize students with a variety of learning strategies. Examples are collaborative student work, peer coaching, and cross-cultural exchanges between culturally diverse groups within local, national, and international contexts.

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2.2.2 Culturally responsive classroom management

Cultural responsiveness with a focus on classroom management is conceptually less elaborated than that with a focus on pedagogy. Weinstein et al. (2004) introduced the concept of culturally responsive classroom management, which refers to both creating a caring, respectful learning environment that supports learning and providing appropriate interventions for behavioural problems. Subsequently, in an interview study with 13 effective teachers from different cities, Brown (2004) identified several characteristics of culturally responsive classroom management. On the one hand, these characteristics focussed on the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the students: (1) developing personal relationships and mutual respect through individual attention to students; (2) creating caring, family-like learning communities; and (3) communicating in a congruent, genuine manner. On the other hand, characteristics were related to monitoring and managing student behaviour by (4) establishing structured, business-like, 'no excuse' learning environments; and (5) being assertive and setting clear behaviour expectations. However, these characteristics appear to differ little from those generally applicable to good classroom management. Within the Dutch context, Wubbels et al. (2006) described several interpersonal competencies and related strategies, based on focus group discussions in two multicultural secondary schools and an in-depth study of one expert teacher. These strategies were also related to creating positive teacher-student relationships and monitoring and managing student behaviour. In addition, they focussed on creating positive peer relationships, and fostering students' attention and engagement. Consistent with Brown's study (2004), these strategies did not specifically refer to students' cultural diversity. However, Wubbels et al. (2006) identified some specific teacher attitudes, most of which referred to cultural awareness: (1) awareness of student diversity within and between homogeneous cultural groups; (2) awareness of school culture, norms, and conventions; (3) awareness of significant language difficulties; (4) awareness of authority issues of male students with female teachers; (5) awareness of the multitude of factors at play in multicultural classrooms. They also mentioned (6) genuine interest in students' backgrounds and (7) being well-informed about students' home situations.

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According to the studies of Brown (2004) and Wubbels et al. (2006), the culturally responsive aspect within the classroom management dimension does not refer to specific competencies or knowledge, but seems to focus on awareness of the variety of students' cultural frames of reference that can make this dimension more complex.

2.2.3 Multicultural citizenship education

Regarding citizenship education, it is challenging for teachers to find a balance between fostering commonality among students and addressing diversity and cultural identity development (Banks, 2001; Leeman, 2006). According to Banks (2001), teachers should provide multicultural citizenship education to support students in functioning within and beyond their own cultural community. The underlying idea is that individuals should be able to maintain a connection to their cultural roots while also learning to effectively participate within the shared culture of which they are a part. Ladson-Billings (2006) refers to this as developing students' cultural competence.

Additionally, both Banks (2001) and Ladson-Billings (2006) argue that students should be encouraged to actively participate in the construction of a just society, aligned with democratic ideals and the values of universal human rights. This means that teachers should encourage the development of students' socio-critical consciousness regarding social systems that perpetuate inequality (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Promoting the development of students' cultural competence and socio-critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 2006) could be seen as the culturally responsive aspect of citizenship education. How teachers might shape this in practice is hardly elaborated. However, classroom discussions centred around tense or controversial topics are seen as an opportunity to prepare students for culturally diverse coexistence (Radstake & Leeman, 2010; Schuitema et al., 2017). Through these classroom discussions, which in a multicultural classroom usually reveal a range of different perspectives, students can learn that there are multiple viewpoints on different topics, and they can be encouraged to develop an understanding of one another's perspectives. Gay (2010) argues that working with multiple perspectives can transcend cultural boundaries.

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2.3 This study

Although previous research has been conducted on culturally responsive practices regarding different educational dimensions, it is not clear how teachers incorporate these practices into the day-to-day practice of their teaching, where they need to take these dimensions into account simultaneously. Furthermore, the extent to which insights derived from research conducted in the United States (Banks, 1993; Gay, 2010, 2018; 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006) are applicable in the Dutch context remains unclear. Concepts such as multicultural education (Banks, 1993) and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010, 2018) have been developed within an educational context characterized by explicit racism and the marginalization of minority groups, particularly Afro-Americans. According to these educational concepts which are rooted in critical race theory, emancipatory adjustments in education are emphasized to provide equal opportunities to students of diverse ethnic-cultural backgrounds. However, the composition of the Dutch multicultural society differs from that of the United States. Like several other European countries, the Netherlands hosts a relatively sizable population of Muslim migrants (Huijnk, 2018). Consequently, the discourse regarding the multicultural society, which permeates educational contexts as well, mainly focuses on cultural-religious tensions. As a result, it is unclear how the US literature on culturally responsive teaching should be interpreted in the Dutch context. Limited research has been conducted on culturally responsive practices in the Netherlands and so Dutch teacher educators lack a situated framework that can be used in the training of student teachers for teaching multicultural classes.

With this study, we aimed to produce a synthesis of expert teachers' practices regarding the three teaching dimensions within a multicultural classroom context. By the term "practices" we refer to general principles (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016) rather than strategies, actions or behaviours, based on what teachers state that they do and what they consider in doing so. These principles could serve as a stepping stone for student teachers' discussions and reflections with respect to their experiences in multicultural classrooms and they could be used

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to structure research themes related to culturally responsive teaching. The main research question of this study was: 'How can expert teachers' reasoned practices with respect to teaching multicultural classrooms be characterized?'

2.4 Method

2.4.1 Participants

The 13 participants in this study were employed at three different urban multicultural schools. School leaders within the network of the first author were approached with a request to invite teachers to participate in this research. The selection criterion was that the teachers had experience with teaching multicultural classrooms. The participating teachers were teaching at a variety of grade levels and educational tracks at a secondary school. They were teaching a variety of subjects. Furthermore, several teachers held additional positions or responsibilities within their respective schools, such as department head, principal, counsellor, or teacher coach.

Two of the three schools had a mixed Protestant/Catholic (PC/RC) denomination, while one school was a public school (i.e. it had a secular ethos). The schools differed in several aspects, such as the number of students, the range of educational tracks offered, and the number of years that the school had been multicultural. Table 2.1 gives an overview of characteristics of these schools and the participating teachers.

Schools 1 and 2 had in common that many students resided in poor neighbourhoods and often had an Islamic religious background. In these two schools, student diversity was remarkably rich, with over 50 different nationalities represented.

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. The research was conducted with the approval of the Ethics Committee of ICLON, University of Leiden (reference number IREC-ICLON 2018-02).

Table 2.1

Characteristics of the participants and their schools.

School	Denomination	Educational tracks	Number of students (n)	Students' nationalities	Participants per subject matter (n)
1	Secular	General secondary education Pre-university education	± 600	>50 nationalities. Predominantly students with Turkish-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch roots.	History (2) Art (1) Economics (1) French (1) Physical Education (1) Music (1) Geography (1)
2	PC/RC	Pre-vocational secondary education General secondary education Pre university education	± 900	>60 nationalities Almost no students with Dutch roots.	German (1) English (1)
3	PC/RC	Pre-vocational secondary education	± 320	Predominantly students with Turkish-Dutch, Moroccan-Dutch and Dutch roots.	Dutch (2) German (1)

*All participants had a Dutch cultural background.

2.4.2 Interviews

Since the aim of this study was to gain insight into teachers' reasoned teaching practices, we chose to use open, unstructured interviews. The primary aim of the study was not to ascertain what teachers typically do in their lessons, but rather to delve into the considerations that guided their actions, including their values and intentions. After informing the teachers about the research's purpose and the data processing methods, they were presented with a general opening question. This question concerned how they provide a supportive and safe learning environment in their multicultural classrooms. Subsequently, they were encouraged to elaborate further through follow-up questions, and they

were asked for specific examples and related considerations. All interviews were conducted by the first author. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was recorded with a voice recorder.

2.4.3 Analysis

The recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the data were analysed inductively. The three educational dimensions outlined in the introduction and the elaboration of the concept of culturally responsive education were used as sensitizing concepts.

For the inductive analyses, steps from the psychological phenomenological approach were followed (Cresswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). This means that the data were first analysed horizontally by the first author who highlighted meaning-filled statements or sentences. These statements encompassed what teachers mentioned they did or did not take into account when teaching in a multicultural classroom context and the considerations they had in this regard. The statements were clustered by the first author under the three educational dimensions. Teachers' considerations, which often reflected their underlying educational goals, were guiding for this categorization.

The categorization was discussed with the second author, leading to complete consensus regarding clustering into five categories. These categories represented the teaching goals that participants were pursuing rather than general teaching dimensions. In line with the concept of culturally responsive classroom management (Weinstein et al., 2004), two types of statements could be categorized to do with (1) fostering interpersonal relationships with students and (2) preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour. Two other categories of statements fitted multicultural citizenship education (Banks, 2001) and were refined into (3) fostering social cohesion and (4) fostering personal development. A fifth category related to pedagogy could be distinguished involving statements referring to (5) fostering students' learning process.

In the next step, the first author merged similar statements made by teachers for each category and matched them to reasoned teaching practices (see Appendix). Then an inter-rater check was done by the second author. She coded

all statements for each category based on the list of reasoned teaching practices compiled by the first author. The highest percentage of agreement was found regarding the reasoned practices categorized as 'fostering social cohesion' (90%) and 'fostering personal development' (82%), followed by 'preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour' (72%), 'fostering students' learning process' (72%), and 'fostering interpersonal relationships with students' (67%). All statements with no agreement were re-evaluated, leading to rescheduling of some statements or reformulation of some reasoned teaching practices until full consensus was reached. The final reasoned teaching practices are presented in the Appendix. This Appendix is further explained in the Results section.

2.5 Results

The five teaching categories, spread across three teaching dimensions (classroom management, citizenship education, pedagogy) and related reasoned teaching practices are presented in the Appendix.

When clustered in teaching dimensions, the majority of examples were related to the classroom management dimension of teaching. All teachers gave examples (f=55) referring to 'fostering interpersonal relationships with students', and ten teachers mentioned examples (f=39) regarding preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour.

Regarding the citizenship education dimension, ten teachers made statements (f=28) regarding fostering social cohesion and eight teachers regarding fostering personal development (f=28).

Finally, regarding the pedagogy dimension of teaching, 11 teachers gave 35 examples. These were all related to fostering students' learning process.

The categories under the teaching dimensions are listed in the Appendix in the order above, with the reasoned teaching practices ranked from most to least mentioned statements. In the sections below, the reasoned teaching practices per category for which at least four teachers made statements are discussed. The Appendix also includes the reasoned teaching practices and corresponding examples for which less than four teachers made statements.

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2.5.1 Fostering interpersonal relationships with students

Regarding fostering interpersonal relationships with students, all teachers made statements (f=55), emphasizing that this aspect is of utmost importance when teaching in multicultural classrooms. One teacher expressed it as follows:

> *"The relationship with students is, of course, always important, but for our school, it is crucial. Students are very sensitive to this. With the attitude of: 'Listen, I am here to teach my subject', it is impossible to function well."*

To achieve good interpersonal relationships with the students, teachers gave examples that could be clustered into six reasoned teaching practices: (1) being genuinely interested in the students as individuals; (2) being aware of and responding to intercultural differences and tensions; (3) taking students' home situation into account; (4) being curious about students' cultural background; (5) building trust and having fun with students; and (6) being authentic and showing your personality behind the teacher role. The statements were made by teachers of different subject areas. By far the most statements (f=22) could be categorized under the first reasoned teaching practice.

Being genuinely interested in the students as individuals

All examples regarding this reasoned teaching practice reflected the importance of being genuinely interested in the students as individuals. The teachers indicated that this can be expressed before class begins, for example, by standing at the door and greeting all students personally. At that time, informal conversations can be initiated, such as discussing what students did over the weekend, showing interest in their sport competitions or their part-time jobs, or just asking how they are feeling in general. Such conversations can also take place in the hallway or while supervising during breaks. The teachers also mentioned that it is important to learn students' names quickly, even if they are sometimes difficult to remember and pronounce, and they said that they give students explicit and specific positive feedback whenever possible.

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Being aware of and responding to intercultural differences and tensions
According to the seven teachers who made statements regarding this second reasoned teaching practice, mutual understanding between the teachers and the students is often not evident in multicultural classrooms because of conflicting values that can arise based on interethnic, social and religious differences. The teachers mentioned that they constantly consider how their behaviour or communication may be perceived by the students. Moreover, they have to give immediate responses to events that are often not predictable and come out unexpectedly. In deciding how to respond, they seek compromises to honour both their own values and the values of their students. For example, one teacher said that he finds it important to congratulate all students on their birthdays because he wants them to feel seen. However, he does not congratulate students from a Jehovah's Witness background because they do not celebrate birthdays for religious reasons. Instead, he gives a thumbs-up when he sees the student or asks, "How long has it been since you were born?".

Taking students' home situation into account
A third reasoned teaching practice that could be identified within the category of fostering interpersonal relationships with students, involves taking students' home situations into account. Five teachers gave examples related to this teaching practice. It was mentioned that students from their classrooms often have to take on a lot of responsibility at home. Many parents do not master the Dutch language and use their children as translators, for example when a family member needs to visit the doctor or to arrange financial matters. Another common theme, mentioned by several teachers, was that students often have part-time jobs of up to 20 hours a week outside school.

According to the teachers who emphasized this teaching practice, particularly in the role of mentor, it is important to be aware of students' home situations and any potential barriers so that they can anticipate appropriately. For example, they mentioned that in cases of poor academic performance or frequent absenteeism, they engage in conversations with students to find out underlying issues. They emphasized the importance of looking beyond socially desirable answers in these

conversations. One teacher mentioned that he sometimes chooses to break legal norms and school rules when it is in the best interest of the student and their learning process. For example, he allows students who generally perform well in his subject to skip school occasionally to resolve family issues. According to him, it is essential to express empathy at times when students are facing challenges at home. His focus is not on changing the home situation but on helping students learn to navigate between the, at times conflicting, demands of school and home environments. By paying attention to students' home situations, teachers indirectly contribute to making them feel seen and acknowledged.

Being curious about students' cultural background

This fourth reasoned teaching practice is a specification of the first one. Five teachers made statements referring to showing interest in cultural traditions, festivals, music and eating habits. They conscientiously observe things that they do not recognize from their own cultural background and when they notice this, they engage in conversations with their students about these topics out of genuine curiosity.

Building trust and having fun with students

The statements clustered under this teaching practice included using humour in class, joking around with the boys in the hallway, and playfully conspiring with the class by, for example, ending the lesson a bit earlier. According to the teachers, it is important to do what suits you, to be authentic, which aligns with the sixth reasoned teaching practice.

2.5.2 Preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour

Ten teachers who taught various subjects made statements (f=39) in the context of preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour. From these statements, six teaching practices could be distinguished: (1) being alert to and preventing students' loss of face; (2) being clear and consistent regarding procedures and commitments; (3) being alert to and anticipating insincerity; (4) not allowing negotiation or discussing sanctions during class; (5) responding to accusations of discrimination; and (6) restoring the relationship after correcting behaviour.

Being alert to and preventing students' loss of face

Seven teachers made statements referring to being alert to and preventing students' loss of face. They emphasized that nobody likes being challenged in front of a group, but that this is even more delicate in multicultural classrooms. Teachers related this characteristic to a strong sense of honour, which they see among students with Moroccan cultural roots, but which is especially noticeable among students who spend a lot of time on the streets. They mentioned that a strong sense of honour is a characteristic of street culture behaviour alongside other characteristics such as wanting to have the last word, denying facts, trusting no one, having a short fuse. According to these teachers, if loss of face is experienced, it can lead to a power struggle between the student and the teacher. To prevent this and to maintain the flow of the lesson, they stated that they address inappropriate behaviour in class firmly but they keep it brief and, if necessary, they discuss the incident with the student one-to-one after the lesson. The participants also mentioned that they are cautious about making jokes in the classroom and never make cynical comments.

Being clear and consistent regarding procedures and commitments

Four teachers indicated that in the context of managing behaviour in multicultural classrooms, it is important to have clear procedures and agreements and to consistently enforce them. They mentioned that frequent repetition of these agreements is necessary, for example, by stating at the beginning of each lesson that jackets should be hung up on the coat rack and by indicating where mobile phones should be stored. According to these teachers, consistency is needed, meaning that classroom rules also apply to students who never break the rules. One of the teachers mentioned that clarity aligns with how students are addressed at home. She noted that in her students' home situations, there is often a vertical, hierarchical communication structure, which is different from the horizontal communication structure often used at school.

Being alert to and anticipating insincerity

Three teachers made statements that could be clustered under this reasoned teaching practice. All three of these teachers taught at school 1 and two of them

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held leadership positions in addition to teaching. The statements they made were mainly about students' denial of facts. Corresponding to the first teaching practice: *Being alert to and preventing students' loss of face,* the participants related this behaviour to street culture. When students deny facts, the teachers indicated that they confront them with facts whenever possible.

According to these teachers, students sometimes make up excuses related to their religious background to avoid doing things. One teacher who experienced this, mentioned that when he doubts the accuracy of a claim, he checks it with a student with a similar cultural or religious background. In this way, for example, he learnt that the Quran prescribes that during Ramadan, you should run the day as usual, implying that no exceptions need to be made for fasting students. One of the teachers mentioned that he leverages his good relationship with the students when he catches them being insincere. He then expresses clear disappointment in the student and states that it is unfortunate that the student can no longer be trusted. Later, he restores the relationship with the student in a one-to-one conversation (see teaching practice 6).

Not allowing negotiation or discussing sanctions during class

The statements included under this teaching practice were also associated with street culture behaviour. The teachers mentioned that students who are involved in street culture often want to have the last word. According to the four teachers who referred to this, it is important to be clear what you want and stick to the line taken. They mentioned that what helps in this regard, is to refer in a business-like manner to norm agreements at school and/or class level and to not take any reproaches personally. Additionally, the teachers indicated that, where necessary, they engage in individual discussions with the student to address what the student wanted to raise. These one-to-one conversations were also mentioned in teaching practices (1) and (3), which were also associated with street culture behaviour. One teacher mentioned that he prevents discussions by quelling students' negotiation attempts through humour.

2.5.3 Fostering social cohesion

Ten teachers, teaching in various subjects, made a total of 28 statements that could be clustered as *fostering social cohesion.* This category focusses on what teachers do to encourage students to interact well with each other and to prepare them for society.

Three reasoned practices could be distinguished: (1) encouraging interest and tolerance for each other; (2) being alert to and clearly rejecting discrimination; and (3) emphasizing the class as a cultural unit. Most statements (f=15) could be grouped under the first reasoned practice.

Encouraging interest and tolerance for each other

Eight teachers indicated how they encourage students to get to know each other and each other's cultural customs and to accept each other's differences. They mentioned, for example, that they let students discuss their cultural traditions and they often also let students change places. According to these teachers, this reduces prejudices in a natural way. One teacher mentioned that she does consider that some Muslim girls might prefer not to sit next to a boy while other teachers said they do not take this into account because later in life they will need to collaborate regardless. Furthermore, teachers provided examples related to promoting empathy by encouraging students to put themselves in hypothetical situations: 'Imagine if you were...'. They also mentioned explicitly discussing the theme of 'tolerance,' such as searching for texts during literature lessons that address this topic.

Being alert to and clearly rejecting discrimination

This reasoned practice is closely related to the previous one. Six teachers made statements about this. According to these teachers, students sometimes make discriminatory or stereotypical remarks about each other as a joke. Underlying cultural conflicts are often at the base of these remarks, for example between students with strongly traditional and students with less traditional religious beliefs. Teachers gave examples of how they react to such comments in a directive and clearly disapproving way. They added that in cases of oppression, they

refer to school norms and the fundamental human right of liberty and security, including the freedom of religion. If the problem persists, the bullying protocol is activated.

Emphasizing the class as a cultural unit.

In the practices mentioned above, the focus was on tolerating differences among students. However, five teachers also emphasized paying attention to similarities among students. These teachers mentioned that they find ways to make students experience a sense of belonging to a class together, in the same grade, with the same educational level, and shared agreements. One of the agreements mentioned was that the language spoken within the class is one that everyone can understand, meaning either Dutch or the target language of the subject. According to these teachers, this is also crucial for students' language development. Another example given was that during mentor sessions, specific attention can be paid to group formation exercises.

2.5.4 Fostering personal development

A last category related to the citizenship education dimension of teaching, referred to encouraging students' personal development. Eight teachers mentioned reasoned practices regarding this category (f=28). Whereas fostering social cohesion was about enhancing a sense of community, this category focused on personal growth. Five reasoned practices were identified: (1) fostering knowledge construction; (2) fostering cultural identity development; (3) fostering self-confidence; (4) seeing and fostering students' strengths; and (5) imparting standards of politeness. Only regarding the first and second reasoned practice did four or more teachers make statements.

Fostering knowledge construction

Six teachers made statements that referred to offering students multiple perspectives. For example, a history teacher mentioned that he provides students with different experiences such as visiting both a Catholic church and a mosque. Before visiting the mosque, the teacher researches which mosque he

considers 'suitable' as it shapes the narrative the students will hear. According to this teacher, a suitable mosque is one without radical ideas and with a positive attitude regarding the pluriform society. Another teacher mentioned an example referring to engaging in conversations with students about homosexuality on International Love Day (annually on June 27th) by inviting members of the COC (LGBTQ advocacy group). Classroom discussions on controversial topics were also highlighted as an opportunity to familiarize students with several perspectives. The teachers indicated that they instigate these discussions, for example by having students read hot topics in the newspaper or by discussing sensitive topics in the curriculum with them. In this respect, teachers indicated that it is important to guide the conversation at the process level and not at the persuasion level. Indeed, the goal is to encourage critical thinking rather than imposing beliefs on students. According to the teachers, guiding at the process level involves facilitating the interaction between students, giving students the reassurance that any well-argued opinion is valid and trying to remain neutral in the discussion themselves. If nonsense arguments are given such as arguments based on conspiracy theories, they do intervene by countering these arguments with facts. To be able to intervene adequately, teachers indicated that it is important to be well informed about current affairs. Teachers said that they also intervene when statements are given that violate human rights, for example disrespectful statements about homosexuality. One teacher mentioned that students do not have to accept, for example homosexuality, but do have to respect it. Some teachers indicated that they occasionally introduce additional perspectives to further stimulate students' critical thinking.

Fostering cultural identity development

Four teachers made statements that could be clustered under this reasoned practice, with four of the seven statements provided by the economics teacher. The teachers emphasized having curiosity about and interest in the cultural backgrounds of their students and whether the students identify with and feel connected to the Netherlands. To find out their students' 'funds of knowledge', the teachers mentioned that they engage in conversations with them, both in

personal discussions and during group discussions. An example of how group discussions on this topic can arise was given by the economics teacher. When he compared graphs between the Dutch situation and the situation in the country of origin of groups of students, students did not identify with the Dutch situation. Several teachers stressed that it is important that students feel connected to the Netherlands, as well as their country of origin. Additionally, one teacher mentioned addressing his students' cultural dilemma, for example by asking: 'In the Netherlands, you are Turkish, and in Turkey, you are Dutch. How do you deal with that?'

2.5.5 Fostering students' learning process

Under this category, which is related to the pedagogy dimension of teaching, statements were clustered according to what teachers indicated they do to support students in their learning process. Eleven teachers, who were teaching various subjects, gave a total of 35 statements. The reasoned practices that could be distinguished were: (1) making learning encounters relevant for all students; (2) being aware of and anticipating aspects in learning content/ learning activities that are culturally or religiously charged; and (3) providing Dutch language support. Most examples were provided for the first practice (f=17). It is noteworthy that the Physical Education teacher provided examples that could not directly be clustered under this category but which were crucial for the learning process regarding his subject. He mentioned some adjustments he makes in his classes so that all Muslim girls can participate. For example, if they want to wear long trousers and headscarves for religious reasons, he allows them to wear jogging trousers and a sports headscarf. However, he forbids regular headscarves that are fastened with pins because these are dangerous in gym class.

Making learning encounters relevant for all students

Remarkably, the majority of statements (f=8) that could be classified under this reasoned practice were provided by two history teachers. Several teachers highlighted the importance of giving their own interpretation to the textbooks, as they are written from a Western European perspective and often do not

resonate with students' lived experiences. In the history textbook, for example, little attention is paid to the Ottoman Empire and in the General Art textbook Islamic art is not discussed. Similarly, the economics textbooks predominantly assume a Western European viewpoint on banking, omitting discussions on Islamic banking. Teachers emphasized that it is not the students' role to dictate the curriculum, but that these adaptations are crucial to connect with their experiences and prior knowledge before guiding them towards the content they need to learn. A teacher called this a 'judo movement approach'. Connecting to students' prior experiences and knowledge can be done, for example, by addressing their questions about how to interpret the subject matter from their cultural frames of reference. Teachers mentioned that if they do not immediately have an answer to a question, they research it at home and address it the following lesson. They indicated that they often know where the questions might arise and that they take this into account in their preparation.

Being aware of and anticipating aspects in learning content/ learning activities that are culturally or religiously charged

Six teachers made statements that could be categorized under this reasoned practice. One teacher indicated that during the preparation of his lessons, but also during the lesson itself, he often asks himself, "What does this mean from the cultural perspective of my students?". Sometimes, teachers choose to avoid a topic, such as when there are students in the classroom with war-related traumas. At other times, teachers delve deeper into the feelings that an issue triggers among the students. Examples were also provided in which teachers consciously disregarded cultural sensitivities, either because the topic was part of the exam material or because they did not want to be censored in educational activities that align well with the curriculum. Teachers also indicated that they were sometimes caught off guard by cultural issues. For example, the economics teacher used sweets in an experiment on market forces. He did not understand why the students did not take the sweets and the experiment failed. When he asked about it, the students with an Islamic background said that they had not taken the sweets because they contained pork gelatine.

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Providing Dutch language support

A third reasoned practice that was identified regarding fostering students' learning process was providing Dutch language support. Five teachers referred to this practice. Four of them were language teachers: two teaching German and two teaching Dutch. Teachers said that many of their students speak a different language at home, so they do not understand more complex words or expressions. According to them, students do not explicitly say that they do not understand the word or expression, but it becomes evident from their gaze that they are no longer following what you say. The teachers mentioned that they do not adapt their language use to the level of the students but instead explain difficult words to prevent the students' lack of language proficiency from holding them back. They also highlighted being cautious with the use of figurative language as it can be misinterpreted. For example, the expression 'hold a mirror up to yourself' can be interpreted as 'you are ugly'.

2.6 Discussion and conclusions

2.6.1 Discussion

The aim of this study was to characterize expert teachers' reasoned teaching practices regarding teaching in a multicultural Dutch secondary education context. The statements of the interviewed teachers could be categorized into five categories spread over the three teaching dimensions discussed in the introduction: the classroom management, citizenship education and pedagogy dimensions. It is striking that by far the largest number of statements were categorized under the classroom management dimension, followed by statements referring to the citizenship education dimension and finally statements that could be related to the pedagogy dimension. Within these three educational dimensions, a more refined classification of the statements was discerned that led to five categories into which the reasoned practices could be categorized. These categories were: (1) fostering interpersonal relationships with students; (2) preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour; (3) fostering social cohesion; (4) fostering personal development; and (5) fostering students' learning process.

Culturally responsive classroom management

The statements of teachers in this study within this teaching dimension could be clustered into two categories: fostering interpersonal relationships with students and preventing and addressing disruptive behaviour. This dichotomy is also reflected in the classroom management competences for multicultural classrooms described by Wubbels et al. (2006) and the concept of culturally responsive classroom management introduced by Weinstein et al. (2004). Like the competencies described by Wubbels et al. (2006), and the characteristics of culturally responsive classroom management identified by Brown (2004), the reasoned practices were for the most part not found to be specific to multicultural classrooms, though some reasoned practices were identified that are more specific to culturally responsive teaching. Some of these practices align with previous research (Wubbels et al., 2006), but two additional practices were found that could not be linked to previous studies: *being alert to and anticipating insincerity* and *responding to accusations of discrimination.*

Multicultural citizenship education

Two categories were distinguished for the citizenship education dimension of teaching, namely fostering social cohesion and fostering personal development. The reasoned practices that could be classified under these categories showed similarities with what Banks (2001) calls multicultural citizenship education. The practices that were classified under *fostering social cohesion* referred to addressing diversity and effective participation within a shared culture, while the practices that were classified under *fostering personal development* focussed on self-development within this shared culture and developing one's own cultural identity.

Regarding fostering social cohesion, the results of this study suggest that teachers of multicultural classrooms are faced daily with the citizenship goal of preparing students to participate effectively in a pluralistic community. Within the diversity of students' values, beliefs, traditions and customs, the classroom community is searching for a common ground that everyone feels comfortable with. Thus, the multicultural classroom forms a micro-pluralistic society in

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which the citizenship goal of preparing students to participate effectively in a pluralistic community goes beyond just 'preparing for'. Students are 'infused' with this goal. Indeed, in order to create a safe and positive classroom climate, it is necessary to put this citizenship goal into practice directly. To achieve this, teachers mentioned reasoned practices referring to encouraging interest and tolerance for each other, being alert to and clearly rejecting discrimination, and emphasizing the class as a cultural unit.

Regarding fostering personal development, the teaching practice of 'knowledge construction' showed similarities with what Ladson-Billings (2006) refers to as developing social-critical awareness. However, with the teachers in this study, the focus seemed to be not so much on making students aware of systems perpetuating inequality but more on providing and arguing multiple perspectives to encourage students to form their own opinions. This is more in line with what Banks (2019) intends with one of the dimensions of multicultural education which is also called knowledge construction. Furthermore, a practice was identified that could be directly related to what Banks (2001) calls 'fostering cultural identity development'. Finally, three practices were identified that aimed at individual development within the shared culture described under fostering social cohesion. These practices were (3) fostering self-confidence, (4) seeing and fostering students' strengths, and (5) imparting standards of politeness.

Culturally responsive pedagogy

The teachers' statements reflected characteristics of culturally responsive teaching (Banks, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Gay, 2010). For example, teachers referred to using students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2002; Gay, 2018) in their teaching by integrating examples that resonated with the cultural or religious backgrounds of groups of students, making learning encounters relevant for all students. This is in line with the multicultural education dimension of content integration, mentioned by Banks (2019). Some teachers indicated that when they have piqued students' interest through connecting with their funds of knowledge, they can guide them towards the compulsory curriculum, which often has less connection with their prior experiences and knowledge. By comparing the

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mainly Western European curriculum with the cultural or religious background of groups of students, students also learn that there are multiple perspectives on the subject matter. This is a goal which shares common ground with the aim of the knowledge construction dimension (Banks, 2019).

Besides examples that can be related to the multicultural education dimension of content integration, examples of the multicultural education dimension of equity pedagogy (Banks, 2019, Gay, 2010) were mentioned in the context of fostering students' learning process. These referred, in particular, to Dutch language support so that all students could understand the subject matter. Furthermore, teachers indicated that they are constantly aware of cultural sensitivities in the curriculum and because of these sensitivities they sometimes choose not to do certain learning activities, for example, because they might be traumatic for students who have experienced war or because they might spark a discussion which there is no time to deal with properly. At other times, teachers chose not to avoid cultural sensitivities, for example because the subject matter was part of the examination material or because they did not want to be censored in learning activities that they considered appropriate for covering a particular subject.

2.6.2 Limitations of this study

Although the reasoned practices described in this study are in line with the literature on culturally responsive teaching (Banks, 1993; 2001; 2019; Brown, 2004; Gay, 2010, Ladson-Billings, 2006; Wubbels et al., 2006), we do not claim to have fully mapped out culturally responsive teaching in multicultural Dutch secondary schools or that the teachers in this study were inherently culturally responsive. This study was too small-scale for that. Moreover, school 1 had a considerably larger number of participants than the other schools and certain statements were only made by teachers at school 1. Consequently, the results may have been coloured by the diversity context and school culture of this particular school. We also did not make any distinction between teachers of different subjects, making it unclear whether teachers of different subjects might have different emphases in their teaching.

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2.6.3 Future research and practical implications

This study provided the insight that in order to know whether behaviour is culturally responsive it is important to delve deeper into teachers' considerations. Based on behaviour alone, it is not possible to determine whether a practice is culturally responsive or not. Future research could explore this further by, for example, video-recording teachers in their multicultural classrooms and then conducting stimulated recall interviews with these teachers. This would allow behaviour to be linked to teachers' thoughts, reasoning and considerations. Additionally, gathering information from students, particularly on how inclusive they perceive their teachers' teaching practices to be, could provide more robust foundations for culturally responsive teaching.

The insights from this study could be used to shape teacher education programs regarding teaching in multicultural classrooms. The cases mentioned could, for example, be used for student teachers to engage in conversations about how they would react to these events and why they would react that way. The categories spread over the teaching dimensions and the reasoned practices could provide a framework for reflection. The cases could also stimulate conversations about underlying attitudes regarding diversity, integration and culturally responsive teaching. In addition, teachers could be encouraged to engage in conversations with students from multicultural schools to learn about their specific educational needs.

2.6.4 Conclusion

Despite the limitations of this study, we have gained insight into how teachers shape their teaching regarding various teaching dimensions in a multicultural secondary classroom context in the Netherlands. Moreover, we found that based only on teachers' descriptions of what they do, it is not possible to determine whether this behaviour is culturally responsive. Indeed, some statements did not initially seem to refer to culturally responsive teaching, but when combined with the teacher's expressed intentions or considerations, these statements took on a different colouring. An example of this was the statement made by the economics teacher that was categorized under the reasoned practice of fostering

self-confidence. This statement could be classified as 'colourblind' because it appears to deny the societal inequality between different ethnic-cultural groups. However, the teacher indicated that he aimed to instil confidence and courage in the student to pursue her goals. According to Ladson-Billings' (2006) educational goal of making students culturally competent, this intention could indeed be considered culturally responsive.

Finally, for all teaching dimensions, the essence of teaching multicultural classrooms seems to involve being aware of and taking into consideration the variety of students' cultural perspectives and funds of knowledge in the different teaching dimensions. It is as if teachers view their teaching activities through a cultural lens. This is in line with what Gay (2013) refers to as 'teaching *to and through* cultural diversity'. However, how teachers put this into practice seems to depend, among other things, on their long-term and short-term educational goals and their underlying attitudes and beliefs regarding diversity and integration.