A Bidimensional Psycho-pedagogical Model for Tolerance Education

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Abstract: This paper presents a bidimensional psycho-pedagogical approach to tolerance education that represents the conceptualization of a theoretical model for future research. The paper also briefly reviews theories on attitude formation and attitude change, and explains how competence may be achieved in terms of knowledge, abilities and attitudes. The model has been designed with the purpose of raising the level of teacher tolerance towards Roma children in class, as well as empower teachers to diminish the risk of discrimination among children in class and school. The two dimensions of the model are related to the lines of action proposed by the model: one line of intervention is concerned with teaching tolerance to students / prospective teachers and the other line focuses on providing teachers with tools to raise children’s level of tolerance in class and diminish the risk of discrimination among young students to a significant level. The model may be used as a tool for further experimental research as it connects the more theoretical principles, objectives and purpose of education for tolerance with the more practical constituents and finalities of an educational intervention program aimed to enhance a tolerant attitude at both teachers and students; the model highlights not only knowledge and skills, but also attitudes and values as goals of education, and ways to achieve them in the teaching-learning process, the approach to the training process mirroring the internal structure of competence. The model systematizes the cognitive, instrumental-methodological and expressive (relational-behavioural) dimensions of training on which it relies, providing a universal framework for any intervention program aimed at changing attitudes.

Keywords: Tolerance; education; values; bidimensional; psychopedagogical model.

1. Introduction

Education focusing on tolerance values aims at enhancing values such as respect for others, solidarity, mutual support, and forming a tolerant attitude that translates into accepting cultural, ethnographic, nutritional, gender, etc. differences, highlighting the idea that there are no solutions to all problems and no unique perspective on a situation characterized by conflict or conflict risk based on discrimination.

In pedagogical terms, we regard tolerance as one of the means and goals of education (Cara & Guțu, 2007; Chiriac & Guțu, 2007, 2013; Boghian, 2016, 2017, 2018). As also argued by other authors (Cristea, 2004; Reardon, 2004), it is not an end in itself but a means and the purpose of education in the spirit of tolerance lies in "recognizing and respecting the dignity and integrity of all human beings" (Cristea, 2004: 19); tolerance is therefore a general value of education (Reardon, 2004: 103). All education that relates to peace, human rights and democracy is an axiological type of education (education for values). Moreover, as Reardon argues, "tolerance education is in fact education for a culture of peace that involves the development and maintenance of positive relationships, social responsibility and ethical maturity in decision-making on social behaviours and relationships" (Reardon, 2004, p. 26). Tolerance is acquired through education, which means it is one of the ends of education.

The general objective of education for tolerance is the formation and development of tolerant attitudes and increasing the tolerance attitude where it already exists in the sense of recognizing and respecting human dignity by enhancing the capacity to accept diversity and active involvement in social life. The attitude of active tolerance is broadly understood as the ability to accept diversity and to be actively involved in social life.

The purpose of education for tolerance is to increase active tolerance attitudes by forming tolerant consciousness and affective competencies that reflect social culture and the level of education of the person.

The specific objectives, the finalities of education for tolerance, aim at the formation of certain attitudes, capacities and knowledge of learners, manifested through concrete capacities, namely:

- to explain the significance of tolerance and to know its components;
- to be able to argue for the need of tolerant communication and for the manifestation of an active tolerant attitude;
to explain the phenomena of social intolerance, identify its causes and possible measures to eliminate/control/reduce these phenomena;

- to identify and differentiate moral values and nonvalues and to accept, in communication, the diversity of axiological opinions;
- to communicate empathically and express an open attitude during exchanges of opinions and ideas;
- to show a pacifist approach in situations of intrapersonal and social conflict so that they can work together to find the most portable solution for solving them;

- to develop and promote in every communicative context principles and rules of communication in the spirit of the culture of tolerance;
- to emotional skills (constructive and creative spontaneity, assertiveness, emotional stability, empathy, sociability, self-knowledge);
- to identify changes in their level of understanding of socio-cultural diversity and, implicitly, their level of tolerance towards vulnerable persons exposed to the risk of being discriminated against.

Education for tolerance promotes a constant dialogue, from positions of equality. One of the debates on intercultural education (in fact, "multicultural" since the debate was in the 1980s in Great Britain), refers to the perceived dichotomy between multicultural education and anti-racist education (Fyfe & Figueroa, 1993: 37-46). In fact, Fyfe and Figueroa show that the debate is sterile, but also counterproductive, because since the principles of education are those listed above, the labelling of the type of education promoted is secondary to the purpose of promoting human rights principles through education. Therefore, we believe that anti-racist and multicultural education are complementary and mutually reinforcing, serving a similar purpose, namely that of controlling, reducing and eliminating discrimination-based conflicts and violence.

2. A bidimensional model of tolerance education

The pedagogical model developed by the authors of this paper follows two main lines and consequently involves educational intervention action aimed at two main actors involved in the educational process: teachers and students. Thus, the two main lines of action of the bidimensional pedagogical model are:

- *Education of tolerance at teachers* by changing tolerance attitudes towards students from different cultural backgrounds in order to increase their tolerance level, as well as provide teachers with teaching instruments,
methods and approaches to support them in increasing the tolerant attitude of primary-school students towards peers of different cultural backgrounds;

- *Education of tolerance at students* by increasing the tolerant attitude of students towards their culturally different peers.

The model is structured on the following aspects / components:

The first component is a theoretical-conceptual one and concerns the essence of competence, especially the tolerant attitude component, which is intended to be developed and formed both at teachers and students.

To select and organize the teaching-learning-evaluation content, the following aspects are considered:

- the internal structure of competence includes: knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- further, the three-dimensional structure of attitude, includes: affective, behavioural and cognitive reactions;

  - therefore, *attitude*, as the finality of the educational process, translates both in the learning of norms of conduct and in the manifestation of these norms in behaviour; the school’s forming function, in addition to the cognitive and behavioural footprint of the format, also impacts the emotional, affective levels;

- *values* can be affirmed at superficial level (clothing, music, public events, etc.) and at an authentic level (professional and family fulfilment, health, diligence, honesty, etc.). The latter include values associated with a tolerant attitude: respect for differences, empowerment, empathy, solidarity, etc.

Thus, it is possible to speak not only about an axiological rationality, manifested by rational behaviour in order to practice well-established cultural values), but also about a rational axiology, namely the rational grounds that can belong to the individual, group, society, behaving in socially desirable ways (Callo, 2014, p. 77).

The second component: the teleological dimension of the educational intervention program for teachers, is concerned, in terms of changing the attitude of tolerance of students / future teachers for primary education, with *constituents* and *finalities: competencies, attitudes, values* involved in the process of building tolerant attitudes that are taken into account in the elaboration and implementation of the educational intervention program.

In the current world of globalization and cultural diversity, cultural competence is necessary for social and economic success; cultural competence means "appreciating the creative expression of ideas and emotions by all types of individuals", including aspects of personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence "highlighted through effective
communication and collaboration" (Mishra & Kereluik, 2011, p. 11). Literature interconnects cultural competence with the following key concepts: intercultural knowledge, civic knowledge and involvement, knowledge of culture and physical world, skills for a global world (Zhao, 2009), communication in foreign languages, social civic competence, consciousness and expression of cultural identity (Council of Europe, 2011), global awareness (National Educational Association, 2007).

Competence is a target of training, an objective but also an expected outcome or product of learning. Centring competence on the result has significant consequences:

- it is a focus of the training process on outputs, not on inputs;
- different training paths leading to the intended result may be admitted;
- training time is no longer a standard but variable depending on the individual's potential.

Focusing on competences presupposes, at the educational level, solidary processes: definition-selection, formation and assessment of competences, complex processes and not always sufficiently clarified or standardized.

Certainly, assimilation of competence requires:

- curriculum reorganizations; types of disciplines, correlations and weights;
- changes in the roles of teachers and pupils;
- capitalizing classic methods in a new perspective and accentuating non-traditional, active-participatory methods;
- reviewing the educational assessment system;
- redefining the management of the school organization;
- a new quality of the learning environment; this environment, according to advanced practices, fosters active and experimental learning, supports individual development and personalized learning, teacher collaboration in relation to school disciplines and cross-curricular elements, and teachers and students have time and space for co-operation.

Educational theory and practice have long taken into account the orientation of training not only in relation to strictly theoretical, abstract, but also concrete, actional, practical exercises. More or less "classical" pedagogues have made clear arguments in this respect. For example, the demand of Michel de Montaigne expressed in his essay On the Education of Children, (1580, apud Hall, 1997, p. 61), in relation to the meaning of learning: the goal of education is to build a man with judgment, who
processes and reflects on what he receives. Beneficial for the learner is not multilateral knowledge, but the multilateralism of the ability to know and undertake innovation. Having one's own opinion about what is being assimilated is more important than mimicking the ideas of others. Self-interrogation is the most obvious sign that the spirit is alive and working. It does not matter how much we know, but what we can do with what we know. Montaigne’s ideas relate to a very modern approach to the teaching-learning-evaluation process: instead of a head full of knowledge, it is preferable to have a well-formed head.

The link between knowledge and skills can be expressed as follows: certain basic acquisitions (such as knowledge) are the foundation of more complex objectives, such as skills, abilities, psycho-behavioural skills.

Acquiring a competence involves distancing, reporting somewhat outwardly, through a meta-discursive situation in relation to an act that is done by the subject. Metacognitive processing implies an exit from the constraining power of knowledge and a necessary external view. The knowledge, according to cognitive psychology, is of several kinds: declarative knowledge (about facts and events, which are expressed in "what something is" type of statements), procedural knowledge (which are knowledge about modes of action expressed in statements of the type "how something is done/made") and conditional or strategic knowledge (which refers to the conditions of the action, considering "when?" and "what (for) what?" questions). In other words, there is a knowledge about knowledge that should not be neglected at all. Students do not only acquire information as such about reality, but gain knowledge about how information is accessed, processed, or interpreted. They acquire both more general features or ideas, but also possibilities of structuring, organizing them in broader, larger-scale explanatory ensembles.

Achieving intercultural education through the promotion of tolerance values aims at forming and developing the following general competencies for current and/or future students/teachers:

1. Use of social science concepts to organize knowledge and explanation of facts, events, processes in real life.

2. Application of knowledge specific to social sciences in solving some problematic situations, as well as in analysing personal development possibilities.

3. Cooperating with others in solving theoretical and practical problems within different groups.

4. Manifesting an active and responsible social behaviour, appropriate to a changing world.
5. Participating in decision making and community problem solving.

For both teachers and students, the educational training program aims to promote acquisitions regarding:

- definition of the terms of tolerance, tolerant behaviour, education for tolerance;
- identification of the characteristics of a tolerant person;
- ways of achieving education for tolerance within the family, school, community;
- understanding and being able to explain the link between tolerance, morality and democracy.

The third component is concerned with the content dimension of the educational intervention program: disciplines, themes, subjects.

At academic level, methods specific to tolerance education may be applied at all disciplines. However, this intervention program is aimed to be materialized as a training module or course (lectures and seminars) covering, for example, at least 2 hours/week, over a whole academic semester that may fall under the umbrella of intercultural education.

Topics and themes: the essence of tolerance, the characteristics of a tolerant person (in terms of attitudes, language, behaviour, communication and interaction with different others); what it means to be tolerant within the family, school and community; the difference between tolerance and indulgence, servitude.

Primary educational cycle: language and communication, music and movement, foreign language, religion, physical education, civic education (Hadîrcă, 2014; Butnari, 2017).

The fourth component is concerned with the procedural approach: methods and techniques.

The problematic aspect of building competences concerns particularly the component of attitude. The three-dimensional structure of attitude (cognitive, affective and behavioural) requires a complex approach when the intention is to change it. Chelcea (2008) mentions the psychosocial theories of changing attitudes and theories of persuasive language to highlight strategies and techniques of persuasion as the most effective: active participation (techniques: role play, interpersonal contact, counter-attitudinal behaviour and choice) and persuasive communication (with regard to this technique, it is important to emphasize the importance of the group of belonging and the reference point in changing the attitude).

Another perspective on the theories of changing attitudes and behaviours suggests six main categories of approaches:

- conditioning and modelling;
persuasive communication or message learning;
the theory of “social judgment”;
motivational approaches;
the approaches of attribution theory;
combined approaches and self-persuasion.

The most widely circulated psychosocial theories on changing attitudes are: behavioural theories, thought-action theory (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), based on the behavioural intent generated by attitude towards a certain behaviour; dual-process theory and the elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981) according to which persuasion can be achieved on a central or peripheral route; the static effect that occurs due to a process of dissociation between the source and the message, installed over time; the theory of the step-by-step change of attitudes focused on the staging of the process of attitude change (the stage of meditation followed by the stage of the actual action); active participation in the techniques described above (role play, interpersonal contact, counter-attitudinal behaviour and choice behaviour).

The theories listed above outline the steps of the attitude change approach, viewed as an attempt to restore the disturbed and / or lost balance (Callo, 2014, p. 80).

The theory of congruence aims at anticipating the direction and degree of attitude change; attitudes defined by extremism and high intensity oppose resistance to change and even assimilate attitudes with the opposite valence.

The most relevant social-context factors that influence attitude change are:
- social groups;
- interpersonal communication networks;
- mass communications (press, radio, television).

Changing attitudes involves the use of a persuasion mechanism that involves a communication channel containing a source, a message and a receiver.

To achieve the attitude change goal, it is necessary for the source (in our case, the teacher trainer and/or teacher) and the message to meet certain criteria:
- the source has to have credibility, competence, attraction, prestige, similarity to the receiver, belonging to the reference group;
- the content and form of the message must be adapted to the age and other particularities of the receiver;
- the arguments must have and convey a certain force, create a certain impact (anticipated, expected, desired);
- the message must be unique and bilateral;
- the order in which the information is to be presented must respect a certain logic, take into account the context and purpose for which that information is transmitted;
- the message must trigger certain emotional reactions;
- the channel needs to be adapted to the message and context.

The main technique of influencing / changing attitudes is persuasive communication / persuasion, and to understand why and how this technique works we relate to the persuasion scheme that includes two main routes:

- the main route of persuasion involves a process of communication described as eminently cerebral: for a message to exert its real influence, the message content must be understood by all the receptors, and they must in turn either be motivated or have somebody motivate them to accept the message; the persuasive inflection of subjects is based on an argument they understand and restrain to use as a point of reference / support in the future; these requirements remain the same irrespective of the channel of message transmission; a strong argument is consistent and rich in valid information, succeeding, on the basis of it, to modify to some extent the attitude of the receiver;

- the non-reflective peripheral persuasion route also involves the mechanisms of influencing irrelevant factors that can influence human beings and their attitudes, for example, movements of their own bodies; the source of the message is one of the relevant factors in this route of persuasive communication. (Callo, 2014, p. 81).

According to the stimulus-response theory, attitude is triggered by a stimulus; thus, changing attitudes occurs if the stimulus for a new response is stronger than the stimulus for the old response; the personality factor also plays an important role. According to the stimulus-response theory, the steps for adopting a new attitude are:

1. Attention;
2. Capturing the message;
3. Understanding;
4. Acceptance;
5. Acquisition;
6. Action.

The factors involved in changing attitudes are, according to the stimulus-response theory: attractiveness (of an emotional nature), credibility, strength.
Resistance to persuasion is achieved by the following methods:
- inoculation: the subject is presented, in advance, with arguments to be transmitted, in a denatured, negative form;
- doping: the subject is given, directly or indirectly, the counter-arguments for the arguments to be transmitted to him;
- selective exposure: especially in closed, conservative communities, we try to avoid exposing information that is inconsistent with „rooted” ideas, beliefs; this avoidance is done by attempts to reduce the credibility of the source, distort the message, or simply reject the entire message from the very beginning ("I don’t even want to hear about it").

Our educational intervention program is bidimensional because the main actions of our pedagogical model are two educational processes applied directly to the teachers in the experimental group (1 and 2 described below) and 1 educational process applied by the teachers from the experimental group to primary-school students (3):

1) implementation of an intervention education program for students / future teachers for primary education;
2) providing students / future teachers for primary education with working methods and techniques aimed at forming and developing at primary school students the attitude of tolerance towards peers from different cultural backgrounds;
3) applying methods and techniques for working with students from acquired during the educational intervention program in the classroom.

Pedagogical approaches to the elements of preparation for interculturality and diversity include the formation of the following main components: personal component (self-reflection and construction), cognitive, methodological and relational dimension.

Rey (1999, p. 180) includes in the training profile for interculturality two distinct but interconnected elements:
- the dimension of knowledge: an objective dimension, developed from many perspectives, aimed at ensuring conceptual means for perceiving reality, providing a broad information to support a certain distance, by taking into account the daily experience, the overcoming of biased views;
- the dimension of experience: subjective and experiential, embraces life-long learning, mobilizes the whole person's personality and learning potential, allowing them to be open to others.

Based on existing studies and the direction opened by Rey, we can detail the three main dimensions of training for diversity and interculturality:

(1) The cognitive dimension: lack of knowledge and misunderstanding generate prejudices; cultural competence is acquired on the basis of cultural
knowledge, direct intercultural experiences and reflection on them (Cisholm, 1994, apud. Nedelcu, 2008, p. 163); the cognitive component is an intersection, reinterpretation, adaptation and personalized harmonization of knowledge belonging to different and specific domains (basic notions of social psychology, anthropology, cultural anthropology, ethnology, ethnography, sociology, communication theory, sociology of education, demography etc.), for example human rights knowledge (to reflect, to live, to act according to context and audience, to reconsider the knowledge for the interactions that build reality, to update and develop the capacity for collaboration) (Rey, 1999, p. 194).

The cognitive dimension of training for diversity and interculturality implies:

- "knowledge of human rights and international instruments relating to them;
- knowledge of the main issues of our time and human rights violations;
- knowledge of institutions, governmental and non-governmental, local, national, regional and international organizations involved in fields of activity related to human rights education from an intercultural perspective, the support and competence of which can benefit both educators and educational institutions;
- knowledge of social, professional and information networks at regional level;
- knowledge of disadvantaged populations by regions, their situations and their needs." (Nedelcu, 2008, p. 163).

The instrumental-methodological dimension refers to empowering teachers with the right methods that have the potential to promote equity, collaboration, individual valorisation in the classroom, in the school (and not only), but also to modernize and resize the methods known in the direction of cultural opening. The interculturally competent teacher must manage a multicultural classroom of learners at the level of interactions, lifestyles, study, behaviour, and transform class space into a mutually beneficial learning environment. Thus, training for interculturality must go beyond the stage of equipping a teacher with "survival" techniques (Cannella & Reif, 1994, p. 33) into a classroom of students from different cultural backgrounds and to aim at the formation of a teacher who knows how to exploit and value positively diversity in the classroom.

The instrumental-methodological dimension refers to the fact that training for diversity and interculturality must instruct teachers to:
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- respond to each learner's needs, recognize their skills, provide mediation necessary for the right interactions, ensure that each is recognized and valued within the group;
- discover and value the skills of students born in disadvantaged environments, even if they do not attend the school environment as expected;
- hold and apply in class active and participatory models specific to collaborative learning, projects, research and investigation, simulation and role play, debate;
- use authentic documents, apply a critical reading of textbooks and information;
- mediate conflicts, identify prejudices and stereotypes and look at knowledge from different perspectives;
- be aware of the conflicts that may arise between people belonging to different cultures, languages and religions and be able to successfully mediate such conflicts;
- develop innovative strategies and cooperate with actors involved in community education;
- evaluate education not only from the point of view of selection and hierarchies, but also from the point of view of social relations that may develop (Rey, 1999, p. 196).

(3) The expressive (relational-behavioural) dimension is a profound and complex side of the training, fundamental for creating an adequate learning environment and capitalizing on diversity as a didactic resource. Intercultural training will target crystallization of democratic mentality that allows teachers to experiment effective forms of communication, expression, to assume responsibilities and to develop critical thought.

The instructive-educational process within the educational intervention program to promote tolerance values focuses on the following teaching strategies: exposition-conversation strategies; illustrative-explanatory teaching strategies; heuristic strategies; algorithmic strategies; learning strategies based on cooperation; strategies focused on research action. The connection between the types of strategies used in the course and the attitudes, values and behaviours acquired can be schematically observed in Table 1.
Table 1. Connecting teaching strategies and intercultural competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching strategies</th>
<th>Attitudes, values and behaviours developed at students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• heuristic, expository, illustrative-explanatory strategies;</td>
<td>1. acceptance of differences;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• problematization;</td>
<td>2. showing self-respect and respect for (different) others;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• cooperative learning;</td>
<td>3. tolerant conscience and thought;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• algorithmic strategies;</td>
<td>4. personalization self-actualization;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strategies based on research</td>
<td>5. volitional and positive self-regulation;</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>6. self-censorship regarding subjectivity in interaction with the (different) other.</td>
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The content of learning is adapted to student/teacher age and level of education, on the one hand and to student age and level of education, and is focused on:

- **general themes**: the culture of respect; legislation discrimination; identity and stereotypes; the effects of stereotypes; prejudices and discrimination; equity and inequality; approaches to diversity in education; adaptation of intercultural and antidiscrimination education to the Romanian context; identity assertion; celebrating diversity; development of strategies for preventing and combating prejudices and racism in class;

- **specific themes**: cultural specificity of different cultures, comparative presentation of Romanian cultural elements and other cultures.

The methods used during the educational intervention program are methods often proposed as highly suitable for building the intercultural competence of teachers, namely: exposition, dialogue, heuristic conversation, exercises, critical thinking methods and techniques, and active-participatory methods (6 Thinking Hats, Frisco, the Fishbowl technique, Cubing, the Pyramid, Starburst), problem solving, demonstration, case study, debate, role play (Bernat, 2006; Slavin & Cooper, 1999).

3. Conclusions

The bidimensional psycho-pedagogical education intervention model aims to achieve tolerance education at two levels and involves three of the main actors involved in teaching-learning: teacher trainers, teachers and
students. The bidimensional education intervention program may be systematized and synthesized as shown in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical – conceptual approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training teachers for tolerance education</td>
<td>Building tolerance at students</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teleological approach to training teachers to build tolerance at students</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalities of training teachers in tolerance education</td>
<td>Finalities of building tolerance at students</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content approach to training teachers to build tolerance at students</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic learning contents</td>
<td>School learning contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process approach to training teachers to build tolerance at students</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies and techniques specific to training teachers to build tolerance at students</td>
<td>Strategies and techniques specific to building tolerance at students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.** Synthetic systematization of the bidimensional psycho-pedagogical model

We expect that such a training program would be able to prepare teachers to:

- be aware of the diverse cultural and ethnic background of the society in which they live;
- be able to recognize their own prejudices and recognize the various forms of discrimination;
- become agents of change in education, within a pluralistic society” (Verma, 2000, p. 105).

Also, we expect that the trainees (primary-school teachers) would apply an intercultural approach to their teaching practices in class and, based on the contents and methods empowered during the training program, be able to promote and build tolerance among early age students. There is the need to implement and experiment such a model, as well as evaluate and measure its impact by pre- and post-testing of levels of tolerance at trained teachers and the students taught by trained teachers.
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