

TOLERANCE ON THE BRINK OF INTOLERANCE¹

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When Norwegian teachers were asked to reflect on which values they find most important in their educational practice, *tolerance and empathy*² were the values most frequently mentioned (Afdal 2005; Haakedal 2003). As a teacher of future teachers, with the multicultural Norwegian classroom with children from different religious and philosophical traditions as a field of interest and research, I asked myself: How do teacher education *students* envision carrying out tolerance and empathy as teachers in a pluralistic classroom? Do they offer pupils from different religious and philosophical traditions and the ways in which they express their thoughts and belief the same kind of tolerance and respect? To answer these questions I shall present a study carried out during a period of three years at a Norwegian college for teacher education, and discuss its main results.

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² *Tolerance* is here understood widely, as «living peacefully with difference». This means that tolerance may include or overlap with other related concepts such as respect, understanding, freedom of religion and philosophy of life, and so on (Afdal 2005). Following this understanding, *intolerance* may include or overlap with concepts such as disrespect, lack of understanding, shortage or lack of freedom of religion and philosophy of life, and so on. *Empathy* is understood as the intellectual identification of oneself with another person in order to understand him or her better.

1. Theoretical perspectives

My theoretical framework in answering the research questions is *dialogic and socio-cultural theories* based on Michail Bakhtin's understanding of dialogue and on scholars' application of Bakhtin's perspectives in their research on students' utterances. These theories emphasise that knowledge as well as identity is constructed through dialogue and interaction with others, and in a context. My methodological solution is to interpret the students' reflections on a given case in the light of theories of dialogue and of frames, roles and positioning (Lied 2004).

According to Bakhtin, all utterances are dialogic. We are always in dialogue with other utterances and voices when we communicate, and an utterance is always formed in dialogue with other utterances, the already-spoken as well as the anticipated ones (Bakhtin 1981, 1991). Referring to Bakhtin, Olga Dysthe says that an utterance carries with it traces of many dialogues (Dysthe 1997). Also referring to Bakhtin, Sigmund Ongstad stresses that an utterance is used simultaneously «to refer a semantic content, to express emotions about this content, and to address someone» (Ongstad 2002: 347; see also Bakhtin 1998). Utterances, that is, bring us into dialogue with our different contexts both through content, form (the way the content is introduced; the expressive element), and adressivity (function; whom the utterance is addressing).

The ways in which students introduce themselves in their utterances – what roles they enter and how they position themselves in their oral or written assignments – are connected with what they find valuable and important, what they relate to and want to be associated with in their contexts (Smidt 1996, 1997). Theory on dialogue, roles, positioning and frames therefore provides me with tools of analysis which help me to find values and perspectives in the students' texts (Evensen, 1998, 2002; Smidt, 1996, 1997, 2002).

In the following I will, in the light of these theoretical perspectives, analyse teacher education students' written utterances on an imagined case, composed by me. I shall focus on the dialogues and roles they enter in their texts.

2. The study

In the first year of the research project I asked the students to reflect on the following situation:

This is the situation:

You are a KRL-teacher³ in a multicultural 5th grade. It is Advent. The class is busy with a theme related to Christian Christmas celebration, and stories about the birth of Jesus from the Christian New Testament are an important part of the teaching plan. Once, when observing your pupils working, you find that Ahmed has written: «Jesus is not the son of God. Allah has no sons. Jesus is just a prophet. The Quran says so. The Christians are wrong. Christmas is nonsense.»

You also find Solveig busy with *her* utterance. She writes: «I do look forward to Christmas! We get presents, we decorate the Christmas tree, sing Christmas carols and eat delicious food. Our Nativity with the little child Jesus has its place in the bookshelf. I feel sorry for those who don't celebrate Christmas!» She has illustrated her text with a drawing sparkling with Christmas candles and decorations, peace and happiness.

Reflect on this situation.

My intention with making them reflect on this situation was to introduce the students to one pupil from each of the two largest religious groups in Norway, Christians and Muslims, in a way which might raise their sympathy with as well as their objections to both pupils, and make them express their thoughts and perspectives concerning the situation. The students were writing their texts as a 20 minutes' assignment at the start and at the end of their mandatory KRL-course which runs through one academic year (the second year of their teacher education) and amounts to 20 ECTS-credits. In autumn, at the start of the KRL-course, 112 students received the case and 91 responded. In spring, at the end of the course, 59 out of the 112 responded, 13 of which received the case for the first time. That is: 104 of 112 students taking the KRL-course this actual year gave me their written reflections on the case, 58 answered once, 46 twice.

3. Students in the role of tolerant and empathic teachers

The case invited the students to enter a KRL-teacher role, and this they did, positioning themselves somewhat differently within the boundaries

³ *Christianity, Religion and Ethics Education (KRL)* is the name of the religion and world view school subject in Norwegian primary and lower secondary education as well as in teacher education.

of such a role. The great majority of the students introduced themselves as teachers who believe in knowledge and insight as a means of creating respect and tolerance between people of different opinions, who respect different religions and world views, and who show tolerance and consideration for their pupils. The following text may exemplify this main trend in the material:⁴

This is obviously a difficult situation. What I probably would have done in this class is to promote tolerance for different opinions. For Ahmed it may be wrong to celebrate Christmas, but he should still learn to respect the fact that Solveig thinks it is a nice holiday. Solveig, too, should learn to understand why Ahmed does not celebrate Christmas. I think that tolerance is the most important value we may teach children in school today. Their learning about each other's religions and cultures will make it much easier for them to respect each other's belief (autumn, project year [p.y.]1).

This student text shows that the student regards tolerance and respect as central values in the pluralistic classroom. Her arguing for knowledge about different religions and cultures as important when learning respect and tolerance, and the role she enters as a tolerant and empathic KRL-teacher, indicates this. In entering the role this way, the teacher education student was led into dialogue with the values which are mentioned by Norwegian teachers as the most important for educational practice (Afdal 2005; Haakedal 2003). She was also in dialogue with the Norwegian National Core curriculum (CC) and the principal aim of primary and secondary education in state schools (as this aim was formulated when both the students texts and this article were written). The aim states that «schools shall promote intellectual freedom and tolerance, and emphasise the establishment of a cooperative climate between teachers and pupils». The CC states that it is important for a teacher to have «respect for pupils' integrity, sensitivity for their uniqueness and an urge to assist pupils in exploiting their potential an enticing them into their own borderland» (CC94: 22). The teacher shall also, still according to the CC, «meet the pupils' differences in ability and rhythm of development with kindness and ease» (ibid.:19), and they shall show

⁴ The students wrote their texts in Norwegian. The translations of their texts into English are mine. Lack of space is the reason why the Norwegian texts are not presented here together with the English translations.

care and consideration for their pupils. The CC underlines that education shall foster both loyalty towards our heritage and an urge to break new ground, and it highlights the importance of developing the pupils' critical sense of judgement.

Among the students who, through these dialogues, positioned themselves as tolerant and empathic teachers, there was a fairly large group who *especially* underlined the importance of treating *both* Ahmed and Solveig, the two pupils of the case, with tolerance and respect. These students argued that the two pupils express themselves in ways we may expect from pupils their age, they both have the right to feel and believe whatever they want to, and they behave according to their upbringing. Therefore, the students wrote, it is important to respect both pupils' utterances. These students also expressed compassion with the two, trying to understand their reactions. The following text may serve as an example of this position:

From Ahmed's utterance we can see that he is concerned with (and taught in) the Quran, and that he regards God in Christianity and Allah as the same, and that Jesus is not the son of God, literally speaking. There are many others, inside «Christian societies» too, who probably have the same opinion. Jesus was a good prophet, but not the son of God, literally speaking. Faith is an individual and personal thing. Solveig like most children in our affluent society, is preoccupied with the materialistic part of Christmas.

As a teacher one must be generous and tolerate the pupils' views in any case. I think that what might be rewarding in this class is to have discussions about for example, Christmas.

The pupils are clearly influenced by their environment and cultures (autumn, p.y. 1).

4. Empathy and tolerance – especially for Ahmed

As I have already pointed out, the majority of the students seem to have based their reflections on how to deal with the situation described in the case, on the values of tolerance, respect and empathy. There was, however, a group of 20 students who expressed more understanding for and empathy with *one* of the two pupils than with the other, and Ahmed was the one who, for the most part, gained these students' sympathy:

The KRL-subject deals with more than Christianity. Ahmed is in this class, too, and the fact that he has another religion than the state religion of Norway does not mean that he should not express his own religion. He is more aware of what he believes than Solveig is – she does not associate Christmas with Christianity, but with all the nice things that she can do and see during the Christmas season.

Ahmed is in a way right when he says that Christmas is nonsense. Most people celebrate Christmas because of tradition and superficial things. I think that it may seem as if his KRL-teacher gives the impression that Christianity is the «correct» religion when I read what Ahmed has written. Perhaps he feels that the teacher – in his teaching – tries to palm another religion off on him? Perhaps the teaching should have been more neutral, underlining that «this is the way Christians do it», while other religions do it in this and that way (autumn, p.y. 1).

In this text the student enters the role of a teacher showing tolerance towards and understanding for Ahmed, as well as the role of his counsel for defence. She is concerned with how to teach about Christianity in an objective and pluralistic way, and she defends Ahmed's right to maintain and express his own religion. In doing so, she is in dialogue with the CC and the national syllabus of the KRL-subject which instructs teachers to teach Christianity, world religions and non-religious world views in a way which promotes mutual understanding and respect. She is also in dialogue with the public discourse which maintains tolerance as an ideal when meeting with «the other».

But at the same time the student also defends Ahmed's right to characterise Christian Christmas celebration as nonsense, and she does so with a modest reservation only: «Ahmed is *in a way* right when he says that Christmas is nonsense,» she writes (my italics). To underpin her statement, she refers to the way in which Solveig and «most people» celebrate Christmas: they celebrate because of «traditions» and «superficial things», and focus on «nice things» which they «can do and see» during Christmas. This she contrasts to Ahmed's way of thinking: «He is more aware of what he believes than Solveig is». The textual context of this last assessment – preceding the criticism of Solveig and «most people» for the way in which they celebrate Christmas – makes me

interpret this as a *compliment to Ahmed* for his religious awareness, and a *critique of Solveig* for being «superficial».

One might expect that this student, in dialogue with the ideal of tolerance and the aim of mutual understanding between people of different beliefs, would try to identify with Solveig and defend the girl's way of expressing herself in the same way as she did with Ahmed, but she doesn't. Thus she positions herself as Ahmed's counsel for defence and Solveig's critic.

16 of the students more or less shared this student's perspectives, either by expressing *more* empathy with Ahmed than with Solveig, by avoiding expressing understanding for or empathy with her, or by a combination of these positions. These students credited Ahmed with being able to argue for his own religion, for having a clear opinion on what Christmas means for «him and his God», and for being «scientifically right». They expressed recognition for his right to believe and feel whatever he wants, and showed understanding for his feeling that the teaching about Christmas was wrong according to his Islamic background. One student wrote: «I personally think that very few Christians believe that Jesus is the son of God. I am not a Christian, and I hope that other teachers, like me, do not run Ahmed's faith down.» Another student even felt that he owed Ahmed an apology:

[...] I would have used the situation [...] to have a debate and an expression of opinion about Christmas and its content, especially about how we in our culture use Christmas as an excuse for wallowing in materialism. I would have apologised to Ahmed for the cultural imperialism he is exposed to (autumn, p.y. 1).

Other students were more nuanced even if they expressed more understanding for and empathy with Ahmed than with Solveig. Some, for instance, found it important not to correct Ahmed for his points of view, but seemed to find it unproblematic to correct Solveig:

I think it is important not to correct or try to persuade Ahmed to write anything other than what he has written. It is possible that he thinks that it is against his religion to read from the Bible, and that he wants to express reluctance to this. I think a teacher must respect this, even if Ahmed does not follow the teaching plan as the teacher had intended him to.

When it comes to Solveig it does not seem that she has completely understood the meaning of Christmas from a Christian point of view. She is busy thinking of presents and nice food. Even if there is nothing wrong with that, I would have tried to make her reflect a little more on why we celebrate Christmas, instead of on Christmas itself (autumn, p.y. 1).

Four students took the opposite perspective and expressed more empathy with Solveig than with Ahmed, a position which the following text may exemplify:

I think that Ahmed's view in this case is quite common. This is how he usually celebrates Christmas, and he has quite simply not been able to experience what it is like to celebrate Christmas. This is probably how he has been brought up to celebrate and think about Christmas. Solveig, on the other hand, has a great attitude to Christmas. She looks forward to it because she knows how Christmas should be celebrated, and she knows what Christmas will bring.

It is evident that Norwegians are much more preoccupied with the materialistic side of Christmas than people from other countries are. Parents/teachers of Norwegian children teach the things associated with Christmas and not just what the religion says. Moreover it is important to highlight that all cultures think of faith differently. That is a thing Ahmed ought to learn (autumn, p.y. 1).

[...] It is a pity that Ahmed is so relaxed regarding Christmas as compared to how we in Norway are [...] (spring, p.y. 1).

In this text the student emphasises that Solveig has a great attitude to Christmas. She understands Solveig's familiarity with the holiday as the experiences of an ethnic Norwegian child: «[...] she knows how Christmas should be celebrated, and she knows what Christmas will bring». In line with this, the student explains Ahmed's negative attitude with his lack of experience with this holiday and with his upbringing inside an Islamic context. Her solution is that Ahmed «ought to learn» that different cultures «think of faith differently». Expressing herself like this, she positions herself as a teacher who has empathy with and understands and appreciates Solveig's attitude, but demands changes in Ahmed's approach.

The student also seems to be in an accepting dialogue with Solveig's as well as her own experience with Christmas, in this text. The sentence «It is a pity that Ahmed is so relaxed regarding Christmas as compared to how *we* in Norway are» (my italics) indicates this. This experience seems to have blocked her empathic understanding for Ahmed who has other cultural experiences and a different belief than she herself has. Thus she positions herself as Solveig's counsel for defence and Ahmed's critic – the opposite position of the students who supported Ahmed.

I find it interesting that the students who for the most part expressed empathy for *one* of the pupils' ways of reflecting on Christmas did not discuss how this fits into their understanding of themselves as tolerant and empathic teachers who have pupils from different religions and world views in their care. This is interesting whether they «side» with Ahmed or with Solveig. There may be several reasons for this lack of reflection. Perhaps they did not see the paradox of the situation or notice the consequences of their own positioning for the two pupils involved. I shall return to this question in section 6 below.

5. Solveig's attitude to Christmas – not Christian enough?

From the texts quoted above we may see that some students found Solveig's attitude to Christmas materialistic or not religious enough. 26 of the 104 students made this kind of objection. In addition to these 26, some students criticised Norwegian Christmas celebration in general for the same reason. To be more explicit: some students criticised Solveig for her concentration on gifts, Christmas trees and nice food. «Perhaps Solveig needs an introduction to the religious message,» one student wrote. Another student wrote that Solveig has «the Nativity standing there, but that is probably it». A third student assumed that Solveig does not know her religion as well as Ahmed does, and yet another stated:

[...] Solveig only looks forward to a tradition which she considers happy because it includes gifts etc. She also adds pagan customs to the happiness of the celebration. This is perhaps typical of western culture, where one's own personal gain takes precedence over the religious ethical education [...] (autumn, p.y. 1).

Even though this last student moderated his statements in his spring text, he did not change his opinion on Solveig (Lied 2008).

It is interesting to notice how central the two children's attitudes to religion are in the students' reflections. Ahmed receives positive response

for his knowledge of Islam and the Quran, and for living according to his religious upbringing. He is criticised for lack of insight in and respect for other people's beliefs, feasts or holidays. The main critique of Solveig concerns her lack of religious commitment and her materialistic attitude to Christmas. Some of the students seem to expect that pupils – even 5th graders – have a definite and fully developed religious identity, and that they are prepared to account for it verbally with a certain degree of theoretical insight. They seem to overlook the fact that both Ahmed and Solveig are children in an ongoing process of development, continually working on their different identities, including their religious identity (Lied 2004). It is possible that it was the *frames* – here: the KRL-lecture – inside which the students were given time to write their texts, and their entering the *role* of a KRL-teacher, which lead them to this way of reasoning. They may also have thought that a preoccupation with religiosity was expected from them in their dialogues with the case they received and with me – the researcher and the addressee of their texts. In spite of this, I ask myself if the students demand of themselves the same kind of awareness concerning their own life interpretation as they do of Solveig and Ahmed. And do they have the same critical attitude to their own, adult expectations to and celebration of Christmas, eid or other «favourite holidays» as they have to Solveig's?

6. Tolerance and empathy for Solveig too?

The majority of the teacher education students positioned themselves as tolerant and empathic teachers in their texts (see above): they seemed to perceive their strongest obligation as KRL-teachers to be respect, understanding and empathy with people who think and believe in ways different from «the ordinary Norwegian one». Their reflections on the Solveig and Ahmed of the case correspond to such an interpretation of the KRL-teacher role. They also seemed both willing to keep and trained in keeping a critical eye on their own tradition and the way in which it is practised. This shows that concerning these aspects of the KRL-teacher role, they were in an accepting dialogue with the CC's understanding of tolerance, empathy and sense of critical judgment as important qualities for a teacher (see section 3 above). But at the same time this dialogue also seems to have led *some of them* – a group of 20 – into a position which does not coincide with that of a tolerant and empathic KRL-teacher: they expressed more sympathy with and understanding for *one* of the two pupils (mainly Ahmed) than with the other (Solveig), or they ignored or criticised one more than the other. These students seem to

have overlooked the fact that the way they enter the dialogue with the values of *tolerance and empathy with the weaker part* affects the way they treated the «not Christian enough» Solveig: their entering the role of Ahmed's counsel for defence *alone* made *her* the weaker part. This did not put them in the position of tolerant and empathic KRL-teachers, but rather of *tolerant teachers on the brink of intolerance*.

At the start of the article I mentioned that 46 of the students reflected on the case twice, at the start and at the end of their KRL-course. Were there any changes in attitude to *Solveig* from autumn to spring in the utterances from these 46 students? That is: did the teaching and curriculum of the KRL-course make any contribution to a change in attitude among the students concerning *Solveig* and her thoughts and belief?

The main tendency in the material is that most of the students' utterances showed greater reflection and theoretical grounding in the spring than in the previous autumn. The following text is an example of this development:

I think this situation is rather usual in a class with pupils from different countries and cultures. That is: it is not an isolated example.

My first thought as a teacher would be to have a talk with the pupils. Try to give them knowledge and insights concerning the fact that people have different beliefs, but that we have to be open and make room for everybody. In our teaching we should also be concerned with stories from other religions and not emphasise the Christian ones only. Nevertheless it is natural to use a teaching plan which deals with the Christian Christmas celebration in Advent (autumn, p.y. 1).

Have not changed my mind concerning the positive effect which increased insight into and knowledge about different cultures, religions or life interpretations has on everybody. The importance of this effect has been made clear also in the teaching here at the college. It is of special importance to accept all pupils and the reality in which they feel at home. The state schools have identity building as their task. The pupils' previous socialisation shall meet the new socialisation which is going on in school.

Since Advent and Christmas celebration is deeply rooted in our tradition, I think that it is important to learn about it to be able to develop increased tolerance and understanding. This will also contribute to the pupils' understanding of the society in which they live and grow up.

In other seasons it will be natural to learn about other religions/traditions so that the Norwegian pupils get a similar knowledge of the culture and tradition of minority pupils (spring, p.y. 1).

Concerning *Solveig* and her way of looking forward to Christmas, the students' spring texts were more nuanced and cautious (Lied, 2008), but they did not express any explicit or distinct change in their approach to her as compared to their autumn texts. The spring texts often contain this or a similar phrase: «I still agree with my autumn text.»

7. New KRL-students reflecting on the previous year's student texts

At the start of the following year's KRL-course (year two of the research project) I invited the new students to comment on some of my observations presented above. Four students met with me in front of a tape recorder. I introduced them to the case and some extracts from the previous year's student reflections, and asked for their opinion on these and on why their «colleagues» had answered the way they did.

There was general agreement among the four that the students had wanted to show tolerance towards people who think and believe in other ways than «the ordinary Norwegian way». «It is both easier and more legitimate to criticise your own belief than others'», they said, «because you know your own belief better than you know others'». One of the students also emphasised that in our culture it is seen as a good deed to defend the weaker part, and that the students probably had seen Ahmed as the weaker of the two, the one who needed protection in the situation described in the case. In addition, two of the students pointed to a marked change in younger adults' attitudes to materialism. There is now an awareness of and interest in a simpler and less materialistic life, they said. They thought that the students' dialogues with these values might have been at least a part of the reason for their rather limited empathy with Solveig's position.

8. Students' reflections on the material as a whole

At the start of the third year of the project I prepared a lecture for the new group of KRL-students where I presented the study as I have presented it in sections 1 – 7 above: I introduced them to the texts from year one, the comments from year two and my own reflections on this material. At the end of the lecture, I asked the students to give me their written comments on my research and discuss it with me afterwards. In the following I shall comment on a few perspectives from their texts which may be of special interest for teacher educators.

Some of the students expressed that their meeting with former students' utterances made them more aware of society's expectations as well as the influence of these expectations on their own way of conceptualising their future profession:

My first reaction to the case was wondering why so few took Solveig's side. After a while it struck me that these students probably are students in the same way as we are, and therefore would like to say/do the correct things. At first sight this would be to take Ahmed's side because he is «the one with a foreign culture» (compared to Solveig who is «a real Norwegian» etc. ...) and because that for instance the Knowledge Promotion⁵ clearly says that one shall respect everybody (autumn, p.y. 3).

[...] To treat both Solveig and Ahmed with an equal amount of respect is a matter of course. But I think that I, too, could have ended up in the mistake of giving Ahmed more attention, just because I am so afraid of being a racist or of not seeing his needs. When I reflect further on this, I say to myself that it is because I know so little about other religions and cultures that I am so afraid of taking a wrong step [...] (autumn, p.y. 3).

It is also implicit in the last of these two texts that the awareness which this meeting with the former students' texts generated made the writer reconsider her initial way of thinking. This is a perspective which several students made explicit. Some underline that they changed their opinion during the lecture – from a rather unreflected backing of Ahmed to the insight that both pupils needed support. Others point to the fact that they had not even been aware of the kinds of conflicts which the case presented, before:

⁵ The Knowledge Promotion: The Norwegian National Curriculum of 2006.

[...] The lecture made me start thinking about multicultural classrooms. I myself never attended classes where there were other pupils than Christians, and I have never reflected on this kind of problem before. Now I have started thinking of how to solve this myself in my future profession as a teacher. [...] (autumn, p.y. 3).

Several students emphasised that they recognised their own thinking in the student texts from the research:

[...] First I have to say that it is important to be aware of one's own attitudes, what, who am I and what do I have as a cultural ballast
[...] I think it was very exiting to hear about many students' answers and see that I recognized some of the chains of thought as my own
[...] (autumn, p.y.3).

The students' responses on the research as a whole told me that the meeting with the «research students» and their reflections generated processes of reflection and change with the students who listened to the lecture. Such processes are important aims for Norwegian teacher education. The National Curriculum Regulations for General Teacher Education of 2003 («Rammeplan for lærerutdanningen 2003») refers to this as «adaptive and development competence». It seems to me that the meeting with the «research students'» texts made the students confront their own thoughts and perspectives in a self-critical and self-conscious way. They even wrote down their reflections and were prepared to share them with their fellow students: «I look forward to hearing what my fellow students say in the discussion afterwards,» one student wrote. It is possible to interpret the immediate start of these processes in the very first lesson of the academic year as a result of their identification with their «student colleagues» and their trains of thought, and the status these students' texts were given as research material. The following text indicates this: «[...] It has been very exciting to see the results of the research. [...] The fact that you focus on this in the first lecture of the year makes me aware of this. And makes me reflect. Exciting.»

9. Conclusions

In this research I found that the majority of the informant students were in explicit dialogue with «the other» from different religions and philosophies of life in their reflections, and that they expressed a real concern for the pupils who have another belief than themselves. I also

found that the students seemed both willing and trained to look at their own background tradition with a critical eye. A group of 20 of the 104 students, though, expressed less concern for *one* of the pupils to whom they were introduced in the imagined case, than for the other. This leads me to the conclusion that these students do not position themselves as tolerant and empathetic KRL-teachers, but rather as *tolerant teachers on the brink of being intolerant*. It is therefore important that teacher education finds ways of teaching which promote processes of adaptation and development for the teacher education students. In the light of the present study it seems that including students in research and using the results from this research as a starting point for further teaching may be one possible alternative.

My results should be followed up. If they are confirmed in other studies, we should perhaps ask ourselves how we take care of all the «Solveigs» as well as the «Ahmeds» in our educational system, in primary and secondary education as well as in colleges and universities. We have for a long time now been concerned about how to care for minority pupils and students and to make room for different cultures, languages and traditions. This has been *and still is* both highly legitimate and just. But perhaps the time has come to reconsider the way in which we meet and treat majority pupils and their values and expectations, too? To be treated with tolerance and empathy is a privilege from which all pupils should benefit, even if they belong to the majority.

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