Tolerance and curriculum

Conceptions of tolerance in the multicultural unitary Norwegian compulsory school

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Tistedal, December 2004
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Part I Tolerance and education. Delimitation of issues, materials and methods

1. Formatting the study

1.1 Tolerant education as ideal

When teachers are asked to reflect on which values that are most important in education, tolerance is one they often turn to. In the start of my work in teacher’s education, I was struck by how often students turned to tolerance as valuable and a goal for education. Quite independent of the topic of students’ essays, tolerance was mentioned with affirmation.

In Haakedal’s (2003:226) empirical study of teachers’ life interpretation and professional space 70 teachers were asked to describe the content and activities which they considered most important for ethical upbringing or formation. The clearly largest category of texts emphasized these values: Tolerance and respect, empathy, solidarity and responsibility. The central role of tolerance in education is also documented elsewhere. In A. Törnvall’s (1982:186) study on teachers’ basic philosophy in relation to the aims of the curriculum, he concludes the teachers’ understanding of the school like this: “The school shall, according to the teachers, be characterized by formation of tolerance and understanding between students and between students and teachers.”

But tolerance is not only a central value in education: It is a basic ideal in many spheres of society. Accusations of not being tolerant, of being intolerant, are serious and would in most instances damage the person’s social and moral reputation. Tolerant persons, groups and states are on the other hand highly valued.

Although the word *tolerance* was rarely in use before the Enlightenment, tolerance as a phenomenon is not exclusively modern. Tolerance was practiced in for example medieval traditional societies like in the Ottoman Empire as a political arrangement that secured peace between the rulers and the different religious and ethnic groups and between the groups (Kymlicka 1996 and Walzer 1997). It also gave the groups a high degree of internal freedom. Tolerance was then, as now, embedded in diversity or plurality. With the emergence of a more comprehensive modern plurality, characterized by individual difference (Skeie 1998), the scope of tolerance was expanded. So when groups, individuals and societies disagree with and disapprove of each other, tolerance seems to be a necessary policy and a praiseworthy ideal.
Although Norway in some respects can be described as a cultural, religious and moral rather homogenous society, it is also characterized by difference. And the differences seem to increase.\(^1\) On a group level, the differences are mainly of two kinds, either connected to recent immigration or to traditional ethnical and religious differences. While the first is mainly, although far from exclusively, a city-phenomenon, the last difference can be found in for instance the northern part of Norway.\(^2\) Here three ethnical groups (the Sámis, the Kvens and the “Norwegians”) and religious diversity (the Laestadians and other groups) are essential elements in a plurality with deep historical roots (Kristiansen 1996).

This increasing plurality is embedding a growing potential for racial, ethnical, religious and moral conflicts. Therefore, the need for tolerant practices seems imperative.

One of the few, if not the only, common arenas in the differentiated Norwegian society is the compulsory school. The idea of the unitary school as a unified and unifying social institution has been central in Norwegian educational policy and ideology for a long time. The school is the primary institution of the state’s intentional socialization, the place and the instrument for the state to create tolerant citizens. At the same time the Norwegian school is a place where tolerance is to, and has to, be practiced. All of the diversity is gathered in the one institution because of the minimal number of private schools. Tolerance is recognized as one of the most important goals of Norwegian compulsory education. The second part of the principal aims for Norwegian primary and secondary education reads:

> The schools shall further intellectual freedom and tolerance and emphasis shall be placed on creating satisfactory forms of cooperation between teachers and students and between the school and the home. (C97:10)

### 1.2 Main purposes, issues and delimitation

Tolerance is valued highly and needed more than ever before in an increasingly pluralistic Norway. But: What is tolerance? This is the main question of this study.

There seem to be a high degree of agreement on the importance of tolerance, but disagreement on what tolerance is. Is tolerance just an “empty honorific slogan, a concept perhaps robbed of any meaning by relentless over-use” (Weissberg 1998:1)? There is no

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\(^1\) For instance: The population of immigrants in Norway was in 1970 estimated to 1,5 percent and in 2001 6,6 percent of the population, More than one of ten persons in Norway had foreign background in 2001. (Lie 2002:15-17)

\(^2\) In 2001 one third of the immigrants in Norway lived in Oslo. In comparison 11 percent of the entire Norwegian population lives in the capital (Lie 2002:18-19).
agreement as to the understanding of tolerance in social science or philosophy. Horton and Nicholson (1992:1) put it like this:

> It would be widely agreed that some toleration is a necessary feature of a good society; but agreement often goes no further. The meaning, grounds and limits of toleration are all to some extent matters of both ideological and practical debate.

One way of working with the understanding of tolerance, could be to decide “tolerance” at a high level of abstraction, and then try to make implications for different forms of practices and institutions. Here the approach will be the opposite, namely to answer the question “what is tolerance?” with reference to one specific context: “What is tolerance in Norwegian compulsory education”. The question could be discussed theoretically, using existing ethical, political and educational theory. This study does, however, aim at an empirical answer, that is: “How do actors in Norwegian compulsory education conceive tolerance”.

The study could be aiming at describing how tolerance is taught and practiced in the classroom, but is, for pragmatic reasons, limited to describing tolerance as an intentional and perceived ideal in the compulsory school. How tolerance is taught at schools and experienced by students would also be interesting to study, but is not possible to do within the present format. The main research question of this study is therefore:

> How is tolerance understood in the intentional and perceived curriculum in Norwegian compulsory education?

Initially *tolerance* is understood widely – since it is the concept the study is set to analyze. Tolerance can at the outset be delimited to “living peacefully with difference”. This means that tolerance may include or overlap with other related concepts as respect, understanding, intellectual freedom and so on. It is the concept of tolerance that is studied, not only the word.

*Intentional* and *perceived* refer to three specific curricula domains: The ideological, formal and perceived curricula. This means that the focus is on different educational actors’ *understandings* of tolerance. Understanding is here used as a concept that includes both conceptualizations and theories. This does not exclude practices of tolerance, because understanding, as it is conceived here, can be formed in reflections on practices. It is therefore not a study of conceptualizations and theories on tolerance only, but also of the practice of tolerance. The accounts of practices are, however, given by the actors of
education: By teachers, by the national curriculum and authors in the academic debate on tolerance. The practices of tolerance narrated in this study are therefore interpretations of practice of the teachers and other actors.

By compulsory education is meant primary and lower secondary school, that is, first to tenth grade. One central aspect of compulsory education in this study is its character of being both unitary and multicultural. On one hand one of the basic ideologies of Norwegian compulsory education in modern times has been equity - of value, organization, content and economy. The school has been conceived as a unified institution and also as an agent of creating social equity. (Solstad 1997:2) On the other hand Norwegian compulsory education is characterized by increasingly cultural, ethnic, religious and moral difference. This creates challenges for tolerance: Difference is to be handled within a unitary and in some respects unifying institution. I use the term unitary and not uniform because the latter may be associated with a comprehensive kind of homogeneity, which is not a good description of the Norwegian educational situation. The preferred term of the opposite of unity is difference, but other words like plurality, pluralism, multicultural and multiculturalism are used synonymously. I do not distinguish between plurality/multicultural as descriptive and pluralism/multiculturalism as normative concepts. The descriptive and normative perspectives are seen as a matter of degree, not as an either/or. Diversity is not preferred because the term tends to exclude radical difference.

Curriculum is used as the main concept of education. This means that curriculum theory is mainly used in giving educational perspectives on the material. Curriculum theory provides a framework for comparing the understanding of tolerance in the different domains. This means that the study does not stop at describing tolerance in the three domains, but is also comparing them. A crucial question is whether tolerance is understood in the same way or differently in the three domains. If the teachers understand tolerance quite differently from the way it is conceived in the national curriculum, the national curriculum will probably have little influence on teachers’ understanding and practice of tolerance in schools. Put differently: Tolerance is claimed to be one of the most important ideals in Norwegian compulsory education. But is tolerance the same thing in documents and in teachers’ understandings? If so: What kind of tolerance is it? If not so: What are the

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3 For a somewhat different conception of unity in Norwegian compulsory education, see Bjørnsrud (1999:26-38).
differences, and how does this affect the communication of tolerance between different curricula domains?

This can be expressed by four sub-research questions:

1) What is the understanding of tolerance in Norwegian educational-ethical debate?
2) What is the understanding of tolerance in official curricula of Norwegian compulsory education?
3) What is the understanding of tolerance of teachers in Norwegian compulsory education?
4) What is the relationship between sub-issues 1-3, and how can it be understood?

This means that the study is an analysis of tolerance at the three curricular domains, and a comparison between them. It is also important to understand and discuss the results of sub-issue four in light of curriculum theory: What does similarities and differences of the understanding of tolerance at the different curricula domains mean for curriculum theory?

Ethical debate and theory is essential in understanding tolerance. I use ethics and morality broadly as the understanding of right and good ways of life. The concepts are used interchangeably because the distinction between theory and practice is seen as a matter of degree, as argued below. The main concepts used to describe the moral ought are value, norm and virtue. Value is roughly understood as a desired condition, norm as rule for action and virtue as an aspect of a good character. Value is also used in a broader, epistemological sense, relating to the concept fact.

On the background of the discussion of research issues and questions, the purpose of the study can be formulated as such:

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of tolerance in the intentional and perceived curricula of Norwegian compulsory education in order to find out if there is a shared understanding of tolerance between curricula domains.

1.3 A note on previous research

This means that the main question of this study is not who is most tolerant, and why? It is: What is tolerance? Chapter three will present and discuss research on tolerance in detail.
Here I will just draw some broad lines in the field of tolerance-research and research on values and curriculum.

Research on tolerance is done within two fields: A theoretical and an empirical. The fields have different foci: While the theoretical is concerned with the understanding of tolerance, the empirical is researching the causes and effects of tolerance. The theoretical discussions of tolerance are done within political and moral philosophy, and are characterized by modest empirical interest. The empirical research is mainly quantitative, trying to establish causal explanations of the relationship of tolerance to other societal factors. This field most often takes the understanding of tolerance for granted. Or more precisely: The understanding of tolerance is established before looking for tolerance. Rarely, if ever, is the question asked: What do people mean by tolerance?

The literature on tolerance within philosophy and social science is vast. Just to mention one example: The Morrell Tolerance Project at the University of York, England has for years been productive in research on tolerance. The project is connected to the Politics Department, and the publications are characterized by political philosophy. One recurring theme is the challenges of liberal theory of tolerance, for instance in Mendus (1989) *Tolerance and the limits of liberalism*. A good review and analysis of empirical research on tolerance and education is found in Vogt (1997) *Tolerance and education. Learning to live with diversity and difference*. His focus is whether education fosters tolerance. He answers affirmatively, but not without certain conditions. Not all education results in tolerance, only certain kinds.

Vogt (1997:177) is making an interesting reflection on research on tolerance: “Tolerance has often become one of those empty goals that sound important but commit educators to very little. Seldom has explicit attention been paid to what tolerance in fact is and, therefore, to how one could hope to teach it.” “What tolerance is” is the main focus of this study. The field in-between theoretical and empirical research on tolerance is quite open. As far as I know, no major qualitative empirical study has been made on the understanding of tolerance in education. This study is therefore exploring the field between theoretical and empirical research of tolerance in trying to give an empirical answer to the theoretical question of what tolerance is – and to bring different theories of tolerance to an empirical field.

This study does, however, not address tolerance as such, but in a curricular context. This raises the issue of research on curriculum and values. In chapter two I am discussing the issue in more detail. Here are just some initial remarks.
The broader field of education and ethics may be divided into three sub-domains: First, ethics as raising the questions of good and right in politics of education. Secondly, the domain of the education of morality, that is moral formation or education. The third domain raises issues of professional ethics, that is, what is a good teacher, and what is the right thing to do in education. (Strike and Ternasky 1993) This study is mainly within the second domain, that is, moral education. Still, it is addressing issues of professional ethics and educational policy, as well.

The literature on moral education is also vast. One comprehensive presentation of the field and critical discussion is van der Ven’s (1998) *Formation of the moral self*. The focus of this study is, however, not primarily on how to do moral education, but on a specific content of moral education, namely tolerance. The critical issue is therefore whether there are reasons to assume that values are different from knowledge (or facts), and require a specific curriculum theory. I have argued elsewhere for the difficulties of separating values and facts (Afdal 2004). On the assumption that values and facts are interdependable, that is, they cannot be separated as two distinct entities, curriculum theories of knowledge can also be used to interpret values in curriculum. Or rather: Curriculum theories have no alternative other that to address both knowledge and values.

Research on the curriculum theory chosen here, Goodlad’s conceptualization of the curriculum field, is elaborated on in the next chapter.

Generally, the domain of empirical research in educational ethics is growing. One example is Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen (1998) *The moral life of schools*. The book is a result of classroom observation in eighteen schools in the US, focusing on the moral dimension of educational practice. They conclude that moral education is done mostly implicit, not explicit as teaching. Moral education is integrated in everyday practice, structures and choices of education. This is an important insight that also is influencing this study: The issue of values and education is primarily about the moral dimension of education. The task is to master a moral language which is able to help identify and analyze the moral dimension of everyday educational practice.

Another insight from the book has been decisive for this study: The moral dimension of education is a complex one. That is, moral situations in everyday school life happen quickly. There are many, and often contradictory, simultaneous concerns, and the situations are not easy to “read”. This means that the moral dimension has to be studied in educational context. Values and practices are integrated. One has to study practices in order to understand values, and one has to study values in order to understand practices. On this
account the moral dimension best can be interpreted by a dialectical hermenutics between empirical data and philosophical theory.

This is a study trying to map and understand the teachers’ and other educational actors’ way of using and understanding the value tolerance. In that respect it tries to meet the challenge given by Colnerud (1995:27):

The research that here is referred has not stemmed from the teachers’ definitions of what is critical or important within professional ethics in their own practice. Research has been done from the researchers’ conception on what is significant within professional ethics in the teachers’ actions. The researchers have constructed dilemmas or illustrations that the teachers have decided on and reflected on. In observational studies the researchers have made the sampling of which occasions or aspects of the classroom practice they consider morally relevant. An almost uninvestigated aspect within the research field of teachers’ professional ethics is therefore what teachers themselves identify as critical situations and important aspects from an ethical point of view.

1.4 Design
This brings me to the issue of research design. Research design is the “logical structure of the data in a research project” (de Vaus 2004:964). It is analogous to the architect designing a building, not the logistics of the building process. In my interpretation design concerns the choice of data in relation to the research questions and theoretical paradigm. Theoretical paradigm refers to the broader research tradition or perspective the study is related to, according to Guba (1990:17) “a basic set of beliefs that guides action”. This is equivalent to the understanding of research design in Denzin and Lincoln (1998b:28), locating research design in the intersection of research question and purpose, the choice of type and sets of data and strategies for doing the research. One can only discuss design after having settled the purpose of the research (Janesick 1998).

1.4.1 One case and three sub-cases
According to de Vaus (2004) there are four main types of research designs in social research: Experimental, longitudinal, cross-sectional and case study. The purpose of this study is to analyze the understanding of tolerance of teachers, official curricula and in academic publications. The aim is not to establish causalities of tolerance, but to describe how tolerance is understood in relation to other concepts and values. This rules out an experimental design. Further, the study is contemporary. How the conception of tolerance change through time is not at issue. This rules out a longitudinal design. The design is cross-sectional in the sense that three different curricula domains are described and compared.
Most of all, however, it is a case study. The case is the conception of tolerance in Norwegian compulsory education, and the critical question is whether there is a shared understanding of tolerance within the case. In order to end at an answer to that question, Norwegian compulsory education as a broad case has to be divided into sub-cases. The sub-cases chosen are three curricula domains: The perceived, the formal and the ideological.

This leads to the following illustration of the research design of this study (figure 1.1):

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**Figure 1.1:** An illustration of the research design of this study.

\[ D = \text{difference} \quad S = \text{similarity} \]
So far, the head of the figure has been established: The formating of the research question has lead to an identification of three sub-cases (perceived, formal, ideological domain) within the main case (compulsory education). This allows for analysis of tolerance in different parts of the case, in order to establish a rich description of the main case. But, not at least, it allows for comparing the three sub-cases in order to find similarities and differences in the understanding of tolerance.

1.4.2 Case design

The main reason for choosing a case design is the complexity of the concept of tolerance. The complexity consists in its relational character. It is relational in several senses: Tolerance is about relations between people, cultures and societies that are different. It is understood and practiced in these relations, and the characters of the relations are decisive for the conception of tolerance. Tolerance is also relating to ideologies and theories. Tolerance is understood and practiced in the light of conceptions of good and right, and it is hard to get a grip of the particular understanding of tolerance if this horizon of meaning is unclear. Tolerance is also relating to practices. In this sense tolerance is a practical concept. In an educational context tolerance must be understood in light of the different established educational practices at different schools. The understanding of tolerance is conditioned by the practices teachers are a part of and their individual and inter-subjective conceptions of these.

This means that if tolerance is reduced to one or a few variables, the understanding of tolerance is strongly reduced:

In taking up these under-scrutinized matters, we reintroduce a complexity often expunged from inquests. Indeed, our style occasionally verges on tedium. Modern social science inquiry is parsimonious, inclined toward neat, precise analysis. Complex concepts are reduced to uncomplicated definitions quickly transformed into simple numbers. Complexity is embodied in elaborate statistical techniques. The atmospheric level of tolerance in a community, even an entire state, might be indexed with a single digit. Here, however, no easy escape from the messiness of reality is permitted. Simplicity is necessary in scientific scholarship, but in grasping tolerance, this impulse for black and white has become excessive. Given that much scholarship is admittedly directed at providing slogans and ammunition for political improvement, this reductionistic inclination is perhaps understandable. It is not, however, especially useful. (Weissberg 1998:6)

In order to describe understandings of tolerance, it is necessary to go deep or wide into one case. Case study and a qualitative research design are well suited for this purpose.
Some clarification of phenomenon of case study is needed. The issue of case study is not a methodological one, but a question of which information or data to study (Stake 1998:86). It is an issue of design. Case studies can be distinguished from for instance surveys by factors of number and variables of data (Andersen 1997:23). A case study is limited to a study of one or a few numbers of objects. A survey is a study of something general for a larger part of a population. A case study is describing and analyzing many different variables within and in relation to an object. A survey is explaining the effect of one or a few variables. Andersen (1997:80) argues that case studies are well suited to contribute to generalizations through conceptual development: “Conceptual development presupposes ability both to develop typologies and to reformulate insights in theoretical language.” Andersen (1997:127) distinguishes between descriptive, 1) a-theoretical and 2) interpretive developing case studies on one hand, and analytical 3) theory-generating and 4) –developing case studies on the other. This study is not a-theoretical, it is drawing upon established traditions of tolerance and curriculum theory. It is, however, not theory-generating and –developing in a strict sense. Primarily, it is an interpretive case study with an ambition of understanding the different conceptualizations of tolerance within the case, and the relationship between them. Still, the study aims at establishing elements of a theory-building of tolerance and curriculum. More specific this concerns the understanding of tolerance in education and the understanding of values in curriculum. Theory is, however, not understood as a product of hypothesis-testing (as in Andersen 1997), as different from assumption. Theory is understood as “being able more effectively to cope with the world” (Taylor 1985:92). It is understood as a systematic, expanding and critical account of practice. This study is a systematic account of the practice of tolerance in education, it suggests conceptual expansions and is critically discussing the role of tolerance and values in and between different curricula domains.

1.4.3 An interpretive theoretical paradigm

This leads to the issue of theoretical paradigm. The study is aiming towards understanding, not explaining. Taylor (1985:91-104) distinguishes between social theory and theory within natural science. While natural science studies independent objects, objects that can be separated from human practices and self-understandings, social theory is closely relating to human practices. To put it simply, I as a social researcher am studying practices which also are constitutive for my self-understanding and the concepts and strategies I use in the research. The object of study, social practices, cannot be separated from the process of
theorizing. This of course has far reaching consequences. First, data or facts cannot be separated from theory. It is impossible to establish “pure” data, which then are interpreted by independent theory. Data are always results of interpretations and constructions. With Van Maanen (1988) one can say that data are events with meanings. He (Van Maanen 1979) suggests therefore the use of the terms first-order and second-order concepts. First-order concepts are data which never speak for themselves, and second-order concepts are the accounts used to understand patterns of first-order concepts.

This leads towards a hermeneutical approach to social science. There is no obvious point of departure. There is no way of leaving theories behind, establishing independent data. Data has to be understood in the light of theory and theory in the light of data. This hermeneutical dialectic is more than merely methodological (Schwandt 1998:227). Seeing the hermeneutical circle as a methodological device in order to find a given, determinate and objective meaning can be called objective or validation hermeneutics. The understanding of hermeneutics in this study is one of philosophy or ontology. That is, the hermeneutical condition is an intrinsic part of human existence. The human being has no way of understanding other than by hermeneutical interpretation: “If we have a science which has no brute data, which relies on readings, then it cannot but move in a hermeneutical circle” (Taylor 1985:52). This is an understanding of hermeneutics which concerns the question of research paradigm, not only method.

This interpretive paradigm has a lot in common with what broadly can be described as a constructivist approach (Schwandt 1998). The researcher focuses on the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved. Meaning is not found, as a ready-made, objective entity, but constructed (Merriam 2002:37-39). Reality is conceived as pluralistic and plastic; pluralistic in the sense of depending on interpretive perspectives, plastic in the sense of fitting human purposes and constructions (Schwandt 1998:236). Some stands within constructivism emphaizise construction as an individual enterprise. This creates, however, a problem of explaining the existence of common constructions, which establish common concepts for social and cultural communication. Social constructivism emphaizises the construction of reality and meaning as a cultural and social phenomenon, seeking to solve this problem. The language of construction is used in this study in order to underscore the perspective that the various understandings of tolerance are ways of constructing meaning. It is, however, an assumption throughout the study that individual constructivist work is done in the context of social constructions.
Another aspect of the dialectical relationship between practices and theory is that the normative aspect also is intrinsic to both. Put differently: It is impossible and undesirable to separate facts/data and values. The relationship between data and values is a main concern of this study, being located in the sphere between empirical and normative theoretical traditions. Taylor’s (1985) account of the interdependency of facts and values is a fruitful way to establish an understanding of the relation between description and evaluation.

On Taylor’s account human beings are conceived as acting and reflecting purposely within contexts. This means that purpose and context must be known in order to understand human life. Understanding cannot be found in universal law on human behavior alone, but in the interpretation of the conditions and purpose of the persons in question.

Values are an intrinsic part of the interpretive process in two ways, individual and common. A theoretical framework or conceptual structure is chosen by the interpreter. This formats her understanding of the phenomena. These frameworks are opening some possible connection and closing others. They are also value-laden:

Thus the framework does secrete a certain value position, albeit one that can be over-ridden. In general we can see this arising in the following way: the framework gives us as it were the geography of the range of phenomena in question, it tells us how they can vary, what are the major dimensions of variation. But since we are dealing with matters which are of great importance to human beings, a given map will have, as it were, its own built–in value slope. That is to say, a given dimension of variation will usually determine for itself how we are to judge of good and bad, because of its relation to obvious human wants and needs. (Taylor 1985:73)

Theoretical frameworks can be conceived as individual sketches of meaning, for instance liberal or critical theory. But theoretical frameworks can also be understood as inter-subjective and common meaning. Inter-subjective meaning constitutes social webs, language and institutions, of which the individual is a part, but at the same time exist prior to the individual. The common institutions and practices are established by a common language, norms and meanings, a sense of a shared good. The interpreter is constituted by both individual and inter-subjective values. The value-position in interpretive work is therefore indispensable. No neutral position is available.

This is, however, no necessary evil: The recognition of the value-embedded perspective of understanding enables the researcher to understand the relational meaning of phenomena and the meaningful horizon of human behavior and reflection.

This is a hermeneutical account of the relationship between facts and values. This means that this study is born out of certain pre-understandings, for instance a sense of the
importance of tolerance and values in education. Another pre-understanding is also the
character of moral education as a moral dimension on educational practice. These pre-
theories do however not determine the results of the study, they establish foci in form of
categorical boundaries and space. One example of a pre-understanding that changed during
the interpretation of the data is the status of the teacher’s conceptions of tolerance. Initially I
imagined those to have less potential than academic conceptions of tolerance. That pre-
conception had to be revised during the research.

This account of facts and values does, however, also have consequences for the
strategies of description and evaluation. There is no definite distinction between the two, but
a matter of degrees. This means that presentation of the material on one hand and normative
and theoretical discussions on the other are not separated into different sections. The
analysis instead moves gradually from a mainly descriptive to a more theoretically and
normative perspective. The ambition is to be clear on the normative context of the
discussions and to give an inter-subjective description of the material.

1.4.4 Comparing sub-cases
So far I have situated the study within an interpretive research paradigm and the tradition of
case studies. As figure 1.1 illustrates it also has a comparative design. That is, in order to get
an answer to the research question, it is necessary to interpret the understanding of tolerance
within three different curricula domains and to compare these. This design creates a
strategical dilemma between the particular and the general. Studying a case means to
interpret the particular. The interest is almost by definition the particularity of the case, not
the general it holds in common with others. As many complex relations and variables as
realistically possible are contributing to a particular description. Case studies on this account
are characterized by thick descriptions. In order to compare, however, some common
measure has to be established. This means that the interpretation of the case is governed not
by the particularity of the case itself, but some general standards. In other words: A study of
one particular case is not necessarily compatible to a study of another. The focus on and
structuring by common measures may easily conflict with the aim of understanding the
particular case (Stake 1998:97-98). The focus of the study may easily be changed from the
case to the comparison. If so, the case gets an instrumental, not an intrinsic, value.

In this study the dilemma may be formulated like this: The comparative design of the
sub-cases may conflict with a particular understanding of the main case. The dilemma may
be resolved by claiming that the main question is really the comparison, not the
understanding of the particular case. Still, there is another way of resolving the dilemma which makes it possible to hold on to both understanding of the particular and the comparative. Wengraf (2001:302) argues that there is a gradual difference between the particular case and a comparative study:

I argue, however, that it is, luckily, impossible to produce a report on a particular case – or to read such a report – without implicitly comparing other possible and actual cases and without certain universal concepts for describing and understanding cases being more or less strongly implied by the text and by the act of reading. It can be shown, then there is no logical jump or discontinuity involved in moving from single-case to multiple-case analysis. Neither is there any particular difficulty in moving from the particularities of a single case to general concepts suitable for comparative work and for generalization, since some general concepts were already employed to evoke and make sense of the particular case.

In interpreting the particular one has to use the other as a contrast and way to identify the specifics of the case. But more: This interpretation is only made possible by general concepts. The particular is understood by the general. The argument is a hermeneutical one: The particular is only understandable through the general and vice versa. The general perspective, the concepts that are used, has to be chosen. In other words, there is a choice of perspective. The choice of perspective, of general concepts, in this study is made explicit in figure 1.1. In order to make a comparison between the three curricula domains, three standards or groups of concepts are used: Practice of tolerance, conceptualization of tolerance and theory of tolerance. An interpretation of these perspectives gives both an understanding of the main case and a comparison of the sub-cases.

The comparative design is as follows: The three sub-cases, 1) perceived tolerance, 2) formal tolerance and 3) ideological tolerance are analyzed in terms of the understanding of a) practices of tolerance, b) conceptualizations of tolerance and c) theories of tolerance. This is the interpretive level of the design, and the establishing of comparable stories. Then the comparison of the three accounts of practices of tolerance, of three accounts of conceptualizations of tolerance and three accounts of theories of tolerance is done. The comparison is made in form of identifying similarities and differences in the stories, and trying to understand them in theoretical contexts.

The understanding of the standards or perspectives, practices, conceptualizations and theories, are elaborated on below. They are a way of operationalizing the interpretive paradigm of this study and understanding of the relationship between practice and theory argued for above.
1.4.5 Design of data

The content of the case, the data, is divided into three sets. The research question focuses on the intentional and perceived curricula of Norwegian compulsory education. These concepts are discussed in the next chapter. The intentional and perceived curricula are conceived as three different curricula domains, the ideological, the formal and the perceived curricula. Details of sampling and data are given below. In designing the study a criterion has been that the data within the three sub-cases should be rich. This does not mean that the data should be all-comprehensive in trying to cover the entire sub-case. It should be rich in supplying material for a diversity of perspectives. It means that the data should not be statistically representative. This is a qualitative case study with no statistical ambitions. It means that the sample should be theoretical or strategic in order to collect material from different contexts within the case. Such a design seeks to establish data that can exemplify the many complex relations and variables that characterizes everyday school practice and policy.

The data of the three sub-cases are of different kinds. The data of the perceived curricula domain is empirical – it consists of 15 interviews of teachers. The data of the formal curricula domain is a political, official text, a national curriculum. The data of the ideological curricula domain are texts, in the sense of academic texts. The aim of the design is to establish interpretations of this material that is compatible. At the same time the aim is to give a detailed description of the complexity and many nuances of the understandings of tolerance.

The main aim of the design is of course to give an answer to the research question: How is tolerance understood in the intentional and perceived curriculum in Norwegian compulsory education? As an interpretive study it also tries to give an understanding of its main results. This is formatted as a critical reflection or discussion on values, here exemplified by tolerance, and curriculum.

One comment on the model of design (figure 1.1) is necessary. The model is hierarchical in design and the relations are deductive, starting with a research question and ending with a result. This is of course in a sense an ideal image of the actual research process, which is more complex. Still, it gives an impression of the logic of the study, and the main line of the ongoing research.
1.5 Materials and sampling

It is time to go a step further from the issue of design of material to a description and discussion of the actual data used. Data is understood as “the recorded empirical observation on the cases under study” (Lewis-Beck 2004:234). The concepts data and material are used interchangeably.

In a case study like this the data has the shape of qualitative, not quantitative material. As emphasized above, data cannot be conceived as “raw material” or “brute facts”. Data are impregnated with understanding:

Qualitative data are not so much about “behavior” as they are about actions (which carry with them intentions and meanings and lead to consequences). Some actions are relatively straightforward; others involve “impression management” – how people want others, including the researcher, to see them. Furthermore, those actions always occur in specific situations within a social and historical context, which deeply influences how they are interpreted by both insiders and the researcher as outsider. (Miles and Huberman 1994:10)

This means that the pre-conceptions of the process of doing this study were decisive in choosing and understanding the material. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:10) qualitative data are characterized by local groundedness; a particular phenomenon is focused in its context. That is, the material is formatted as phenomena situated in a variety of contexts, not as a de-contextualized phenomena. Qualitative data are further characterized by richness and holism which reveal complexity and provides thick descriptions. The issue of meanings is also central in qualitative data. The material is focused on how people understand events, processes and structures in their lives. In other words they focus on “naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings”. In this study these characterizations have been important in understanding and choosing material.

The main case is divided into three, and so are the data. In the following I will discuss the process of sampling and describe the chosen material in the three sub-cases.

1.5.1 Material 1

The main actors at perceived curricula domain are, as argued in chapter two, the teachers. This can be called material 1. In order to answer the research question, the material must be rich in description. For practical and analytical purposes this means that it must be limited in numbers. The sampling of the material 1 is driven by theoretical and stratificational purposes. One important theoretical issue is that tolerance is conditioned by difference or plurality. Plurality in education can be of different kinds, for instance social class, gender,
religion, morality, language and ethnicity. Tolerance is often used in issues of cultural (including religious, ethnic and moral) difference. One main criterion for sampling was therefore variety in cultural difference. It may well be that tolerance is understood different in different types of educational plurality. This leads to the point of stratified sampling. Stratified sampling means data are collected in different layers to contribute to richness and difference.

In the sampling of schools I have used critical cases as a criterion of two schools with high degree, but different kinds, of cultural plurality, and typical case as a criterion of one school with low degree of cultural plurality. Still, the third school is characterized by other kinds of plurality, which are more typical among Norwegian schools. I settled with a selection of three schools, and five teachers at each school. It is important to choose schools that have experienced moral and cultural issues concerning tolerance. By selecting teachers working in multiethnic and multicultural schools, the probability of such experiences is higher. In the northern parts of Norway, there have existed multicultural schools for many years. I interviewed five teachers at a school in the county Finnmark. This is a multiethnic school that uses the Sámi Curriculum. A more recent type of multicultural schools has developed in the large cities during the last two decades due to new immigration. I therefore interviewed five teachers working at a school with both immigrants and non-immigrants in a major city. I also interviewed five teachers in an ethnic and cultural relatively homogenous community in the county Østfold in order to be informed by teachers at schools with less ethnical plurality. The particular schools were partly recommended by others, partly known by myself in beforehand.

The criterion of the sampling of teachers was a mixture of maximum variation and random selection. I made arrangements with the principals at three schools, and they chose the participating teachers. I asked, however, the principals to make a selection of teachers of different age, gender, experience and teaching-subjects. I did not get full insight in their selection process, but all the respondents volunteered to be interviewed – either after being asked or by putting their name on a list. This may on one hand influence the variation of the understandings of tolerance in the material in a direction towards valuing tolerance as important. On the other hand the interest of tolerance among the respondents may have contributed positively to selection of material in form of many engaged accounts of

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4 Plurality may of course also be understood as individual difference, but this does not have any consequences for sampling other than collecting data from a number of persons.
practices of tolerance and reflections on them. The main focus of the study is not to give an answer just to the value of tolerance. The focus is a more comprehensive understanding of tolerance. Engagement from the interviewees is then a resource more than a weakness.

Before presenting the data in form of the 15 interviews, a brief description of the character of the three schools may be fruitful.

*Kjernsund School* is a primary school (grades 1 to 7). It is located in a community with mainly three ethnic backgrounds, known as the three “tribes” of Finnmark: The Sámis, the Kvens and the “Norwegians”\(^5\). In 1997 a new national curriculum was implemented in Norwegian compulsory education. In fact, there were two curricula, one national and one Sámi. There is a difference between them; the Sámi curriculum prescribes an education for a distinctive Sámi cultural context. The government decided that the Sámi curriculum was to be effective in all communities that are characterized as Sámi communities, independent of what the communities themselves wanted. This created massive oppositions in large groups in some mixed communities, that is, communities in Finnmark that consist of not only Sámi population, but also Kvens and “Norwegians”. In the sampling process this was considered as a resource on the assumption that such potential conflicts would have created debates on tolerance. Glimmerdale School also had some recent immigrants. In addition Northern Norway is characterized by religious difference, for instance in form of Laestadianism, a lay movement with significant cultural influence.

*Glimmerdale School* is also a primary school (grades 1 to 7). It is located in a major city, and consisted at the time of the interviews of students with ethnic Norwegian and immigrant background, evenly distributed. This creates a situation of ethnic, religious and moral difference, and situations of difference and tolerance are part of everyday practice.

*Hopen School* is a combined primary and lower secondary school. It is located in a rural area, and there were at the time of the interviews no students with immigrant or other ethnic background than Norwegian attending the school. Religiously the school was also quite homogenous. Still, the phenomenon of lay religious movements within the Lutheran Church was creating a sort of pluralism. Even though the school in these respects was rather homogenous, it was characterized by for instance individual pluralism.

A presentation of the respondents is given in chapter four. Here I just want to describe some general features. The teachers varied in age, gender, experience and teaching-subject. Their average age was 37 years, varying from 21 as the youngest and 53 as the oldest. Eight of the respondents were women, seven men. In respect of experience the
respondents can be grouped in three: First, six who had recently graduated from college or university and with limited work experience (0-2 years). The second group of four has medium experience in matter of years (3-7 years). The third group consists of five teachers with long experience (16-32 years). Two of the fifteen were at the time of the interviews principals, but had also practiced as teachers for years. One did not have a teacher’s education; he was a teacher-assistant. Still, he had many of the same responsibilities as teachers, especially in special education. For practical reasons I refer to all 15 as teachers in the text. The respondents teach at all levels from first to tenth grade and in different subjects.

The variation in age, gender, experience, job position and teaching-subject should contribute to a material with not only different accounts of situations of tolerance, but also different perspectives on them.

The interviews of the teachers did not focus on abstract reflections on tolerance, but started with descriptions of tolerant persons and practical challenges of tolerance in the professional everyday life of the teachers. In the ongoing conversation reflections on these descriptions and situations evolved. The material has therefore a twofold structure: Firstly, descriptions of practical cases and characteristics of tolerance, secondly, reflections on these practices and characteristics. In most cases descriptions and reflections are interwoven. The cases vary from detailed descriptions of persons or situations to more general observations that do not have one specific empirical reference, but are built on a number of experiences.

1.5.2 Material 2
The second basket of data – material 2 - constitutes the formal curricula domain. The central material is of course the *Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school (1997)* (C97), the formal national curriculum prescribing educational practice for the schools and teachers at the time of the interviews. A question was whether to analyze other preliminary official documents in the curriculum-process, and whether to include previous curricula. These ideas were rejected for two reasons. First, this could lead to data-overload. Material 2 is just one of three parts of data. Secondly, the aim of the interpretation of formal tolerance is not to give a detailed historical account, but to do a systematic analysis of the understanding of tolerance in C97 as the text the teachers are supposed to relate to.

In a sense there are two different national curricula: *Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school (1997)* and *Sámi Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in...*  

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5 There is no better name for this third group than “Norwegians”. They are non-Sámi and non-Kvens.
Norway (1997) (C97S). The relationship between these texts is discussed in chapter five. For practical reasons I use C97 as the main text for analysis, and includes C97S where there are important differences.

Because tolerance is addressed both in the general parts and in different subject curricula, the entire curricula constitutes the material.

1.5.3 Material 3

The third part of data – material 3 – belongs to the ideological curriculum domain. The aim of this part of analysis is to establish an understanding of the conception of tolerance within the ideological domain. A discussion of the conceptualization of the ideological domain is found in chapter two. In this study the concept is understood as the academic contribution to the curricular field. Academic is not understood in a strict scientific sense, but indicating a systematic and reasoning form as well as an interest of the issue beyond the political. Academic implies a certain ability of reflective distance.

The question of sampling of data is often also a question of method. Here the main alternatives were to interview representatives within the academic field on tolerance, or to use academic publications on tolerance. The last alternative was chosen. Again, the argument is practical, two sets of in-depth interviews in addition to the entire national curriculum could easily create data-overload. In addition, there exist a certain number of Norwegian academic publications on tolerance. It is reasonable to assume that these persons are better enabled to express their view on tolerance in writing than orally.

One criterion for the publications is of course that they are published in Norway, written in Norwegian and refer to a Norwegian context. A criterion for sampling was richness, in the sense that as many perspectives as possible should be represented in the material. Norwegian academic texts on tolerance are published in a variety of journals and books. The articles were found partly by systematic search in some educational and philosophical journals, partly by snowball sampling. Through references in articles, others were found. This does not mean that there do not exist other Norwegian publications on tolerance, but the material should be rich enough to give a detailed account of the multitude of understandings.

Another criterion was the time of publication. Being a contemporary and not a historical study, the aim was to establish a material that was published at the years before the writing of C97 and the interviews (1998). This way the writers of C97 and the teachers could have had the opportunity to read the articles on tolerance, or they could have been
influenced by the ideas of the publications in a mediated form (from secondary sources). The time span of the academic publications on tolerance is therefore 1984 to 1997. A presentation of the material is done in chapter six.

1.6 Method
Having established the main question of the study, the design and the material, it is time to turn to the question “how”. The issue of method is divided in two. First, interviewing the teachers is discussed, secondly, the text-analysis of C97 and the academic articles.

1.6.1 Choice of methods
First, to perceived tolerance and the 15 teachers. In order to establish the understanding of tolerance at this domain, it is important to find out what the teachers mean. This could be done using a variety of methods. I have already argued for a qualitative case-design and assumed qualitative methods in the presentation of the material. Still, one option could be to use more quantitative oriented methods like for instance a questionnaire within the case.

In a pilot study a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods were used. A questionnaire with closed alternatives focusing on the conception of tolerance was used together with semi-structured interviews. The results of the questionnaire turned out to have limited value. Why so?

An article by Chong (1993) may provide an answer. He did a study based on in-depth interviews of 30 respondents on issues of individual rights and liberties. His methodological discussion is very interesting. He found that the respondents answer an interview-question according to how they frame the issue in question. This framing is typically happening hastily and “off the tops of their heads”. They only take into consideration the most obvious consideration of the issue. And further:

While people may respond to a question based on a single consideration, most issues are sufficiently complex that they bring forth multiple considerations if respondents are given enough time to reflect on them. [ ...] people revise and often reverse their original answers in light of new considerations that were brought to mind either by further contemplation or by the interviewer. The interviews therefore highlight the difficulty of measuring public opinion on civil liberties issues using conventional closed-ended survey questions. (Chong 1993:869-870)

He analyzed responses to a selection of ten topics, and found that “subjects reversed or qualified their opinion (at least once) during their replies to these questions almost a third of
the time.” (Chong 1993:873) This is an argument against relaying too heavily on survey as a method in issues of persons’ understandings of values. The results from surveys can be given sophisticated statistic analyses, but there is often an open question of what the result is about. That is, there is a validity problem with survey as a method on issues of individual conceptions of values. The reason for this may be that surveys assume one general answer. In the case of tolerance it is assumed that the respondents have one general theory. The problem is that their theories of tolerance are complex and depending on issue and context. They have a variety of tolerance practices and conceptions. This was the case with the respondents conceptions of civil liberties and rights in Chong’s study, and also here, as chapter four will describe. To put it simply: What column the informants would mark on a question on tolerance in a questionnaire will depend on the issues they happen to think of, and how long they think about it. It would be quite random. It would not provide any information about how the respondents arrive at the specific answer for instance concerning tolerance, and limited information of how they understand it. This is not a general argument against survey as method, but an explanation of why it has limited value in a study like this. A triangulation of methods could of course have been chosen, but it turned out that the accounts from the interviews were both rich and clear enough for a detailed interpretation and comparison. The standards necessary for comparison could be established through interviewing.

As long as the focus is the teachers’ understanding, observation is not a natural method to choose. Observing teachers in their practice could give valuable information about the operational curricula domain, but that is beyond the limits of this study.

1.6.2 Interviews, narratives and joint constructions

Interviewing is a common concept of a variety of methodical practices. Fontana and Frey (1998:55) divide interview into five forms: focus group, brainstorming, nominal/delphi, field natural and field formal. In this study I have used a formal field interview, which according to Fontana and Frey is characterized by being preset, but done in the field. The role of the interviewer is somewhat directive, and the question format is semi-structured. Such a type of interview has a phenomenological purpose.

This is a good description of the form of interviewing in this study. The formal field interview can also be called qualitative interview (Gubrium and Holstein 200la, Kvale 1996). According to Kvale (1996:30) the purpose of the qualitative research interview is "to obtain descriptions of the lived world of the interviewees with respect to interpretation of the
meaning of the described phenomena." This form of interviewing is designed for everyday issues of the respondent and her relations. The central focus is on construction of meaning, that is, how the interviewees interpret their experiences. This fits very well with the aim of this first part of the study: To understand teachers' conceptions of tolerance.

It was important to format the interview so that it could open up for accounts of experiences from the teachers' practice, and their reflections on these. These considerations shaped the form, structure and content of the interviews. I had prepared a questionnaire with eight main questions and a number of potential follow-up questions. The questions were developed out of a number of research questions, following the main and sub-research questions of the study. The questionnaire only had a guiding function, not all questions were asked all respondents. In addition other questions were asked as a consequence of the direction of conversations. Still, the main questions and themes helped keeping the focus in the interview situation. The interviews were clearly semi-structured.

This leads to the question of epistemological status and character of the interview, as illustrated in table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Conceptions of different creations of meaning in interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive interviewer</th>
<th>Passive respondent</th>
<th>Active respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Respondents as containers of answers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Respondents' narratives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Joint construction of meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, on a more instrumental or mechanical view, interviewing is a form of collecting information from informants. On this account the interviewee is reporting his knowledge or points of view. It is important for the interviewer to interfere as little as possible in order not to influence the answers. The interviewer should therefore take a neutral or passive role. This should also be the role of the respondent. He should just report the information asked for. Mishler (1986:14) calls this interviewing within the stimulus-response paradigm. The respondent is conceived as a container of answers and information. The information is there, as objective entities. It has to be reported. The ideal situation is where informants do most or

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6 The following builds partly upon Gubrium and Holstein (2001b), Mishler (1986) and Kvale (1996).
all of the talking, but on the specific questions asked.

A second conception of the epistemological character of the interviews is the narrative. On this account respondents are not containers of answers. On the contrary: Answers are not made in beforehand, they are created at a particular time, place and language. This means that the answers are particular ways to create meaning within a set of particular contextual relations - for instance the interview situation. Or to put it another way: The interviewee is responding to her own specification of the question, not (necessarily) how the interviewer meant it. This creation of meaning often takes the form of narrative. Through a narrative the fragments of experiences are ordered and connected. On this conception the respondent is actively creating his stories, and the role of the interviewer is to facilitate these:

We are more likely to find stories reported in studies using relatively unstructured interviews where respondents are invited to speak in their own voices, allowed to control the introduction and flow of topics, and encouraged to extend their responses. Nonetheless, respondents may also tell stories in response to direct, specific questions if they are not interrupted by interviewers trying to keep them to the "point". (Mishler 1986:69)

On a third conception the interviewer takes a more active role. The respondent is seen as not only telling his stories, but telling particular stories in particular ways due to the relation to the interviewer. Through conversation, through exchange of meaning, meaning is jointly constructed. It is therefore not the respondents' stories only, but the common stories or constructions of meaning of the interviewee and interviewer. On this account there is no neutral interviewer. The conversation cannot be understood and interpreted as a monologue, but as a dia-logue or a multi-logue, on the assumption that each participant has a number of voices.

The interviews in this study are clearly not conceived according to the first model, but as a mixture of the last two. On one hand it has been important in the interview-process to get the respondents tell their stories, relatively undisturbed by the interviewer. Such stories are the source for understanding tolerance in educational practice. At the same time the interviews are clearly understood as common constructions of meaning. In the back and forth of the conversation, aspects are developed. These cannot be interpreted apart from the particular dialogue and its context.

As long as the purpose is to interpret the teachers’ understanding of tolerance, the
simplest way to ask questions seems to be a direct approach. That is, questions concerning the conceptualization and theory of tolerance. That was done in the pilot study, with a poor result. It turned out that the teachers at large were unable to answer abstract questions of definitions of similar concepts, justification of tolerance and its boundaries. This should maybe not have been a surprise. Few are able to define and discuss such complex value concepts at an abstract level. In the final questionnaire the questions were reformulated as open and addressing practice, for instance starting the interview with asking: "Can you tell me about the most tolerant colleague or teacher you have met?" The purpose was to make the teachers tell about practical situations in everyday school life they though were about tolerance. In making the questions open, many different kinds and modes of stories came up. This is an indirect strategy of interviewing. In telling stories of tolerance the teacher use the concept. The way they use tolerance in the conversation and their stories is a source for interpreting how they conceive it. Before proceeding to the phase of analysis, I will give an account of how the interviews were made.

I did all the interviews in May and June 1998. This means that C97 had been effective one year, and that a lot of discussion on implementing the new curriculum was going on in the schools. The general part of the curriculum had been effective since 1993. The general part is supposed to give the basic understanding of values as tolerance, which the subject curricula should implement.

After getting the names of the respondents, I sent them a short, quite general description of the study. They were also asked to return a signed statement, confirming their participation in the study. I did all the interviews at the three schools. The intention was that sitting in a classroom or another room in the school would establish a relevant context for talking about educational practice and tolerance. The interviews lasted from approximately one and a half to two hours.

I did a briefing before and a debriefing after the interviews. In most cases the teacher came more or less directly from class to the interview, and they returned to class after having finished. This means that the interview situation was integrated into the everyday educational practice. At the same time it was important to create a relaxed atmosphere, so the interviewees were able to get some mental and reflective distance from their current tasks.

All interviews were taped. The informants seemed quickly to forget that the cassette recorder was present. At the end of the interview the respondents were invited to make comments not asked for. The general impression was that enough time was spent on the
different topics and stories that were introduced during the interview. I also gave the respondents my address, e-mail-address and telephone number in case they wanted to elaborate on or correct something. Nobody contacted me.

1.6.3 Analyzing interviews

I had the interviews transcribed, but listened through all and corrected the transcription. In this initial analyzing process, I also took notes from listening to the voices. This was a valuable supplement to the interpretation of the textual edition of the interviews, which of course excluded phenomena as for instance raising of voices and very rapid answers. The initial phase of analysis also consisted in reading single transcripts in length, making notes particularly on structure and form. Which were the high- and low-points? I looked for interesting concepts and formulations, ways of reasoning and so on.

In the analytical process - both in the analysis of the interviews and the C97 - I used a computer program for qualitative analysis of texts, Atlas/ti. It was very helpful in managing the data and providing conditions for a detailed analysis. In the analysis of the interviews I chose a combination of different analytical strategies, what Kvale calls an eclectic "ad hoc approach". The main form of analysis was however coding. As mentioned there is a lot of theory both on tolerance and curriculum. For instance I have worked out a rather detailed matrix of possible conceptualizations of tolerance (chapter three). This strong theoretical basis could easily lead to an over-theorizing of the analysis of the material. In the encounter between data and theory, the first gets a secondary role. The material can easily be put into established theoretical categories. This has of course structural and practical advantages. But it may also be that other, vital aspects in the material are lost. It does neither contribute to theoretical expansion. In order to establish a more equal dialectic between data and theory, I chose also methods that focus a less structural approach to the data.

Grounded theory is not primarily a method, but a research strategy (Strauss 1987:5). It is characterized by theory development, theoretical sampling, making constant comparisons, coding and conceptual development and density. This study is using an interpretive strategy, not grounded theory as design. Grounded theory does however have methodical implications that I used in order to initially put a strict analytical framework in parenthesis. That way I could approach the material more widely in looking for possible perspectives. This may result in expanded understanding.
Practically, I used the way of coding\(^8\) and memo-writing described in Strauss (1987). This means that coding was a gradual process. Atlas/ti allows for two types of codes, in line with grounded theory: Open coding and in-vivo coding. The first are theoretical constructions, the latter are actual concepts used in the texts. From time to time I stopped the coding and other analytical steps in order to write memos. These memos contained everything from single observations to more detailed texts on for instance relations between codes.

The coding of textual elements in Atlas/ti made it possible to create new texts based on choice of codes, respondents, frequency and so on. Out of these analytical possibilities came a variety of matrixes and conceptual diagrams showing relations between codes.

In addition to this I also used narrative analysis of some of the many stories in the interviews. This was not a complete analysis of the entire interviews as narratives, but of the narrative bits and pieces. This was a valuable supplement to concept analysis because it enabled me to see connections and through-running themes.

As discussed above there is no strict separation between presenting the material and theoretical analyses in this study. The relationship between presentation and interpretation is conceived as a matter of degrees. Therefore the data are analyzed in three steps: First, a structured presentation of the material, trying to describe tolerance in its many relations. Secondly, an analysis of how tolerance is conceptualized, and thirdly what kind of theories the informants have on tolerance.

Table 1.2: Levels of analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Presentation of the material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Conceptualization</td>
<td>Conceptual analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Theoretical analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 1.2 illustrates these levels correspond to the distinction between a practical, conceptual and theoretical understanding of tolerance. This means that at level one the

\(^7\) For the role of computer programs in qualitative research, see Richards and Richards 1998.

\(^8\) Codes are conceived as ‘tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study.’ (Miles and Huberman 1994:56)
teachers' accounts of educational practices that concern tolerance are presented and described. In this part of the analysis it was essential to link tolerance to experience and practice. That is, focus is not ideals of tolerance detached from educational practice, but the identification of situations of tolerance in the educational context and reflections on these.

During the interviews a large number of situations involving tolerance appeared. These practical cases of tolerance were placed in the educational field in order to answer the question of structure: Which parts and relations of education does tolerance involve? The analysis also consisted in identifying the issues of tolerance, answering the question of content of tolerance in educational context.

At level two the theoretical perspective is somewhat more visible. Different ways of conceptualizing tolerance in philosophical theories constitute an interpretive framework that is used to place the way tolerance is used and understood in the material.

At level three the interpretation is clearly more theoretical. At this level an attempt is made to establish a meeting between different theories of tolerance and the material. This dialogue results in theoretical descriptions of tolerance at the three curricula domains.

The distinction between the concepts practice, conceptualization and theory will be elaborated on below.

1.6.4 Hermeneutic analysis of documents

The methodological alternatives concerning material 2 and 3 were not that many. The C97 is a text, and a hermeneutical analysis of the text was necessary. Here hermeneutics is referring to method of interpreting texts, trying to create understanding and meaning. (Gilje and Grimén 1993:142-174) As described above the researcher is always approaching a text with a pre-understanding. In social and human science there is a close relationship between the object of study and the studying subject. The researcher is constituted by the society and culture she is researching. She has a pre-understanding and pre-evaluation of the research object. In this case I was practicing tolerance and intolerance myself, and had a more or less clear conception of the phenomenon. This is influencing the process of interpretation. As will the context of the object. A social and human phenomenon, here tolerance, is normally not an isolated entity. It is relationally constituted, and these relations are decisive for the content and structure of the phenomenon. Tolerance as a human and social phenomenon must be understood in context.

The pre-understanding and context of the phenomenon are important elements in
the hermeneutical circle. The hermeneutical circle is a way to express the idea that no interpretation starts from scratch and that interpretation means entering a circular movement between the phenomenon studied and the pre-understanding and context of the phenomenon. This could also be expressed as a circular movement between parts and wholes, between the phenomenon of interpretation and its contexts and between our pre-understanding and the phenomenon. (Gilje and Grimen 1993:153)

Through this movement understanding and meaning is established. A condition for creating meaning is however a choice of perspective. Meaning is always meaning for a subject. Meaning is created through a certain way to describe it. Meaning is in this sense distinguishable from the phenomenon, not in any absolute sense, but as two different stories. The meaningful story includes the meaning of the phenomenon for the subject. (Taylor 1985:22) This implies a distinction of language, the language of the material (phenomenon) and the language of analysis. This distinction is not fixed; it is a matter of degree. Still, the hermeneutical analysis of the documents (C97 and the articles) means creating an account of meaning in an analytical language.

Since meaning is dependent of choice of perspectives, a number of alternative and maybe competing perspectives are possible. In deciding the better interpretation, either the holistic or actor criterion can be used (Gilje and Grimen 1993:157-162). The actor criterion is claiming that an interpretation should be in line with the actors’ or writers’ purpose of the action or text. In this study is the focus more on possible and probable understandings of the texts than on intended meaning. A holistic criterion is therefore used in the sense that different interpretations are viewed on the background of the other parts of the texts. This does, however, not mean that a text cannot be contradictory and multi-voiced. If so, these characters of the text are essential to analyze in the interpretive process.

The analysis of the C97 was also done by coding, using Atlas/ti. The same three foci structured the analysis: The practices, conceptualizations and theories of tolerance. Particular attention was given to how C97 describes difference, in order to establish a context in which to understand the conception of tolerance.

The analysis of the academic publications on tolerance followed the same steps, but Atlas/ti was not used. The same three analytical foci established the analytical structure. Also in these textual analyses matrixes and conceptual schemes were used. Both material 2 and 3 are collections of different parts. C97 is one document, but consists of two general parts and a number of different subject curricula. The academic articles on tolerance are different in both content and form. The aim of interpretation was the same as in the
interview of the teachers: To both describe the plurality of understandings and establish some common issues. The main difference between particularly the interview and the academic debate is that the last texts are closer to the analytical language than the first. Still, I have tried to analyze the articles according to the theoretical frame established in this study (chapters two and three). This means that some of the same words have a somewhat different meaning in the material language than in the analytical.

1.7 Understanding, conceptualization, theory, and practice

So far the concepts practice, conceptualization and theory have been used. Although some remarks have been done on the relationship between theory and practice in the light of Taylor's interpretive approach, the concepts have to be discussed in relation to conceptualization.

Concept and related terms (conceive, conception, conceptualize) is used in a wide and a narrow sense in this study. In the wide sense it is synonymous with understanding. In the narrow sense it means "an abstract notion or idea" (Webster’s comprehensive dictionary 2003:270), that is, bricks in the building of theories. The same bricks can be used to build different theories, and to recognize and understand other. The term conceptualize is in this study used in a narrow sense.

While in the wide sense conception includes concepts, theories, practices and so on, it is possible to distinguish between conceptions as general notions on one hand and theories as more comprehensive and explicative perspectives on and assumptions of characteristics of phenomena or principles on the other. An application of this distinction is to separate conceptual questions as the extension of, the conditions for or the marks of the concept of tolerance from theoretical questions concerning justification, limits, social character, social relations and so on of tolerance.

Practices of tolerance are here not seen as implementations of certain principles, but as constitutive for both conceptions and theories of tolerance. Winsnes (1988:1-4) conceives theory as reflections on the particular perspective on the reality field that is the object of the researcher's consciousness. Conceptualizing refers to the production of symbols in order to make the reality-field transparent. Winsnes sees the

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9 This does of course not imply a separation. In the following it will be apparent that theoretical positions on tolerance influence conceptions of tolerance and vice versa.
10 This distinction is similar to the one Mendus (1989:3-5 and 21) does, with the exception that she uses theoretical mainly in the normative sense (referring to justification and limits). Here theoretical includes both normative and descriptive (empirical) perspectives.
research on concepts and conceptualizing as an entrance to development of theory. This corresponds to the conception of concept and theory in this study.

It is, however, necessary to take a closer look at what concepts are. According to Utaker (1991) concepts are always concepts of something. They tie different phenomena together. The phenomenon in itself does never determine the concept. A concept is always individual and culturally conditioned. It is always a selective construction, leaving something outside and including something else. This means that a phenomenon can be understood in a number of ways. "Concepts refer to the way we use words and understand phenomena." (Utaker 1991:46)

Concepts are formulated in words, but are not the same as the sense of the words. The conception of tolerance can therefore not be deducted from a lingual analysis of the word tolerance. Other words may be able to describe the core and boundaries of the concept of tolerance. Although the word tolerance of course is central in understanding the concept tolerance, the focus of the study is more extensive. Other words and combinations of words may describe the concept of tolerance.

A central concern in this study is that concepts are individual and cultural constructions. Concepts change with time; they are not a part of the natural order. Since concepts are culturally conditioned, the individual is not free to decide conceptions as he wishes (Utaker 1991:56). In analyzing individual concepts, one is therefore also analyzing cultural concepts. In this perspective this is a study on cultural conceptions of tolerance.

A concept is never covering an entire reality; it is a more or less good or bad description of a phenomenon. This is the critical issue of this study. The different conceptions of tolerance are in varying degree making educational practice "less stumbling" and "more clairvoyant" (Taylor 1985:111).

Developing culturally, concepts are processual phenomena. They cannot be identified by its substance only. And further: Concepts are relational:

Things only have meaning in a field, that is, in relation to the meaning of other things. This means that there is no such thing as a single unrelated meaningful element; and it means that changes in the other meanings in the field can involve changes in the given element. Meanings can not be identified except in relation to others, and in this way resemble words. The meaning of a word depends, for instance, on those words with which it contrasts, on those which define its place in the language (e.g. those defining 'determinable' dimensions, like colour, shape), on those which define the activity or 'language game' it figures in (describing, invoking, establishing communion), and so on. The relations between meanings in this sense are like those between concepts in a semantic field. (Taylor 1985:22)

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11 See for instance Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1990.
This means that the conception of tolerance must be assumed to be in motion, and changing according to its relations:

> Until recently, the notion of a concept was viewed as something for which clarity, precision, simplicity, and maximum definition seemed commendable. We have tried, in reflective consonance with our theoretical perspective, to preconceive it in interconnected, relational terms. Thus the concept of legitimate peripheral participation obtains its meaning, not in a concise definition of its boundaries, but in its multiple, theoretically generative interconnections with persons, activities, knowing, and world. Exploring these interconnections in specific cases has provided a way to engage in the practice-theory project that insists on participation in the lived-in world as a key unit of analysis in a theory of social practice (which includes learning), and to develop out thinking in the spirit of this theoretically integrative enterprise. (Lave and Wenger 1991:122)

Conceptualization is connected to theory, but can be distinguished in the sense that it is possible to agree on the conception of what tolerance is, but theoretically disagree on what tolerance means. The relationship between theory and practice is, as argued for above, understood as relational, but distinguishable. *Theory* is not conceived as something completely different than practices or data. Gullestad (1996:242) argues that the practical field is also theorizing. The actors are making narrative and systematic reflections in understanding their practice. In a society with academic plurality and disagreement, the individual has no definite external authority to trust. She must make her own theories. These theories are contributions to knowledge about society.

*Practice* is here understood as bodily action situated in patterns and understandings of various traditions. (Schrag 1997:42-75) This means that the conception of practice in this study includes actors, relations and contexts of the practice of tolerance in education. These aspects of practice are made textual through a double interpretation, by the informants/the texts and by me.

### 1.8 Ethical issues

Ethical issues concern the entire research process. I conceive ethics and morality as a dimension of human existence, rather than a separate sphere. On the latter conceptualization ethics is a societal and academic domain like for instance politics, law and science. Ethics understood as a dimension means that everything in principle may be analyzed from a moral point of view. A moral point of view is characterized by the critical question of right and good of human practices, which implies a sense of a moral "ought". This means that the
moral question is primarily "how ought we to live", not only "what ought we to do". "It implies an understanding where all aspects of human conduct and human life could be seen in an ethical dimension, i.e. could be seen and interpreted in terms such as good or bad, right or wrong, praiseworthy or blameworthy etc." (Schmidt 1998:113)

This means that different aspects of the research process should be discussed morally. Or put another way: Ethical consideration must - and I hope in this case have been – an integral part of doing research. Kvale (1996:111) identifies seven research stages: Thematizing, designing, interview situation, transcription, analysis, verification and reporting. There are ethical dimensions to all.

The purpose of the research should not only contribute to more knowledge, but improvement of human conditions, he argues. This project has an ethical motivation in an interest for acceptance of difference. Hopefully it is a small contribution to a clarification of moral and curricular language. As to design I have already mentioned that the respondents were informed in beforehand of the interviews, and that they signed an informed consent. The interviews were not made a secret, and colleagues could possibly observe who were interviewed. In practice it seemed that few did. The content of the interview was neither very private nor controversial. The interviewees were of course informed that they were secured confidentiality in the analysis and reporting. Otherwise they seemed satisfied with the arrangements of confidentiality. It seemed like the clarification of confidentiality gave them security enough not to exclude accounts because they put themselves or others in a dubious or bad light.

The project was registered at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) after an application for concession to establish a personal register.

In the interview situation the matter of confidentiality was discussed. I also informed the respondents that they could make contact if they wanted to provide further information. They were also told that they could exclude accounts in the interviews from reporting.

Nobody did so.

As to transcription, analysis, verification and reporting I would like to discuss a particular case. One of the informants told a story that involved colleagues and students at the school she worked. A student got an anger attack, and in the process of getting control over the student a teacher kicked him in the crotch. The students of the respondent saw this as they were walking by. This is a story about an apparent immoral and illegal action. It involves a colleague, who is not able to give a different version of the situation. The moral
question is: Should this situation be used in the study or not?

The reasons for not reporting could be that it was an immoral episode, it was an illegal act or it is a charge against a person that is deprived of defence. The two first reasons do not seem to hold. School life is a messy practice, and it would not be ethical to report otherwise. Trying to make the practice look better than it is, is a misunderstood moral concern. If the identity of the colleague was known, it would be difficult to use the story. But the account is more an example of a general problem than a unique case. Besides the interviewee’s story is her own perception of the situation. It may have looked otherwise in somebody else’s eyes. The ethical challenge for me has been to try to include these perspectives in the interpretation of the account. The fact that the respondent did not at any time express uncertainty whether to exclude the story from her interview or not, strengthens the judgment that the account should be reported.

1.9 Evaluating the study: Validity, reliability, generalization

So far the study has been formatted: Its research question, design, materials and methods have been described and discussed. Before going to work, the issue of evaluation needs to be addressed: How valid and reliable are the results of the study and how general are they?

Altheide and Johnson (1998:292) understand evaluation of ethnographic work as: “The process by which the ethnography occurred must be clearly delineated, including accounts of the interactions among context, researcher, methods, setting, and actors.” This definition could be expanded to qualitative studies in general. Discussing the quality of the results of a qualitative study is relational.

The key concepts of this process of evaluation are validity, reliability and generalizability. These concepts have a quantitative history, and there has been a debate whether to replace them in the process of formatting the critical questions of quality to a qualitative way of doing research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest the concepts credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as replacements. Here I hold on to the “scientific holy trinity” (Kvale 1996:229) of validity, reliability and generalizability, understood within the interpretive paradigm I have presented above. I will focus on the question of validity, but also include a briefer discussion on reliability and generalizability.
1.9.1 Validity

Validity concerns matters of truth: Is the particular account true or not, or: To what degree is it true? Validity therefore concerns theories of truth. This is not the place to elaborate on this, but it is important to make a distinction between correspondence, coherence and pragmatic theories of truth. Correspondence theory is conceiving truth as whether or not a statement or a belief correlates to a fact or reality. On the account of coherence theory “a belief is verified when it is a part of an entire system of beliefs that is consistent and ‘harmonious’” (Audi 1995:812). A pragmatic theory of truth is focusing on the functions of knowledge: A belief is true as long as it is a good basis for action. Knowledge is true to the degree it “works”.

It is clear that the interpretist approach of this study is not compatible with a correspondence theory of truth. There is no way to establish theory or knowledge beyond a dialectics between fact and belief. A statement can therefore not relate to reality as something external because there is no way to establish reality independent of statements or beliefs (that is, theory). In Taylor’s (1985:63) terminology theory can only be made within conceptual or theoretical frameworks. That is, a coherent theoretical framework has to be established in order to understand facts, reality or phenomena. This framework is on the other hand in continuous change depending on the understanding of phenomena. This means that there is no independent measuring of reality that can validate interpretive theory. It has to be validated in its self-defining. This means that validation is not primarily done by establishing criteria that are external to the theory. Taylor (1985:109) expresses this in these two propositions:

1. There is such a thing as validating a social theory in its self-defining use, as well as establishing it as explanation/description.
2. Validating a theory as self-definition is in an important sense primary, because understanding what is involved in such validation will frequently be essential to confirming a theory, even as an adequate description/explanation.

Still, Taylor also has a distinct functional conception of validity. Validity is something one can test in practice:

This is so, because since theories enable practices to take a certain shape, a theory which badly misidentifies the goods we can seek in a certain domain will ground a practice which will fail to realize these goods. The practices informed by wrong theories will be in an important way self-defeating. (Taylor 1985:109)
This does not mean that testing a theory in practice means to see how well it can integrate independent entities in a description, but to “judge how practices fare when informed by the theory” (Taylor 1985:113).

This means that validity only can be done after the research, and preferably by the audience or reader. This is a possible validating strategy: The process is left to the reader. Still, something more has to be said on the plausibility of the research in this study.

Validity is here broadly understood as “the degree that a method investigates what it is intended to investigate”. (Kvale 1996:238) On an interpretive account it is assumed that all knowledge is perspectival. This means that when knowledge is to be evaluated it should be seen in the relevant perspectives or relations. Altheide and Johnson’s (1998:291) conception of validity-as-reflexive-accounting is fruitful in this respect. It discusses validity of research in the interaction between researcher, topic and sense-making. Kvale (1996) is making a similar point, namely that validating is an integrated part of the entire research process. It cannot be reduced to a test of method or results. Validating research is on these accounts the continuous reflection a researcher report throughout a study. This means that the substance of validation is an aspect of all chapters of this study, not limited to this point.

Still, in the following I will address some issues of validity explicitly:

1. Not addressing tolerance
2. Influence of the the researcher
3. The trustworthyness of the interviewees
4. Negative evidence, rival explanations, uncertainty

1) One of the essential questions of validity of this study is what the phenomenon or object in question is and how it should be conceptualized. Strangely enough, it is not obvious which practices, situations or cases tolerance refer to. Some will claim that racial and ethnical tolerance is one of the most important goals of education. Others will object, arguing that tolerance requires a disagreement or dislike of (moral) choice. Race and ethnicity are matters beyond choice, and therefore it is meaningless to use tolerance in such contexts. On the issue of tolerance of homosexuality, some would object that the objects of tolerance are persons, not actions or issues. One can tolerate homosexual persons, precisely because one finds homosexual practice immoral. Cultural tolerance is also ambiguous: It may refer to liberty for the individual to practice her culture as she wishes as long as this does not imply harm to others (Mill 1859/1991:13-14), or it may refer to the politics of
cultural recognition, in which society (for instance through education) actively supports marginal cultural groups (Taylor 1994b:38-44 and 65-66).\(^\text{12}\)

This means that there are no cases of tolerance commonly agreed upon. Tolerance is not the common minimal value or virtue persons with various moral convictions can agree upon. Heyd (1996:3) argues that in fact the disagreement of tolerance is more fundamental than that of moral theory. Persons, who radically disagree on the theory of right, virtue and duty, still have in common a repertory of examples. “But with tolerance, it seems that we can hardly find a single concrete case that would be universally agreed to be a typical object of discussion.” There is a lack of paradigm cases in the discussion of tolerance.

Does this study concern tolerance at all? Is it not just a misunderstanding of the question, and a description of something quite different than tolerance? To answer such a critical question it is vital to remember the purpose of this study: To describe and analyze tolerance as conceived in curricula. The focus is on what the actors in the different domains associate with tolerance, not whether this understanding is correct according to some normative conception of tolerance or who is most tolerant and why. This means that no conception of tolerance that the teachers have is incorrect or correct, with an exception of extreme cases of confusion and incoherence. A revision of Walzer’s (1997:1-7) broad conceptualization of tolerance as “how to deal peacefully with difference”, will be useful as an outer conceptual border of tolerance. Within this border tolerance takes on a multitude of shapes.

This is of course also a question of definitory power. Who is to decide what tolerance really means? My view is that it is vital to hear the voices of the practical field, in order to understand phenomena and conceptions.

Carmines and Woods (2004:1171) comment that: “The association of an abstract theoretical concept with its empirical manifestation is at the heart of validity.” The problem with validity is to establish a fruitful communication between theory and data. In this study there is initially a gap between the sophisticated concepts of philosophy and everyday language of teachers. In establishing a communication, there is a danger of simplifying theoretical language in order to make a connection to data and to over-interpret data in order

\(^{12}\) Taylor is using respect and not tolerance in “The politics of recognition” (1994). Gutman (1994b) distinguishes between tolerance and respect in the Introduction, tolerance being the extensive acceptance of different views as long as they do not imply harm, while respect involves an acceptance of the other’s point of view as a genuine moral one, although one do not agree. This distinction is parallel to Walzer’s tolerance 3 and tolerance 4 (Walzer 1997:10-11), and may therefore be conceived as two different positions on tolerance. This is the conceptual view of this study, and in this terminology Taylor’s “politics of recognition” is a form of cultural tolerance.
to connect to theory. However, in order to make a connection, I cannot see another alternative.

2) The second issue concerns the role of the researcher. In what sense have I as a teacher-educator and theologian with interest in difference, the moral dimensions of education and the dialectics between practice and theory and facts and values, influenced the study? In many respects, surely. Being an interpretative researcher means choosing and declaring perspectives or theoretical frames. Still, I have tried to open these perspectives in order to include alternative theories and interpretations. The methods were designed in order to establish a rich material, which could be interpreted by different sets of theories. In presenting and discussing the analyses I have emphasized the attempt to work down-top as well as top-down. Also in the conceptual and theoretical framework I have chosen a design with different matrixes, opening up for a variety of interpretations.

The influence of the researcher in the interview-situation has two aspects: First, I deliberately played down my own role as a teacher-educator and a theologian. That is, the respondents knew I was working at Finnmark University College, but not much else. One of the informants was a previous student. This may have influenced her thinking about education and ethics, but tolerance was never a topic in the classes I taught. She may have told her colleagues about my background, but nobody commented on it. And there was no obvious difference in kinds and modes of answers of these teachers than the other. When asked, I told about my background. One respondent did so in a break while I changed cassettes. At the time I sensed a change in her mood after this, in the sense that she became somewhat less open-hearted. I have, however, listened to the tape of the interview and analyzed the transcript carefully, not finding any main change. It might as well have been my own expectations that lead to the immediate impression. The reason for not telling my professional background in general was my fear of restricting the respondents. They might connect theologians, church and religion with intolerance, and answering on their different assumptions of my reason for the study. This could lead the focus from the everyday educational contexts to other issues, for instance religion.

The second aspect concerning my influence on the interview-situation is that interviewing is best conceived as a joint construction. This means that the respondents’ answers cannot be interpreted in isolation, but as a part of a dialogue. This is why I normally refer the question in or before the quotes from the interviewees in the study.

3) Then to the third issue of validity: Can one trust that the interviewees gave valid information? There is no way to know for sure. The accounts of the respondents were made
in conversation with me at a particular time and place of their lives. They could possibly have told other stories, and probably would have if I had been interviewing them later.

One point is important in validating the informants’ accounts. In asking them to tell stories from their educational experience, the material is one interpretive level lower than if they had been asked generally about tolerance as an educational ideal. On the latest question, they would themselves have to interpret their experiences and make a general account. As argued above, such generalizations may turn out not to be so general after all. In telling narratives of their experiences, one can assume that the data are closer to their first hand professional and personal experience. In that sense they are more valid.

One way of validating in the sense of making sure that the accounts of the respondents are correctly understood is to let them participate in or respond to the alternative interpretations. For practical reasons this was not done. The time span from the time the interviews were done to written interpretations was over three years. My judgment was then that the respondents probably had forgotten much of the content in the interview, and certainly specific accounts. There are, however, two other reasons for not doing so: The interpretations are the researcher’s new readings of the data. These are particular interpretations, conditioned by certain theoretical perspectives. These perspectives are most probably not shared by the respondents, and it would be impractical to first explain the different theoretical perspectives to all before starting a discussion on interpretation. The second reason is that the interviews are conceived as joint constructions of meanings, and that the theoretical interpretation of these common constructions is the researcher’s responsibility. This does not mean that respondent-participation is not possible and desirable in certain research designs. It simply means that for practical and methodological reasons it was considered not necessary in this study.

4) The fourth point on validity concerns alternative data and theories. Has not a theoretical framework guided the establishing of data and theory in such a fashion that it is self-confirming? Is it so that only the data that fits with the theory is described, and the choice of theoretical perspective prevents alternative interpretation? As mentioned above, the data is rich, and the presentation of data is done on the rule that both typical and divergent material is presented. That is, after finding patterns in the material, the patterns have been checked for negative examples. Also as mentioned above, matrixes of different conceptual and theoretical perspectives were established, and alternative theories were used in order to give the interpretation that fitted best with the larger contexts.
There has been an aim to validate the study during the different stages. The study has been designed in order to enable alternative data and theory in the process of interpretation.

1.9.2 Reliability

Are the results of the study dependable and consistent? This is a question of reliability. Kirk and Miller (1986:41-42) distinguishes between quixotic reliability, diachronic reliability and synchronic reliability. Quixotic reliability refers to instances where a single method leads to reliable, but invariant results, for instance a broken thermometer. Diachronic reliability refers to “the stability of observation through time”, while synchronic reliability refers to “similarity of observations within the same time”. Being a contemporary study, this question of reliability here is synchronic.

It is quite usual to distinguish between internal and external reliability. The first concerns the interior of the study: Whether another researcher would match the data to the same design in the same way as the original researcher. External reliability concerns the entire study’s relation to other studies: Whether another researcher studying the same phenomena under the same conditions would come to the same conclusions. (Seale 1999:140) Here the focus will be on internal reliability.

Also reliability concerns the entire research process, from choosing and presenting methods that secure reliable data to the role of the researcher in collecting and organizing the materials and the interpretation. Some of the issues already discussed in relation to validity also have relevance for reliability, for instance the description and reflection on the process of interviewing. I have already described a number of aspects important for reliability: The connection between research questions and design, the role of the researcher, the checking of data and the theoretical framework of the study (Miles and Huberman 1994: 278). Here I want to focus on two additional issues: Transcription and coding.

As mentioned the transcriptions, which were made by others, were checked and corrected. The transcriptions contained pauses, mm’s, indication of laughter and so on. The further question, however, is in what form they are displayed in the text of the study. Two main options are possible: One is to modify the quotes by omitting repetition and other elements that make the texts hard to read. The other is to display the texts as close to the original transcript as possible. I have chosen the last. The advantages of the first are obvious: It is easier to see the main points the respondents are doing, and the larger lines in their accounts. However, operating with less edited quotes enables the readers to a somewhat larger degree to draw their own conclusions from the material. Editing the
transcripts is of course one additional round with interpretation. The reader is getting the possibility to enter a “lower-interference description” (Seale 1999:148). In order to strengthen this point I have included all the primary Norwegians texts together with the English translations of the quotations. I also give rather elaborate quotations, in order to establish contexts for the readers’ interpretations of the texts.

The other issue concerns coding. Seale (1999:154) argues that “coding that fixes meanings too early in the analytic process may stultify creative thought, blocking the analyst’s capacity for seing new things.” He suggests calling the initial stage indexing, and the later, conceptual clearer phase, coding. I do not distinguish the terminology like this, but the factual distinction corresponds quite well with the initial coding in this study as described above. In order not to over-theorize the data, a large number of codes were developed. In the coding process, they were reduced to a certain number of core codes. The relations between these core codes were then analyzed.

One example of this is the analysis of the theories of tolerance among the teachers. Initially in-vivo and free coding was used in order to create codes close to the respondents’ language. Gradually these codes were gathered in families, corresponding to the main theories in the study. But in this process theoretical perspectives emerged from the coding of the data, which were supplementary to the established, main theories of tolerance. This result would maybe have been lost using strict codes from the start.

1.9.3 Generalization

The issue of generalization is often conceived as external validity: Whether the results of the research are valid for other contexts. In quantitative research this is most often a case of transferring from a sample to a population in statistic generalization. In qualitative research there are two forms of generalization: Theoretical/analytical and case-to-case (Miles and Huberman 1994:279). Theoretical/analytical generalization is to provide arguments that the results of the study have wider range than the particular phenomenon and context studied. Case-to-case generalization is thought possible through thick descriptions of one case. Through these detailed descriptions another may transfer the knowledge to a foreign context. (Seale 1997:106-121)

There are two extremes in the view of generalization in qualitative research. One is that generalization is neither possible, nor desirable. Understanding is context-bound and individual. Every reading is particular. The other is that qualitative research is to be valued after its generalizability. Andersen (1997:128) is arguing for a position in-between.
Generalization is a matter of degrees. Qualitative research should however specify its valid sphere for generalization. Andersen (1997:135-136) suggests three criteria for good generalizations: 1) They should be able to synthesize a complex case-material in a simple manner, including core perspectives. 2) It should be in line with other accepted research in the field. 3) It should be possible to test the generalizations in a case study.

In this study the question of generalization is mainly one of the perceived domain. The C97 is the main material at the formal domain, and the selected articles constitute the main corpus of academic publications on tolerance in the ideological domain. The question is: Are the practical accounts, the conceptualizations and the theories of tolerance among the 15 teachers in the study valid for more or all Norwegian teachers? Before answering this question, another has to be asked: Is it necessary that they are?

In a strict sense I would argue no. The purpose of this study is to understand conceptions of tolerance in detail. The focus is not the particular, not the general. It is a case study, investigating whether there are similarities or differences in the understanding of tolerance between 15 teachers, C97 and academic articles. Independent of the result, the conclusion would be able to say something about different understandings of tolerance and curriculum communication of tolerance between the three domains. That would be interesting in itself.

It could of course be argued that one cannot change conceptions and make policy-decisions on basis of conceptions of 15 teachers. The point here is however not only the number, but the arguments and positions. On this account the teachers may be conceived as advocates of certain conceptual and theoretical positions. Then it is not a question of number, but of argument.

On the other hand there are reasons to believe the teachers can be conceived as representative for teachers who experience difference in their everyday practice. 1) Two schools and ten of the teachers were sampled as critical cases. The degree of plurality and cultural conflict was high in these schools. This should lead to a material that is rich in descriptions of different situations, relations and complexities of tolerance. 2) The third group of teachers was sampled as a more typical case. One can of course discuss what is typical, but the school was lower on cultural plurality than the other two. It was a different kind of school, contributing to richness of the data. 3) The respondents vary in age, gender, experience and teaching-subject. Variation in background should produce different accounts. 4) Their conceptualizations and theories of tolerance related well to tolerance theory. They expand conceptions and theory where these theories of tolerance do not
provide a good understanding of their experiences. 5) It is tried to make a synthetic
generalization of the teachers’ conceptions of tolerance, which is possible to use in further
research. On this account the criteria suggested by Andersen for generalizations should be
met.

These arguments, however, are not decisive. The important issue is understanding
tolerance in all its complexity in this particular case.

1.10 The structure of the study

The study is divided into four main parts: First, a formatting, introductory part which now is
about to be concluded (chapter one). Secondly, a theoretical part, establishing a theoretical
framework of curriculum theory (chapter two) and analytical schemes of tolerance theory
(chapter three). These two chapters are asking what curriculum and tolerance is,
theoretically understood.

The third part of the study is the material analysis of the understandings of tolerance
at the three curricula domains. Chapter four is the largest chapter in the study, analyzing the
main material, the interviews of the teachers. Then the understanding of tolerance in C97 is
analyzed (chapter five). Finally there is an analysis of the same issue in academic articles at
the ideological domain (chapter six).

The fourth and last part of the study is trying to compare and interpret the results in
part three. In chapter seven the understandings at the three domains are systematically
compared on the questions of understanding of tolerance in practice, conceptualization of
tolerance and theories of tolerance. Chapter eight is trying to interpret this result, in form of
a discussion how it can be understood within curriculum theory.
Part II Education and tolerance. Some theoretical aspects

2. Curriculum theory. A theoretical framework

This is a study on tolerance in a specific context, namely an educational one. The concern here is to map and analyze tolerance within the Norwegian compulsory school. It is necessary to develop a conception of education, which will constitute a theoretical framework. The empirical analysis of tolerance will take place within this framework.

In order to conceptualize the sphere of education, curriculum\textsuperscript{13} theory\textsuperscript{14} will be used. The reason for this is that this theoretical tradition is concerned with the relationship between curriculum as official document and actual teaching in schools. This study aims at describing and analyzing the conception of tolerance at both the intention domain and the perception domain, and curriculum theory will be helpful in constructing an understanding of the different domains and the relationship between them. It will also be fruitful in analyzing the role of the teacher and the different contexts the teacher work within.

The use of \textit{curriculum} in the study rests for a great part on the conceptualization of the field of curriculum made by John I. Goodlad in his book \textit{Curriculum Inquiry. The Study of Curriculum Practice} (Goodlad et al 1979). The first part of the chapter will therefore be

\textsuperscript{13} “Curriculum” comes from the Latin “currere” which means a running, course, race, career (Webster’s new world dictionary 1984)

\textsuperscript{14} The educational terminology varies between nations and traditions. \textit{Curriculum} is a key concept in Anglo-American educational tradition, while \textit{didactics} is a central concept in North and Central European educational theory. Still, Norwegian educational research has been influenced by both traditions. Usually \textit{didactics} is used as a key term, integrating the entire educational field (Engelsen 1988:47-48). Curriculum theory is then one discipline within didactics. It must however be emphasized that \textit{curriculum theory} includes more than the common Norwegian conception of \textit{curriculum} (Norwegian “læreplan”) as only a formal document. In the US \textit{curriculum} has traditionally been understood as a discipline within education, focusing on the educational \textit{what} (content) and the \textit{structure} of what, while \textit{pedagogy} has focused on the educational \textit{how} (teaching). This distinction has however become less clear-cut in recent American educational theory, where curriculum also deals with \textit{how}- and not at least \textit{why}-questions. (Pinar 1995:744-755, Doyle 1992:486-516) Curriculum in this broader sense includes a wider range of educational phenomena, and will be somewhat – but not entirely - equivalent to the North and Central European didactics (“didaktikk”). Westbury (1998:65-69) sees the theoretical traditions of curriculum and didactics along a continuum from institutional to classroom issues, at the same time as the traditions live in tension because of their different starting points (theory versus practice). The conception of curriculum in this study will be the last, broad one. Pinar et al. (1995) distinguishes curriculum theory from curriculum development in society and schools. Curriculum theory in the U.S. has lost much influence on actual curriculum development and practice, they claim. The present field of curriculum (curriculum theory) is characterized by: A focus on curriculum in a broad sense, an interest in the school as an institution, a domination of the humanities and arts and a integrating field that is not a stepchild of another field (as psychology, philosophy and the like) (Pinar 1995:50-51). For a collection of interesting discussions of curriculum versus didactics-issues, see Gundem and Hopmann 1998.
an interpretation of his theory,\textsuperscript{15} including identification of some unclear and problematic issues. The second part will discuss three topics of interest for this research – in the light of other curriculum theory. Thirdly I will present a modified model of Goodlad’s conceptual framework for analysis that will be used in this study.

2.1 Goodlad’s conceptual framework

2.1.1 Curriculum, theory and practice

John Inkster Goodlad (born 1920 in Canada) was a teacher, principal and school-director for seven years before he got his Ph.D. at University of Chicago in the 1940s (Who’s Who in the West 1969-70:354). There he took a course in curriculum theory, \textit{Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction}, taught by the famous curriculum scholar Ralph W. Tyler\textsuperscript{16}, more of duty than genuine interest (Goodlad et al 1979:2). But both the practice of teaching and theory of curriculum had a lasting effect on his academic work. His curriculum project can be seen as an attempt of bringing curriculum practice and theory as close together as possible.

Goodlad has an overwhelming academic production\textsuperscript{17}, but the focus here will be on the development of his conceptual framework of curriculum, presented in \textit{Curriculum Inquiry}\textsuperscript{18}. The book can be read as a summary of more than 20 years work with the curriculum theory. It started as an inter-disciplinary project at the University of Chicago in 1956, and was developed through empirical and theoretical research (at University of California, Los Angeles and other institutions). The theory has therefore the character of both developing during a long period of time, and of cooperation between several researchers. These are important facts to remember when it comes to interpretation and questions of coherence.

Although the theory is a result of cooperation and contribution from a number of researchers from various disciplines, Goodlad has played the key part in developing the

\textsuperscript{15} Goodlad does not use the word “theory” to describe his conceptual-work, which he regards as a framework for theory-development. He describes it as a bridge between practice and theory (Goodlad et al 1979:19). It can also be viewed as a meta-theory, a theory about curriculum language. In that respect it is a theory, and I will in the following describe it as such.

\textsuperscript{16} The four-step curriculum procedure outlined by Tyler (1949:1) is: 1) Pre-set goals, 2) selection and 3) organizing of experiences and 4) evaluation. It became known as the “Tyler-rationale”, and has had a great influence on curriculum theory.

\textsuperscript{17} In 1984 Goodlad had produced more than 20 books, some 200 articles in journals and encyclopedias and chapters in 60 or more books (Goodlad 1984:396). He has published a lot of articles etc. since then.

\textsuperscript{18} Some other presentations use earlier works by Goodlad, like Goodlad and Richter 1966 and Goodlad and Richter 1977, in which the conceptual system is more linear and rational. Goodlad et al 1979 presents a refined
conceptual framework. In *Curriculum Inquiry* this is apparent by the fact that Goodlad has written three chapters that introduce, elaborate and revise the conceptual framework. The rest of the chapters are mainly reports of research using Goodlad’s theory and focusing different parts and relations of the conceptual framework. In the first two chapters Goodlad presents a revised version\(^\text{19}\) of the theory first published in 1966 (Goodlad and Richter 1966). Then another revision is coming, namely the last chapter (chapter 14). In that chapter a new model (figure 2.1) is introduced as an illustration of the conceptual framework, as developed until 1979 (Goodlad et al 1979:348-349):

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\(^{19}\) Presented in the form of a model at page 22 (Goodlad et al 1979).
Figure 2.1: Goodlad’s conceptualization of curriculum (a simplified version of Goodlad et.al 1979:348-349).

The figure will be the focal point of this presentation of Goodlad’s theory. The model is an illustration of different important concepts within the field of curriculum and how the concepts are related. *Curriculum* is the key concept. There is no single definition of it.
because there is not one single curriculum, but several.\textsuperscript{20} Or to put it in Goodlad’s own words: “To call it \textit{a} curriculum is a mistake; it was many curricula, each successive one changing more profoundly than a larva changes in becoming a moth” (Goodlad et al 1979:20. See also p45).

To Goodlad \textit{curriculum} is a \textit{thick} concept, referring to a whole range of phenomena and the relationship between them. Goodlad does not give one definition of the word \textit{curriculum}; it is impossible in his mind.\textsuperscript{21} He seems to agree with those who argue that the various definitions illuminate important differences in curriculum theory, and that definitions of curriculum should be broad in order to include the various views of the field. In fact his entire conceptual framework may be seen as his definition of curriculum. This broad and plural conception of curriculum is important, because Goodlad several places argues against a too narrow and singular interpretation of his conceptual framework. His ambition is to develop a conceptual framework of curriculum that can embrace all curriculum theory and practice in a modern-western context.

Curriculum planning touches the whole of human existence, Goodlad says, and curriculum practice has been going on since God warned Adam and Eve (Goodlad et al 1979:38, 45-46). The ultimate purpose of curriculum is to “improve the knowledge, skills, or attitudes of identifiable learners, to help individuals get greater meaning and satisfaction from their lives." (Goodlad et al 1979:38, 45-46) This wide conception of “curriculum” includes first both curriculum \textit{content} and curriculum \textit{process}, secondly, curriculum \textit{intentions} and \textit{experiences}, and thirdly, \textit{theory} and \textit{practice}.

\subsection*{2.1.2 Process and content}
First I will focus on the question of \textit{process} and \textit{content or product}. Curriculum has, in the US context, traditionally been understood as different from instruction. While curriculum concerned questions of educational content (the educational \textit{what}), instruction and pedagogy concerned the questions on method (the educational \textit{how}). This is a distinction more or less abandoned in the educational theory, but remaining in educational practice. To Goodlad curriculum includes both content and method, both product and process.

\textsuperscript{20} “The search for a single definition (occupying more than a little of the literature in the field of curriculum inquiry) is futile simply because widely differing phenomena are viewed – justifiably – as a curriculum or as curricula.” (Goodlad and Su 1995:328)

\textsuperscript{21} “Just as there is no single definition of the word ‘curriculum’, there is no single theory” (Goodlad et al 1979:45).
The content and the methods are called the *substantive* elements of curriculum. Two other phenomena are included: The socio-political and the technical-professional. These three kinds of phenomena constitute the field of curriculum. The substantive curricula are educational product at various educational domains. They include the “educational commonplaces” as goals, subject matters, material, organizing, evaluation and the like. Socio-political and technical-professional are phenomena of the curriculum *process*; the complex way curricula are established in a political society. Asking why some human interests prevail other, identifies socio-political perspectives. The task of curriculum is therefore not just questions of which subject matters to include at what age-level and the like, but how curricula are results of political influences, power and compromises. The technical-professional phenomena are the specialized knowledge and skills needed by participants in all domains at the curricular process. The teachers have certain professional skills in teaching and educating, the school administrators at administrating schools and the school-politicians at making laws and regulations for education. Interesting questions in the curricular process are to what degree these skills exist at the different curricular domains, and the influence they have on the curricular process.

A question of debate is whether *curriculum* primarily refers to educational *intentions* or *experiences* – or both. James R. Gress (1988) argues that differences in the definition of curriculum may be linked to at least two important considerations. The first is the view of the relationship of formal learning within the school with learning as a result of hidden curriculum and learning outside schools. The other concerns whether one focuses upon the intentions of learning in one end or the actual, experienced learning at the other (Gress 1988:3). Goodlad one place says that a “reasonable definition of curriculum is “a set of intended learnings””22. But then he goes on to say that this definition does not encompass the curriculum experienced by the students. In the first edition of his theory Goodlad did not include the experienced curriculum of the student. The student was seen as the passive receptor of the curriculum. In the revised version the active student or the experienced domain is included. Therefore curriculum is not merely intentional, but also experiential. Goodlad describes another development in his theory,— a shift in focus from the substantial curriculum to both the process of and the substantial curriculum. (Goodlad et al 1979) That is, he came to be more interested in how curriculum actually was politically and socially

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developed than what it contained. Many of these processes are non-intentional and non-rational.

Thirdly, Goodlad’s conceptual framework of curriculum is meant to be helpful both for curriculum research and educational practice, both theory and practice (Goodlad et al 1979:27). As mentioned earlier, he had experiences both as a teacher, school administrator and researcher. So did many of his co-researchers. It seems urgent to Goodlad that there is connection between theory and practice. Theory must not be developed in an idealistic setting without reference to complex educational practice. And for practice to improve, it is necessary to rely on educational theory. He says that we know too little about what actually goes on in the schools and in the curriculum process. There has been much prescriptive curriculum theory – saying what ought to be, not what is. An important task for curriculum inquiry is therefore to do descriptive research. Since so little is known, the ambitions must first be to map the terrain. In order to do this, it is vital that the researchers get closer to curriculum practice. This is a concern he shares with other curriculum theorists, like Joseph J. Schwab and Ulf P. Lundgren (Schwab 1988:599-600, Lundgren 1979, Lundgren, Svingby, Wallin 1983).

So far we can conclude that Goodlad uses a thick description of curriculum. Curriculum includes both substantial and processual phenomena, intentions and experiences and theory and practice. We do not come closer to Goodlad’s definition of curriculum than his entire conceptual framework.

Such a thick conception of curriculum, include not only processes of knowledge in a narrow sense, but also of values. There are also reasons to understand knowledge and values not as separate entities, but more or less interwoven. That also means moral education in a wide sense is a perspective of all parts of education. (Afdal 2004, Moran 1987:3-18 and Afdal, Haakedal and Leganger-Krogstad 1997:260-266) The conceptual framework described in this chapter concerns therefore curricula in moral or character education, as well as other educational fields.

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23 Goodlad prefers inquiry to theory, and inquiry is often followed by”of curriculum practice” This is probably because he considers inquiry more than theory to be closely related to practice.

24 Goodlad’s own contribution in Curriculum Inquiry is the conceptual map. This has to be tested on empirical research, which in turn may force the conceptual map to change if shown incomplete or mistaken. Some of the changes of Goodlad’s conceptual scheme since the 1960s have been results of empiric research. But some have been the result of theoretical or philosophical deliberations of normative character (e.g. the view of the student or anthropology, chapter eight). That suggests the conceptual framework has a normative horizon. Goodlad makes this only partially explicit.
2.1.3 The curriculum model

After this inquiry into Goodlad’s conception of the word curriculum, it is time to move forward and explain the different elements and processes in his model (figure 2.1). I will start in the center of the model, and then move outwards.

As mentioned earlier, Goodlad considers curriculum to include two kinds of phenomena – substantial and processual. The various curriculum products (the ideal one, the formal one and perceived one and so on) cannot be seen and understood apart from the process of which they have been made. Goodlad’s model illustrates this by a lot of arrows between the four curricula domains and the surrounding phenomena. Each of the four central boxes illustrates separate domains of curricula. Goodlad defines domain (quoting Webster’s Dictionary) as “a distinctly delimited sphere of knowledge or of intellectual, institutional, or cultural activity”. He says further that the curriculum domain both includes the field of knowledge and the process of curriculum making. (Goodlad et al 1979:49)

Curriculum exists and is shaped in four different spheres or locations, so when the word curriculum is used, it can refer to one or several of these four domains.

Goodlad uses various concepts synonymous to domain. Originally he described the domains as levels - placing them in vertical order (Goodlad et al 1979:24). That brought a critique of curricular hierarchy. The model was interpreted as the societal level was the most and the instructional level the least important in the curricular process. This critique was a misreading of the theory, Goodlad says, and is consequently using domain as the main term and placing the domains in horizontal order. Still he is using level as a synonym to domain, as well as “locale” (Goodlad et al 1979:21), “terrain” (Goodlad et al 1979:50), “levels of decision making”, “curriculum-levels” and simply “different curricula”. Even if Goodlad uses domain more than level, and places the domains in horizontal order, it is still worth noting that the model has a linear character. This will be discussed later in connection with the question of relations.

The societal domain, the institutional domain, the instructional domain and the personal/experiential domain are all described as process domains – as opposed to substantive domains. These four domains are spheres of curriculum processes.

The societal domain is the sphere of controlling agencies, of politics and bureaucracy. This is the domain where curriculum policy, laws, regulations and the like are made. It is worth noticing that the societal curricula domain varies significantly between the

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25 The difference between process domains and product domains is not clear. This will be discussed later in this chapter.
United States (US) and Norway. In the US education is mainly a state concern\(^{26}\) and to some degree a local concern through delegation (Goodlad et al 1979:101). In Norway educational policy is centralized to a large degree. That means the societal domain in curriculum in the U.S. is found at different political levels, from the federal to the state and local level. In Norway the societal domain of curriculum will mainly be found at the national political level. Another matter is the degree to which the societal domain delegate curricular decisions to another domain like the institutional. However, also in the U.S. there have been – and still are – significant national concerns about education.\(^{27}\) Politicians and bureaucrats removed in time and space from the students therefore mainly make curriculum decisions in both countries (Goodlad et al 1979:78).

The societal domain has a decisive role in giving directives for the other curriculum domains. But these decisions and directives are not easy to interpret because the sphere of politics is complex. Goodlad differentiates the societal domain in many sub-publics, categorized by “regions, socioeconomic class, levels of educational attainment, age, occupation, and so on” (Goodlad et al 1979:52). Another relationship that Goodlad does not give much attention, is the one between politicians and bureaucrats. There are a lot of different actors at the societal scene, and there are good reasons for focusing the role of the educational bureaucrats in the curriculum process at the societal level.\(^{28}\)

The institutional domain refers to an educational institution, in most instances the school, the college or university. Different actors like the principal, school committees and teachers’ unions often represent the domain\(^{29}\).

The instructional domain is the sphere of the individual teacher or groups of teachers. There are a lot of curriculum processes at the instructional domain. The teacher stands in various contexts that influence the way curriculum is conceived and practiced.

The personal/experiential domain is the sphere of the students. This domain was included into Goodlad’s conceptual framework on the initiative of L. Tyler and F. Klein, and due to the argument that without a separate curriculum domain of the learners, the role

\(^{26}\) Education is one of the phenomena affected by The tenth amendment to the Constitution (The Bill of Rights): “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” (The World Almanac and book of facts 1998:519)

\(^{27}\) Tanner (1996:125) points out that since the middle of the twentieth century, curriculum has “increasingly become an arena for nationalizing influences” in the U.S. The “Sputnik-shock” in the United States in 1957, when Russia launched a satellite before the U.S., made curriculum in the sense of “course-content improvement” a national issue to a larger degree than before. Another example is found in the report “A nation at risk” (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983) that emphasizes national responsibility for education in order to for the US to be competitive against flourishing Asian economy.


\(^{29}\) Goodlad does not mention teachers’ unions.
of the student would be instrumental and passive. This is not how a student experiences – or should experience - the curricula. (Goodlad et al 1979:8-9)

So far nothing has been said about the relationship between the domains. That will be discussed in some more detail below. Here it is only necessary to notice that there are two-way arrows between the domains, indicating influences from for instance the societal domain on the instructional domain and vice versa. These relations are characterized by interpretations and transactions, meaning that not only is there a question about interpreting and understanding (the substantial) curricula, but also transacting and negotiating between them.\(^\text{30}\) The curriculum processes are ideally open and democratic, but in real life a matter of power. To overlook this realistic socio-political aspect would be to idealize curriculum inquiry and theory.

The same kinds of relations exist between the separate domains and the various contexts. In the earlier versions of his model, Goodlad was mainly concerned with the relationship between different kinds of knowledge and the various curriculum domains. His main concern was that decisions on curriculum processes and content should be on the basis of funded knowledge as opposed to conventional wisdom. Goodlad does not define funded knowledge, but speaks of this knowledge as rational. This kind of knowledge is funded, probably by empirical data, reason and a scientific method. The concept of funded knowledge, developed in the late 1950s and 1960s, seems initially to imply a neo-positivistic foundational epistemology, separating universally justified knowledge from unjustified contextual beliefs and values (conventional wisdom). The role of funded knowledge is however of decreasing importance through the development of Goodlad’s conceptual framework. This is due to two considerations: That knowledge and values are not separate entities, but entwined, and that the contexts of the domains are not limited solely to the question of knowledge, but that knowledge has to be understood as entwined in larger cultural contexts and patterns. It is however worth noting that Goodlad does not leave the conception of funded knowledge as opposed to conventional wisdom. Although the role of funded knowledge is somewhat moderated and conventional wisdom is seen as an important factor in the curriculum process, Goodlad seems to keep a foundational view of epistemology throughout the book.

Values get increased significance during the development of Goodlad’s theory. Starting with a separate domain for values, he later comes to the conclusion that values are “…pervasive and express themselves in the form of personal or group interests at all levels
and in all decisions of curriculum making even when we believe these decisions to be very “scientific”. As MacDonald points out, knowledge cannot be divorced from human interest...” (Goodlad et al 1979:346). Values therefore get a place in the field of interaction between the domains and the rest of the context in the model. This is meant to indicate that each domain, all of the context and all the relations include values. Goodlad is not satisfied with the visualizing of values in the model, because the lack of precision.

So far Goodlad’s model identifies two elements in the context, or the surrounding milieu as he calls it, namely knowledge and values and the relationship of these with the different domains. To be more specific about the socio-political influence on the curriculum process, he quotes Schwab in identifying six forces that determine curriculum. These are:

- **Society**: The need of the polity and the economy (civitas).
- **Culture**: The common culture and its subcultures.
- **Child/family**: Client-perceived wants and needs.
- **Knowledge**: Knowledge resources.
- **Research**: Communities of inquiry.
- **Teachers**: Professional interests of teachers and administrators.  

Goodlad’s model (figure 2.1.) mainly describes the processes, not the content, of curriculum making and interpreting. Each of the domains does contain “substantive elements of curriculum inquiry and practice,” but in an earlier chapter Goodlad uses a somewhat different classification on the substantial domains or stages of curricula. The substantial domains of curriculum are five: The ideological, the formal curriculum, the perceived curriculum, the operational curriculum and the experiential domain (Goodlad et al 1979:58-65). The domains are described as follows:

### 2.1.4 Five domains

#### Ideological curricula

The ideological curricula are not results of political and educational compromises, but of an ideological – in the sense of ideal - conviction of what education should be. Ideological is

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30 Interpretation refers to the substantive curricula, while transactions are socio-political processes.
31 For a short description, see Goodlad et al. 1979:350-351.
32 This conceptualization was made in cooperation with M. F. Klein and K. A. Tyle in connection with a research project on curriculum in the United States in the mid-1970s. The three of them stand as co-authors of the second chapter, although Goodlad has written the main parts (Goodlad et al 1979:9, 43).
not understood as a closed, but as an open term. He uses different and often more or less self-constructed words like ideological, ideational and ideaistic (Goodlad and Su 1992:329 and Goodlad et al 1979:59), to indicate this. An ideological position is a rational one, which is open for arguments, but still funded in a firm conviction of the purpose and meaning of education. These curricula are not concerned with the actual contexts of the schools and how the ideas should be realized in (or outside) a classroom. Implementation is left for others. They do therefore not have to compromise in any way with politicians, administrators, teachers or someone else in order to get the curriculum taught to the students. The ideological domain is not included in the socio-political process. It is a “pure”, substantial curriculum, often developed in an academic context.

In what form does the ideological curriculum appear? That is not at all clear. It may seem, however, that the ideological curricula are more or less proposals of actual curricula, not just fragmented points of view on how a certain curriculum should be. The ideological curricula are found in textbooks, teachers’ guides and the like. Frances Klein also identifies the ideological domain with various resources to assist the teacher (Goodlad et al 1979:178-179). Here one can see the difference in educational context from the US to Norway. In the US the federal and state government does not have a large influence on the content in textbooks. The publishers have a great amount of liberty regarding textbook content, only restricted by state laws that often are results of political lobbying done by various groups. The publishers can be motivated both by profit or/and idealistic reasons. The lack of governmental regulations on the production of textbooks and the diversity of state and local curricula, open up possibilities to produce textbooks according to what Goodlad would call an ideological curriculum. (Pinar et al 1995:775-780 and Venezky 1992:436-461)

In Norway textbooks, teachers’ guidelines and other resource material would not be pure ideological curricula for a number of reasons. One is that the textbooks and the material are produced according to the formal, national curriculum. It is therefore not an ideological pre-formal source, but an interpretation and operationalization of the formal curriculum. Besides until the year 2000 all textbooks in Norway had to be approved by a government agency. This secured formal and national control on educational resources in compulsory school, which other countries prefer to be without. There are reasons to believe

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33 Following the 1997 Educational reform was a discussion on the rules for approval of text-books. The arrangement was established in 1889 and Norway had a long history of checking whether text-books were loyal to the national curriculum. After a period when Nasjonalt Læremiddelsenter (National Center of Curriculum-resources) approved text-books, the arrangement was abandoned in year 2000. (Bachmann et.al. 2004:59)
that text-books have not departed from the national curriculum since year 2000. That also means that the ideological curriculum gets another content and meaning in Norway that in the United States.

In the last chapter of *Curriculum Inquiry* Goodlad is discussing the latest revisions of his theory. Here he says that the ideological curriculum is two things. First, it is the first level or domain – in a way preceding all the others. Secondly, it can be developed at each of the other domains. That is, the schools, teachers and students can have more or less comprehensive views of an ideological curriculum at their respective domain or level. This last function of the ideological domain can however be interpreted as a result of increasingly complex relations between the domains in Goodlad’s theory.

*Formal curricula*

The formal curricula are officially approved curricula. In the United States that would mean approval by the state or local school board, in Norway by the National Assembly, the *Storting*. Formal curricula are documents, sanctioned by a democratic political institution. They are products of political compromises. The documents are also interesting sources of a society’s educational interests and conception.

This is the domain which ordinary is understood by the Norwegian word *læreplan* (curriculum). Goodlad emphasizes however that one must never consider the formal curriculum as the factual one, the one taught in schools and learned by students. The formal document is not the educational reality, but an idealized and politicized image of what the school should be like. It is a document of intentions, and the intentions, Goodlad says, are better understood by studying the content (what is to be studied by students) than statements of aims and objectives. Idealization in formal curricula can be of two sorts: First, in prescribing an ideal school which cannot be reached by those who are set to reach it, the school administration, the teachers and the students. That is, the goals, the ideals are set to high. Secondly, in giving a description of the actual school omitting the problems, conflicts and limitations schools actually have. Both the prescription and the description of the school can be, and often are, idealized in the formal curricula.

There is often a long distance between the decision-makers and the classroom. The relation between formal curricula and teaching is a debated and complex one. This is an issue that will re-appear several times in the following chapters. Gundem (1990:33-35) identifies three functions of formal curricula: The reflecting, the mediating/informing and
the guiding. Formal curricula are cultural products. They will reflect values, beliefs and knowledge of a particular place and time. They are sources of particular societies’ views of knowledge, education, learning, community and the human being. Secondly, the formal curricula are mediators between government and schools. They inform schools about values and knowledge that are considered to be essential in a society, and the consequences this is meant to have for education. Thirdly, formal curricula have a guiding or regulating function. How detailed this guidance or regulation should be and how it actually works, are issues for discussion. Gundem tries to balance formal guiding with school’s and teacher’s autonomy.

There is a lot to say about formal curricula. But this is not the place to describe differences in design, organization and so on. One issue is however especially relevant here, namely the degree of substantial specification in the curriculum document. On a hierarchical view of curricula, the less specific the formal curriculum is, the more curricular decisions are thought to be left for the next domain or level, namely the institutional/the perceived. The National curricula for compulsory education of 1974 and 1987 were literally translated frame curricula; they identified certain topics that should be taught within a period of three years. What these topics should contain, when they should be thought and how, was for the local school to decide. That is, local schools had to make a local formal curriculum as well. This should be a more detailed curriculum than the national one, but it should also bear the character of the local context. The local ones should be contextualized curricula. Local curricula are therefore not only descriptions of subject-content, but comprehensive documents where the national curriculum is re-contextualized to a local setting. It should include the school’s basic educational philosophy, as well as goals, aims, content, methods and so on of various subjects, inter-subject activities and moral education. The success of this form of curriculum making has been debated, but the point here is that formal curricula in a Norwegian context also include a local level. A council at each school, with parents and teachers as members, is sanctioning local curricula. The 1997 National curriculum for compulsory education is more detailed and precise on issues of content, method and organization. The space for local curricular decision and development is limited. Still local schools are supposed to make local curricula (The Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway 1996:60-84).

35 The expression moral education has no equivalent in Norwegian educational language, but expressions like “verdiformidling”, “oppdragelse” cover parts of it.
Perceived curricula

The perceived curricula are curricula of the minds. They are more or less conscious and comprehensive conceptualizations of the curricula in the minds of parents, school administrators and particularly teachers. It is important to notice that the perceived curricula are not simply interpretations of formal curriculum, but the actual conceptions parents, teachers and others have of curriculum. These conceptions are formed not only by the formal curriculum, but a variety of other personal and cultural factors like the person’s educational philosophy, classroom practice, colleagues and local culture. Something as trivial as how carefully the teacher has read the formal curriculum is one of the factors influencing the degree of influence from the formal to the perceived domain.

The parents own school experience may be as important to how they perceive curriculum as the national curriculum. A Norwegian study concluded that teachers’ experience as students at primary school and the code at the school where they started to teach, are the most influential factors for their own teaching and understanding of their role as teachers. It is reasonable to believe these factors also will influence their view of curriculum.

According to Goodlad an interesting field of study is empirical research on the teachers’ perception of the extant curriculum, and their attitudes to what they perceive as curriculum reality. This is an important concern of this study.

Operational curricula

The operational curricula are what is taught. What a teacher thinks the curriculum is, what he thinks his practiced curriculum is and how he actually is teaching, are different matters. Goodlad is particularly concerned with two things about the operational curricula. First, we know little about what actually goes on in the classrooms. Secondly, it is hard to get a picture of what “really” goes on; it will always be a picture in the eye of the beholder. The teacher himself sees everything from where he stands, and is surprised when confronted with another story of the teaching (through video, an observer or the like).

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36 “What has been officially approved for instruction and learning is not necessarily what various interested persons or groups perceive in their minds to be the curriculum.” (Goodlad et al. 1979:61-62)
37 Jordell (1986:466) has done a major empirical study of the effect of teachers’ education. His conclusion is that students come from and return to the factual school. Teachers’ education is many ways an intermediate phase, where a conception of an ideal school dominates. This ideal conception is however ambiguous because neither the actual teaching at the colleges, nor the in-service training at elementary and secondary schools are ideal.
38 There existed, however, a number of classroom studies prior to Goodlad. He has made his own contribution in Goodlad 1984.
observation is connected with several methodological problems. Quantification of certain phenomena loses the important moments and processes, and qualification become easily too dependent on the observers’ preconceptions and stereotypes. On the other hand, Goodlad’s second concern seems to imply a neo-positivistic ideal of uncovering one true reality of classroom practice. An interpretive or constructivist approach would emphasize the necessity of choice of perspective in classroom research.

**Experienced curricula**

The experienced curricula are the ways the students experience curricula. It is the student’s total experience of curriculum, not only the part influenced by teaching and the school as a whole. Students’ experience of for instance tolerance may have been influenced by a variety of factors like family, media, peers, religious beliefs and the like. Goodlad uses the expression *experience* in this domain as interpreted experience. The interpretation takes place at different domains. The student interprets his or her experiences, and the researcher tries to interpret the student’s interpretations of his or her experiences. It is impossible to reach a “pure” experience. There are other methodological problems at this domain. For instance, it is nearly impossible to sort out the consequences of curriculum from the consequences of other agencies of socialization, such as family, media and the like.

It is not obvious how the two conceptual frameworks – the four process domains and the five substantial domains – are related to each other. As mentioned earlier, the illustration of the final model does not include the substantial domains. But they appear in the text in the last chapter. The ideological domain is not included in the process domains and the model because it, in Goodlad’s opinion, is not influenced by the sociopolitical aspects of curriculum development that the conceptualization seeks to include (Goodlad et al 1979:355). Goodlad seems to think of the ideological curriculum as a rather decontextualized, “pure” ideal, value-laden phenomenon, not infected by political and bureaucratically compromises and “conventional wisdom”. If, however, it would turn out that the ideological curriculum also is a part in curricular processes, there seems to be no reason for leaving it out of the model.

The two conceptualizations could be compared as follows:
Table 2.1: An overview of Goodlad’s process and substantial domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goodlad’s curricula domains</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The process domain</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Societal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Institutional</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Instructional</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Personal/experiential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences at domain one has already been commented upon. At domain two the similarity is striking: The formal document is made as a result of the curriculum process at the societal domain. The similarity is even larger at domains four and five. The instructional and operational domains are nearly identical, and so are the personal/experiential and the experienced curriculum. At domain three, however, there is a difference in focus. The perceived curriculum is more personal orientated than the institutional curriculum. The perceived curriculum is the curricula of the mind, while the institutional domain is the arena for local curricula processes. It is the place where national ambitions meet local traditions. The difference is therefore mainly between institutional processes and personal conception.

2.1.5 Two interpretations

There are two interpretations of the relationship between process and substantial domains. One is that the two conceptualizations together cover the curriculum field. The other is that the substantial domains are a subdivision of the main four process domains.

In the first interpretation the relationship could be illustrated like this:
Table 2.2: A matrix-interpretation of Goodlad’s curricula domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum processes</th>
<th>Societal</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Instructional</th>
<th>Personal/ experiental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceived</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This matrix displays the possibility of conception of several substantial domains at the various process domains and that the separate substantial domains can be understood at different process domains. An example on the first possibility is that at the societal domain, there exist conceptions of the ideological curriculum. There are differences in opinion on what curriculum ideally should be. But there are also conceptions of the formal curriculum. The formal curricula are texts, but the texts in the persons’ minds are always interpreted texts. This automatically involves the perceived domain - it is a question of how persons at the societal domain perceive curricula. But it may also be their perception of the school administrators’, teachers’ and parents perception of curricula. Further on, the persons at the societal domain have a perception of the operational curricula, how curricula are taught in schools. And at last they may have a perception of how students experience curricula.

The second possibility allows comparison between the conception of for instance the ideological curricula at the societal domain, the institutional domain, the instructional domain and the experiential domain. One interesting issue would be the supposed difference of the ideal curricula in the politicians’ minds compared with the ideal curricula in the students’ minds.

The other possible interpretation of the relationship between the process and substantial domains is that the last ones simply are subdivisions of the first. The substantial domains were developed in connection with one specific research-project. These can therefore be considered as a specification of the general ones.

Goodlad does not elaborate on the relationship between the substantial and the process domains other that they are entwined. In this study the analytical possibilities of seeing the process and substantial domains as supplementary will be used, for instance in
distinguishing between the teachers ideological or more theoretical conceptions of tolerance from the formal and perceived ones.

This chapter aims at a revised model, based on Goodlad’s conceptual framework that will take a personal perspective on the local level. This will however be combined with relations to the school as institution. Before this model can be constructed, it is necessary to discuss three issues in connection to Goodlad’s theory that are particularly important for this study.

2.2 The issue of normativity

The question of normativity is recurring in curriculum theory and research. Normative is here distinguished from descriptive. To be descriptive is to describe and explain educational theory and/or practice. To be normative is to take an educational position, to express and defend a specific educational theory and/or practice as good, right or true. This implies conceptions of good or right education, conceptions that are value-laden. In education, and curriculum theory especially, the term prescriptive is often used as opposed to descriptive. Historically, curriculum theory has had a distinct prescriptive function and ambition. Prescription in curriculum theory has often been conceived as prescribing more or less detailed curriculum procedures to the field of practice, and can therefore possibly be understood as a rather detailed normative curriculum enterprise. However, the distinction between prescriptive and normative is easily blurred, and in this study the concepts are used synonymously.

2.2.1 An educated person

The relationship between the descriptive and normative perspective in education is viewed differently. There is a common agreement that education, both as practice and theory, involves normative decisions and issues. The extension of these is however debated. The

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39 It must be added that Goodlad’s theory is not in every respect clear. Firstly, Goodlad does use different concepts synonymously and without precise clarification. One example is the numerous words indicating level or domain. The word level indicates some sort of linear classification, domain does not. Secondly, the texts where Goodlad introduces and elaborates his conceptual framework are limited more or less to three chapters in Curriculum Inquiry. This limitation leaves a lot of questions unanswered. Thirdly, it is a theory in process, starting in the 1960s and evolving during two or three decades. Even through the book “Curriculum Inquiry” the theory is revised and changed. The different interpretations can refer to the theory at various stages of this development. Fourthly, Goodlad’s is a comprehensive theory, trying to cover both a large field of curriculum and a variety of contexts. When the theory is interpreted and applied to a limited part of this field or to a specific context, those perspectives will influence the conceptions. Fifthly, Goodlad’s theory is developed in cooperation with a number of researchers. The various inputs from others are not always coherent, and that
British philosopher of education R. S. Peters (1966:25) describes normativity in education as follows: “It [normativity] implies that something worth while is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a moral acceptable manner.”

Normativity is in educational literature often connected with the question of purpose or aims. The choice of aim is a normative one; it is a question of which aims have the greater value. Peters has a somewhat different approach, because education in his mind always implies what is thought valuable. Education is not a neutral tool that can be used instrumentally to realize some extrinsic value. Education has intrinsic value, because an “educated person” means a person with virtues. Education, or rather training, that does not achieve something worthwhile, is by definition not education. The question of normativity is however not limited to the sphere of aims, content and the matters. Peters also claims that the manner must be moral acceptable. The educational how therefore also has normative implications. (Goodlad et al 1979:23-30)

These are basic educational issues, which also concern curriculum. In curriculum theory the expression prescriptive is often used to indicate the normative focus. A discussion throughout Curriculum Inquiry is whether Goodlad’s conceptual framework is descriptive, prescriptive or both. This is a question with importance also for this study since it will use a revised version of Goodlad’s theory. The question can however be formulated in two separate issues.

2.2.2 Normative functions

The first issue concerns the normative or prescriptive function the theory is meant to have. This is the question whether Goodlad’s theory is a description of a curriculum reality or a prescription of one – or both a description and a prescription at the same time. The second issue concerns whether or to what extent and in what way Goodlad’s theory, seen as a descriptive theory, has normative assumptions. This concerns the larger question of whether – and if so, how - theories are value-laden, which cannot in any depth be dealt with here. Through the following discussion several assumptions in Goodlad’s theory of value-character is identified. They can be interpreted as frustrations with modern American educational context and search for a new paradigm of educational and curriculum theory.

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creates ambivalence or even paradoxes. Examples are the relationship between product and process domains, the question of normativity and the question of relations.

An even more interwoven relationship between the descriptive and normative aspects in education is found in Gabriel Moran 1987.
Goodlad’s own answer to whether his theory should have descriptive, prescriptive or both functions, is given in the last chapter of *Curriculum Inquiry*: Both. But there is a longer journey to that answer which is important to briefly recapitulate in order to discuss his conclusion. To give a context to Goodlad’s discussion on the prescriptive and descriptive aspects of curriculum, it is useful to give a brief note on Schwab’s “The practical”.

From the late 1960’s on, a part of curriculum research has made what could be called a descriptive turn. This meant a shift in focus from “ought”-questions to “is”-questions. Curriculum theory had in the tradition of Tyler asked what the curriculum ends and means should be, rather than what they actually are in educational practice. With some researchers there was an increasing feeling that prescriptive curriculum theory moved away from educational practice, and that there was a considerable gap between theory and practice. This meant theory had little influence on practice. It also meant that curriculum theory was made under ideal conditions – without knowledge of the limitations, problems and complexity of curriculum thinking, planning and decisions in schools and society. Theory therefore had little explaining and prescriptive power. The actual schools, teachers, classrooms and students differed too much from the generalized, idealized schools, teachers, classrooms and students.

This made Joseph J. Schwab in 1969 to declare “the curriculum field is moribund”.\(^{41}\) Instead of theory, curriculum needed three other forms of inquiry, he claimed, *the eclectic, the practical* and *the quasi-practical*. Curriculum inquiry must be *eclectic*, and include a variety of disciplines, not only the behavioral and social sciences, and theories. These theories and disciplines are seen as complementary, each with a fruitful, but incomplete perspective (Scwab 1988:593-595). Curriculum inquiry must also be *practical*, that is “a complex discipline, relatively unfamiliar to the academic and differing radically from the disciplines of the theoretic.” (Scwab 1988:587) Schwab’s article can be interpreted as a sketch to a new paradigm of curriculum. The old paradigm consists of theories with little explaining power and methods that are limiting and not opening the field. The old curriculum paradigm is dissolving, there is a flight from the curriculum field and people from other subjects are taking over curriculum planning and decision-making. The new curriculum paradigm suggested by Schwab is characterized by the “art of the practical” which aims for “choice and action” and “defensible actions”, not warranted conclusions.

\(^{41}\) He said this in the introduction of a paper presented at the American Educational Research Association in Los Angeles 1969. A revised version of the paper is published several places, for instance in Gress (ed.) 1988:586-607.
The new paradigm requires a new method, deliberation, new education and new journals and forums, which Schwab expected to be realized. To foresee a change of paradigm is however not easy, and the “art of the practical” did not get that status. Still, it has been highly influential. (Pinar et al 1995:35-41 and 197)

Goodlad was one of those influenced by Schwab. One of the basic principles of the art of the practical is that established practice is not necessarily bad. Practice should be preserved and changed piece by piece, not replaced by a new conception of curriculum derived from theory. As discussed later (particularly in chapter eight), curriculum innovation or change often starts with a theoretical or political concern, and is implemented to the various schools with limited concern for local practices and traditions. This gives little credit and value to the practiced curriculum at the schools. Curriculum change from above is not, and need not be, interested in actual school practice, because change is initiated from general and idealized prescriptive curriculum theory. Instead of, or supplementary to, a change from above, Schwab suggests a change from below. Change should be done from established practice. But then one needs to know what established practices are, and that we do not know, Schwab said in 1969 (Pinar et al 1995:600.). There is a definitive need of empirical curriculum study. A similar argument and diagnosis is found in *Curriculum Inquiry* ten years later (Goodlad et al 1979:29).

This concern is shared by Norwegian curriculum researchers, for instance Britt Ulstrup Engelsen. Her argument for descriptive curriculum research may seem somewhat different. Prescriptive curriculum theory has too weak knowledge about actual teaching as a phenomenon. The role of descriptive curriculum research is to supply prescriptive theory with this knowledge, which will constitute a foundation for curriculum prescriptions. That way the prescriptions will work, because they are addressing educational practice. (Engelsen 1988:10-11)

Schwab’s deliberations on the dual relationship between inquiry and practice are similar to how Goodlad’s deals with these issues. An example is that Goodlad one place rephrases Tyler’s famous prescriptive curriculum questions (the Tyler rationale) into descriptive ones:

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42 These theories may refer to some empirical data, but these would be from another field than the schools.

43 This turn towards the field of practice is accompanied with a complimentary turn towards theory (developed in other disciplines). See discussion on this issue later in this chapter.
1. What educational purposes does the educational institution seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences are provided to attain these purposes?
3. How are these educational experiences organized?
4. How is the attainment of these purposes or the value of these experiences evaluated? (Goodlad et al. 1979:19-20) 

Goodlad, agreeing with Schwab, admits that these questions and other descriptive curriculum questions, remain unanswered. His contribution is to map the field in order to give empirical curriculum research a conceptual framework. But an empirical problem makes his initially descriptive task difficult. In a study of curricular decision making, Griffin (1979:77-99) found that few such decisions were made at the institutional domain. If this result is representative, it would therefore seem that the institutional domain is of minor importance in the curriculum process, and it would be hard to justify it as a separate domain in a descriptive curriculum model. Griffin suggests two solutions to the problem: Either revise the model or change its status from descriptive to prescriptive. Goodlad chooses a modified version of the last solution, claiming that the conceptual system is designed to serve both descriptive and prescriptive functions (Goodlad et al 1979:352).

This is however an unsatisfactory position. The problem is that it is serving neither the descriptive nor the prescriptive function accurately. Goodlad himself admits that the model is not a precise description of curriculum practice. On the other hand, he has not given any argument why this model, and not anyone, should be a prescriptive model. If one is constructing a model of how curriculum should be, an argument is needed to convince others that it is valid. The fact is however, that Goodlad’s concern is descriptive – he is mapping the existing field, not a future or ideal one. One of the few prescriptive concern revealed, is that there should be a larger degree of decentralization from the societal to the institutional domain. In fact, Goodlad says that he would have put more emphasis on the institutional domain if he were to construct a prescriptive conceptualization. This may explain why he did not revise the model according to Griffin’s results – the institutional concern was too strong. Otherwise the strength of Goodlad’s theory is that he gradually has incorporated results from empirical and theoretical research into his model. Not to adjust the map when it does not correspond with the terrain is as a rule a mistake. 

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44 At page 50 and 51 Goodlad (1979) quotes a passage in Schwab’s “The Practical” where he claims “we [curriculum researchers] have not the faintest reliable knowledge of how literature is taught in the high schools or what actually goes on in the science classrooms.”
45 These research-questions are highly substantial. Later Goodlad focuses more on the description of curriculum processes.
46 It is true that theories, especially grand theories, are not automatically changed as a result of troublesome empirical data. In this case, however, the data are of significance to central parts of the theory.
There is however a third possibility that is mentioned en passant by Griffin, but not discussed by Goodlad, namely the scale of the map. The conceptual framework is meant to cover the complete field of curriculum in any modern-western context. That is a big field. The scale of such a map must be very large, and large-scale maps are not precise when it comes to details. It might be argued that the significance of the different curriculum domains or levels change in time and place. It is for instance reasonable to suppose that the degree of institutional curricular decisions in Norway increased as a consequence of the 1974 and 1987 National Curriculum for compulsory education. It is also reasonable to suppose that the societal domain will be more significant than the institutional in a highly centralized educational system. In all instances Goodlad’s model gives a meaningful conceptualization of the inquiry.

For the reasons discussed above, the revised model will be interpreted and used descriptive in this study. The model will be viewed as a framework in the sense that the significance of the different domains will vary with time and place.

2.2.3 Curriculum development or understanding

William F. Pinar, William M. Reynolds, Patrick Slattery and Peter M. Taubman give one interesting perspective on the issue of normativity and paradigm in their comprehensive book *Understanding curriculum* (Pinar et al 1995). With reference to other curriculum theorists, they describe a war of and change of paradigm in the field of curriculum during the 1970s and later.\(^{47}\) The old paradigm was curriculum development, conceiving curriculum inquiry as a practical and procedural discipline which prime task was to contribute to curriculum development in the school. Tylers’ *Basic principles of curriculum and instruction* from 1949 is seen as the most influential contribution of the old paradigm, a conception of curriculum procedure that set the standard for curriculum thinking the next decades. Changing societal conditions resulted in decreased influence from curriculum theory on actual curriculum development and practice.\(^{48}\) This fact the old paradigm refused to realize, and kept on drawing curriculum maps that did not reflect or prescribe curriculum practice (as purposed). On the other hand the curriculum models were theoretically underdeveloped. This made Schwab and others declare the field moribund. As mentioned above Schwab initiated descriptive, empirical research. But, as Jackson (1992) has pointed

\(^{47}\) The paradigm-war is located to the US, but is relevant to curriculum theory in many countries.

\(^{48}\) “The schools, to a considerable extent, are now in the hands of politicians, textbook publishers, and subject matter specialists in the university.” (Goodlad et al 1979:14)
out, this also resulted in a more advanced theoretical path, not limited by the old conceptualization. These became two paths of curriculum research in the U.S. the next decades, a practitioner and an eclectic theoretical orientation. Both constituted however a new paradigm, not to develop, but to understand curriculum. Curriculum theory is seen analog to other disciplines like for instance history, trying to understand human history and psychology, trying to understand human mind and action. The old paradigm was (or is) technical, focusing on the educational how. The new paradigm moves both closer to practice and further into the academia, focusing on the educational why. The new paradigm is using mainly qualitative methods, the old paradigm used (or is using) quantitative methods (Pinar et al 1995:52).

At first glance this picture seems to suggest that curriculum theory under the new paradigm is solely descriptive. That is however not so. Included in the new paradigm is action research and critical research, both highly normative enterprises. The concept of understanding therefore includes action, normative critique and the potential for contribution to curriculum improvement (Pinar et al 1995:14). In the new paradigm the dualistic dichotomy between descriptive and normative theory and between theory and practice is dissolved. In an odd way this seems however to create another dichotomy between an action and theory-in-practice-oriented research on one hand and a highly theoretical research more or less dissolved from existing educational practice (but viewed as a practice in itself) on the other. The new paradigm (the reconceptualization of the curriculum field) is highly diverse and pluralistic. This means a necessary liberation of curriculum research from a technical and bureaucratic framework.

The perspective in this study is that is and ought are interrelated both in more descriptive studies and in normative arguments (Afdal 2004). A description of different conceptions of tolerance work within one or several normative horizons, and a normative discussion how tolerance should be curriculized has descriptive assumptions. Still, it is a matter of main aspect. The larger part of this study has a descriptive, empirical aspect, and the revised model is the basis for that. In the end (chapter eight) more normative curricular issue are discussed – on the basis of the descriptive conclusions. Here the model is attempted developed in a normative direction as well.

49 “Such understanding is not positivistic, not a mathematicized copy of a reality “out there”, somehow apart from the lives and language of those who conduct research and who are subject of that research. Rather understanding is a “reading” of reality that interprets that reality, and in that reinterpretation, changes both the interpreter and the interpreted. In this respect, the point of contemporary curriculum research is not different for the university scholar than it is for the practitioner.” (Goodlad et al 1979:62-63)
2.3 The issue of relations

So far little has been said on the issue of relations in Goodlad’s model. There are basically two kinds of relations: Those between (and within) domains, and those between domains and the context. The last kind will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Goodlad identifies three kinds of sociopolitical processes, namely within a domain, between domains and between a domain and individuals. Here the perspective will be somewhat broadened in two respects, the term *relations* will be used instead of *processes*. In relations there are both processual and substantial elements. Secondly *contexts* will substitute *individuals*. Context also includes inter- and trans-individual phenomena which relate to curriculum domains or levels. Local culture and school culture (code) are two examples of such phenomena.

2.3.1 Relations in Goodlad

This section tries to answer two questions: Firstly, how can the relations between curriculum domains\(^{50}\) be understood within Goodlad’s theory? Secondly, viewed in light of other research on relations between curriculum domains: Where is modification necessary?

The relationship between the various domains in Goodlad’s conceptual model (figure 2.1.) seems linear. One such linear interpretation is given in Riktor (1993:105-106). She also explicitly interprets the relationship between domains as *hierarchically* with reference to formal Norwegian curriculum decision making.\(^{51}\) In this scheme curriculum is decided at the political level and interpreted and operationalized at the institutional and instructional level. That may seem like an obvious interpretation, but is problematic. The reason is simply that a hierarchically descriptive and prescriptive model implies a severe limit in perspective. Empirical research of an educational context could very well show that curriculum reality is far from hierarchically. A conceptual framework must include such probable findings.\(^{52}\) Goodlad protests when accused of prescribing a hierarchically

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\(^{50}\) For reasons given above, *domains* and *levels* here refer to both process and substantial domains and levels.

\(^{51}\) This does not mean that Riktor in other texts interpret Goodlad in a linear manner, but that the referred text seems to suggest such a reading.

\(^{52}\) This is probably his point in the following: “... the conceptual system assumes transactions and interpretations flowing back and fourth between levels and not a linear process, with one level subservient to “a level of higher authority. To suggest such linearity would be to deny what actually goes on.” With the expression “such linearity” he probably refers to linearity as hierarchy. That may further imply that other kinds of linearity are possible. (Goodlad et al 1979:26)
Can still a case be made for a linear interpretation of the relationship between the curriculum domains in Goodlad’s theory? It is useful to distinguish between vertical and horizontal linearity. It seems that the first kind is what Goodlad protests most heavily against. On the question of horizontal linearity, he seems unclear. The figure of the model is horizontal linear, allowing only relations between neighboring domains. There are also some parts of the text that can be interpreted in this direction: “… there probably is more linearity than many teachers would like and less than some legislators might prefer.” And: “… there is, to a degree, an hierarchical character to the existing decision-making structure constituting the several domains of practice.” (Goodlad et al 1979:26, 51-52) It seems like Goodlad wants to say that even many do not want to admit it, there actually often is a sort of linearity in curriculum processes.

On the other hand Goodlad frequently emphasizes that the curriculum practice is not necessarily linear:

Societal-level decisions are in some ways the most potentially dangerous decisions simply because the public interest does not extend far beyond one’s own child and school, and yet one’s own child and school are affected by them. Perhaps it is fortunate, therefore, that many of the decisions made in far-off places have no practical effect and, apparently, the potentially restraining sanctions often are impotent or difficult to employ…

… The fact that many decisions by controlling agencies fail to get into the delivery system, fall out along the way, or are ignored on reaching their targets contributes significantly to the very real autonomy of other levels or domains in the entire decision-making structure. (Goodlad et al 1979:53)

Curriculum decisions, according to Goodlad, do not follow one linear path. Often the political curriculum will have minimal effect on instructional practice. This means that there are other factors and other relations that are more important in influencing instruction. And it means that the various domains have autonomy, they are, to some degree, “self-

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53 That does not mean he thinks all curricula processes are non-hierarchical. In some instances they may be just so. What he is saying is that all curricula processes are not hierarchical. And therefore a conceptual framework cannot make such a limitation.

54 It also seems that Goodlad is critical of curriculum linearity as a prescriptive model: “However a prescriptive conceptualization of curriculum decision making with two-way arrows between levels opens up possibilities for theories of curriculum development other that the Western linear one that has dominated.” Goodlad et al 1979: 193-194.

55 The domains have no absolute autonomy; their autonomy is influenced and restricted by other domains and contexts. Autonomy here indicates that no domain initially is more important than the others are, and that there are relations between domains of equal importance. It also means that the domains have individual lives, relatively independent of the others.
governing” spheres. That means for instance that curriculum planning and innovation could and does start anywhere in the model.

This complexity of interaction and relations are reflected upon in the last chapter, and Goodlad concludes:

Sometimes a domain is “jumped”, as when teachers transact the instructional curriculum with some societal agency or group. In fact, the research of Griffin (Chapter 3) and Hill (Chapter 4) suggests that there may be more sociopolitical activity between the instructional and societal domain than between the instructional and institutional. One is tempted, therefore, to draw arrows between the instructional and societal, arrows that simply bypass the institutional domain. However, there are so many avenues of political and social interaction that it is perhaps better simply to note that many possibilities for deviating from Figure 14.1 [here figure 2.1] exist. To attempt to include them carries the obligation to be all-inclusive. But our present state of knowledge is such that the implied precision and detail simply are impossible. (Goodlad et al 1979:357-358)

This means there are good reasons for establishing relations between two non-neighboring domains. As earlier mentioned, Goodlad sees interaction between the ideological domain and all the others. Empirical support for this assumption is given in the two studies of Anders Törnvall and Marie-Louise Törnvall. They show that the teachers’ basic philosophy, which include the ideological curriculum, have great influence on the perceived curriculum and some influence on the operational curriculum.

This makes it hard to defend a solely linear interpretation of the relationship between the domains in Goodlad’s theory. But surely there is an ambiguity in Goodlad, which is expressed in the following: “To call it a curriculum is a mistake; it was many curricula, each successive one changing more profoundly than a larva changes in becoming a moth.” (Goodlad et al. 1979:20) The quotation encompasses what could be called an ambiguity or maybe even a paradox in Goodlad’s understanding of curriculum, namely that the larva and the moth at the same time are different and the same creature. On one hand there is a case of plurality of curricula and profound changes, on the other hand there is a genetic relationship and a successive curricular process. This ambiguity and complexity is supported by empirical studies of the relationship between the formal curriculum and the perceived and operational ones. There are, however, reasons to ask whether Goodlad’s model (figure 2.1)

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56 Basic philosophy is here conceived on two levels, according to A. Törnvall. The first, general basic philosophy means a philosophy of life, including convictions and attitudes on world-view, philosophical anthropology and values. Both Törnvall 1982 and M. L. Törnvall 1982 include ideology in basic philosophy. On the second level the basic philosophy is employed to an educational context as basic educational philosophy (literally “basic pedagogical outlook”), focusing on convictions and attitudes regarding view of society, human being, including the students, view of knowledge, learning, subjects and the school in general (A. Törnvall 1982:17-21).
give a good illustration both of the complexity of relations and the autonomy of the domains. The revised model used in this study will try to express the complexity in another way. So far I will conclude that the curriculum domains in Goodlad’s theory have autonomy, and that the relations between them are complex.

### 2.3.2 Expanded relations

There are reasons within Goodlad’s theory to suggest a revised model of the curriculum domains. And there are reasons given by other research. M. L. Törnvall has done an empirical study in Sweden on the influence of teachers’ basic philosophy on their perception of and teaching of (as perceived by the teachers) internationalization. In this connection her analyses of other possible influences on the teachers’ conception of international issues in curriculum is of particular interest. Her conclusion is: “The [formal] curriculum cannot, in reality, be credited with any major influence on how teaching of international issues should be carried out.” (M. L. Törnvall 1982:208, 245) Three other factors seem to be more influential, namely the professional code, the basic philosophy and situational factors.

Very schematically her study shows that basic philosophy is very influential on the view of aims of education in internationalization, partly on content and little on methods. This pattern is somewhat different depending on the strength of the ideology. Generally the more total ideology a teacher has, the more her basic philosophy will affect content and methods in her teaching (M. L. Törnvall 1982:204-210). When the teacher is under a lot of pressure, she will be more likely to give in to situational factors.

M. L. Törnvall’s study gives support to the view that relations within a curriculum domain, relations between non-neighboring domains and between a domain and its context

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57 Professional code consists of the principles of the teachers’ interpretation and action in her educational practice (Arfwedson 1985:21, 231). The teacher’s professional code is, according to M. L. Törnvall, a result both of her basic philosophy - and the central and local school-system and society in general. Others (Arfwedson 1985) would consider it more a social than an individual product.

58 Situational factors represent external influence from and situational demands of students, parents, colleagues, local society and the like. The Törnvals view situational factors mainly negatively. When external, situational power decides in educational matters, innovations based in the ideological (basic philosophy) and formal curriculum are lost.

59 Following Anders Törnvall she distinguishes between partial and total ideologies. Socialism and Christianity are examples of the first, Secular Humanism and Naturalism of the last. A total ideology is constituted by homogenous convictions and attitudes shared by a group or a society, while a partial ideology is constituted by a set of convictions and attitudes that do not cover a complete life philosophy. A partial ideology may also be a result of several ideologies and world-views (A. Törnvall 1982:58-59). The idea of A. Törnvall is that the more total a teacher’s ideology is, the more effect will her basic philosophy have on her actual teaching. - The conception of total ideology seems problematic in light of both modern differentiation and postmodern fragmentation. It would for instance imply strong (total) connections between Christianity and politics.
may be more influential than the linear relations and the primacy of the formal curriculum.\(^{60}\) Firstly: Various factors within the perceived curriculum, such as the teacher’s basic philosophy and professional code, had more influence on how the teacher conceived teaching internationalization (the perceived curriculum) and the teaching in internationalization (the operational curriculum) than the national curriculum (the formal curriculum) and the students (the experienced curriculum). Secondly: The teacher’s basic philosophy or ideology (ideological curriculum) influenced the conception and practice of teaching internationalization (the perceived and operational curriculum) generally more than the national curriculum did (the formal curriculum). The ideological curriculum had influence on conception of the subject matters, critique of the national curriculum, on motivation for teaching the issues and the like. The ideological domain therefore had generally more effect on the perceived and operational curriculum than the formal curriculum did. And thirdly: Situational factors often decided what and how teachers did - and did not – teach international issues. Situational factors are a part of the curriculum context. One can therefor say that the perceived curriculum’s (here the teacher’s) relations with contextual factors (or as Goodlad puts it, the surrounding milieu) are more influential on the actual content and methods in teaching internationalization, than the formal curriculum.

M. L. Törnvall’s study also provides another important insight. Relationships between domains vary depending on “the curriculum commonplaces” in question. The relational pattern seems to differ between for instance aims and methods. While perceived aims are influenced by both the ideological, formal and factors within the perceived domain, methods seem in general to be more influenced by the institutional domain and contextual factors.

There are therefore a number of reasons, both within Goodlad’s theory and other research, to modify Goodlad’s curriculum model in a more dynamic direction - allowing an increased number of interactions between curriculum domains and curriculum contexts.

\(^{60}\) Törnvall’s study concerns internationalization as a curriculum innovation. One might therefore argue that her results only are valid for innovation-processes, and not for general curriculum practice. This is not likely for two reasons: Other research supports her general conclusions (Sirotnik 1998, Vestre 1980). Secondly the national curriculum had been effective for 11 years when the interviews of the teachers were done (1969-1980), and a new curriculum was on its way. The question of internationalization had also been a part of Swedish curricula before 1969.
2.4 The issue of context

Educational practice always takes place in a specific time and place – in a context. It is also beyond doubt that the context influences education. There are however questions concerning the relationship between education and the context that need clarification. In the following the contexts of the institutional domain, the schools, will be focused.

I will start the discussion with an interpretation of the conception of context in Goodlad (1979) and continue with some critical remarks. Secondly, I will turn to other research on context that will contribute with additional perspectives. Thirdly, I will discuss the methodological question of an individual teacher-perspective against a collective context-perspective in curriculum research.

2.4.1 Context in Goodlad

Goodlad uses context in the meaning of a “surrounding milieu”. The context is therefore the sum of factors “within which curriculum development at all levels proceeds” (Goodlad et al 1979:350). He also identifies context with “the surrounding culture”, “social system” and “community” (Goodlad et al 1979:358). Goodlad gradually opens up the domains to relations with the context. He does also give the context increasing content. Initially it consisted merely of knowledge of two different sorts, one reliable (funded knowledge) and the rest (conventional wisdom). In his final model values and other social forces are included in the concept of context. The importance of local context is also emphasized:

Some schools, for example, probably pay far more attention to the prevailing moods of parents and communities than to directives from the societal domain of formal decision making. It is almost certain that school board members (societal domain) are more tuned in to the electorate than to school employees and, as a consequence, stimulate the emergence of teachers’ unions. (Goodlad et al 1979:358)

This quote is an example of another characteristic feature of the conception of context in Goodlad. In the model and in Goodlad’s text the context is most often viewed in the form of individuals or groups. The context is understood as persons outside of the curriculum domains, influencing curriculum development through a set of political and societal processes. When the context is placed outside the curriculum domains, the text (curriculum) and the context are conceived as two separate entities, relating as two relative autonomous subjects. One problem with this model is that the school easily can be conceived as a curriculum domain relating to the local context, but not as a significant part of the local context. The local context – the local culture and society – is surrounding and influencing,
but not constituting, the school. Another problem is that context is viewed only as political processes and not also as culture, in the sense of shared and sharing symbols, ideas, traditions, values, practices and knowledge in a society or a group. These symbols and ideas are common goods in a specific context, the school included. The school is therefore as an institution, more or less\textsuperscript{61} bearer and communicator of these symbols. If one conceive educational context in the sense of culture, the school necessarily becomes a part of the context. This is a perspective one does not find in Goodlad’s theory\textsuperscript{62}, but which still is important to include in a curriculum framework.

2.4.2 School codes
Another Swedish study can contribute to a further clarification on the issue of curricula context. Gerhard Arfwedson has in a number of studies\textsuperscript{63} (both empirical and theoretical) focused on what the culture or code at the different schools mean to teachers’ practice and to their thinking (Arfwedson 1985:26). His concern is to show that contexts are influencing the teachers’ educational conceptions and practices.

Arfwedson distinguishes between three different contextual layers that influence the teachers’ practice (the perceived and operational domains): The context of the school system (system context), the context of the school neighborhood (external context) and the context of the local school (internal context).

The context of the school system is the formal curriculum and administrative, economic and juridical statues and the like that limits and gives direction to teachers’ practice. These are the central educational authorities’ tools of governing local schools and teachers. In Norway as well as in Sweden the school system is intended to function in a unitary way. This could therefore be named the national or central context.

\textsuperscript{61} How contextual conscious a school is, is depending on for instance the degree on educational centralization and contextual consciousness among the teachers and administrators.

\textsuperscript{62} One can find examples of what seems to be negative statements concerning local school codes in Goodlad: “There is evidence to suggest that there are school and even “professional” norms derived from other than funded knowledge that effectively restrain teachers from doing what they have been technically prepared to do.” (Goodlad et al 1979:56). The resources of teaching are found in teachers’ education and funded knowledge. When educational norms have another source, like the local culture or the local school, and are different from those of funded knowledge, they are restraining teachers from doing what they should do. This quote also enlightens the problem of knowledge in Goodlad. It is highly questionable whether educational norms can be derived solely from “funded knowledge”. Deciding norms implies questions of values and normativity. Even though Goodlad modifies his concept of funded knowledge, knowledge in a limited sense occupies a too central contextual place in his model.

\textsuperscript{63} A summary of the studies is found in his dissertation (Arfwedson 1985), which also include a further discussion of the results.
The context of the school neighborhood is named external context. The local communities have different characters both in respect of socioeconomic composition and cultural traditions. These local contexts influence schools to a varying degree.

The context of the local school, or the internal context, consists of its history and tradition (Arfwedson 1985:28-30). It is more or less visible in the form of institutionalized rules, expectations and assumptions in the daily life of the school.

These three context-layers influence the school code. A school code consists of the common principles of interpretations and actions at a school. It is the common orientation of meaning at a school, into which new teachers and administrators are socialized.

Arfwedson’s results support the assumption that each local school has an individual school code. That does not mean that all the teachers agree on educational conceptions and practice, but that there is some kind of common comprehension of central conceptions. (Arfwedson 1985:32)

Arfwedson’s conception of different contexts is helpful in creating an important distinction between a central/national, a local and a school context. The schools are a part of the local context, but also a part of the national and central one. This is especially the case in unitary school systems like the Norwegian one. And the school context may explain why different schools in the same local community have different character (school codes).

In Arfwedson’s conception of curriculum context, the school is not only a part of the context. It is contextual. That is, each school is influenced by national and local contexts and by its own history and tradition in a particular way. This does not mean that schools are determined by a set of contexts, but that its own contextual character is shaped in the active interaction with these different contexts. In this sense context is not conceived as frames or boarders. Contexts seen as frames constitute limitations of and space for the schools’ or teachers’ autonomy, and the teachers can freely decide within the borders that the contexts set. Such a view of context separates context and text.

Arfwedson’s results support the view that the context is entwined with the text in a more complex manner. Teachers are influenced by the context in reflection and practice. This does however not mean that the context determines teachers’ deliberations and practices, but that it influences educational reflections and actions. On this view, also taken in this study, context is more like glasses the teachers look at practice through than borders defining a more radical self-governing area. The studies by A. and M. L. Törnvall indicate that the individual teacher’s basic philosophy and ideology also is influencing teachers’ educational conceptions and practices.
2.4.3 Content and context

Stephen B. Bevans (1992) has developed a typology of five alternative understandings of the relationship between text and context in theology. In one sense theology and education are similar: They both deal with the relationship of knowledge, values and beliefs to specific contexts. In addition both theology and education are contextual activities, sharing some common influences from for instance end-mean-rationality (the translation model, below), anthropology (the anthropological model) and critical theory (the praxis model). There are significant differences between theology and education as well, but the following models of contextual theology are fruitful perspectives on various conceptions of the relationship between curriculum (here conceived as text) and context.

The traditional way of understanding contextualization in theology Bevans calls the translation model. The core of a message is separated from the shape. The core is the content, which is constant and independent of time and space. The shape is the form, which changes, and should change, with varying contexts. The shape, or the husk, has only instrumental value to the more important core, or the kernel. The text is to change the context, and not vice versa. Used on curriculum theory, curriculum content is what Goodlad characterizes as funded knowledge. Epistemologically it can be characterized as foundationalism. Curriculum content should to be funded by scientific standards. This funded or secure knowledge can than be translated into different cultures or contexts. The model could be called contextualization from above.

The anthropological model constitutes in many ways the opposite view on the relationship between text and context. Texts can only be contextual. A text has to be verbalized in a language, and every language implies cultural conceptions, values and assumptions. There is no way to give a core a language beyond culture, because such a language does not exist. Therefore there is no kernel and husk – the relationship between text and context is understood as layers of an onion. On the search for a core, one will only find a new layer – until there are no more. Texts are intervowen in the context. Used on the relationship between curriculum and context, curriculum is constructed within a context. Curriculum is understood in cultural terms. It is a way to express the initiation into culture. The content of the curriculum, knowledge, values and practices, cannot be found external to the cultures of the school and nation. Therefore the students and teachers are not translators.

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64 This means that funded knowledge is not only of a different kind than local knowledge, but also of higher value.
of given knowledge, but co-creators of curriculum. Curriculum is created in classrooms and schools. The model could be named *contextualization from below*.

The *praxis model* often implies a critical or liberative perspective, although Bevans claims it does not have to. It is distinguished from the two models above by its view of knowledge as critical action. Knowledge is not developed in the sphere of theory and then used in practice, but created in the interaction between action, reflection over action and new action. This dialectical relationship between action and reflection constitute the method called praxis. First step is some kind of committed action. The second is analyzing the action and its situation, then rereading the Bible and the Tradition in order to give critical perspectives to the Bible and Tradition from the reflective action, and give critical perspectives to the reflective action from the Bible and Tradition. This leads to new action, then new reflection and so on in a spiral movement. The spiral movement must however not be interpreted as a gradual evolution, but as a transformation. The point is that contextual knowledge does liberate communities and societies from unjust and oppressive practices and structures. Used on curriculum theory this means that curriculum is a process of praxis. Curriculum is not theory that is to be taught and learnt, but actions at school and in the local society that leads to reflection and renewed actions. Knowledge and value in curriculum can never be separated from action. The intention of curriculum is not only that of understanding theory or culture, but changing society and theory. This model could be called *contextualization for change*.

The *synthetic model* is a complex synthesis of the three models mentioned above. Its most characteristic feature is dialogue. It is also a both/and-model: The text, here understood as the revelation, is both contextually bound and something which gives meaning across cultural and contextual borders. Each context is both unique and similar to other contexts. Modern Western cultures for instance have some common characteristics, but are also individually shaped. Contexts and cultures can include both good and bad features, and there is a need for cultural growth. This cultural growth is created through dialogue – between context and text (here between cultures and the Bible/Tradition), between different cultures and between the existing culture and ideas of social change. For curriculum theory this model means that there is a dialogue between curriculum as the text and several contexts. Further more curriculum dialogue involves matters between cultures and matters of cultural and social change. The synthetic model opens up for a normative common

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65 Bevans argue that the praxis model as a contextual method could be used in a society with very limited structural injustice (Bevans 1992:66). Here it is however understood as liberation.
national curriculum, but that curriculum must not be fixed. It must be designed in order to enter the various dialogues mentioned above. This model could be called *dialogical contextualization*.

The *transcendental model* is a highly abstract one, but has some relevance to the understanding of the relationship between text and context in curriculum theory as a matter of authentic subjectivity. Only through authentic subjectivity can objective knowledge be achieved. We are all contextual subjects, products of time and space. Therefore asking *who am I*, articulate the experience of others who share the same basic context. One underlying assumption in this model is that human mind is identical in all cultures. For curriculum theory this means that the relationship between text and context is understood through the subject, primarily the student. Objective knowledge is found in the authentic student, articulating her cultural *I*. A common, cultural *we* is often invisible for individual students. Through studying and interpreting cultural texts and symbols a deeper understanding of the authentic *I* as a part of a collective *we* will evolve. Curriculum must therefore prescribe cultural important texts in a way that requires and promotes contextual interpretation in the classroom. This model could be called *interpretive contextualization*.

A conceptual framework cannot choose one of these models of the relationship between text and context, but must try to include several of the possible relations. It is however important to notice that all of the models (perhaps with the exception of the translation model) understand the relationship in a more interwoven and organic form than Goodlad does in his curriculum model (figure 2.1.). This aspect will be included in the revised model.

### 2.4.4 Situated and expansive learning

The issue of context is also discussed in other related subjects to curriculum theory, namely in theories of learning. Theories of learning like cognitive and constructivist, which operate with a de-contextualized view of the learner and knowledge, have recently been challenged by theories that emphasize the situated and particular character of the knower and concepts (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young 2003:1-2). Wenger (1998:4) draws his theory of learning on following four assumptions:

1. We are social beings. Far from being trivially true, this fact is a central aspect of learning.
2. Knowledge is a matter of competence with respect to valued enterprises – such as singing in tune, discovering scientific facts, fixing machines, writing poetry, being convivial, growing up as a boy or girl, and so forth.
3. Knowing is a matter of participation in the pursuit of such enterprises, that is, of active engagement in the world.

4. Meaning – our ability to experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful – is ultimately what learning is to produce.

This means that the social and historical character of the subject and knowledge is of fundamental importance. There is no way to abstract pure knowledge or subjects in a de-contextualizing process. This also means that knowledge is situated within different social and historical practices. Knowledge has to be learned in participation in these practices. The concept of practice takes priority to knowledge.66

Acknowledging the insights of theories of situated learning, but trying to combine these insights with the expanding possibilities also in theory, is activity theory (Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström 2003). On this view of learning knowledge is embedded in social circumstances, but human collectives have the possibility to cross the borders of particular contexts. Learning is therefore more than being socialized into a contextual practice. Learning means expansion of the knowledge and conceptions within a practice.

Engeström (2001:136-137) summarizes activity theory in five principles: Firstly, the prime unit of analysis is not the individual or an action, but an “activity system”. An activity system is collective, artifact-mediated and object-oriented, and is modeled in figure 2.2.

![Figure 2.2: An interaction between two activity systems, as modeled within activity theory (Engeström 2001:136).](image)

This means that individuals and actions always are interpreted as parts of a complex system. The individual (subject) and the actions (object) are related to mediating cultural artifacts, to

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66 This account of knowledge resembles the conception of situated or contextual morality in communitarianism, for instance MacIntyre’s (1985:181-225) point that morality is interwoven in social practices and traditions.
a community with certain rules and division of labor. In activity theory the focus is mainly on the interaction between different activity systems.

Secondly, an activity system is multivoiced. It consists of different traditions, interests and points of view. When one activity system is related to another, critical questioning appear and innovation is made possible.

Thirdly, an activity system must always be understood in the light of its own history. This history can be analyzed both at a local level and at the more theoretical history of ideas.

The fourth principle is the centrality of contradictions. It is through contradictions that change and development are made possible. “Contradictions are not the same as problems or conflicts. Contradictions are historically accumulating structural tensions within or between the activity systems.”

Fifthly, there is an expansive transformation possible in activity systems. An activity system is a particular context with its own history, culture, aims and rules. Still change within and between activity systems or contexts is possible. Change in form of conceptual expansion, expansion in understanding, happen when objects and motives of activity are reconceptualized. This reconceptualization means understanding and practicing with expanded horizons that offers new possibilities.

Activity theory is valuable in recognizing that both knowledge and individuals must be understood within particular and complex contexts. This means that a curriculum model or theory must include the contextual character of curriculum processes. On the other hand giving context or activity system a fundamental role does not result in education as maintenance of separate contexts. Individuals step in and out of different activity systems, and activity systems interact in such a way that through contradictions and dialogue, common reconceptualization occurs.

The insights from both situated learning theory and activity theory mean that Goodlad’s idea of reliable and de-contextualized, funded knowledge as something quite different (and implicit primary to) everyday knowledge is problematic. It also means that the conceptualization of curriculum theory must be open to valuable knowledge-constructions within particular contexts or practices. Knowledge does not always come from above, it may be drawn from below. And maybe the construction of theory as above and practice as below is deceptive.

Connected to the discussion on text and context is a methodological issue of importance, namely whether to study the context of the teachers and the schools or to study
the teachers as educational agents in curriculum research. As Engelsen 1988, 18-25 shows in a detailed discussion, this may be a point of fundamental disagreement. That is, when research on curriculum context is combined with a belief of contextual determination, and studies on teachers’ conceptions and practices are combined with a belief in unrestricted freedom in curricular decisions. Engelsen takes the position that it is more a question of *choice of perspective* on the curriculum field, than competitive all-embracing curriculum theories. Engelsen and several others (for instance M. L. Törnvall 1982 and A. Törnvall 1982) take an individual actor-perspective, while the studies by for instance Arfwedson have a context-perspective. Very simply put they find that the individual teacher has space for curricular decisions, and that their personal philosophies and beliefs tend to influence the conception of and practice in this space. On the other hand Arfwedson finds that different school codes tend to have an influence of teachers conceptions of curricula. These research results need of course not be in conflict with each other because, as Arfwedson puts it, the teachers can be seen as “‘creating’ their own work conditions and at the same time being “created” by the conditions of the same work situation”. (Arfwedson 1985:26)

This allows a complex pattern of interaction between the teacher (understood as the perceived and operational curriculum) and the context, which also constitute a part of the curriculum framework of this study.

In sum, there is a need for a revision of Goodlad’s conceptual curriculum model that incorporates a different view of context – as well as normativity and relations.

### 2.5 A cyclic curriculum model

On the basis of the discussion in this chapter, the following model of a curriculum framework for this study can be drawn:
Comments on central features of the model will make a conclusion of this chapter. The figure consists of two main parts: Firstly, five domains of curricula: the ideological, the formal, the perceived, the operational and the experiential. Secondly, three contextual domains: the national context, the local context and the school context.

Curriculum is in this study conceived broadly, as the domains and processes in figure 2.3. This also means curriculum describes a certain theoretical tradition in conceiving education, named curriculum theory. This way curriculum includes institutional texts, practices and processes on one hand, and theory that is trying to understand or develop curriculum on the other. Although a wide conception of curriculum includes all domains and processes, this does not mean that curriculum practice and theory always is concerned with all the domains and processes. Curriculum theory can for instance deal with very different aspects of curriculum, and from very different perspectives. In practice, curriculum often refers to institutions and especially the compulsory school. It is however important to have in mind that the field of curriculum reach beyond institutional borders.

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67 In Pinar (1995) these perspectives include for instance political theory, research on race and gender, phenomenology, poststructuralism and theology.
In this study *domain* will be a preferred term to the more classifying and linear *level*. The names are identical with Goodlad’s substantial domains. The ideological domain is the sphere of normative curriculum debates and proposals. This domain is influenced by the cultural context. Ideas are not conceived a-historically, they are shaped in their historical and cultural context. This is evident also in education and curriculum theory, where some of the dominant schools have raised out of particular historical contexts. Ideological curricula also have some idea of the other domains. In fact, many ideological curricula are reactions to how curriculum is conceived and disapproved on. Therefore ideological curricula are best understood as having interactions both with various contexts and with other curricula domains. It needs to be stressed that this is a conceptual description of the ideological domain. Such a conceptualization opens up for possible relations, but whether such interactions in fact exist in the particular case, is an open question.

The critical issue in this study is whether the ideological domain has interactions with the formal and perceived domains. Or put differently: What kind of communication exist between the ideological domain and the two others that are studied here? Which image of the perceived and formal domains is found in the ideological? The presumption for these questions is that the degree of communication will affect the validity of the image of relevant contexts. A high degree of communication between the ideological, formal and perceived domains will increase the possibility that the ideological domain has an up-to-date knowledge of the political and practical field of education. Such knowledge is necessary in order to understand the particular contexts of education. And assuming that texts are in one way or the other interwoven with contexts, such contextual awareness is a condition for making texts that are meaningful in a particular context. Plainly spoken: One needs to know something about life in schools in order to talk meaningful about tolerance in schools.

The content of the ideological domain is conceived more broadly than in Goodlad, including curriculum debates and texts on curricula that include normative discussions at different curricula domains.

The formal is the domain of politically sanctioned curricula documents, including local school curricula. The perceived domain consists of conceived curricula, that is, how the different actors, most often teachers, think the curricula to be. These are curricula of the mind, often not expressed, and more or less conscious. In a Norwegian context this would

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68 Cultural context here refer to the broad historical and geographical sitatedness of ideas. Cultural context includes national, local and school context.
69 One who has emphasized this with regard to philosophy is Alasdair MacIntyre, for instance in MacIntyre (1966).
also be the domain of textbooks and other resource material. Textbooks are important interpreters of official curricula, and will influence the teachers’ perception of curricula. On the other hand, the teachers’ interpretation of the textbook will depend on their pre-conceptions of curricula.

The operational domain is where curricula are put into practice, the taught curricula. The last domain, the experiential, is the domain of the students. It is how the students conceive curricula and how curricula influence students.

The model includes three spheres of contexts, roughly corresponding to Arfwedson’s three levels of contexts. The first is the national context. This indicates that curriculum is of national interest, and that the various domains of curricula interact with the national context. What is considered national is of course often international. The international context also influences curriculum policy making and other curricula domains. But to simplify the model, the international context is thought of as interwoven with the national, local and school context. The second is the local context. Curricula are conceived and practiced in local places. These local contexts relate to the different curricula domains, also the formal one. The third context is the one of the school itself. This means that each individual school has certain codes or traditions that influence and are influenced by different curricula domains.

The contexts are viewed as overlapping. The school context is partly local and national. It is influenced by national cultures and by national policy and bureaucracy, by national ideas of education like the unitary school and the like. And it is influenced by local cultures, local policy, local ideas of education and so on. But each school is relating to these contexts individually, depending on its school code.

The domains are thought of as separate spheres, but interrelating in various ways. The relations are cyclic, not linear. Curriculum reforms may seem linear, a single movement from educational policy to implementation and evaluation in the schools. But this is of course a simplified, ideal picture of a much more complex process. All reforms happen in a historical context. They are here not understood as isolated events, but for instance as reactions to previous curricula. The simple fact that some Norwegian schools had not

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70 Arfwedson uses the names 1) “system context”, 2) “external context” or “neighborhood context” and 3) “internal context” or “school context”. Here the three contexts are called 1) “national context”, 2) “local context” and 3) “school context”. The contexts are understood mainly in the same way as Arfwedson do, although focusing more on the school as an arena of both international, national and local cultures and interests. This is developed in for instance Engen 1989.
changed to textbooks based on the 1987 Curriculum yet when the 1997 Curriculum was affectuated, is an example of the discrepancy between the formal and the operational domain. A curriculum reform has no final end, but is part of one act among many in a comprehensive play. Having said this, the model also opens up for reforms with high degree of implementation. This is just a conceptual model, opening for numerous relations and processes.

Several theoretical perspectives can be used to interpret and to normatively discuss the field of curriculum. Tyler’s rationale constituted once a common procedural understanding of curriculum, but since the 1970’s no single theory has dominated curriculum as an educational discipline. This means that curriculum research is done from a variety of perspectives and focusing on various parts or processes of the cyclic curriculum model. This cyclic view of curriculum theory does not necessary imply harmonizing or developmental progress. The various perspectives do not always complete each other; they may be alternative and conflicting points of view. The cyclic movement is not necessarily a progressive movement. In American curriculum theory Pinar (1995) and others describe two conflicting paradigms, where the reconceptualization (the new paradigm) implies a new way of conceiving curriculum. The new paradigm is not developed out of the old one (curriculum development), but represents a definite shift in perspective and method.

In sum: The model is called cyclic, in contrast to linear curriculum models. There is a movement in Goodlad’s theory towards a cyclic and ecological (and moral) understanding of curriculum (Goodlad 1987:1-19, 210-221 and Goodlad 1990:19, 25). The discussion above gives reason for a movement towards conceptualization of complex and cyclic curriculum relations.

Now having established a conceptual framework, I will turn to various theories of tolerance that is of importance to the analysis of the material in this study.

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71 International reports on education (like for instance OECD-reports) have influenced the Norwegian political debate. However, international influence on Norwegian education is of course not limited to formal documents.
3. The complexity of tolerance - conceptual and theoretical issues

3.1 Introduction

Tolerance is often described as a paradoxical ideal or phenomenon. These paradoxes are of different kinds. One of them is the high level of formal agreement on the importance of tolerance on one hand and the high level of disagreement of what tolerance is on the other. The aim of this chapter is to describe and analyze these differences in conceptions of tolerance.

Although a formidable literature on tolerance exists, the degree on conceptual and theoretical consensus is low. Heyd (1996:3) says that the best indication of the “shaky grounds” of the discussion of tolerance is the lack of paradigm cases. It is hard to find a single concrete case that would be agreed upon as a typical object of discussion. An example of the fundamental disagreement of tolerance is the question of ethnical and racial tolerance. While racial tolerance is considered one of the most important issues of tolerance by some, it is considered not to have anything to do with tolerance by others.

As discussed in chapter one the analysis of tolerance in this study is done on three levels: A practical, conceptual and theoretical. Theories of tolerance do however not address the practical level to a large extent. The discussion deals with issues of conceptualization and theoretization. The level of practice will recur in the next chapters.

Firstly, the conceptual level: Tolerance can for instance mean indifference, permissiveness, endurance or neutrality (Churchill 1993:190). Or tolerance can be conceived along a continuum from resigned acceptance to passive indifference to individual rights to openness and respect to endorsement (Walzer 1997:10-11). Unless one clarifies what is meant by tolerance, a discussion of the importance, limits and practical cases of tolerance is likely not to be fruitful. Secondly, there is serious theoretical disagreement as to the justification and limits of tolerance. The ideal of tolerance has primarily been

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73 See for instance Vogt (1997:19) who distinguishes between political, moral and social tolerance, where the last category primarily refers to issues of race or ethnicity.
74 Mendus 1989:16. See below for a discussion on ethical and racial tolerance.
75 Horton, who is director of the Morell Studies in Toleration at the University of York and has published extensively on tolerance, gives, together with Nicholson, the following description of the situation: “Toleration is a central concept in modern political thought, and the practice of toleration is generally recognised as an essential constituent of a free society and a stable polity. Yet there is neither widespread agreement about
developed within a liberal\textsuperscript{76} political and philosophical context. This liberal conception of tolerance has however serious problems, which the critique of classic and modern liberal theories of tolerance\textsuperscript{77} and the more general critique of liberalism has revealed (MacIntyre 1981, 1988, Sandel 1998, Taylor 1989, Walzer 1983). This does not mean that liberal tolerance is indefensible, but that it is highly contested as a universal formal framework. No single theoretical paradigm has substituted the liberal conception of tolerance, and the theoretical landscape of tolerance is therefore diverse, indeed.

This chapter does not aim at a new definition and theoretical development of tolerance. It does neither aim at a “correct” conception of tolerance\textsuperscript{78} Its ambition is to disclose the conceptual and theoretical complexity of tolerance – a complexity that one probably will also find in the empirical material that will be analyzed in part III. More precisely the ambition of this chapter is to describe and systemize the different conceptual and theoretical issues and positions in order to clarify the complexity of the field.\textsuperscript{79} This is not an easy task because not only is there disagreement of what tolerance is, there is also

\textsuperscript{76} Liberal is here understood as an adjective form of liberalism. Liberalism is a diverse tradition within political philosophy and ethics, and it is debatable whether it can be treated collectively as one tradition or that any apparent or superficial unity conceals a plurality of modern political theories. Gray (1995:xii) argues however that liberalism is characterized by four features: Individualist, egalitarian, universalist and meliorist.

\textsuperscript{77} “I doubt whether we can find an argument of principle that satisfies the purest and strongest aims of the value of liberal toleration, in the sense that it does not rely on skepticism or on the contingencies of power, and also could in principle explain to rational people whose deepest convictions were not in favor of individual autonomy and related values that they should think a state better than let their values decay in preference to enforcing them. If toleration as a practice is to be defended in terms of its being a value, then it will have to appeal to substantive opinions about good, in particular the good of individual autonomy…” (Williams 1996a:24). The universal claim of liberal tolerance rests on formal or procedural conceptions of the good. William’s critique is that these procedures and formal conceptions are based on substantial conceptions of the good, like individual autonomy. Since these substantial conceptions of good may be rejected, tolerance may also be rejected. This is the dilemma of modern tolerance, according to Williams, who argues for a modest, political tolerance. For a comprehensive critique of liberal tolerance, see Mendus 1989 and Budzewski 1992. See also Dees 1997, Chaplin 1993 and Marcuse 1965.

\textsuperscript{78} Churchill (1997:192, 202) argues that four conditions are necessary in a “correct” use of tolerance: 1) awareness of diversity 2) voluntarily forbearance 3) moral disapproval and 4) power to suppress or interfere. He further argues that these are necessary, but not sufficient conditions of tolerance. Three more conditions have to be met: 5) attribute of moral character or moral disposition 6) directed against alterable beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and so on, and 7) based on respect for persons. As the discussion in this chapter shows each of these conditions are contested. There are also reasons to question the combination of all these conditions. Such a detailed conception is at risk of loosing contact with how the word actually is understood and used. Not only is the conceptualization remote from everyday use of tolerance, very few philosophers and social scientists understand and use tolerance (or toleration) analytically in this detailed sense.

\textsuperscript{79} The main focus is to describe, systemize and discuss the various conceptions and theories of tolerance. This does not exclude critical discussion of the various positions in this chapter. It is not uncommon to argue for a conceptual or theoretical position negatively, that is, not only to give positive arguments for the position, but shape it in the light of a criticism of another, competing position. This is for instance the case in communitarian critique of liberalism and postmodern critique of modernism. Critical remarks are here not used to give an argument for one or several preferable positions, but in order to understand the issues and positions better.
disagreement of how to describe the disagreement. Different conceptions of tolerance are often described in dichotomies as narrow or broad, weak or strong, negative or positive, traditional or modern, modern or postmodern and so on, but these characteristics are to some degree used and understood differently from author to author. Because tolerance is a complex concept, it is hard to give a satisfactory description along one dimension. The first part will therefore construct a conceptual model along three dimensions of tolerance. The second part will give an account of some major theories of tolerance which belongs to different political-ethical traditions: Liberal, socialistic, communitarian and postmodern. There are few explicit theories of tolerance. In most cases they are implicit, woven in a larger moral story. This larger moral story is necessary in order to understand the particular conception of tolerance. An account of tolerance must therefore be placed within a substantive moral tradition. The third part of this chapter is a brief presentation of some empirical research on tolerance and education that is relevant for this study.

The purpose of these conceptual, theoretical and empirical considerations is to furnish the empirical analyses in part III of this study with analytical tools. Part III tries to describe and analyze different conceptions and theories of tolerance in different domains of the curriculum. These descriptions and discussions will help identifying and analyzing different conceptions and theories of tolerance in the curriculum debate, the formal curriculum and in the interviews with the teachers.

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80 The disagreement starts with which word to use, tolerance and/or toleration. There is no agreement what this distinction amounts to. (See below.)
81 One example is the dichotomy negative/positive that is used both in the sense of a) refraining from action or active support (Mendus 1989:5) and b) tolerance as a political necessity or a moral ideal (Nicholson 1985:163-166).
82 The two most explicit liberal defenses of tolerance, Locke’s *Letter concerning toleration* and Mill’s *On liberty* illustrate this point. In Mill’s case tolerance must be understood within a larger liberal account of liberty, autonomy and progress. Locke’s case is interesting because the interpretation of his conception of tolerance depends on which larger framework one chooses. Within a secular liberal framework, Locke is seen as (unsuccessfully) trying to give a pure rational and universal defense of tolerance (Waldron 1991:103-105, 120). In a theological interpretation of Locke tolerance is seen as being true to one’s Christian faith (Mitchell 1996:158). More recent defenses of tolerance are clearly interwoven in a larger moral account, for instance Rawls 1971 and 1996 and Rorty 1989.
83 The same point is made by John Horton: “… giving an adequate account of toleration is much less straightforward than might be thought; […] such an account must be placed in some substantive moral context…” (Horton 1996:29).
3.2 Tolerance – conceptual issues

3.2.1 Etymological questions

The English word tolerance comes from the Latin “tolerantia”,\(^84\) which comes from the verb “tolero”. The Latin word carries four meanings, which are relevant in this context. Firstly, to bear the weight of, to support. Secondly, to provide food or sustain for, that is to support something or to maintain a state of affairs. Thirdly, to submit (or be prepared to submit) oneself to, undergo, bear, endure. Fourthly, to stand up to or resist successfully without difficulties and hardship.\(^85\) Especially the last of the first and the second senses are important to notice, because it is from time to time claimed that the classical etymological meaning of tolerance is the more passive and limited bearing and enduring.\(^86\) Tolerance as support and providing goes beyond this limited sense.

In English there are mainly two words that are used as tolerantia, namely toleration and tolerance.\(^87\) In Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary (2003:1320) tolerance is defined as “1. The character, state, or quality of being tolerant. 2. Indulgence or forbearance in judging the opinions, customs, or acts of others; freedom from bigotry or from racial or religious prejudice. 3. The act of enduring, or the capacity for endurance.” Toleration is defined as “1. The act or practice of tolerance. 2. The recognition of the rights of the individual to his own opinions and customs, as in matters pertaining to religious worship, when they do not interfere with the rights of others or with decency and order. 3. The spirit and desire to be tolerant in matters of opinion; forbearance, freedom from bigotry or race prejudice.”

In the literature the concepts are either used I) interchangeably or with II) distinct meaning. In the case of I) it varies whether tolerance or toleration is used as the main term or whether they are used by random choice. In the case of II) tolerance and toleration are distinguished for analytical purpose. There exists, however, no established agreement on the character of the distinction. There are at least five alternatives:


b) Toleration: The broader term, serving all negations of intolerance. Tolerance: The most minimal cases of toleration. (King 1976:13)

\(^84\) To the following, see Oxford Latin Dictionary (1976:1946-1947).
\(^85\) A fifth sense of tolero is to remove. This meaning comes from tollo, to pick up, lift, get rid of.
\(^86\) See for instance Razavi/Ambuel 1997:vii.

d) Toleration: Endure the disagreeable. Tolerance: An accepting attitude. (Fotion and Elfstrom 1992:9-14)


In ethics the first distinction is perhaps the most appealing because it corresponds with a frequently used similar distinction between normative ethics and morality. There are on the other hand several reasons why a distinction between toleration and tolerance does not have significant analytical value for this study. The main reason is that this study initially does not want to create a separation between theoretical, normative reflections on one hand and conceived and experienced ideals on the other. In other words, it is an assumption in this study that ethics has to understand practiced tolerance before and while discussing theories of tolerance (or toleration). Two different concepts for these two activities can easily not only distinguish, but separate ought and is in ethics. When there is a need to establish a distinction between the theoretical and the practical, the normative and the descriptive, the institutional and the private and so on, it can easily be done by other means. There are also other reasons for not keeping the distinction between tolerance and toleration. Such a distinction does not exist in the Norwegian language. Further, the nouns tolerance and toleration has the same verb, to tolerate, and the same adjective tolerant, and the distinction does not apply to the negation intolerance (intoleration is not used). When one adds the already mentioned confusion about what there is to distinguish in the concept of toleration/tolerance, this study prefers to use tolerance and toleration interchangeably. For pragmatic reasons tolerance is used as the main term.

Related terms as liberty, acceptance, respect, indifference, license and solidarity are often used as contrasting concepts. The narrower tolerance is understood, the easier it is to draw distinctively lines between the different concepts. The more wide tolerance is

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87 King (1976:12) also mentions tolerationism as a third alternative. Also tolerantism could be mentioned. These words are however rarely used both in everyday and in theoretical language.

88 Morality is then conceived as the material or the field, and ethics is the (normative and descriptive) study and theory of this field (Beuchamp 1991:21-22 and 33-37). In this study “morality” and “ethics” are used interchangeably.

89 In Norwegian there is a distinction between toleranse (tolerance) and åndsfrihet (liberty of conscience or literary: liberty of spirit). In especially Danish educational literature, toleranse is understood as a negative concept, while åndsfrihet has a more positive character. (Kjær 1974)
understood the more overlapping between them. The different conceptualization of the relationship between tolerance and some of these related terms will be discussed below.

In an attempt to describe the conceptual field of tolerance, I will not pursue the etymological or the contrasting paths further. Instead three conceptual dimensions will be identified, namely questions of 1) scope, 2) energy and 3) conditions. The reason for this more complex description of the conceptual field, is that the many and major differences in the conception of tolerance can be properly understood neither along either-or dichotomies, nor as different points of views on one issue, in the form of a continuum. For instance, positive tolerance can have a variety of meanings. It can mean that tolerance is an individual moral virtue, it can mean that the tolerator is allowed or obligated to assist the tolerated or it can mean that tolerance does not require disapproval or dislike. These are three distinct issues, and it is quite possible to describe tolerance as positive in one of these and negative in the two others. There is therefore a need to describe tolerance along several issues or dimensions in order to get a picture of the conceptual variations as complete as possible.

The following discussion will take the form of first describing the more “narrow” or “limited” conceptual position, which almost without exception is the chronologically primary. A critique of that position then results in a description of a “wider” or more “comprehensive” position, which constitutes the opposite end of the dimensional line. This does not mean that the latter is necessarily a preferable position, but that a critique of the first is an integrated part of its self-understanding.

\[90\] Tolerance is the most common concept in educational and curriculum theory, and corresponds best to everyday use.
3.2.2 Dimension 1: From thin to thick tolerance

The issue of scope concerns the question of the extension and the boundaries of the concept of tolerance. The dimension goes from thin to thick\(^1\) tolerance. Historically it was constructed as a thin concept, mainly concerning religious liberty and freedom of conscience, and it was more a question of institutional forbearance than a comprehensive individual ideal or right.\(^2\) It was more often an argument against intolerance, than for tolerance (King 1976:75). During the last and this century tolerance also got a thick meaning, addressing not only religious, but also political, moral and racial matters. There was a growing demand not only for institutional, but also for individual tolerance. At the same time the picture of tolerance became more complex: Arguments are given both for

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\(^1\) Geertz (1973:3-10) distinguishes between thin and thick descriptions. Thin descriptions try to supply uninterpreted narrow “data” to the analysis, while thick descriptions are wide context-sensitive interpretive readings of complex webs of meaning.

\(^2\) In medieval times tolerance meant the right of religious institutions and groups to be in charge of internal affairs, not individual liberty. See Tierney 1996 for an account of the history of religious rights. He emphasizes that one must not confuse the ideas of tolerance with the historical practice of tolerance. The ideas of freedom of the church from secular control, the overriding authority of the individual conscience and existence of natural rights, which all are leading to religious rights, were visible in medieval times and formulated by the end of the 17th century. But: “Implementing them took much longer.” (Tierney 1996:55)
making the concept of tolerance thinner\textsuperscript{93} and for making it thicker\textsuperscript{94}. However, one must ask: What in the concept of tolerance do thin and thick more specifically refer to? The following discussion of the scope of tolerance addresses two issues: First, the question whether tolerance is an exclusively moral concept and what we mean by moral. Secondly, I will discuss the conception of the actors and structures of tolerance.

\textit{The issues of tolerance: Moral and non-moral?}

One of the conceptual debates on tolerance concerns the condition of objection\textsuperscript{95}. Objection is often referred to as a condition for tolerance: One can only tolerate what or who one disagrees with. The debate has focused on two different conceptions of the objection-condition, namely \textit{disapproval} and \textit{dislike}\textsuperscript{96}. The consequences of this conceptual debate are significant, for instance whether it is meaningful to speak about racial tolerance. This part of the scope-dimension goes from a thin disapproval on one hand and thick dislike on the other.

Nicholson (1985:160-1) argues that \textit{dislike} may have descriptive, historical and sociological, value. In normative theories of tolerance, however, in theories of tolerance as a moral ideal, one must use \textit{disapprove}. “Toleration is a matter of moral choice, and our tastes or inclinations are irrelevant,” he claims. People’s dislikes, their prejudices, have a significant explanatory value when trying to map the tolerant landscape. Feelings can however not serve as a foundation of a moral position because feelings are not morality grounded.

In a similar fashion Raphael (1988:139) argues: “Toleration is the practice of deliberately allowing or permitting a thing of which one disapproves.” Disapproval alone must be the condition of tolerance because dislike is arbitrary and a subjective preference. Disapproval on the other hand is reasonably grounded so that one can expect it to be shared by others. This moral intersubjectivity is strong, it is universal. The judgment of disapproval claims to be “the view of any rational agent”. In a kantian tradition Raphael separates the

\textsuperscript{93} Robert Weissberg delivers a forceful attack on what he calls “heart and mind tolerance”, and reserves tolerance to a institutional, political sense in his book \textit{Political tolerance. Balancing community and diversity}: “Tolerance, unfortunately, may be deteriorating into an empty, honorific slogan, a concept perhaps robbed of any meaning by relentless over-use.” (Weissberg 1998:1)

\textsuperscript{94} For instance Vogt 1997 and King 1976 use a thick conception of tolerance.

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Refusal} is also used, indicating a stronger moral judgment. This following discussion assumes the condition as necessary, and focuses on its form and content. A more radical discussion on the justification of the condition itself will follow below.

\textsuperscript{96} Disgust and distaste are also mentioned by Mendus (1989:9). Here dislike covers all three concepts.
rational moral from the emotional esthetic sphere, where disapproval relates to the first and dislike to the last.

On the other side of the scale, the objection is formulated as *dislike*. Vogt (1997:3) says: “Tolerance is intentional self-restraint in the face of something one dislike, objects to, finds threatening, or otherwise has a negative attitude towards…”. Dislike is here understood as a broad term, covering a variety of types of objections. Vogt is working within a context of social science (education) which has a descriptive more than a normative focus. This means that he obviously feels no need to discuss whether the objection is moral legitimate or not, or for that sake moral or not. The focus is on attitudinal and behavioral objection, independent of form and cause. The objection may be in the form of disagreement with homosexual practice or hate of homosexuals. And the cause may be (socially) peer pressure, a (psychological) tendency to project reasons for failures in one’s own life to emotionally threatening groups, or it may be (moral) convictions. Mere dislike as expression for objection does not limit the objection to moral reasons alone, the reasons could be psychological, esthetical, customary, economical, and so on. In other words tolerance is not limited to the moral sphere or to a moral perspective, but is, and should be, used in different contexts.

This distance in the view of the requirements of tolerance is not only a question of different scientific traditions. Also a number of philosophers think of objection in a wide sense. Joseph Raz (1988:162) describes the particular condition of tolerance as this: “Tolerance is a distinctive moral virtue only if it curbs desires, inclinations, and convictions which are thought by the tolerant person to be in themselves desirable.” Emotional reasons (desires and inclinations) are here mentioned together with cognitive reasons (convictions) for objection and as legitimate grounds for moral judgments. Raz renounces universality and rationality as necessary marks of morality, and allows for a moral pluralism, which includes incompatible forms and styles of life. This also means a conceptual plurality in deciding what morality is. The limits between morality and other social spheres or perspectives become fluid, and tolerance get a very thick meaning. In some instances it is

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97 This is obvious in for instance Weissberg’s *Political tolerance* (1998) that is written within political science. In the book he is contrasting an external, political tolerance which is oriented towards behavior with an internal psychological tolerance which is attitudinal of character. Very rare does he reflect on tolerance as primarily a moral ideal and how such a perspective would affect his criticism. Morality is transformed and reduced to psychology. (Weissberg 1998:16 and 39) A moral perspective could easily constitute a bridge between the political and attitudinal realm.

98 See also King 1976:41-44.

99 Individual (not moral) autonomy, in the sense of the person as the author of her life, does however get the character of a universal ideal (Raz 1988:156-158).
hard to judge if tolerance is only a moral (in the wide sense) concept or also apply to these other spheres as politics, custom and so on.\textsuperscript{100}

In between these positions Susan Mendus (1989:12-15) argues that objection is both disapproval and dislike. She rejects to limit objection solely to disapproval for two reasons. The first\textsuperscript{101} is that this excludes the important role of feelings in ordinary moral judgments. Simply put morality in a Kantian tradition puts great emphasis on reason,\textsuperscript{102} while morality in a Humean tradition is understood as a dialectical movement between reason and passion (or sentiment). In Hume’s view passion gives reason motivation, while reason is the critical corrective to passion.\textsuperscript{103} Secondly she argues, following Raz, that value pluralism implies a wide concept of morality and therefore also a thick concept of tolerance.

Mendus does however also reject the view that objection can be formulated solely as dislike. “… the circumstances of toleration are circumstances in which there is diversity coupled with disapproval, dislike, or disgust, and where the tolerator has the power to influence the tolerated.”\textsuperscript{104} She seems to agree with Warlock that there can be drawn a line between tolerance which “involves only dislike” (“weak tolerance”) and moral disapproval (“strong tolerance”) (Mendus 1988:11-12). The first category of tolerance takes place outside the sphere of morality, is subjective and represents “simpler cases”. The second category of tolerance takes place inside the sphere of morality, corresponds to universal and rational claims of disapproval and represent the problematic cases (Mendus 1988:20).

The debate on the objection condition of tolerance is important because it is implicitly a debate of the scope of the concept of tolerance. The wider the objection-condition is defined, the wider is the field of tolerance. The debate seems to involve two connected, but separate questions, which often are confused: 1) What is morality

\textsuperscript{100} In one example he mentions tolerance of another’s slow and methodical speech (Rax 1988:162)
\textsuperscript{101} She here draws on the argument for a thick (or weak as Warnock puts it in opposition to Nicholson’s (1985) strong conception of tolerance) conception of tolerance, including dislike, in Warnock 1987:125-135.
\textsuperscript{102} Reason, not inclinations, can produce a good will which means that people can act from duty. (Kant 1785/1970:11-12)
\textsuperscript{103} See Beauchamp 1991:264. Hume expresses the need for feelings, sentiment and passion in morality like this: “But though reason, when fully assisted and improved, be sufficient to instruct us in the pernicious or useful tendency of qualities and actions; it is not alone sufficient to produce any moral blame or approbation. Utility is only a tendency to a certain end; and were the end totally indifferent to us, we should feel the same indifference towards the means. It is requisite a sentiment should here display itself, in order to give a preference to the useful above the pernicious tendencies. This sentiment can be no other than a feeling for the happiness of mankind, and a resentment of their misery; since these are different ends, which virtue and vice have a tendency to promote. Here, therefore, reason instructs us in the several tendencies of actions, and humanity makes the distinction in favour of those, which are useful and beneficial.” (Hume 1772/1998:83-84)
\textsuperscript{104} It is however unclear on what grounds she rejects the objection-condition as solely dislike. It may seem that she, despite the criticism of a narrow concept of morality she presents, never rejects it.
(conceptually)? And: 2) Should tolerance properly be understood solely as a moral ideal, or also as a non-moral phenomenon?

While tolerance according to Raphael’s definition is limited to moral issues only, and a morality that is limited by the criteria of universality and rationality, Raz is using tolerance in a much larger context. Tolerance is both a moral and a non-moral conception, and morality is conceived broader. Two quite different conceptualizations emerge. These are partly due to different moral positions. For instance Raphael’s conception of morality is framed by a deontological ethical tradition. The understanding of tolerance within different ethical theories will be discussed later in this chapter. But the different conceptualizations of tolerance are also connected to different conceptions of morality.

One conception of morality understands it as a *sphere* with more or less distinctive boundaries to neighbouring spheres and concepts. It is then possible to delimit the distinct moral from the political, economical, juridical and customary sphere. This conceptualization is used by for instance Vogt (1997:17), who distinguishes between political, moral and social tolerance. Political tolerance refers to the public sphere while moral tolerance is used within the private sphere. Social tolerance is tolerance of “people’s state of being”, characteristics from birth or early socialization, such as race, language and so on. The problem with the conceptualization of morality within a sphere is obvious. If the distinction above were to be taken literally, the social and political sphere would be cut off from moral considerations.

Another conception of morality sees it as a *perspective* on an unlimited number of spheres or issues. Schmidt (1998:113-114) rejects the idea of restricting morality to certain spheres or realms. “Accordingly, morality is most reasonably conceived as pervasive; we can not define specific realms or dimensions of human life that are exempted from moral assessment…”

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105 This shows the close relationship between the use of different conceptions of morality and different ethical theoretical traditions (MacIntyre 1985:51-61, Taylor 1994a:16-23). MacIntyre (1985:7-8) argues that fragmentation of moral traditions results in conceptual incommensurability and no common conception of morality. Although there should be possible to agree on some patterns of common conceptual marks (like in Beauchamp 1991:21), it is not unlikely that the conception in use would be imprinted or even impregnated by theoretical ethical positions.

106 It is worth noting that “political tolerance” is used in at least three different senses in the literature. While Vogt (1997: 17-18) understands political tolerance as 1) referring to cases where the subject of tolerance is a political body (for example society tolerating the individual), Walzer (1997, 8-9) understands political tolerance as 2) issues where the object of tolerance is political, for instance the tolerance of political parties. Williams (1996b:43) understands political tolerance in the sense that 3) tolerance is more a pragmatic, political concept than a moral virtue.

107 The spheres could of course be constructed as overlapping. Still the problem recurs: Some areas are per definition exempted from moral reflection and arguments.
Conceptualizing morality as a sphere, limits the scope of moral tolerance to issues within this sphere. If one conceptualizes morality as a perspective, moral tolerance will have relevance to a variety of issues concerning politics, law, economy, religion and so on. This has importance for the discussion whether racial and ethnical tolerance is a meaningful concept. Using a narrow conception of the objection-condition, objection as disapproval, racial tolerance does not give any sense. One cannot morally disapprove of a race or an ethnicity, given the requirements that such disapproval is to be rational and universal. One can however dislike a race or an ethnicity, so a wide conception of the objection-condition does not initially imply such restrictions on the language of tolerance. The obvious problem is however that talk about racial tolerance indirectly legitimates racial objections, or racism. This problem is recognized both by Mendus (1988) and Horton (1996), and they both argue that racial tolerance does not give any meaning because race is not a moral issue, while tolerance is. Mendus argues that a requirement for talking about moral tolerance is that the tolerated has a possibility to change or is alterable. Since race and ethnicity are unalterable, such issues fall outside the scope of tolerance (Mendus 1988:15-17). Horton says that in the case of for instance religion, there may be cases where it is legitimate to morally disapprove or dislike and therefore talk about religious tolerance. There are however no such cases in the case of race. “It is not tolerance toward different races that we generally wish to promote but the recognition of the intrinsic moral irrelevance of racial differences.” (Horton 1996:34)

Both seem to claim that in spite of a wider conception, tolerance primarily is a matter of morality. And there has to be a moral requirement either connected to the tolerator (Horton) or the tolerated (Mendus) in order to speak properly about tolerance.

The arguments for a wider conception of tolerance, which includes racial tolerance, are primarily of an everyday-use kind. Racial tolerance and ethnical tolerance are widely used concepts, and these issues are most pressuring in most pluralistic societies. A narrow conception of tolerance might have analytical value, but would not correspond easily with the everyday-use of the concept. And defining racial issues outside the moral scope, would risk isolating ethics from cases involving race. This obviously is problematic in a situation when racial hate and “ethnical cleansing” are creating not only pressuring theoretical, but also practical and political moral questions of tolerance and intolerance. This is not the place for a lengthier discussion on this issue, but it is worth mentioning one possible way out of the theoretical dilemma. Racial issues rarely involve race alone. It is more often a question of a cluster of cultural, economical, moral and religious issues that are gathered under a
racial flag. And the practice of ethnical culture, economical structures with relevance to ethnical and racial questions and so on are in principle alterable. So even if one sticks to the irrelevance of tolerance in issues which concerns solely race, the majority of cases of racial tolerance would not be disqualified.

**The actors and structures of tolerance**

So far I have described different positions on the question of the scope of the issues that concern tolerance. I will now proceed to another question of scope, namely how the actors and structures of tolerance are conceived.

The first of these dimensions concerns the language in which the subjects and objects of tolerance are conceived. The dimension goes from conceiving the subjects and objects of tolerance in a thin or narrow individual-society dichotomy on one hand to thick or complex social relations on the other.

The subject of tolerance, the tolerator, and the object of tolerance, the tolerated, can obviously be an individual or a society. The classic liberal scheme consists in a dichotomy between the individual and the society or the state. In John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* (1859/1991) this dichotomy is visible in for instance the clear distinction between the self-regarding sphere and the other-regarding sphere. The self-regarding sphere is the sphere of the autonomous and individual choice. It consists of all the attitudes and actions that only have consequences for the individual herself, and not for others, other than they can consent to and participate in. The state should therefore be tolerant to the individual, because individualism is the key to progress, utility and human well-being (Gray 1991:xv).

Tolerance is here conceived in the primary relation between the individual and the state (the social systems and institutions), much like in the later (though theoretically different) account of tolerance in Rawls *A theory of justice* (1971:211-221). The dichotomy is not an equilibrium, the individual has priority. This is the thin conception of the actors in tolerance. This conception affects the focus of theoretical interest. In liberalism the focus has been on

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108 *Actor*, and not *agent*, is here used deliberately. Conceiving the person as an *agent* tends to limit the scope in an individualistic and rational direction. The conception of the moral *actor* is essentially relational. The actor has to create her own role in relations to different actors, audiences and scripts in a complex play.

109 *Structures* here refer to the social and cultural structures that tolerance is conceived within.

110 These are expressions from Bentham, not frequently used by Mill, but they describe Mill’s idea of two spheres or areas well: “But there is a sphere of action in which society, as distinguished from the individual, has, if any, only an indirect interest; comprehending all that portion of a person’s life and conduct which affect only himself, or if it also affect others, only with their free, voluntary, and undeceived consent and participation.” (Mill 1859/1991:16).
how the state can be constructed as a tolerant institution towards its citizens, included a reasonable account of the limits of tolerance.

Groups do not play a great part as actors of tolerance in On liberty. Individuality is the key to human happiness and individual and social progress. Tradition and custom are seen as obstacles to individuality, (Mill 1859/1991:63) and groups based on tradition and custom are therefore more of a problem than a resource. Groups in Mill’s account therefore get the meaning of a gathering of individuals, in which they can fulfill individuality and social progress. Groups do not play a central part in Rawls (1971:211) either:

Rather, given the principles of justice, the state must be understood as the association consisting of equal citizens. It does not concern itself with philosophical and religious doctrine but regulate individuals’ pursuit of their moral and spiritual interests in accordance with principles to which they themselves would agree in an initial situation of equality.

Tolerance is in principal an issue between the state as the provider of public order and the moral and spiritual individual.111

As previously noted, groups had another status in medieval conceptions of tolerance. Tolerance was a matter between the governing powers and various groups, and between various groups. Seen with modern eyes, there was often greater tolerance towards members of other religions than towards heretics within own religion. Tolerance for the individual is an idea of the Enlightenment. However, the individual-society dichotomy in ethics has during the last two or three decades been criticized by authors often labeled as postmodern112 and communitarian113. These theories place larger emphasis on the social constitution of the moral subject. This can either result in greater efforts to liberate the individual from discipline power-knowledge structures as in postmodern thinkers such as

111 Although Rawls has a positive account of the idea of social union, groups still get an instrumental value. They contribute to the individual good: “In either case, persons need one another since it is only in active cooperation with others that one’s powers reach fruition. Only in a social union is the individual complete.” (Rawls 1971:n4/525) See also the diagram at page 109, where the concept of right is conceived in form of individuals and social systems/institutions (regulated by the law of nations).

112 The term postmodern is here broadly understood as a diverse reaction to modern theory and culture with emphasis on radical pluralism. For a more specific description of the rejection within philosophy, see Audi 199: 634-635.

113 Communitarian is a contested label, and it is worth noting that the persons most often connected with communitarianism have more or less rejected their label (Etzioni 1998:xxi-xxii, Sandel 1998:ix, Walzer 1997:112). Although the label covers a plurality of theories that differs on many issues, it is not less precise than other terms of equal macro-level, like “liberal”, “modern” and “postmodern”. Here communitarianism is understood as a collection of political and moral theories with a conception of human beings as “integratedly related to the communities of culture and language that they create, maintain and inhabit.” (Mulhall and Swift 1996:162)
Foucault (1980 and Henriksen 1997:166)\textsuperscript{114}, or it may result in a recognition of the contextual good, the value of community, as in the communitarians MacIntyre (1985:244-255) and Sandel (1998:60-65). In both instances the groups are admitted greater significance for the constitution of the moral subject (negative or positive) than in Mill’s and Rawls’ account.

Sandel (1998:62-63) argues against Rawls’ conception of the moral subject as an antecedently individuated self, an individual constituted prior to its ends and goals. The rawlsian individual is conceived as a fixed rational goal-seeking and choosing unity, always at such a distance from his commitments and goals that he could be thought without them. On Sandel’s account the moral subject is conceived as intersubjective and intrasubjective. Intersubjective conceptions allows for the possibility of describing the moral self as more than one individual person, but as integrated in larger contexts as family or community, class or nation. Intrasubjective conceptions allow describing the moral self not only as a unity, but as a divided self, or a plural self. In both these conceptions the moral subject is seen as relational, externally and internally, more than a fixed entity.

As in the case of individuals, also groups can be divided or plural.\textsuperscript{115} The relations of tolerance therefore work within as well as between groups, and between groups and individuals and societies. A wide conception of the actors in tolerance opens up for a conception of tolerance as working within a web of relations between and within groups, individuals and societies.

On the wide conception, this web includes human ideas as well as actions, policies as well as law-making and enforcement. A specific discussion on this point is whether it is meaningful to talk about tolerating a person (a character) or the person’s actions and opinions. Churchill (1997:200-201) argues that it is only reasonable to tolerate a person’s ideas or actions: “The objects of toleration, as the expression of a moral virtue, are not

\textsuperscript{114} Henriksen (1997:150) comments on Foucault’s statement that his purpose has been to show the ways in which human beings are made subjects through history. This means firstly that the subject is deeply rooted in her historical period, and constituted within this periods’ resources. Secondly, the subject is not self-constituting, but defined by the surrounding and internalized knowledge. Thirdly, the human being is made subject by objectification. The human being is therefore not the liberated, autonomous, self-made individual, but formed by historical and cultural knowledge and practices. The context has a constitutive role in identity-formation, but valued negatively. “The individual’s social horizon or context is in this perspective primarily seen as a threat…” (Henriksen 1997:164). Here of course is a point of departure between Foucault and MacIntyre. MacIntyre (1984) argues for a conception of morality rooted in contextual traditions and practices. The point in this connection is, however, that it is difficult to view the tolerating subject and the tolerated object as isolated, self-made individuals distanced from the cultural context, relations and structures.

\textsuperscript{115} Different cultural groups can be conceived in the terminology multiculturalism or plurality/pluralism. While multiculturalism indicates diversity between group, and basic unity within groups, pluralism indicate individual and group heterogenity, but little group homogenity (Horton 1993:2).
persons per se, but beliefs, attitudes, behavior (including verbal), and practices subject to change or alteration by the persons who hold these beliefs and attitudes or exhibit or participate in the behavior or practices in question.” It is only rational to tolerate the person’s attitudes, behavior and practices, because these can be altered. Persons themselves cannot be. This is similar to the point Mendus makes concerning racial tolerance, with the exception that she limits it to the question of race and does not claim persons per se to be unalterable.116 Again tolerance is interpreted within a strict moral sphere, and a narrow conception of actors of tolerance.117 A contrary conception is found in for instance Heyd (1996:10-17) who argues for a perceptual tolerance. First when seeing the other as person, not as an object, I am able to tolerate. It is more a shift of attention, more about understanding the other than making a judgment. “According to the perceptual conception, only human beings are, strictly speaking, the objects of toleration. We do not tolerate opinions and beliefs, not even actions and practices, only the subjects holding disliked beliefs and the agents of detested actions.” (Heyd 1996:14)

A wider conception of the objective of tolerance is found in King (1976:60-67) who identifies four different objects of tolerance: Human acts, human ideas, human organizations and human identities. The classification human identities include issues of nationality, class, race, tribe, religion and culture.

The point here is, as previously stated, not to argue for a certain conception of the moral subject, but to describe two different positions that create different schemes in which tolerance is understood. The different conceptual schemes imply different foci, issues and questions of tolerance.118

Power is often considered as one of the conditions of tolerance. The tolerator must have power to in some way interfere with the tolerated, there must be some kind of action

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116 Churchill seems to claim that person “per se” is person as nature, opposed to person as culture. Nature is unalterable, while culture in principle is not. This is of course highly problematic for a variety of reasons. Firstly, what counts as nature, is culturally conditioned (Henriksen 1991:7-13). Secondly, in a technological era, the limits of nature are not absolute. Thirdly, a person as culture (for instance his religious tradition and conviction) may in practice be just as unalterable as a person’s nature.

117 An even narrower concept of the object of tolerance is found in Weissberg (1998) who argues that the only legitimate object is people’s actions (an “outer tolerance”). “Inner tolerance” is illegitimate because it tries to affect people’s ideas and thinking, and tends to define intolerance as “bad thinking” or as a “thoughtcrime”. Weissberg is identifying external tolerance with political tolerance and internal tolerance with a psychological tolerance. Trying to impose an absolute value (tolerance) is therefore a kind of brainwashing. However, Weissberg fails to see the bridge between tolerance of actions and ideas, namely tolerance as a moral phenomenon. Moral tolerance regards both virtues and actions, individuals and politics.

118 How different conceptualizations of the actors in tolerance can provide different account of the same issue is obvious in the Rushdie-affair. Is the issue at stake tolerance for individual freedom of speech or tolerance for the identity of a group? For an interesting discussion with emphasis on different conceptualizations of the conflict, see Mendus 1993:193-206.
(widely conceived) of disapproval or dislike that the tolerator either refrains from or transforms into a positive expression because of tolerance. If the tolerator does not have such power, tolerance would not require anything but a statement free from obligation.

Power can however be understood differently. Here I will describe first a thin and then a thick account of power. One possibility is to understand power in a sovereign model. Power is something persons or institutions have sovereignty over; it is something people or institutions have. That also means power is clearly identifiable, it is acknowledgeable and understandable. Nicholson (1985:161) can be said to express this view of power as a condition of tolerance:

It is widely agreed that power is a necessary condition of the exercise of toleration. Of course, a powerless person could be tolerant in the sense of being of a tolerant disposition or believing in toleration, if he would exercise toleration were he to have the power. In politics, in fact, everyone does have at least some power. Even if the government has decreed that a particular opinion or action be tolerated or not tolerated, it is within every citizen’s power to decide whether he will enthusiastically uphold and support that law or deliberately evade and thwart it. He can, within limits, be intolerant where the law has commanded him to be tolerant, and tolerant where it has ordered tolerance; and if enough citizens refuse to accept and apply the law, the authorities’ power can be greatly reduced. Power, and hence the possibilities of toleration, is widely dispersed between governments and subjects.

Nicholson conceive power as juridical and contractual. The way power functions at the governmental level, is through lawmaking and law-enforcement. This is an openly, accessible form of power, which either is used legitimate or illegitimate. The individuals consent to transfer some of their initial power to the society, embodied as the government. The condition of the contract is that the government uses the power in a legitimate way, that is, according to the public moral judgment and sentiment of the limits of government. If those conditions are violated (“enough citizens refuse to accept and apply the law”), the government has misused its power.

This is an account of power from a meta-perspective. It assumes that the account itself is not a result of power, but told from an external, independent perspective. Such a perspective is however an illusion, Foucault argues, no human being can escape the structures of power. All accounts, all knowledge is affected by power.119 The neat story of sovereignty power is itself a power-story, which tends to diffuse and disguise the complex

structures and relations of power. This wide conception of power does not see it as a “thing” that one can have and decide over. Instead of you having power, power has you. On this account power is relational and structural, it is plural and contextual.

On this wide account of power, it cannot be an unambiguous condition of tolerance. It is impossible clearly to distinguish one’s power from powerlessness and one’s power from the power over one. I may tolerate “the other” not only because I have the power to do so, but because I realize my own powerlessness. And I may tolerate “the other” not because she has the power to change, but because she is powerless. This expansion of the concept of power expands the concept of tolerance.

3.2.3 Dimension 2: From negative to positive tolerance
The second dimension concerns the question of the energy and the means of tolerance. Is tolerance negatively or positively charged? Is there any specific behavioral pattern that characterizes the ideal of tolerance, and if so, what would that be? The answers can be plotted along a line from a negative to a positive tolerance.

Negative and positive tolerance can be used in at least four related, but different senses. Firstly it may refer to the meaning of tolerance, whether tolerance is thought of as a positive, moral ideal or a somewhat more negative, political necessity (or even completely negative political propaganda) (Nicholson 1985:158-166). Secondly it may, assuming the meaning of tolerance is fixed, describe the value of tolerance. In especially Denmark, following Grundvig, several authors have described tolerance as negative and “åndsfrihet”, literally spiritual freedom, as positive. (Kjær 1974) Thirdly, the distinction may also refer to the question of tolerance and pluralism. Negative tolerance then means a more or less strong moral objectivism, while positive tolerance describes a pluralistic view of morality. The fourth sense is the issue of this section: The question of the means of tolerance, or the conception of tolerance as an active or passive practice.

A negative tolerance, in this connection, means that tolerance is practiced by inaction or by refrain from action. A positive tolerance means that one actively supports the

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120 Foucault calls this discipline-power as additional and opposed to sovereignty-power. Through different disciplining institutions in society, the subject is woven into a web of power-knowledge and objectified not humanized, submitted not liberated.
121 Peter Johnson (1992:156-161) offers a somewhat similar critique of a narrow concept of power as a condition of tolerance based on an analysis of Oliver Twist. In the book relational trust between persons in situations with different demands, obligations and possibilities, create a complex pattern of power and powerlessness.
122 For a similar, but not so radical account, see Raz (1988:162-163) who talks about tolerating other people because of their limitations.
tolerated in some form of action. This is of course a rude distinction that needs some elaboration.

The question of means of tolerance is not conditioned by other conceptual accounts of positive and negative tolerance. It is for instance possible to combine a positive account of tolerance as a moral ideal (the first sense) with negative tolerance in the sense of inaction. On this view tolerance is a moral ideal, but to tolerate is to refrain from action (the fourth sense). It is also possible to think a combination of moral objectivism (negative tolerance in the third sense) and positive, active tolerance (in the fourth sense). Although one morally disapproves of an action or attitude, it is quite possible to think that one is doing some action in order to help the disapproved.

The question of the means of tolerance therefore has to be discerned as a distinct dimension in the concept of tolerance, only partly related to the other two dimensions. Positive and negative tolerance in this sense corresponds to the concepts of positive and negative liberty. Negative liberty refers to an idea of the largest amount of individual liberty and where social interference is justified with securing individual liberty. Positive liberty allows society larger space in order to assist individuals in their pursuit for liberty. (Berlin 1969)

Historically the practice of tolerance has been connected to the refrain from coercion. This was particularly the case in religious tolerance, where tolerance came to mean not to punish or coerce “heretics and pagans”. The arguments for tolerance, like in Locke’s Letter Concerning Toleration, are primarily arguments against historically intolerant actions, that is for inaction as a better alternative than intolerable action. This has led to the view of tolerance as disapproval not acted upon (Horton 1993:4) or “asceticism in the exercise of power” (Ricoeur 1996:189), that is, tolerance as a practice of doing nothing.

This is the idea in Rorty 1989, although he is not stating this explicitly.

See for instance Nicolson (1985:160 and 164-167). This only means that inaction is not considered as a political pragmatic necessity, a second best, but a moral value, duty or virtue.

The justification of this could for instance be to considering the tolerant action as overriding, or some kind of epistemic limitations or uncertainty.

“Historically, to tolerate was to permit by law, but not to endorse or encourage member of dissenting groups, much less to provide them with equal opportunities.” (Mendus 1989:7)

This is formulated as the second condition of tolerance in Churchill (1997:191): “Toleration is a matter of leaving others alone or refraining from persecuting them, either through the law or by means of what John Stuart Mill called the “tyranny of public opinion””. Churchill claims to be drawing upon Mendus (1989) for this condition, which is not completely correct. Mendus, as is done here, distinguishes between positive and negative tolerance. She refers to negative tolerance as the historical conception of the means of tolerance, and although she does explicit take a stand on the issue, her positive evaluation of socialistic tolerance should imply a more positive tolerance. (Mendus 1989:5-8 and 155-162)
On this account of tolerance inaction is a necessary but not sufficient condition. Also indifference and inability leads to inaction, and in order to speak about tolerance the tolerator must have a moral motivation and be in a position of power (as discussed above). The point in this connection, however, is that negative tolerance means to suffer, quietly and passively or to refrain from coercion.

A positive tolerance can be found in for instance Raz (1988). He argues that political theorists separate behavior and opinion too sharply. They seem to limit intolerance to the use of coercion, while an expression of a hostile view is not a behavior, and therefore outside the scope of intolerance (and tolerance). He further argues that whether an action or opinion is about tolerance or not, is not decided by the means that are used, but by the reasons of the action.

If there is a concept of intolerance according to which only coercive interventions are intolerant then this is not the ordinary notion of intolerance but one developed by political theorists to express a particular point of view. The ideas of toleration and of intolerance identify modes of behaviour by their grounds and object. They do not identify them by the means employed. (Raz 1988:163)

According to Raz intolerance and tolerance can in principle be expressed by any mean (behavior or opinion) possible. This opens for a positive tolerance, that is, a tolerance in the form of some kind of supporting action.

There are two problems with negative tolerance that have been formative of the conception of positive tolerance. The first concerns the sharp distinction the negative conception of tolerance applies between behavior and speech. Inaction refers to the first, and does not imply a principled obligation not to speech on the issue (or person) that is tolerated. One can therefore try to convince the person that he is doing something wrong, but not actively interfere to stop him from doing what he intends. There are, however, obvious examples of speech as coercive. In the classroom for instance, a teacher would show tolerance and intolerance as much through speech as action. Actually speech may turn out to be the prime mean of (in)tolerance. To separate action and speech would therefore result in downplaying the role of a vital mean of (in)tolerance in education. The concept of

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128 These conditions are expressed as conditions 4 and 5 of tolerance in Churchill (1997:192, 199): “4. The tolerant person exercising forbearance must be in a position to be able to interfere with the behavior of the tolerated; that is she has the ability to suppress, disrupt, or censure the offending speech or behavior, but refrains from doing so.” “5. Toleration is an attribute of moral character; it pertains to the attitudes, motives and behavioral dispositions of those who voluntarily forbear from interference with speech or conduct of which they disapprove.” The last condition implies that inaction must be a result of a moral motive, not for instance disinterest, laziness or chance.
indoctrination is constructed as a mean to distinguish illegitimate from legitimate speech. Indoctrination is however a contested concept, and there is no consensus on how to understand and apply it (Afdal 1998:259-262). In an account of positive tolerance this sharp distinction between speech and behavior is therefore dissolved.

The second problem concerns the possibility of inactive behavior in issues of tolerance. Herbert Marcuse seems to have a historical account of tolerance quite contrary to the above (Marcuse 1965:102). He claims that the classic liberals used tolerance in an active sense as practice, and that towards our own time the conception of tolerance has developed towards a more passive sense as non-practice. His point is that tolerance used to belong to the opposition, the minority, but now is defined by the majority. The minority wanted change and action, the majority wants status quo, non-action. This illuminates an important conceptual point, the practice of tolerance cannot be separated from the political context. Tolerant actions (or in-actions) must be legitimate and legal in order for the citizens to be able to tolerate. When this is not the state of affairs, one has to fight for a political space for tolerance. This fight or liberation is of an active, positive kind, and cannot be dissolved from tolerant practice.

This has led to a conception of positive tolerance. The relationship between negative and positive tolerance should however be understood as a continuum between absolute inaction on one side, and engaged supportive actions on the other. One example from religious tolerance can illustrate some positions along this continuum. A Muslim group wants to build a private school in the neighborhood, and a tolerant Christian can do one of the following: She can do nothing, she can try to convince the neighbors of the legitimacy of the school, she can engage in a campaign in order to convince the government to let the group build the school, she can engage in a campaign in order to convince the government that it should contribute to financing the school, she can help raise funds for the school or she can bring her hammer and nails and help build the school. All of these alternatives are possible in combination with some kind of disapproval or dislike. She may dislike the fact that a Muslim school is built instead of a Christian school, but may still be tolerant because she would like the same to happen if she belonged to a minority in a Muslim country. But what if she had no dislike or disapproval of the Muslim school – could her attitude and behavior still be called tolerant? That is the question along the third dimension of the concept of tolerance

129 This does of course not mean that all means have equal value or is equally (un)desirable.
130 He seems to refer to classic liberals as John Locke and John Stuart Mill.
3.2.4 Dimension 3: From a double to a simple condition of tolerance

The last dimension concerns a condition that so far has been taken for granted: That tolerance presupposes disapproval or dislike. This may seem like the heart of tolerance: One can only tolerate that which one objects to. The objection-condition accompanied by acceptance or non-interference create a double condition\textsuperscript{131} that most often is conceived as distinctive for the concept of tolerance. If one conceives tolerance as acceptance or non-interference independent of objection, tolerance is constructed with a simple condition. This third dimension of the conception of tolerance goes from a double to a simple condition of tolerance.

Tolerance is understood as a double construct in order to distinguish it from related concepts as liberty, respect and indifference. Raphael (1988:138-139) understands tolerance as a subdivision of liberty:

\begin{quote}
The weaker form of making the ends of others your own ends, namely refraining from interference, is the duty of allowing other people liberty to go their own way. This is not quite the same as the duty of toleration. Toleration is a particular species of allowing liberty. The idea of toleration implies that you really disapprove of what you are prepared to leave alone. The simple idea of leaving free does not carry that implication, though perhaps it does imply that you have some sort of inclination or interference: if you had no feelings at all on the matter, the idea of interference or refraining from interference would not arise. Liberty, then, is a wider notion than toleration.\textsuperscript{132}
\end{quote}

While liberty implies no disapproval, tolerance does. It is however worth noticing the reservation Raphael does: The question for liberty also seems to imply some kind of objection or inclination to interfere, that is, the need of liberty presupposes some kind of not-liberty, and not-liberty implies interference. For Raphael this does not represent a major problem, because the objection condition of tolerance is of a different kind, it is moral in the sense of disapproval as separate from dislike. If the disapproval-dislike dichotomy is either loosened or dissolved, the problem will however rise again.

This is one of the reasons the recent emergence of conceptions of tolerance without the objection-condition has been argued for. Tolerance constructed with a simple condition has actually a longer story, for instance many surveys in the US since World War II

\textsuperscript{131} King (1976:37) describes this double condition as a “double negative”. That presupposes of course a negative energy of tolerance.

\textsuperscript{132} See also Cranston 1987:101 and Mendus 1989:8-9 for a similar distinction.
operationalized tolerance as the opposite of prejudice. These surveys understood tolerance as acceptance, respect and solidarity without any preceding requirement of dislike or disapproval. This “new” conception of tolerance was however not a result of conceptual or theoretical reflection. In philosophy (mainly political and moral philosophy) tolerance kept its double condition, and it is therefore possible to talk about two analytical traditions of tolerance after World War II, one empirical and one philosophical, that worked on quite different conceptualizations. The plurality of conceptions of tolerance has however the two or three last decades evolved from primarily an inter-disciplinary to an intra-disciplinary phenomenon. There are now a variety of conceptions of tolerance both within empirical social sciences and philosophy and ethics.

The philosophical critique of the double condition is both of a conceptual and a substantial character. One can argue that the objection condition creates a conceptually difficult position. Peter Gardner and John Horton argue that the double condition implies that there are two ways of becoming more tolerant: One can either accept or not interfere more or one can disapprove or dislike of more (without interfering). That means for instance that the more one opposes to for instance homosexual practice and other races without interfering, the more tolerant one is. This second road to more tolerance seems however paradoxical and contradictory to a conception of progression in tolerance as a journey towards greater openness and non-judgment (Gardner 1993:88-89, Horton 1996:34-35). This means that the objection-condition has to be qualified. Gardner suggests that is it a sufficient condition that the object of tolerance is disapproved or disliked by others, not necessarily by the tolerator (Gardner 1993:87-90). This means that the tolerant practice is

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134 It is not obvious what the reasons for this conception of tolerance were. A pragmatic need for operational simplification, a wish to communicate with everyday-use of the concept and implicit ideals of a liberal, “non-dogmatic” morality may have played a role.
135 A group of researcher connected to Sullivan at the University of Minnesota has operationalized tolerance as both objection and acceptance in a two-step procedure: First the respondents’ disapprovals and dislikes are mapped, then the respondents are asked questions concerning tolerance towards their disapproved or disliked persons, groups or cases. (Sullivan 1982:23-25)
136 In addition to the conceptual problem mentioned below, one could also argue that on a liberal view of the state, tolerance as a conjunction of disapproval and acceptance will be meaningless to use in a social-ethical sense. Since the state cannot take a stand between different conceptions of the good, the state cannot morally disapprove of something. Consequently the state cannot tolerate. (On a non-neutral view of the state, the problem will still rise, because the state will disapprove of fewer issues than normally is referred to as issues of tolerance.) This is however a problematic conceptual limitation, because a lot of the cases generally thought of as issues of tolerance involves the state (for example freedom of religion, regulations of abortion, policy on ethical and racial issues and so on). That is, this conceptual limitation creates a great distance to the ordinary use of the word. Jordan’s (1997:214-217) suggestion to limit the scope of moral tolerance and instead talk about political tolerance in cases beyond the individual presupposes a separation between the spheres of morality and politics, discussed above.
identified primarily by the accepting or non-interfering actions or attitudes, not by a personal disapproval or dislike in conjunction with acceptance or non-interference. The center of the issue is moved towards simple acceptance. “In other words, we can be more tolerant by disapproving of fewer things. We can be tolerant without disapproving.” (Gardner 1993:88) This does not mean that tolerance is to accept everything and disapprove of nothing, but that tolerance is a meaningful concept also in issues where there is no dislike or disapproval. The educational implication of this is that the teachers do not have to leave the children’s and families’ “prejudice or bigotry” alone and limit the moral education to accepting and not interfering with the various objections.

Those concerned with anti-racism, for instance, need not feel that tolerance will leave in place the very attitudes that they want to change or that it need result in patronising forbearance. Equally, those concerned to develop tolerance need not always feel that they have to wait for other values and attitudes to be acquired before they can make their move.” (Gardner 1993:100)

In the prolongation of Gardner’s statement, one can argue that in the educational context tolerance is best understood without the objection-condition because of two circumstances: Firstly, education aims not only at tolerance for diversity of moral believes and practices, but at changing undesirable attitudes. Tolerance as accepting the disapproved and disliked may give this necessary moral education a status of intolerance. Liberating tolerance from disapproval and dislike also liberates moral education from a negative framework. Secondly, there is a problem in operationalizing tolerance as a double construct. In a pluralistic classroom it is very difficult and maybe practically impossible to map disapproval and dislike as a condition for targeting the issues of tolerance. If the teacher could only teach tolerance in those cases where there was unanimous disapproval or dislike in the class, she would face tremendous problems. She would have to register all the students’ moral positions, how they change and have them present in her mind while selecting issues of tolerance. The scope of cases will however be very narrow in a multicultural classroom because of moral diversity. Disapproval as a personal condition is therefore almost impossible in the educational context. If the teacher however is choosing cases where she herself disapproves or dislikes or where there have been or is public

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137 There are some problematic assumptions in and consequences of Gardner’s position that cannot be dealt with in depth here. He claims that education is teaching right and wrong, good and bad, but does not seem to acknowledge radical moral difference. When different conceptions of the good and right in the negative form of dislike and disapproval is censured by a strong uniform morality (that is implicit in Gardner’s account), intolerance is the probable result.
disagreement, the tolerance that is taught is leaning heavily towards tolerance as a simple construction.

Horton (1996:34-41) argues also that increasing tolerance by increasing disapproval or dislike does not make conceptual sense. A person becomes more tolerant by becoming less judgmental, not more. His solution is to qualify disapproval and dislike so that it must not be “unreasonable and without value”. This does not mean one have to share the objection, but not find it unreasonable. According to Horton this will rule out for instance increased racism without interference as increasing tolerance. This position is also problematic. On one hand it assumes a shared conception of rationality and value, while on the other Horton himself admits that:

... I am not persuaded there is any one uniquely rational perspective, any Archimedean point, any view from nowhere, from which the reasonableness or rightness of a specific substantive conception of the virtue of tolerance can be established. Tolerance is not a virtue that stands altogether outside the moral and political conflicts it often seeks to mediate. (Horton 1996:40)

It is therefore difficult, indeed, to find or establish a point from where “unreasonable and without value” can be decided or agreed on.

Both Gardner and Horton are trying to give accounts of tolerance with a looser and more limited conception of the objection condition. The reason for this is the problems with a conceptual distinction between disapproval and dislike, that is, to establish objection as an unambiguous moral condition, and with finding a substantial ethical account of the disapprovable. In other words, moral plurality makes it hard to give a strong account of disapproval. But also the more limited determinations of the objection condition are problematic.

One position claims that this is because moral pluralism is not taken seriously enough. Rorty (1989) gives a more radical, postmodern, account of tolerance. All human beings have life-stories, stories about our long term projects, our hopes and doubts, friends and enemies. Rorty calls these stories a person’s “final vocabulary” (Rorty 1989:73). Morality is understood as an integrated part in a person’s self-expression. There is however no absolute, common ground to evaluate these vocabularies. And further more, we all come to recognize the contingency of our own vocabulary and morality. There is no way we can produce convincing, non-circular reasons to other people that our disapproval is “right” or

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138 Rorty (1989) does not often explicitly mention tolerance, but the idea of tolerance is central (Conway 1997:157-160).
“good”. My own disapproval gives therefore no reason for interference with the other. Rather the opposite is the case: Because I realize the historical contingency of my own disapproval, I will tolerate the other. And even more: I will tolerate my own contingency. I become the tolerant liberal ironic, distanced both to the other’s and to my own story. On this account tolerance is conceived without disapproval and with acceptance or non-interference as the sole condition.

So far the question has been: What is tolerance? Before proceeding to different theories of tolerance, it is necessary to ask: What is not-tolerance, that is, what is the opposite of tolerance? And how can the relationship between tolerance and not-tolerance be conceived?

3.2.5 Tolerance and intolerance

What is the opposite of or the negation of tolerance? Most often that would be called intolerance. On a simple account tolerance would be considered the ideal and intolerance its negative opposite. This is the way tolerance and intolerance often has been conceived in surveys, where intolerance often means prejudices. However, this simplified distinction does not reflect that intolerance sometimes may be appropriate and tolerance not. It does neither reflect on how one conceives intolerance and its relation to tolerance will depend on the conceptualization of tolerance.

King (1976:54-60) conceives tolerance as a conjunction of objection and acceptance. The contraries of tolerance can therefore be results of several combinations: It can be

a) intolerance: objection and rejection,
   b1) indifference: no objection and acceptance,
   b2) negative expediency: no objection and rejection,
   c) favoritism: subscription and acceptance,
   d) sacrifice: subscription plus rejection.

Intolerance is on this account only one of several possibilities of not-tolerance. The difference between tolerance and intolerance is a difference in action, not in motive. That is,

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140 This is a form of not-tolerance, which does not result from some kind of moral objection, but from pragmatic or circumstantial convenience.
both tolerance and intolerance find the tolerated objectionable, but while tolerance does not act or act positively on the objection, intolerance acts negatively.

Another view of the relationship between tolerance and intolerance is given by Crick (1971:69-70 and 84-88). Tolerance is constructed along approximately the same two dimensions as in King, namely disapproval and acceptance. Crick argues that the disapproval-dimension runs between tolerance and indifference, while the acceptance-dimension extends from love to intolerance.\(^{141}\)

Figure 3.2: Tolerance and not-tolerance as conceived by Crick (1971).

This means that tolerance is clearly distinguished from indifference, tolerance implies a sense of right and wrong, good or bad. On the other hand intolerance means no-acceptance. Nothing is therefore said whether this no-acceptance is justified or not. It is however distinguished from full acceptance - which is love.

\(^{141}\) The subsequent conceptual problem is how tolerance both can be constructed as a conjunction of disapproval and acceptance, and at the same time be limited to the issue of disapproval. Another question is whether intolerance in every instance is the opposite of love. Intolerance to Nazis could be actions of love of Jews and humanity.
Three other possible relations between tolerance and not-tolerance are worth mentioning. Together these constitute an alternative conception of the relationship between tolerance and not-tolerance presented so far.

The first is tolerance versus a-tolerance. So far in this chapter the conceptualization of tolerance has been discussed, that is, various distinctive spheres or perspectives of tolerance have been identified – as opposed to what tolerance is not. This is a distinction between tolerance and a-tolerance, that is, between what concerns tolerance and what does not. When there is no difference, there is neither any demand of tolerance. A-tolerance can therefore describe issues and situations of unity. Understood along these lines, the inside of the circle represents two approaches to difference. Outside the circle difference dissolves.

The second relation is between justified tolerance versus unjustified intolerance. This is a distinction within the conceptual sphere of tolerance. It is assumed that some theory identifies the demands of tolerance. To disregard or violate these demands are acts of intolerance. On this distinction intolerance is the negative flip side of justified tolerance.

Thirdly, there may be instances where not being tolerant is right. Then it is a question of justified intolerance (the intolerable) versus the unjustified tolerance (Ricoeur 1996:197-201). This represents a reversal of the second relation, namely (unjustified) tolerance as the negative flip side of (justified) intolerance.

These relationships could be illustrated like this:
3.3 Normative theories of tolerance

Why should one tolerate, and what are the limits of tolerance? These questions are still left unanswered, they are beyond the scope of a conceptual determination. In this section different theories on justification and limits of tolerance will be presented.

All theories of tolerance are integrated in more or less comprehensive ethical or political-philosophical theories. That means that the theories of tolerance will be presented within larger frameworks, such as liberalism, communitarianism, socialism and postmodernism. The criterion for choosing theories has been that they are representative and authoritative within the actual political or moral philosophy. Secondly it means that, surprisingly enough, there does not exist a large number of extensive explicit theories of tolerance. Most of them are more or less implicit in more comprehensive philosophical or political theoretical constructions.\(^{142}\) Most of the theoretical literature on tolerance is secondary, that is, it refers to and critically reflects on these theoretical constructions, without constructing alternative comprehensive theories.

Tolerance has for decades been considered a liberal ideal or virtue. This presentation will therefore start with three liberal accounts of tolerance. A variety of different theories have emerged as a result of a criticism of liberal tolerance, and these will follow.

3.3.1 Liberal tolerance

John Locke (1632-1704) is recognized as one of the fathers of modern liberalism. One of his concerns was religious tolerance, and in 1689, while in exile in Holland, he anonymously published *Epistola de Tolerantia* (addressed to a theological friend, Philip van Limborch). It was quickly translated into English, *A letter concerning toleration*, and has since been an important reference in theory of tolerance.

The letter was published at a time when great religious wars had been brought to an end (the peace of Westphalia 1648), but religious persecution still flourished. This was especially the case in France, where Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Heresy was a matter to the government. Protestants who refused to convert to Catholicism were tortured, their children were taken away from them and they were enslaved.

The letter is an argument against this religious intolerance, and is therefore only an indirect argument for general tolerance. He is further writing “to us Christians” (Locke 1689/1991:39), assuming a shared Christian foundation. Although he briefly discusses religious plurality (Jews and Muslims), the main focus is on denominational and theological plurality within a Christian unity.

Locke starts the Letter emphasizing that the Gospel is a Gospel of love, not force. Christ was the Prince of peace, and tolerance is to be “the chief characteristical mark of the true church” (Locke 1689/1991:14). Tolerating other-believers is therefore “agreeable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the genuine reason of mankind” (Locke 1689/1991:16). In order to give a convincing account of this, Locke is combining a distinction between civil government and religion with a certain epistemology of belief. While the church is a community of peace, the state is an association of force. The state’s – or the “magistrate’s” -

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143 The historical accounts of tolerance have relevance in this study in two respects: Firstly, they constitute a theoretical framework that later theories relate to. Secondly, they have presumably had an influence on the political development of “liberal Western” societies like the Norwegian. For a more detailed presentation and critical discussion of liberal tolerance, see Mendus 1989.
145 Locke also wrote “An essay concerning toleration” (1667). In a debate with Jonas Proast he also published three more letters of toleration. These are lengthier, but contain more problems than new insights (Nicholson 1991:163-183). Here the focus will be on the more famous first letter.
power is derived from the citizens.\textsuperscript{146} The state is a voluntary, contractual association of free and equal individuals with no other purpose than to protect the individuals’ rights and property. The government is primarily identified by its means, but it also has a function, namely to secure civil interest.\textsuperscript{147}

Locke’s argument for tolerance is threefold: 1) Authority: The government, represented by the civil magistrate, has no authority to interfere with another person’s religion. Such an authority is given neither by God nor by the consent of the people. 2) Mean: Using coercion as a mean in religious matters is irrational. The power of the civil magistrate “consists only in outward force”. True religion consists in inward persuasion of the mind. Therefore force and coercion are non-effective means in questions of salvation.\textsuperscript{148} 3) Consequences: Coercion will not bring truth. Even though force and laws would change people’s mind concerning religion, that would not help. Assuming that there is one truth, this truth is found by the light of the individuals’ reason, not by the court or the civil magistrate. (Locke 1689/1991:17-19) The jurisdiction of the state (the civil magistrate) therefore “neither can nor ought in any manner to be extended to the salvation of souls…”.

Religious intolerance is \textit{illegitimate}, \textit{irrational} and producing untruths.

However, tolerance has its limits. Since he primarily is addressing religious tolerance, the limits are discussed in connection to church worship and doctrine. The civil magistrate cannot enforce or prohibit any rites or ceremonies, Locke claims, but if the practice is prohibited by civil law, then it also constitutes the limit of tolerance to churches (Locke 1689/1991:36-37). Doctrines should also be tolerated, within three limits: Firstly, doctrines contrary to the foundation and preservation of human society are not to be tolerated (Locke 1689/1991:45). Secondly, neither are those who oppose civil rights. Churches arguing for tolerance only to become intolerant when in power, are examples of this. Locke believed that Catholics belonged to this group, since their primary loyalty

\textsuperscript{146} “… therefore is the magistrate armed with the force and strength of all his subjects, in order to the punishment of those that violate any other man’s rights.” (Locke 1689/1991:17)

\textsuperscript{147} Waldron (1991:100-103) argues that government in Locke is conceived solely by means, not by function or any substantial end. (See also Mendus 1989:25-26) Those statements in \textit{the Letter} that seem to refer to governmental functions are not premises, but conclusion of arguments where the state is defined in terms of its means, Waldron claims. This is a valuable observation, but it is not obvious how such a strict reading fits with part one and three in Locke’s three-part structure argument. It seems that Waldron only relate to Locke’s second part of the argument (which he considers the crux).

\textsuperscript{148} “The care of souls cannot belong to the civil magistrate, because his power consists in outward force: but true and saving religion consists in the inward persuasion of the mind, without which nothing can be acceptable to God. And such is the nature of the understanding, that it cannot be compelled to the belief of anything by outward force. Confiscation of estate, imprisonment, torments, nothing of that nature can have such efficacy as to make men change the inward judgment that they have framed of things.” (Locke 1689/1991:18)
(according to Locke) went to the Pope, not to the civil society (Locke 1689/1991:45-46). Thirdly, those whose promises one cannot trust, are not to be tolerated. In Locke’s contractual social theory promises and covenants play a vital part. A person who cannot give an oath at the presence of God, should not be trusted. Atheists, therefore, belong to this third category of the limits of tolerance (Locke 1689/1991:47).

To sum up the limits of tolerance: The law is central in deciding the limits of tolerance. However, it has to be a just law, a law informed by natural law. Those who are not in a position to subscribe to and observe the law are not to be tolerated.149

How should the letter be read? Waldron suggests that it is primarily an argument trying to show the irrationality of intolerance. Because the means of the government, force and coercion, cannot achieve the ends in question, religious belief, it is irrational to use them for that purpose. Drawing upon Locke’s contemporary critic Jonas Proast, Waldron is however questioning the claim that belief cannot be affected indirectly by governmental actions. The government can for instance regulate the availability of religious books. That is, belief is also dependent on epistemological sources, and these sources are to a certain degree open to state control.150 One can however doubt whether Locke had such universal ambitions with his letter, and whether such a universal interpretation is valuable. It seems that a more modest reading where Locke’s letter is conceived as an argument in a specific historical context, are able to include the theological151 and political presuppositions in the Letter.152 This opens up for the possibility to imagine other contextual accounts of the irrationality of tolerance.

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149 However, in the letter there are traces of a broader tolerance. Not only the government shall tolerate, the same imperative applies to churches and to private persons. And tolerance is not conceived in the framework of negative liberty, tolerance is to be accompanied with charity and meekness (Locke 1689/1991:23, 26-27). Tolerance is not only to refrain from coercion, but is to be followed by active caring.

150 A systematic form of such control in modern times took place in the previous communistic states in Eastern Europe. If this attempt to affect the citizens religious and ideological believes is viewed as “successful”, it would create an empirical problem with Locke’s argument. However, the result of the communistic program is not unambiguous.

151 Although Lockes account of tolerance is deeply rooted in theology and the rationality of God, it does not mean that tolerance is limited to sects within Christianity. Muslims and Jews are to be tolerated, and the largest Christian church, the Catholic Church, is not. This means that a theory of tolerance within a specific moral tradition not necessarily is uncritically protecting the borders of the tradition.

152 See for instance Dees (1997). For an interesting theological interpretation, see Mitchell (1996:143-160). “Christian truth, the light that was revealed, then demands that Christians accept heterodoxy, that they are tolerant. This paradox: that universality and heterodoxy are not inconsistent, derives from what Locke considers to be the truth of the New Dispensation: by the light of reason mankind can accede to the universal morality brought by revelation provided that political power not overstep its rightful jurisdiction – and only by the light of reason.” (Mitchell 1996:147) This theological epistemological account of tolerance is also found in Markham 1994:182-183. It has some interesting parallels to Mill’s view on tolerance as a condition for epistemological progress.
Almost two centuries later systematic religious persecution was no pressing problem in the western part of the world. Another phenomenon had taken its place, according to John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), “the tyranny of the majority”, the suppression of individuality from custom and tradition. Although the principle of liberty of conscience and of thought had gained common support and given legislative force, liberty and tolerance was conceived too narrowly, Mill argued in his famous essay On Liberty (published 1859). In the essay Mill is giving a liberal account of liberty and tolerance where autonomy and truth have a leading role. Mill is of course one of the most famous utilitarian thinkers, but it is not immediate clear how his utilitarian scheme is to be conceived. This conception will affect the more particular account of tolerance.

At face value On liberty seems to be an inconsistent collection of arguments where Mill on one hand claims an absolute principle of liberty and on the other hand that every ethical question is dependent of its utility. That is, on one hand Mill seems to be constructing a principle of action, which is to be acted upon independent of the consequences, and on the other hand the actions are valued as how they contribute to happiness. In everyday life there are however examples where the largest and highest happiness is gained by limiting liberty. This also has consequences for the interpretation of Mill’s view on tolerance. Is tolerance a right or a non-instrumental maxim, derived from the principle of liberty, or is tolerance an instrumental value, justified as long as it promotes utility?

Gray (1983) suggests that this apparent conflict in Mill can be resolved when conceiving Mill as an indirect utilitarian. Simply put this means that if the principle of utility were to have an action-guiding function, this would not result in maximum utility partly because of the limited resources humans have to calculate consequences. In-between principles are necessary. These principles are justified in the principle of utility, and are fundamental principles for maxims and rules for moral actions. These principles have however a more absolute character than rules in rule utilitarianism.

153 On one hand he seems to argue that liberty is a right: “If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.” (Mill 1859/1991:21) On the other hand he argues that ethics finally rests on utility: “I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions…” (Mill 1859/1991:15).

154 “The direct pursuit of happiness is supposed by Mill to be collectively self-defeating, partly […] in virtue of the lack of any dependable test which identifies the best act, but also in virtue of certain indispensable conditions or terms of social co-operation.” (Gray 1983:35)

155 This does not mean that they cannot be overridden. It seems that Gray is thinking of the maxims derived from the principles as prima facie rights. “This moral right is a defeasible right (like the moral rights established in many non-utilitarian theories of justice) but is not to be overridden whenever a calculation of
The single in-between principle for regulating society’s interference with the individual is the principle of liberty or the harm-principle: “… that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any number is self-protection” (Mill 1859/1991:14). In other words, power should not be used against an individual against her will unless it is used to prevent harm to others. This principle is on one hand utility-barring, on the other hand it will, on Mill’s account, maximally promote aggregate utility (Gray 1991:xvi).

So how is tolerance understood in this broader scheme? The words “toleration” and “tolerate” are used from time to time by Mill, but they are not as central as “liberty”. Still the issue of tolerance is important, because it constitutes a vital aspect of liberty of thought or discussion, which in turn is the branch of the principle of liberty that Mill discusses in a large part of his essay. In this way Mill is broadening Locke’s perspective, from tolerance of religion to tolerance of all human opinions and actions.

The liberty of thought and discussion is a central branch of the principle of liberty. Chapter II of On liberty is a teleological justification of liberty of thought and discussion in truth. It seems reasonable to read this justification as one particular justification of the principle of liberty in utility or happiness in “the largest sense” (Mill 1859/1991:15). In other words, the truth-barring principle of liberty of thought and discussion is justified by being the principle that totally will result in maximized truth. The road to truth is seen as progress, unraveling truth will liberate man and give social and moral growth. And this unraveling process is included in happiness in the largest sense. Happiness for Mill is more an activity than certain kinds of sensations or experiences (Gray 1991:xiii).

The principle of liberty of thought and discussion therefore has a teleological justification in utility in the largest sense. Mill does not see utility primarily as a moral principle, but as a more fundamental, axiological one. It is therefore not surprising that the principle of liberty and thought and discussion has an epistemological, not a moral consequences seems to suggest this might yield a net utility benefit, it ground obligation not derivable directly from the demands of utility and it is not conferred simply because of the benefits it will yield in any particular case.” (Gray 1983:16)

156 Here my reading of Mill departs from Gray’s, who conceives liberty of thought (or freedom of expression) as an application of the principle of liberty (Gray 1983:103-110). The problem with such a conception is why Mill then does not justify liberty of thought in the principle of liberty, but in a teleological and epistemological account of truth. Truth has hardly any central place in the principle of liberty. It also seems strange that Mill is using chapter II of his essay for matters of application, to which he again returns in chapter V. On the reading here the structure in On liberty is conceived as follows: I: The principle of liberty introduced II: A particular justification of the principle of liberty III: An elaboration of the principle of liberty IV: The limits of the principle of liberty V: Practical applications of the principle of liberty.

157 The principle of liberty of thought and discussion can be truth-barring in allowing the same rights to non-truths as truths. The principle may prevent an effective silencing of non-truth, which would maximize truth.
justification. Everyone has a right to freedom of speech because it will lead to increased knowledge about the truth, not because it will make us better human beings.

The more detailed justification of the liberty of thought and discussion is summarized by Mill himself in four grounds. Opinions should not be silenced because 1) they may eventually turn out to be true, 2) they may be partially true, 3) even if they are not at all true, they provoke people to be more conscious of the rational grounds of truth, and finally 4) they will prevent the doctrines of truth to be lost.

Tolerance is, more specifically, a necessary condition for the practice of freedom of expression. The principle of liberty of thought and discussion, a branch of the general principle of liberty, is justified teleologically in utility in the largest sense, in the progress of truth. Tolerance, however, is not justified in utility or happiness, but in the principle of liberty of thought and discussion. Tolerance is growing or flowing out of this principle, not from utility. That means tolerance in Mill is conceived as a moral principle, derived from one particular branch of the principle of liberty. This seems quite clear in a passage in another text by Mill:

I grant that an earnest person, being no more infallible than other men, is liable to dislike people on account of opinion which do not merit dislike; but if he neither himself does them any ill office, nor connives at its being done by others, he is not intolerant and the forbearance, which flows from a conscientious sense of the importance to mankind of the equal freedom of all opinion, is the only tolerance which is commendable, or, to the highest moral order of minds, possible. (Mill 1873/1969:32)

Tolerance is here connected to the principle of equal freedom of opinion and expression, not to utility or happiness.

Central in the principle of liberty is the idea of individuality and autonomy. Individuality is the form of life in which people make autonomous choices, realizing their specific nature. Individual autonomy creates progress and is the most significant factor in human well-being. A happy life is an autonomous life, a life where the individual is able to realize his nature and projects. The principle of liberty is creating the necessary space for

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158 The entire chapter II is a detailed discussion of these four grounds (Mill 1859/1991:20-61). They are summarized at page 59.
159 This means that the direct justification of tolerance is primarily moral and indirect epistemological. For somewhat different views, see Edwards 1988:103-107 and Dees 1997:139-142.
160 This means that tolerance in Mill primarily is non-instrumental. For a discussion on the ambiguity in Mill between an instrumental and non-instrumental account of tolerance, see Edwards 1988:87-113, especially 93-94.
161 “A people, it appears, may be progressive for a certain length of time, and then stop: when does it stop? When it ceases to possess individuality.” (Mill 1859/1991:79)
such an autonomous life, and tolerance is a right for the tolerated and an obligation for the
tolerator that secures the individual sphere despite diversity and dislike. One must tolerate
others because it is not only a question of what they do and say, but in what manner they act
and speak. That is, tolerance creates the ground for an autonomous life, a life where people
can choose purposely and individually and thereby realize their diverse projects and natures.

There is however a limit for this tolerance, and the limit is harm. One should
tolerate people’s actions as long as they do not imply harm to others. Mill operates with two
domains of actions, the sphere of self-regarding conduct and the sphere of other-regarding
conduct. The first domain of action concerns nobody (at least directly) but the individual.
The second domain concerns actions with consequences for others. The harm principle
means that the first domain always should be tolerated because the harm never could affect
other persons that the actor herself. Actions within the other-regarding domain should also
be tolerated as long as they do not result in harm.

Harm is on one hand connected to social rules necessary for protecting individuals
and the public. On the other hand the result of the harmful action has to be tested against
the harm of the means to prevent the harmful action. If preventing harm is producing
“greater evils” than the actions it should prevent, it is not justified (Mill 1859/1991:16). The
standard for good and evil is utility. This means Mill is reintroducing the principle of utility
as a final criterion for the principle of harm.

Mill does not specify harm, and there are several unanswered questions as to what
constitutes harm. Is harm physical or also emotional? Is it harm to individuals only or
institutions also? Does harm apply to some fundamental rights, or “vital interests” as Mill
puts it, or can it also concern more harmless harm? And, not at least, is it possible to operate
with harm as a neutral criterion for the limit of tolerance, established outside particular
moral views, or must harm be conceived within particular moral traditions?

One of the most significant theoretical contributions to modern liberalism is written
by John Rawls. In A theory of justice (1971) he is constructing principles for a social

162 Susan Mendus argues that this account assumes certain anthropology and epistemology views, namely a
romantic belief in individual diversity and that liberty of expression necessarily creates progress (Mendus
the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civil community, against
his will, is to prevent harm to others.” (Mill 1859/1991:14)
164 One should not punish (legally or morally) a person simply because he is drunk (the self-regarding sphere),
but if he is a soldier or a policeman on duty (the other-regarding sphere). (Mill 1859/1991:90-91)
165 Rawls’ position on tolerance is here based on the account in A theory of justice (1971). In Political
liberalism (1996) tolerance has an even more prominent place, and the theory is somewhat revised. (For a
critical discussion on this revision, see Kymlicka 1996). The aim here is however to give a representative and
morality, a conception of the right that can unite a plurality of individual conceptions of the good. The right is constructed as a framework, in which various conceptions of the good (aims) can flourish, but not exceed.

We can express this by saying that in justice as fairness the concept of right is prior to that of good. A just social system defines the scope within which individuals must develop their aims, and it provides a framework of rights and opportunities and the means of satisfaction within and by the use of which ends may be equitably pursued. (Rawls 1971:31)

Justice as fairness is thought to be societal glue, a common conception that can create necessary unity in a modern society characterized by religious, philosophical and moral diversity.\(^\text{166}\)

The right is formulated in the original position, a hypothetical discourse between representatives of different groups and interests. The equal participants do not know anything about oneself and society that would create an advantage in the bargaining (the veil of ignorance). From this position, Rawls argues, they would subscribe to the right in the form of justice as fairness. Two principles would be chosen in such an initial position, namely:

1) …each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others.
2) …social and economical inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all. (Rawls 1971:60)

The principle of equal liberty is a result of deliberation in the original position. And so is the principle of equal liberty of conscience and tolerance\(^\text{167}\). According to Rawls tolerance is founded neither in the political situation nor any special metaphysical or philosophical theory (“doctrine”). On one hand it needs a stronger foundation than a pragmatic necessity can supply, on the other it cannot be justified by one philosophical or metaphysical theory because there is not one such theory that everyone can agree upon. What is needed is an influential liberal account of tolerance that can contribute to an interpretation of the empirical material, not to give a comprehensive overview on Rawls and tolerance. Rawls 1996 is used to shed light on Rawls 1971.

\(^\text{166}\) How justice is limiting and framing plurality is visible in the following: “Among individuals with disparate aims and purposes a shared conception of justice establishes the bonds of civic friendship; the general desire for justice limits the pursuit of other ends. One may think of a public conception of justice as constituting the fundamental charter of a well-ordered human association.” (Rawls 1971:5)

\(^\text{167}\) Rawls does not distinguish clearly between liberty of conscience and tolerance (Rawls uses “toleration”). It seems that he conceives tolerance as a duty and a consequence of the right of liberty of conscience and moral and religious freedom (Rawls 1971:214).
justification that is both principal and a result of a consensus. This justification is found in idea of the original position, Rawls claims.\footnote{For the argument of equal liberty of conscience from the original position, see p 206f.}

In order to secure the freedom of goods, tolerance is a necessary condition. The domain of tolerance is therefore within the limits of the right, in the sense of justice as fairness. Although Rawls does not explicitly say so, this means that tolerance is to tolerate different conceptions of the good, not various conceptions of fundamental rights. Religious and philosophical views and forms of life are to be tolerated, but not the fundamental principles of society. The principles of justice are not objects of tolerance, but constitute the border and limit of tolerating. When the religious and philosophical views and forms of life cross the borders of justice (the right), they have no right to be tolerated.

Rawls emphasizes that this does not imply philosophical skepticism or religious indifference. (Rawls 1971:214) Skepticism is a contested philosophical position, and can therefore not justify tolerance. Tolerance is constructed as a consequence of justice as fairness conceived in the original position. This means that tolerance is a common ideal, a duty of society and citizens across all religious and philosophical convictions, reasons and motivations.

Tolerance works in the neutral\footnote{“Neutrality” is not frequently used in Rawls 1971, but the idea of the state as neutral between different religions, philosophies and morals is indeed present. Neutrality is explicitly discussed in Rawls 1996:190-194, and he introduces the discussion saying that the term is unfortunate. Rawls argues here for neutrality of aims as opposed to procedural neutrality and neutrality of effect. This is a modest account of neutrality, that could have been called “political neutrality”. Neither in the “early” (1971) nor the “late” (1996) Rawls is neutrality used in an ontological sense, as representing a neutral reality. It is a pragmatically constructed moral or political concept. For an account of ontological and political neutrality in liberal theory, see Haga 1994:38-40. Larmore (1987:40-68) argues for liberal neutrality as political neutrality and establishes a distinction between procedural neutrality and neutrality as outcome. - For a comprehensive and highly critical discussion on neutrality and tolerance, see Budzewski (1992).} dimension of society. The basic structure in a society ought to be neutral towards different conceptions of the good, as long as these conceptions are within the limits of the right. The state should not promote one or more “comprehensive doctrines”,\footnote{The terms “comprehensive doctrine” is used throughout Rawls 1996 as opposed to “political conception”.} this will result in and be a result of an oppressive regime. That means the society ought to tolerate doctrines the majority does not agree with or dislikes. The connection between neutrality and tolerance is therefore clear as long as the state is the subject. When the subject is the individual, the matter becomes more complex, mostly because Rawls does not use neutrality in this sense in A Theory of Justice. In Political Liberalism he distinguishes between the person as a citizen and a more comprehensive doctrine of the person. Although there seems to be a movement towards a
thinner conception of a citizen in the late Rawls, the distinction is also implicit in *A Theory of Justice*. A citizen is the person seen as a political and social moral individual. A citizen is “standing in political relations with other citizens” and with “the political rights and duties of citizenship” (Rawls 1996:xlv). The ideal of neutrality and the duty of tolerance seem to apply to the person as citizen, not to a comprehensive doctrine of the human being.\footnote{Assuming this is a right interpretation, several interesting questions on neutrality, tolerance and education appear. For instance: Ought the teacher reflect and act on the basis of citizenship or a more comprehensive doctrine of herself? And further: Is the local school primarily a “city” (a place for citizens) or a “community” (a place for social situated selves) (Sandel 1998:17-65)?}

Tolerance also works with the idea of autonomy\footnote{Beauchamp (1991:386) is operating with three conditions for autonomy: “1) acting intentionally 2) acting with understanding and 3) acting free of controlling influences.”}. However, not in the sense that one must tolerate the other because of his right to choose and act as he likes. Autonomy in the early Rawls means moral, not individual autonomy.\footnote{While Mill (1873/1969) conceives autonomy (although not using the term autonomy) as the free development of individuality, Kant understands autonomy as acting according to moral principles. See Beauchamp 1991:195-197 and 390-391.} Autonomy is conceived as acting according to justice as fairness, the moral principle one would obligate oneself to in an original position: “Thus acting autonomously is acting from principles that we would consent to as free and equal rational beings…” (Rawls 1971:516) Autonomy is not understood as realizing one’s individuality: “From the standpoint of justice as fairness it is not true that the conscientious judgment of each person ought absolutely to be respected; nor is it true that individuals are completely free to form their moral convictions.” (Rawls 1971:518) Substituting “respected” with “tolerated” makes it clear that only the moral autonomous subject has the right to be tolerated. That is, only the person that acts according to principles from the original position, according to justice as fairness, has the right to be tolerated.

Then we have proceeded into the question of the limits of tolerance. The boundaries of moral autonomy also represent the limit of tolerance as a right. Put differently: The principles of justice agreed on in the original position create a framework. Within this framework moral and religious convictions and practices have liberty. However, those individuals or groups that do not accept or live within the framework, that is intolerant\footnote{“Intolerance” in Rawls (1971) means not accepting the fundamental principles it would be rational to agree with in the original position.} persons or groups, do not have the right to be tolerated. The rights of the (in)tolerated (the object of tolerance) are restricted and the intolerant sect, for instance, has no right to complain about not being tolerated. This does not mean that the tolerator has the right not to tolerate all individuals and groups that are intolerant. As long as the intolerant group does...
not represent any threat “to our own legitimate interest” (Rawls 1971:219), that is, as long as the society is a stable one, and the intolerant groups does not constitute an actual risk for overthrowing the constitution or limiting liberty, the tolerator has no right to be intolerant:

… while an intolerant sect does not itself have title to complaint of intolerance, its freedom should be restricted only when the tolerant sincerely and with reason believe that their own security and that of the institutions of liberty are in danger. (Rawls 1971:220)

The reason for being more tolerant than justice requires are twofold according to Rawls: There is no reason to restrict liberty as long as the constitution itself is secure. And being tolerant can persuade the intolerant group to a belief in liberty. If freedom is one of the reasons for its growth, the idea of equal liberty will probably become a part of its self-understanding and thereby limit their intolerance.

Two criteria for the limits have been suggested by Rawls. The first, moral autonomy, has been said to apply to the objects of tolerance, the tolerated. The second, self-preservation, is the principle for the subjects of tolerance, the tolerator.175

3.3.2 Critical tolerance

A critique of a liberal account of tolerance is found within the broad tradition called critical theory176. This critique in conjunction with the liberal conceptual hegemony of tolerance has resulted in a somewhat restricted use of the word itself in critical theory. However, there exist attempts of redescribing tolerance in a socialistic or discursive theoretical framework. And even though some writers avoid the word tolerance, the issue is just as acute, and is described in synonymous terms.

Herbert Marcuse in his famous essay Repressive tolerance (1965) is arguing against the contemporary understanding of tolerance which in his view legitimates existing injustice and repression. Historically, when tolerance as a political ideal emerged, it represented a challenge to existing regimes. Tolerance in its historical sense was interwoven with ideas of the good or the right, with a practical and partial ideal, and demanded political change. At some point this connection was dissolved, tolerance was conceived as an impartial, “pure” ideal. The result was a laissez-faire attitude towards the establishment and a principle of

175 One could of course ask whether this does mean, at least indirectly and practically, that the liberty and security of the state is the primary criterion also for the rights of the objects of tolerance. The (in)tolerated could always confront the (in)tolerator with his limited right of tolerance.

176 “Critical theory” in a more strict sense was first developed by Max Horkheimer and used as a description of the Frankfurt School, to which Jürgen Habermas is associated. The term is here understood in a broad sense, as
treated dissenting political convictions and groups equally, whether they were promoting good or evil, truth or false. This is repressive tolerance177. (Marcuse 1965:81-85)

In order to re-create a partial and liberating tolerance, truth has to be established. Truth is the aim and limit of liberty. Truth according to Marcuse is one and can be established once the false assumptions of the majority are cut through. This will result in a tolerance with firm limits as to what is legitimate action and speech, with intolerance towards movements from the political right, and tolerance towards movements from the political left (Marcuse 1965:109).

While Marcuse’s account of tolerance is a Marxist one, David Miller (1988) examines tolerance within a socialistic ideological framework. Essential in socialism is the idea of common citizenship. The sense of common citizenship gives the individual a motivation for solidarity with the other: “Each member of this society should ideally see himself as bound to the other member in such a way that he feels himself responsible for their welfare.” (Miller 1988:240) This social bound is not conceived in purely voluntary or contractual terms, but as a vital dimension in the constitution of individual identity. This means that the individual’s fate is dependent on the fate of the society.

According to Miller this common citizenship should refer to the level of the nation state, the level where most major decisions affecting society at large take place.178 Dialogue in plurality, between groups with different ethnicity, religion and culture, takes place within the unity that a national identity gives: “For the dialogue ideal to have a chance of success, participants must share a common identity as citizens that is stronger than their separate identities as members of ethnic or other sectional groups.” (Miller 1988:248) In a pluralistic society this common, stronger identity needs to be created and maintained. Education

“… any social theory that is at the same time explanatory, normative, practical and self-reflexive.” (Audi 1995:170).

177 This repressive, but democratic tolerance had fatal consequences in this century, according to Marcuse: “But the spreading of the word [tolerance] could have been stopped before it was too late: if democratic tolerance had been withdrawn when the future leaders started their campaign, mankind would have had a chance of avoiding Auschwitz and a World War.” (Marcuse 1965:109)

178 This is where Miller departs from the communitarianism of for instance MacIntyre: “It is once again worth stressing that this common identity must exist at national level. Small-scale or local communities may of course practise distribution according to need internally, and there is ample historical evidence of this occurring. But there is no reason to believe that separate distributions at this level will add up to a just distribution overall, when one takes into account local and regional variations in productive wealth, in population profile, and so forth. Only a national distributive mechanism can guarantee fairness, and this requires ideological support at the same level.” (Miller 1988:243) This idea of the nation state as the central domain of tolerance, is strongly contrasted by MacIntyre (1999:152), who substitutes nation state with local community: “It does of course follow from what I have said that, although the state must tolerate, it must not be allowed to impose tolerance on others. Local communal autonomy requires the freedom to make one’s own decisions about where the line is to be drawn between tolerable and intolerable utterance. Such local autonomy has to extend to those institutions that are integral to local community, among them schools and colleges.”
(together with politics) has a particular responsibility in fostering this common citizenship that transcends cultural differences.

This has implications for educational tolerance, and Miller distinguishes between narrow and wide tolerance. Educational tolerance in a narrow sense means that no student is prevented from stating her point of view in the classroom. In a wide sense it means that the students are encouraged to critical thinking of the curriculum content. Tolerance in Miller’s sense does however not direct the selection of curriculum content towards neutrality between different points of view. (Miller 1988:253) Tolerance is justified by the idea of a common national citizenship, an idea that also is constitutive for the limits of tolerance.

Discourse ethics, as formulated by Jürgen Habermas and Karl-Otto Apel, is an influential contribution to moral philosophy, and together with the whole complex of the theory of communicative action, it has also been influential on educational theory. Discourse is however not only a theoretical phenomenon; it is a part of everyday life in schools. More or less formalized discourses take place at different curricula domains and in different relations. It could therefore be fruitful for the further analysis in this study to see how tolerance is understood in discourse ethics.

Habermas is at first sight not very interested in tolerance at all. He practically does not use the word at all in his central works (e.g. Habermas 1984/1987 and 1990a). Issues of tolerance is however present, indeed. Habermas is concerned with peaceful coexistence in a society characterized by difference (and with reconstructing conditions for sufficient normative unity). 179

A central concept in Habermas is solidarity 180, and in most instances it can be translated with tolerance (in a positive sense). Solidarity (and tolerance) is deeply connected to the procedure and result of the discourse. Discourse ethics is an articulation of certain procedural rules and communicative presuppositions that prepares the soil for possible agreement between actual participants in a discourse on valid and obligatory social norms. The procedural rules are of two kinds, one describing the necessary conditions for discourse, the other the possible content of an agreement. Solidarity and tolerance is a necessary precondition for discourse. Without initially accepting and tolerating the other, no real

179 For reading Habermas in terms like these, see Henriksen 1997:64.
180 Solidarity according to Habermas (1990b:244) is the other side of justice or “two aspects of the same thing”. Justice concerns equal treatment of individuals, solidarity the welfare of intersubjectivity or consociates. (See also MacCarthy 1990:xi)
discourse can take place. This tolerance is universal in character. Trade We respect the other in discourse simply because she is human. All human beings are potential participants in a discourse, and should therefore be tolerated. More substantial norms of tolerance must be formulated in discourse. These norms, the content of the agreement, must however fulfill a requirement: They must “articulate generalizable interest” (Cohen 1990:85).

Two more comments must be made on discourse ethics and tolerance. First, tolerance and solidarity in the discursive process is limited by rationality. That is, every participant must be ready to give a rational reason for a statement in the discourse. Habermas distinguishes between evaluative expressions and normative discourse (Habermas 1990a:178). The first kind of assertion includes particular, cultural conceptions of goods. The second kind of statements can claim universal validity through a rational discursive justification. Universal moral rights belong to this category of statements. Only this kind of language is to be tolerated in the discourse. That is, only social norms that can be rationally and universally justified in discourse are to be tolerated.

Secondly, discourse ethics refers to the social, not the individual sphere. It provides sufficient soil for peaceful coexistence and universal solidarity. Public discourses and normative principles live side by side with cultural values and evaluative expressions. As long as the evaluative expressions do not conflict with discursive norms, they are extended social tolerance.

3.3.3 Communitarian tolerance
An account of tolerance that is formed in opposition to the liberal one, is the communitarian. This account is no more uniform that the liberal, but some features are similar. Firstly, tolerance is viewed not as a universal principle, but as an ideal that needs to be conceived within specific political, historical, religious, philosophical contexts. It is

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181 Habermas is contrasting a premodern, particular solidarity with a modern universalistic one in the following: “As a component of universalistic morality, solidarity loses its merely particular meaning, in which it is limited to the internal relationships of a collective ethnocentrically isolated from other groups – the character of forced willingness to sacrifice oneself for a collective system that is always present in premodern forms of solidarity… [where] fellowship is entwined with fellowship… Justice conceived in postconventional terms can converge with solidarity, as its other side, only when solidarity has been transformed in the light of the idea of a general, discursive formation of the will.” (Habermas 1990b:244-245)
182 This does not mean that every norm has to be discursively “tested”. Norms that people agree upon does not have to be subject of discourse - only norms that are questioned.
183 Liberal here refers in Walzer’s (1994) terms to Liberalism 1 (universal liberalism), not Liberalism 2 (contextual liberalism).
184 This position could just as well been named “contextual”, but “communitarian” is kept as the main term because it is referring to the wide liberal-communitarian debate which constitutes a scenery for conceiving contemporary controversies on tolerance.
necessary to understand tolerance not as procedural ideal, superseding all particular values in philosophies and religions, but as a substantial one. Secondly, the focus of tolerance is on (cultural and religious) groups, not primarily on the dichotomy between the single individual and society in large.\textsuperscript{185}

Michael Walzer offers an in many ways contextual account of tolerance in his On toleration (1997).\textsuperscript{186} It is contextual in four ways. First, the word tolerance (or toleration, as Walzer prefers) can mean different things, be conceptualized in five ways, depending on the context. Secondly, tolerance must be understood as conditioned by the political context, the political regime. Thirdly, tolerance must be discussed in the light of the specific parts of or issues in society that is in question. Fourthly, tolerance in the US and similar countries with increasing immigration must be understood in the dialectic between a modern and postmodern cultural context.

Tolerance does not mean one thing, and there is no one right conceptualization of tolerance, Walzer claims. Tolerance can be understood along a continuum, including the following positions:

1) Resigned acceptance
2) Indifference (passive, relaxed, benignly) to difference
3) Recognition of others’ rights (even if expressed unattractively)
4) Openness, respect (listen and learn)
5) Enthusiastic endorsement of difference\textsuperscript{187} (Walzer 1997:10-11)

All of these conceptualizations (maybe with the exception of 5) lies within the domain of tolerance,\textsuperscript{188} as it has been understood historically and as it can be understood today in everyday life within different cultures. All they share is a circumstance of difference and a

\textsuperscript{185} For an overview of communitarian theories of tolerance, see d’Entrevès 1990:77-91. For particular accounts of tolerance by authors often described as communitarians, see MacIntyre 1999, Sandel 1989, 1990, 1998 (ix-xvi), Taylor 1996, in addition to Walzer 1997. For a communitarian-based critique of liberal tolerance, see Chaplin (1993). The criticism of liberal tolerance by for instance Mendus (1989, 1993), Williams (1996a, 1996b) and Altman (1997) and their alternative understandings have much in common with a broad communitarian view, without explicitly being presented as such. Kymlicka (1996) offers an interesting liberal rejoinder.

\textsuperscript{186} The need for contextualization is expressed like this: “Philosophy has to be historically informed and sociologically competent if it is to avoid bad utopianism and acknowledge the hard choices that must often be made in political life.” (Walzer 1997:5)

\textsuperscript{187} Walzer does however declare doubts whether 5) is within tolerance or beyond tolerance. In the continuation of the book, he seems to exclude 5) from tolerance.

\textsuperscript{188} Indirectly Walzer suggests tolerance to different conceptions of tolerance.
will for peaceful coexistence. The success of a regime, Walzer claims, is that it does not depend on one of these forms of tolerance, but is open to several.

Further Walzer argues that tolerance is taking different forms in different societies, depending on the political regime. That is, one cannot construct one formal principle of tolerance in order to apply this to different societies and various parts of these societies. He describes five different regimes and how tolerance may take form under these political and historical conditions. The first are multinational empires. Within one imperial code, certain ideals and boundaries decided at the center of power, different groups and communities in the great empires were relatively autonomous entities. Pluralism and tolerance was traditional or premodern in character, that is, group-based. There was difference, but this plurality was primarily a difference between groups and communities, not between individuals. Tolerance meant to live in peaceful co-existence with other groups, recognizing the other groups’ rights to live according to their practices and convictions and not interfering with the other groups’ internal affairs. There is however one loophole, a premodern melting pot, namely the imperial capital. Here the intermarried couples, the dissidents, heretics and others can find refuge, an asylum.

Two other regimes mentioned by Walzer, the international society and the consociations, are not very relevant in this context. But the last two are.

Nation-states are characterized by one single dominant group and one or several minorities. Traces of the dominant group are visible in public education, ceremonies, state calendar and so on. That is, the dominant group has more symbolic and cultural influence and power than the minorities. This has of course a historical background, the nation and the dominant group has a common history, the story of the nation.

The regime is tolerating minorities primary as citizens and individuals, not as cultural groups. There is a distinction between a private collective and a public collective. The public collective is constituted by the majority culture, and the minority cultures are therefore to act as a collective privately. Publicly they are individual citizens with citizens’ rights. Walzer puts this in a way that is very relevant to the Norwegian situation:

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189 For the description of tolerance and political regime, see Walzer 1997:14-36.
190 I use the past tense on multinational empires because they in original form are historical. This does however not mean that several of the premodern features of plurality and tolerance cannot be found in contemporary regimes.
191 International society can be for instance the United Nations. They can be tolerant in two senses, Walzer observes, in principle because it is a union of a variety of nations and cultures, but also in the weakness of its regime.
192 A consociation is for instance Switzerland, a union of two different, but equal nations or cultures. Tolerance will depend on trust in the political institutional arrangements.
Any claim to act out minority culture in public is likely to produce anxiety among the majority (hence the controversy in France over the wearing of Muslim headdress in state schools). In principle, there is no coercion of individuals, but pressure to assimilate to the dominant nation, at least with regard to public practices, has been fairly common and, until recent times, fairly successful. (Walzer 1997:26)

The politics of language is the road to unity. “The dialect of the center” is the normative, and minorities struggle for legitimacy of their language in schools, on signs and so on. On one hand nation-states offer less room for difference than multinational empires and other political regimes. On the other: “… there is a double effect here, with which any theory of toleration must reckon: though the nation-state is less tolerant of groups, it may well force groups to be more tolerant of individuals. This second effect is a consequence of the (partial and incomplete) transformation of the groups into voluntary associations.” (Walzer 1997:27) Besides, Walzer claims, minorities do pretty well in nation-states because they are under pressure.

The fifth political regime Walzer discusses is immigrant societies. In these societies there is no dominant group, and the society has a political more than a national identity. Immigrants have left their homeland, their territory. The group is therefore not territorial based. Groups are seen as voluntary associations. One is therefore tolerated as personalized individuals, as individual versions of groups’ culture. One should not only tolerate individuals from other groups, but also persons within one’s own group that have transformed this culture into a personal expression. Tolerance is more horizontal than vertical, that is, tolerance among equal individuals more than in hierarchical structures as for instance majority - minority. Persons are seen as having dual or hyphenated identities, they are not only Korean or Catholic, but American-Korean and American-Catholic. Politically they are American, culturally Korean and Catholic. The question is, however, whether groups can sustain themselves under such conditions. Walzer doubts this, and suggests substantive political action in order to improve conditions for groups.

Tolerance must however not only be interpreted in the light of political regimes, but also in view of what part or issue of society it concerns. Walzer is discussing tolerance in relation to power, class, gender, religion and civil religion. Here the part on tolerance and education is especially interesting. There is an unavoidable tension between tolerance and the need of a regime to legitimate itself and give the population common and unifying ideas.
to believe in, act on and fight for.\textsuperscript{193} The school is therefore in many respects a central institution in the conception and practice of tolerance. Simply by existing it contains basic tensions that represent a challenge to tolerance.

While multinational empires and consociations have a minimalistic curriculum with large local influence, the curricula in nation-states are centralized:

The case is very different, obviously, in nation-states with national minorities, where one community is privileged over all others. This kind of regime is far more centralized than are empires and consociations, and so it has a greater need (particularly if it is democratically organized) for citizens, men and women who are loyal, engaged, competent, and familiar with the style, as it were, with the dominant nation. State schools will aim to produce citizens of this kind. (Walzer 1997:73)

The state schools are instruments in states’ intentional socializing of the majority’s, often referred to as the “national”, “cultural” or “common”, values and ideals to the next generation. Tolerance in state schools is conditioned by these ideals. This integrative and assimilative power seems like a cultural threat to many immigrant parents. Protests against this pressure for unity can take various forms, Walzer says, like the symbolism of wearing an ethnic dress.

While nation-states have some kind of republic ideals, some national narrative, immigrant societies are resting on liberalism. Both are substantive political cultures, although republicanism demands a stronger cultural base, and liberalism allows for a larger degree of private and cultural diversity. In addition or opposition to liberalism multiculturalism has emerged as an educational and political way to deal with pluralism. Persons are seen as having hyphenated identities, and it is just as important for the public schools to teach about being a Korean or Catholic as being an American. This is a multiculturalism that can work hand in hand with liberalism. However, there are versions of multiculturalism where the cultural identity (Korean, Catholic) is seen as primary to the political (American), a type of multiculturalism that is in conflict with liberalism.\textsuperscript{194}

Although Walzer does not explicitly say so, tolerance in state schools in immigrant societies can therefore take several forms. It may vary from a tolerance of individuals agreeing on some kind of politically neutral core of ideals to a tolerance of different groups

\textsuperscript{193} “All domestic regimes have to teach their own values and virtues, and this teaching is certainly competitive with whatever else children are taught by their parents or in their community. But the competition is or can be a useful lesson in (the difficulties of) mutual toleration.” (Walzer 1997:71-72)

\textsuperscript{194} For critical discussions of multicultural education and tolerance from a more or less implicit liberal perspective, see Vogt 1997 and Weissberg 1998.
that simply are different. Thirdly this almost unconditional group-tolerance can be transferred to individuals, the person as embracing a variety of cultures and identities.

Then we have proceeded into the last contextual issue Walzer is presenting in his analysis of tolerance, namely the relationship between modernity, postmodernity and tolerance. Modern tolerance is taking two forms, individual assimilation and group recognition, that can operate separate or simultaneously. Individual assimilation means including everyone - Koreans, Catholics, women, Sámis – as individuals, citizens in the city. Group recognition means “to provide the group as a whole with a voice, a place, and a politics of its own” (Walzer 1997:85). While the first tolerance is focused on individuals and inclusion, the second is concerned with boundaries and groups. The dilemma between these two modern forms of tolerance is the relationship between unity and plurality, between citizen and member, between individual and group. However in the postmodern condition the dilemma has shifted focus. Life in postmodern societies is without clear boundaries and with insecure and plural identities. Difference is not out there, but in here, in our community, family and in ourselves. Tolerance is therefore tolerating our church, spouses, children – and ourselves. Postmodern tolerance is tolerating the stranger because we all have been or are strangers. The stranger is not only out there, but also within us. The postmodern dilemma of tolerance is therefore not between unity and plurality, but between uniform and plural individuals and groups on one hand and divided selves and cultural strangers on the other, Walzer says.

Walzer seems to claim that postmodern conditions demand postmodern tolerance. Postmodernity is however not a substitution for modernity, they work in a parallel fashion. And further: Ideas of postmodernity like the divided self seems to be parasitic on the undivided groups of modernity. In immigrant societies and nation-states with increasing immigration one is therefore living in a dualism of modernity and postmodernity. This dualism has consequences for tolerance, that has to be accommodated to both conditions: “We need to be tolerated and protected as citizens of the state and members of groups – and also as strangers to both” (Walzer 1997:90-91).

This can be illustrated in the following table:
Table 3.1: Foci of modern and postmodern tolerance, according to Walzer (1997).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tolerating</th>
<th>Modernity</th>
<th>Postmodernity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The individual</td>
<td>The group(^{195})</td>
<td>The stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The person</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divided self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Walzer’s account may seem like a relativistic one. He is primarily trying to understand how tolerance works under different social and historical conditions, but there are also elements of criticism. First, he emphasizes the outer limits of tolerance. Some version of peaceful coexistence, which implies basic human rights, is necessary. Secondly, Walzer engage in the debate on tolerance and pluralism in the US. Because centrifugal forces are threatening to make dissociated individuals, balance between group identity and individual freedom is both necessary and desirable in the actual context. This balance, however, needs to be restored in the sense that groups and cultural associations need political support.\(^{196}\) This can mean favoring some groups at the expense of others. But this is desirable in the name of tolerance.

3.3.4 Postmodern tolerance

An even more radical view of tolerance is found within what broadly could be labeled postmodern theory or narratives. The book *Contingency, irony and solidarity* by Richard Rorty (1989) hardly mentions the word tolerance, nor postmodernism, but can still be read as a postmodern account on tolerance.\(^{197}\) Tolerance broadly conceived as peacefully coexistence in a situation of difference and diversity is one of its central themes.

Rorty does not see difference as a result of epistemological failure or uncertainty or as a political necessity. Difference is understood much more radically. There is nothing but our world of difference, as we know it. There is no unity, no common reason or morality “out there”. There is no single truth, no single right or good, only different truths, rights and

\(^{195}\) One could of course also argue that group-based tolerance is premodern (or traditional) and tolerance of individual rights a distinct modern form of tolerance. This does not necessarily mean that tolerance as respecting group-rights is outdated per definition. It is true that tolerance of the individual and the divided self is a foreign thought in traditional societies. On the other hand one can very well, following Walzer, think of premodernity, modernity and postmodernity not as separate historical epochs, but as descriptions of cultural patterns existing side by side and intertwined in the present Western world.

\(^{196}\) “We are at a point where we can still safely bring the pluralism of groups to the rescue of the pluralism of dissociated individuals.” And: “For it is only in the context of associational activity that individuals learn to deliberate, argue, make decisions, and take responsibility.” (Walzer 1997:104)

\(^{197}\) For such interpretations, see for instance Conway (1997), Hellesnes (1994). One can only speculate on the reasons why Rorty (1989) does not use “tolerance” as a central term.
goods that are products of historical contingencies.\textsuperscript{198} Such a radical view of pluralism prepares the ground for tolerance as one of the most significant ideals of postmodernism, and also to a distinct account of the nature of tolerance.

Because Rorty (1989) does not explicit write on tolerance, the interpreting task is depending on for instance the interpreter’s conceptualization of the word. Although writers have focused on Rorty’s negative tolerance, tolerance as freedom, (Conway 1997:160) I will balance this with his obvious positive tolerance, that is, tolerance as solidarity. First, however, to the narration of negative tolerance.

When a human being is understanding herself and justifying her actions, she is using a set of words, a language, that is learnt. This is the story of herself, her “final vocabulary”, in Rorty’s (1989:73) terminology. There is no way one can step out of this language in order to understand and evaluate it; we are on one hand trapped in our own contingent history and in the tribe we by coincidence was born and socialized into. On the other hand we can still develop, re-create and renew our language. This process does not lead to the truth or the good. It is a contingent process, but one which creates cultural vitality. It is a process of description, re-description and re-re-description.

This means that there is no third, neutral, language, from where we can evaluate differences and conflicts between two vocabularies. There are no universal criteria for evaluating different truth claims, and no hope of ever finding one.\textsuperscript{199}

This leads to tolerance. Rorty calls the tolerant individual, the “ironist”. The ironist has three features. She doubts her own final vocabulary because she has experienced and seen the value in other’s final vocabularies. She sees that arguments within her own vocabulary cannot solve this problem. And finally, she does not think her own vocabulary is closer to reality than other vocabularies. The ironist is tolerant to others and to herself because she realizes that her own language, her identity and her community is contingent, and this is a permanent situation. One has to tolerate others because their moral principles and truth-claims only make sense within their particular language.

While the ironist is the tolerant individual, the liberal state is the tolerant society. The liberal state has “no purpose except freedom” (Rorty 1989:60). The state is to balance peace, wealth and freedom on one hand, and prepare the soil for individual flourishing on

\textsuperscript{198} Rorty describes his hero, the “liberal ironist” as a nominalist and historicist. Accrodng to this position, phenomena have no intrinsic nature or real essence, and can only be understood within their particular historical context. (Rorty 1989:74-75)
the other. State interference with private matters should be kept at a minimum, only when harm is at risk. The state should leave the individual alone with her freedom, independent of how she uses it. This is obviously negative tolerance, as described above.

However, Rorty also operates with positive tolerance, namely in the name of solidarity. One quote taken from the introduction of the book expresses this in a pregnant way:

In my utopia, human solidarity would be seen not as a fact to be recognized by clearing away “prejudice” or burrowing down to previously hidden depths but, rather, as a goal to be achieved. It is to be achieved not by inquiry but by imagination, the imaginative ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers. Solidarity is not discovered by reflection, but created. It is created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and humiliation of other, unfamiliar sorts of people. Such increased sensitivity makes it more difficult to marginalize people different from ourselves by thinking, “They do not feel it as we would,” or “There must always be suffering, so why not let them suffer?” (Rorty 1989:xvi)

Tolerance as solidarity is something else than tolerance as freedom. It is positive tolerance. Tolerance as solidarity is a moral ideal, one of the few Rorty mentions. It has certain features. Firstly, tolerance as solidarity is created, not found. There is no solidarity “out there”, metaphysically speaking. Neither is solidarity found within the human being, in some form of original or proper humanity. Tolerance as solidarity is socially and historically constructed – within a specific language.

Secondly, there is no grand theory or principle of solidarity, tolerance as solidarity is a response to actual humiliation and human suffering. Tolerance as solidarity is not a result of a rational argument, but of seeing or imagining pain. Motivation for solidarity is therefore not found in rational theory, but in narratives. Rorty discusses particularly how the fiction by Nabokov and Orwell is able to sensitize the reader for the facts of cruelty.

Thirdly, tolerance as solidarity is embedded in the “us-they”-relation. Tolerance as solidarity is primarily directed to “one of us”, the group or community, as opposed to “they” – “the wrong sort of human beings”. (Rorty 1989:190-192) We do not tolerate another because he is “one of us human beings”, but because he is “one of us”. Tolerance as solidarity is trying to extend “us” to those previously described as “they”. This extension can never embrace the entire human kind, but we must “try to expand our sense of “us” as far as we can” (Rorty 1989:196). The motivation for this outreach lies in acknowledging

199 “… the world does not provide us with any criterion of choice between alternative metaphors, that we can only compare languages and metaphors with one another, not with something beyond language called “fact”.” (Rorty 1989:20)
pain and humiliation. All humans and animals have a common ability: to feel pain. What distinguishes humans from animals is that they can be victims of a certain kind of pain: humiliation. The capacity of being humiliated is therefore a common human (socialized) trait. Realizing that these similarities are more important than traditional differences of culture, race and morality, gives motivation to extend “us” to “they” and therefore to tolerance as solidarity.

At least three different accounts of tolerance can therefore be found in Rorty (1989). These accounts vary according to the social sphere (private, group, public) and the conception of tolerance as negative or positive like this table illustrates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
<td>(1) Tolerance as irony</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Tolerance as freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Tolerance as solidarity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

200 "The view I am offering says that there is such a thing as moral progress, and that this progress is indeed in the direction of greater human solidarity. But that solidarity is not thought of as recognition of a core self, the human essence, in all human beings. Rather, it is thought of as the ability to see more and more traditional differences (of tribe, religion, race, custom, and the like) as unimportant when compared with similarities with respect to pain and humiliation – the ability to think of people widely different from ourselves as included in the range of “us”. (Rorty 1989:192)

201 Humiliation is not primarily understood in physical terms, but as the destruction of a person’s language and belief without socializing a new one. When the victim is set free, he is unable to understand and defend himself and the world. He is unable to tell a coherent life-story and has become irrational. (See Rorty’s (1989) discussion on Orwell, particularly 173-188.)

202 This can, however, hardly be thought of as a universal argument for solidarity. The socialization of the ability of humiliation, and the understanding of this ability still has to be formed within a particular language. In the introduction (Rorty 1989:xv) this is made explicit: “For liberal ironists, there is no answer to the question “Why not be cruel?” – no noncircular theoretical backup for the belief that cruelty is horrible.”

203 Rorty operates with a distinct polarization between private and public. These spheres are not related, and one of the mistakes of moral and political theory has been trying to make this impossible connection. Operating with three spheres is therefore an interpretation that goes beyond Rorty’s own explicit conceptualization. It is, however, obvious how he especially in the parts on solidarity conceives the moral actor as “us” and “we”, not the individual “I”. An underlying assumption of the whole book is that the person’s language is in fact a tribe-language (with individual creation). For these reasons, it seems fruitful to incorporate a third medium range or meso sphere, that is, the group or tribe or community, between the private and the public. This sphere seems implicit in the following: “Irony seems inherently a private matter. On my definition, an ironist cannot get along without the contrast between the final vocabulary she inherited and the one she is trying to create for herself. Irony is, if not intrinsically resentful, at least reactive. Ironists have to have something to have doubts about, something from which to be alienated.” (Rorty 1989:87/88) This “something” seems to be the meso level. For a discussion on the constitution of the moral self in Rorty (1989), see Henriksen 1997:108-144.
3.4 Empirical research on tolerance and education

There exist a large number of empirical studies on the relationship between tolerance and education. Generally they are asking “who is most tolerant, and why”. More precisely, their ambition is to explain the effect of a variety of social variables, among them education, on tolerance. They can for instance tell how the level, the quantity, of education effects tolerance. These studies are surveys, searching for general and reliable correlation between dependent and independent variables. Most often the dependent variable is tolerance, and the independent variable is education. (Vogt 1997:80)

As previously noted this study has a different focus. The question asked is: What does tolerance in educational reflection and practice mean? It tries to map and discuss the broad domain of tolerance in education, and which larger accounts tolerance is an integrated dimension of. To put it simple: Where the surveys take the conception of tolerance for granted and seeks for horizontal relations, this study stops at the concept and is trying to describe and analyze it vertically, in depth. Most of these surveys operationalize tolerance as acceptance and intolerance as prejudice of for instance a group or an issue. Thereby tolerance looses its double feature, as many understand it (objection and acceptance). The limits of tolerance are implicit drawn by the researcher, thereby supposing that these limits ought to be valid or right for everyone. And further: The only answer one gets is whether a person is tolerant, not what that means, why one is tolerant, under which circumstances or how. This means that the results from the surveys have limited value in this context. Still, it will constitute an interesting background, and in the following some relevant aspects of and results from this research will be presented.

Two questions can be raised concerning the statistical relationship between education and tolerance. The first is whether education has an effect on tolerance. Secondly, if so, how does education affect tolerance?

After reviewing a large number of surveys and reports, which again review other studies, W. Paul Vogt (1997:67-103) concludes that education’s effect on tolerance varies depending on the issue in question, but that the overall picture is unanimous: Education increases tolerance. Behind such a general statement, the picture is however very complex. A number of qualifications are necessary. For instance the result depends on which issues of tolerance that are presented to which group. Highly educated persons tend to

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tolerate left-wing groups more than they do right-wing groups. The same effect is not found among persons with lower education. The choice of objects of tolerance, both issues (political tolerance) and example of the issue (left or right wing groups), informants are asked to respond to will influence the total result and the distribution.

Another qualification is the type of nation where the education takes place. Weil (1985) claims that long-established democratic traditions and substantial religious diversity in a state will increase the probability of effective teaching of tolerance.206

Mary Jackman (1994) gives another answer to the question of correlation between tolerance and education. She claims that the numbers in the surveys have to be interpreted in the light of the idea of a “velvet glove”.207 Tolerance is used as a mean in legitimating and harmonizing social injustice. Tolerance is reducing conflicts, necessary conflicts on the road to equality and justice. Tolerance, as used in liberal and capitalistic states, is therefore not a moral and political ideal, but a means for certain political and economical interests. It maintains individual rights, but is a barrier for social justice. The reason higher educated persons seem more tolerant in surveys is that they answer what is socially acceptable. They know the social code, what is the norm for tolerance and intolerance. But this does not mean that they are more tolerant in action. When asked on a more specific level (applied tolerance), the differences caused by education on a general level (general tolerance) disappear, Jackman claims. Although her research and interpretations are disputed,208 it focuses on the important difference between general and concrete levels of tolerance. It is easier to agree on tolerance on an abstract, theoretical level, more difficult in actual, practical dilemmas.209

If one supposes that education has a positive effect on tolerance, the next question is: How is education affecting tolerance? Is it through the particular teaching of tolerance, or is education in itself promoting tolerant attitudes? The number of studies on these issues is limited. Vogt (1997 104-198) suggests that education of tolerance takes place both directly and indirectly and through both socialization and instruction, according to following model:

205 Two other variables that are important predictors on tolerance are age and religious orientation. (Vogt 1997:xxvi)
206 A number of other qualifiers is mentioned in for instance Vogt 1997:45-103. For instance does American studies show that college education have more positive effect on tolerance than equal years at high school.  
207 Her conception of tolerance is a critical one, more specifically in the tradition of Herbert Marcuse (1965).  
209 Often it is assumed that intolerance is due to lack of actual knowledge of (that is cognitive emotional and geographical distance to) persons and issues, and that proximitmy to the tolerated increases tolerance. However
Table 3.3: An overview over different approaches to tolerance education (according to Vogt 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Directly</th>
<th>Indirectly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>Intergroup contact</td>
<td>Personality development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Civic education</td>
<td>Cognitive development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Intergroup contact* in itself, for instance through ethnical mixed classes, group assignments and so on, does only affect tolerance if certain conditions are met: First, contact must be introduced by respected authorities. Secondly, there must be a meaningful interaction. Thirdly, there must exist an equal status between members in the group. Fourthly, there must be real cooperation.

*Civic education* means curriculum courses that include tolerance. In Norwegian compulsory education that would mean primarily the subjects *Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education* \(^{210}\) (RE) and *Social studies* \(^{211}\). There are no Norwegian studies on the effect of teaching tolerance in these subjects. Research in relation to the *Minnesota-project* \(^{212}\) seems to suggest that these courses have an average limited positive effect on tolerance. Quite interestingly, the education also had decreasing effect on some students. These were students with low self-esteem, who felt threatened and who were high on authoritarianism. (Vogt 1997:192-194)

Indirectly tolerance is educated through the *development of the students’ personality*. Students with realistic self-esteem, high degree of self-actualization and low degree of dogmatism score high on tolerance. Education that fosters these personality traits, therefore indirectly fosters tolerance.

Vogt (1997:139) also claims that a review of studies on *cognition*, education and tolerance “provide considerable evidence that cognitive sophistication encourages tolerance”. Since education increases cognitive sophistication, it indirectly increases tolerance.

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the opposite may be the case: The more distant one is from the objects of tolerance, the easier it is to agree on tolerant statements, and vice versa.

\(^{210}\) In Norwegian the subject was called *Kristendomskunnskap med religions- og livssynorientering* in 1997, and changed name to *Kristendoms-, religions- og livssynskunnskap* in 2002, equalizing Christianity, other religions and world-views in the title by substituting *with* with *and* between Christianity and religions/world-views.

\(^{211}\) In Norwegian: *Samfunnsfag*.

\(^{212}\) For a presentation and discussion, see for instance Avery et al 1992 and 1993.
3.5 Conclusion

Tolerance is a complex concept and value. This chapter has mapped tolerance, by asking what the concept tolerance can mean and how tolerance can be understood theoretically. Conceptually the map is drawn along three dimensions that together constitute tolerance. Theoretically a map has been drawn with liberal tolerance in the center, surrounded by critical, communitarian and postmodern tolerance, which offer partly supplementary and partly alternative accounts.

The next step is to use this map on the empirical material on different understandings of tolerance. This is the part of the study where accounts of practice meet accounts of theory.
Part III An analysis of different understandings of tolerance in Norwegian compulsory education

4. Tolerance in the teachers’ experiences and minds

4.1. Issues and material

The focus is now directed towards the empirical field of Norwegian compulsory education: How is tolerance understood by teachers, in the national curriculum and in the academic debate. This chapter is analyzing teachers’ conceptions. The two next will address national curriculum and the academic debate.

Three main questions are asked in this chapter, namely: 1) What situations and practices do teachers refer to when discussing tolerance and intolerance? 2) What do teachers mean by tolerance and intolerance? 3) In which more or less comprehensive practice-theories is tolerance understood?

The first question concerns practical cases of tolerance in schools. How are the persons involved in tolerance-situations described? Which situations and kinds of situations do teachers associate with tolerance? These constitute the empirical base that all theory of tolerance in education has to address one way or another.213 From describing the empirical field the chapter moves on to describing and discussing conceptual issues. How do teachers conceive tolerance and intolerance? Is it possible to trace one common conception, or are there a number of different understandings of tolerance? If so, is this plurality of conceptions found between or within the individual teachers? The last section of the chapter will make another move, from the conceptual field to issues of theory. The teachers not only refer to cases of tolerance within their practice, they also reflect on them. These reflections form webs of meaning, where tolerance is placed in different more or less comprehensive practical philosophy of education and morality. These webs constitute elements of theories of tolerance. What theories of tolerance can contribute to a fruitful understanding of these elements? Is there one main theory of tolerance or a variety of theories? What are the

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213 Descriptions of moral empirical contexts or “realities” are necessary not only on an interpretive account, but also on two other widely different accounts of morality. Firstly, seeing morality primarily as principles that need to be application to specific situations, is dependent on a description of the situational context in order to make this application as smooth as possible (Habermas 1990, 199-211). Secondly, seeing morality as context dependent on and embodied in cultural practices, is dependent on phenomenological and empirical descriptions of contexts as a resource to (normative) moral theory (Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1990, 237-259).
features of these theories, and what is the character of tolerance within these different contexts?

Together the answers of these three main questions will give insight into the meaning of tolerance in educational practice in Norwegian schools.

The empirical material this chapter builds on consists of in-depth interviews of 15 teachers. Here one conceptual note is necessary before proceeding to the three main questions. In this study an analytical distinction is made between the conceptual field of tolerance and atolerance. The conceptual field of tolerance includes all issues of justified and unjustified tolerance and intolerance - parallel to the conceptual field of morality, which includes all issues of what is moral and immoral. Outside this conceptual field of tolerance is atolerance, that is, those issues that do not concern aspects of tolerance.\(^{214}\) (Parallel to the field of the amoral, issues which have no moral relevance.) This means that asking for practices, conceptualization and practice-theory of tolerance is also asking for the same of intolerance.

An overview of the respondents is given in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: An overview of the respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Classlevel/subject</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Anita</td>
<td>Kjernsund</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5(^{th}) and 7(^{th})</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Alfred</td>
<td>Kjernsund</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Not teaching</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bjørn</td>
<td>Kjernsund</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4(^{th})</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bjørn</td>
<td>Kjernsund</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>4(^{th}) and 5(^{th})</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Carsten</td>
<td>Kjernsund</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4(^{th}) and 6(^{th})</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Camilla</td>
<td>Hopen</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Home economics and special education.</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Hopen</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9(^{th})</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Dora</td>
<td>Hopen</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Not teaching</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Einar</td>
<td>Hopen</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Natural science</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{214}\) See figure 3.3.

\(^{215}\) This column indicates the number of years the informants have been working in different positions in schools. In one case (Else) it also includes practice from nursery (14 years).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Grade(s)</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Hopen</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Else</td>
<td>Glimmerdale</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Froøydis</td>
<td>Glimmerdale</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Norwegian as a second language</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Gjertrud</td>
<td>Glimmerdale</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Gjermund</td>
<td>Glimmerdale</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Assistant for a 12 year old student with mental and physical disabilities</td>
<td>Teacher’s assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Haldis</td>
<td>Glimmerdale</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7th and Arts</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anita was at the time of the interviews, 1998, 41 years old. She was a trained preschool-teacher, but had been teaching at Kjernsund School for two years. She taught physical education and other subjects, mostly at the fifth and seventh grades.

Alfred was in 1998 48 years old, and the principal of Kjernsund School. He had been working in schools for 25 years, included 10 as an administrator. At the time of the interview he did not teach.

Bjarne (28) had been teaching for two years. He was mainly teaching the the fourth grade at Kjernsund School school.

Bjørg was 28 years in 1998 and had been teaching for one and a half years. She taught the fourth and the fifth grades at Kjernsund School.

Carsten (30) was at the time of the interview working at Kjernsund School, close to where he grew up. He had been working seven years as a teacher, now mainly teaching fourth and sixth grades.

Camilla (24) was at the time of the interview in her second year of teaching at Hopen School, mainly in home economics and special education.

Daniel was in 1998 29 years old. He had only been working as a teacher for one year, but Hopen was his second school. The first half year he had been teaching at a school in another city. He was a form teacher for the ninth grade.

Dora (52) was the principal at Hopen School, and had been working as a teacher for 28 years – four of them as a principle.
Einar was in 1998 49 years old. He was mainly teaching natural science at the lower secondary school (eighth to 10th grades). He had been working in a Christian lay organization for 15 years before starting teaching. Einar had been teaching at Hopen School for seven years.

Frank (53) was at the time of the interviews working at Hopen School. He had been working as a teacher for 32 years, 20 of them in his hometown. He was form teacher for the seventh grade.

Else (42) has worked as a pre-school and primary school teacher for 17 years. She was at the time of the interview form teacher in a fourth grade class at Glimmerdale School, a class she has taught since the first grade.

Frøydis was in 1998 29 years old. She had been practicing as a teacher for three years, and was teaching Norwegian as a second language in third to seventh grades at Glimmerdale School.

Gjertrud was in 1998 27 years old and had an M.Phil. in arts. She had been practicing as a teacher for one year, now teaching second grade at Glimmerdale School.

Gjermund (21) was at the time of the interview working in his first year as a school assistant at Glimmerdale School. His main responsibility was to assist a 12 years old boy with severe psychological and behavioral problems, and work with this boy’s relations to other students (mainly sixth and seventh grades).

Haldis was at the time of the interviews in her 40s. She had been practicing teaching for 16 years, three of them at Glimmerdale School. She taught mostly arts and crafts and some other subjects in the seventh grade.

4.2 Practices of tolerance

4.2.1 Practices, situations and persons

This part of the study focuses on which cases that are identified as situations of tolerance within the field of educational practice, that is, among the teachers. This is an empirical contribution to the debate on what issues tolerance concern in schools, and a necessary first step in the description and analysis of tolerance within this educational context.

In the interviews tolerance appears in two different perspectives, as a virtue and in relations.\textsuperscript{216} Tolerance is on one hand used as a description of people’s character, on the

\textsuperscript{216} This does of course not mean that virtue cannot be understood as a relational phenomenon also. It is simply a pragmatic analytical distinction between two somewhat different, but interconnected, foci.
other expressed as a quality of various relations in the educational field. First I will explore
tolerance as a virtue, secondly tolerance in different relations.

The first question the informants got in the interview was to give a description of the
most tolerant colleague or teacher they had experienced. Then the conversation moved on to
the limits of tolerance, focusing on episodes where colleagues, students, parents or the
teachers themselves did something intolerable.217 In these parts of the interviews, but also
elsewhere, numerous descriptions of tolerant and intolerant persons were made.

4.2.1.1 The excellent teacher

In these passages tolerance is seen as a virtue. Tolerance is a moral and educational ideal,
which is used to describe competent or even excellent teachers. Tolerance is something to
strive for, a sign of the successful teacher. Anita gives the following description of the most
tolerant teacher she has met, a teacher of one of her daughters when living in another city:

A: She embraced everybody, she had a lap. She had … she had everything, she managed to give… to the
cleverest ones, the weakest ones, the mediocre ones, the active ones – the passive ones… She managed to
embrace them all - she knew what happened to the children. - She … had a good contact, a very good
dialogue between the school and the homes. She ENJOYED her job, she ENJOYED her everyday life,
it was … it was so obvious.

And when asked if she could give an example of an episode where the teacher appeared as a
tolerant teacher, Anita replies:

A: Yes … she very easily grasped … took
spontaneously what the children brought along …. And … worked … worked with it over time if it was
interesting to the school, put the ordinary subject aside and worked with it instead .. For example – they
had seen a porpoise down by the beach … in … yes, not far from the school. Then she put all the ordinary
subjects aside. Then they worked around this porpoise. In all the subjects, in arts and crafts, in
Norwegian, in mathematics and in orientation
subjects.

217 1. Can you tell me about the most tolerant colleague or teacher you ever met? 2. Have you ever experienced
a colleague to do something you could not tolerate? 3. What is it you do not tolerate a student to do or say in
the class-room or the school yard? From parents? An episode when you were intolerant. (1. Kan du fortelle
meg om den mest tolerante kollegen eller læreren du har møtt? 2. Har du noen gang opplevd at en kollega
gjorde noe du ikke kunne tolerere? 3. Hva er det du ikke tolererer at en elev sier eller gjør i klasserommet eller
i skolegården? Av foreldre? En episode når du var intolerant?) See the attached questionnaire. The exact
formulation of the questions did vary from interview to interview, depending on the ongoing conversation.
Anita has experienced a tolerant teacher, and this teacher is able to embrace all students. She was able not only to attend to the weaker students, but also the clever ones. She included even those who did not stand out in either direction, the in-betweens. The teacher managed to do this for two reasons: She knew the children and their families very well, and she had energy at work and at home. She is an enthusiastic teacher.

The tolerant teacher is also a spontaneous teacher. She is ready to leave her plans behind and focus on everyday experiences within the community. When a small whale, a porpoise had been observed near the beach, she turned the event into an educational project involving a number of subjects. The teacher shows her tolerance through flexibility and attentiveness to her surroundings - students, nature and knowledge.

The tolerant teacher is an excellent teacher. That is the case with all the tolerant teachers that are mentioned in the interviews: They are not only tolerant, but show a set of other moral and educational virtues. Or more precisely: A tolerant teacher is necessarily also an able teacher. In order to be tolerant a teacher needs to have other qualifications or virtues, like embracing children with differences, communicative and professional skills. On this account of tolerance, one cannot be tolerant without a developed educational and moral judgment and ability to act tolerantly to individual students or in class. Tolerance is an undisputed educational and moral virtue and ideal, and it is interconnected with other skills and virtues in images of the good teacher.

4.2.1.2 The caring teacher

Two interesting aspects in the quote are recurrent in most interviews. One is connected to the teacher’s lap, enthusiasm and spontaneity. The tolerant teacher is a teacher that expresses her tolerance through the body, both her own and the students’, in a manner of physical support and warmth. She is not afraid of showing her emotions, and appears as a caring teacher. The other aspect is connected to the way she changes plans for classes due to occurrences in the community and experiences the students have had. The descriptions indicate an educational philosophy where learning is connected to everyday experiences of the child and where knowledge is connected to situated, local knowledge. It takes some

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218 Only one informant mentioned a teacher that he characterized as “maybe too tolerant”. Later in the interview, he criticized the teacher for being indifferent, not tolerant. He then referred to another colleague as being truly tolerant, a colleague that was an excellent teacher also in other respects.

219 Care is here used loosely as being other-directed and conscious of the particular relation of self to the other. See Noddings 1984: 9-29
amount of certainty and trust in one’s own educational judgment to put plans and curriculum away in such a systematic manner. The teacher is making decisive educational choices; she seems to have an idea of good education and of being a good teacher. She is a professional.

Tolerant teachers, teachers who have tolerance as a virtue, are caring and professional teachers. That is, tolerance takes the form of caring and being professional. This needs some further elaboration.

On several occasions Anita claims that the tolerant teacher is one who dares to be physical to the students. He takes them on his lap, he strokes their hair - he acts tolerantly through the contact between his own and the students’ bodies. Alfred is concerned with how the language of the teacher’s body expresses tolerance and intolerance:

G: How do you think you … practice tolerance at school?
A: I think it is important that a teacher … and I as a teacher am able to talk WITH the students not TO them. That there is a dialogue, that the students understand that …all right, there are things they do that you do not accept, but you accept the student. - That you do not … that you do not put yourself on a pedestal looking down upon the student … I had a straightforward way of talking with students who needed me and … if they needed something, or if they were in conflicts of some sort. When they took … could take a student into the corridor, and then it is this way – even if I am rather small, I was fairly big compared to the student. To produce a conversation WITH the student I used to sit on the floor of the corridor. And the student could also sit… if he or she would rather stand. - Because then … then – then the student did not have to look upwards. True?
G: Mm.
A: Then there was more – more physical equity … equality in it. I saw that as very positive. Because then I could … then I got to talk WITH the student about… about the problems that had arisen.

Alfred is asked how he practices tolerance at the school, and he answers by telling a story about how he used to talk to students when he was a practicing teacher. Tolerance means dialogue with and acceptance of the student, although not accepting all her actions.

Tolerance to Alfred is talking with the student, not to her, which he in all likelihood would identify with not being tolerant. Talking with the student, is engaging in a dialogue, presumably talking to the student would be a monologue. Dialogue is the communicative form of tolerance, monologue the communicative form of intolerance. The difference between tolerance and intolerance is expressed through the body.
By sitting down on the floor Alfred creates an atmosphere of physical equality. The equality is one of position, but also one of value. Alfred makes a point that sitting down implies not only equality of status, but also of value. It is further interesting to note that Alfred is sitting down on the floor, independent of what position the student takes. The student is free to sit down or stand up. The act of Alfred sitting down is therefore not a result of an authoritarian equality (equality decided by the teacher) or conditioned by mutual consent (equality of position by agreement). It is an unconditioned act of humility, the teacher’s unilateral renunciation of physical power. It is an act of outreach by humility, it signals empathy and care. The sitting down says: I have time to sit down - I have time to listen to you. I am not starting this conversation above you, but facing you or below you. This means that what you are to say matters to me. I am interested in what you are going to say. I do care.

This care expressed through the body Alfred calls tolerance.

Alfred is also connecting tolerance and body to emotions:

G: For a while, back to the teacher you mentioned. Were there any episodes in relation to colleagues where the person in question turned out to be tolerant?
A: Yes, I could have mentioned many episodes, but I … without mentioning anything special. So the teacher as I said before, is very clever at showing emotions. And is the person happy too – too, he is really happy. You can see from the body language that – that – that the teacher is happy. - True?
G: Mm.
A: But the teacher can also be very angry, isn’t that true?
G: Mm.
A: And has a very… a terrific temper. But… also … when the teacher has calmed down or, true, and considered … considered apologising, for instance, that is that … thinking that … I… that was, what I did was stupid. And then the teacher can for instance convey it and say that … now … now was … now I was a bit quick-tempered and overreacted a bit, for instance.
G: Mm. What is special about that teacher that makes you think he is tolerant, that is?
A: Yes … no. It – it is first and foremost the ability he has to find… to penetrate into other people’s

G: Tilbake litt til den læreren du nevnte … Var det noen episoder i forhold til kollegaer … hvor vedkommende viste seg som tolerant?
A: Ja, jeg kunne hatt med mange episoder, men jeg … uten å trekke fram noe spesielt. Så den læreren som jeg sa i sted, er veldig flink til å vise følelser. Og er vedkommende glad også - også, så er vedkommende virkelig glad. Man ser på hele kroppsspråket at - at - at læreren er glad .. Sant?
G: Mm.
A: Men læreren kan også bli fryktelig sint, ikke sant.
G: Mm.
A: Og har et veldig ... et enormt temperament. Men .. også … når læreren har roet seg ned eller, sant, og tenkt seg om, så .. altså det å be om unnskyldning, for eksempel, altså det der .. tenke sånn at .. jeg .. det der var, nå gjorde jeg dumt. Og da kan den læreren formidle det videre altså si det at det .. nå .. nå var .. nå ble jeg nok litt hissig og tok litt for sterkt i, for eksempel.
G: Mm. Hva er det spesielt med den læreren som du synes gjør at han er tolerant, altså?
A: Ja .. nei. Det - det er jo først og fremst den evnen vedkommende har til å finne .. altså leve seg inn i andre folks følelser, for å si det sånn.

G: Like tolerance, empathy is also a plural concept: “My discussion suggests that sympathy and empathy are in a sense not unitary phenomena but, rather, collections of at least somewhat distinct sensitivities to different aspects of other people’s well-being. [...] One implication of this is that when moral philosophers and educators talk about cultivating sympathy and empathy, accomplishing this will in part involve nurturing or developing some distinct sensitivities, and may involve different tasks and processes for different persons with respect to different objects of sympathy or empathy.” (Blum 1994:47-48)
Alfred is talking about a tolerant teacher, and asked to give examples of this tolerance in relation to colleagues. He does not refer to one particular, but summarizes the virtue of tolerance in the sincerity in and ability to showing emotions. Emotions are expressed through the body. And the body is showing honest and authentic emotions, real happiness and real anger. This means that the teacher is in contact with his own emotions. Only by extensive awareness of the emotional self is it possible to be honest to one’s emotions towards oneself and other people. Frøydis puts it this way: “… by learning to know yourself and your own limitations … Then I think you learn to know others to a certain extent and learn to respect and tolerate others.” Frøydis here refers to the process of increased awareness of one’s own emotions and emotional limits. Through comprehending the moral self, one understands other people. And this educational process leads to respect and tolerance. In other words; tolerance is conditioned by an understanding of the other and her situation. In order to understand the teacher must have some access to the other, and the apparatus of access is emotions. Comprehension of the other’s feelings and situation is, however, brought about by comprehending one’s own feelings.

This process of self-discovery and other-discovery is an honest and courageous one. In asking for forgiveness for his temper, Alfred’s tolerant teacher shows honesty. He reflects on his behavior, admits a mistake, confesses and asks for forgiveness. This takes some amount of courage because it means showing fallibility. The close, personal I is exposed at the cost of the role of the more distant professional teacher. The personal I is creating webs of personal relations, where the teacher cares for the students, but also is in need of the students’ caring. The teacher is a visible teacher, for better or for worse.

4.2.1.3 Empathic tolerance

At the end of the quote above Alfred is specifying tolerance as the ability to “immerse into other people’s feelings”. The tolerant teacher is empathic - projecting his own emotions in to the other in order to understand her better. The tolerant teacher is therefore the...
teacher that is able to understand the feelings and situations of students, colleagues, parents and other people he is relating to. Asked to give an example of himself being intolerant, Alfred tells a story about a teacher taking a student to his office. The teacher had been inspecting during break, and there had been a minor conflict between him and the student at the restroom. After the teacher had told his version of the incident to the principal, Alfred had simply overlooked the student. He did not ask for her version. He did not get angry with her. He just confirmed the teacher’s anger without relating to the student at all. This incident still troubles him, and is to him a case of intolerance:

He neither looked at, nor communicated with the student. Failing to empathize with the student meant being intolerant. Not relating to the student was intolerant in itself, because it meant not relating to or caring for her. In addition it meant that Alfred did not get a balanced story of the incident.

On the question whether she could describe a situation where being intolerant Gjertrud is reflecting on how the working conditions at the school influence her relationship to a colleague. This colleague had been absent because of illness for three longer periods. A large portion of her duties had been given Gjertrud, making her work more demanding and difficult:

G: Now I feel almost no compassion for her any longer. And that I feel - I think is very … very difficult. Because I feel that it is not me as a person. But because my work situation has become so much more difficult, I feel that it … that is, I become irritated with her instead … Instead of the whole system as it is. You don’t get substitutes, and the ones you get are taken ill after a couple of days or disappear and … And that is something I perhaps have canalised to HER. Because she isn’t here, so I can be angry with her. - And it is a … I would not have accepted it if ANYBODY ELSE had behaved that way… But it is perhaps a kind of defence mechanism then …

G: Altså jeg føler nesten ikke medlidenhet med henne lenger. Og det føler - det syns jeg er veldig … veldig vanskelig. Fordi at jeg føler ikke at det er meg som person. Men fordi at min arbeidssituasjon har blitt så mye vanskeligere, så kjenner jeg at den … altså jeg blir irritert på henne istedenfor … Istedenfor hele systemet, som er sånn som det er. Du får ikke vikarer, og de du får blir syk etter to dager eller forsvinner og … Og det er vel noe som jeg kanske har kanalisert til HENNE da. For at hun er jo ikke her, så jeg kan jo være sint på henne. - Og det er jo en … Jeg hadde ikke villet akseptert hvis NOEN ANDRE hadde vært sånn … Men det er kanske en sånn form for forsvarsmekanisme da…

dream. When I am in this sort of relationship with another, when the other’s reality becomes a real possibility for me, I care.”

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Gjertrud reacts in a manner she would not approve of with others: She projects her aggression towards the “system” or the structure of the school to the colleague who happened to be ill. The intolerant act, however, is not sympathizing with her. By not being able to feel with the colleague - an ability she would demand of other people in the same situation - she is not tolerating her.

The interviews show that in the teachers’ minds the tolerant teacher is the caring teacher. The caring teacher is the one who can be characterized as physically and emotionally expressive. It is the emphatic teacher who is personal and proximate.

To be caring is not only a condition of, but in itself a practice of tolerance. In being caring, physical, emotional and empathic the teacher is tolerant. That is the way how tolerant teachers are characterized in the interviews.

4.2.1.4 The professional teacher

But the tolerant teacher as the caring teacher is only half the picture. The other half is the professional teacher.

Bjarne is concerned with the teacher’s behavior, temper and tolerance. He recalls a teacher he himself had in the sixth grade, one he characterizes as intolerant. She was an inexperienced substitute teacher, and was teaching an art-class that went out of hand. They were going to draw people, but did not do very well. Most students had drawn the arms way too short:

B: They were almost – we had to start thinking of the fact that they were almost down to the knee, and that she concentrated on and then it aggravated, and … it ended – The lesson at least ended by her storming out and – and the last thing she shouted was that we – what did she say – were damned dumbskulls who were good for nothing!

G: Oh, yes.

B: (Laughing a bit) And then we were satisfied. Then we felt – that we had a good …self-esteem afterwards….

G: Why is it you characterise her as the most intolerant?

B: It is perhaps – what I am left with – the experience I am left with after that, it is perhaps that… that is the type of teacher I DON’T want to be. - As … The type – yes, that is, of teacher who does not… does not blow his top so quickly and to the degree that… and says such things to children. It is perhaps … the fright

B: De var nesten - vi måtte begynne å tenke på at de gikk jo nesten helt ned til kneet, og det hengte hun seg opp i da, og så ballet det bare på seg, og … det endte - Timen ihvertfall endte med at hun sprang ut og - det siste hun ropte, det var at vi - hva var det hun sa - helvetes drittunger som ikke kunne noen ting!

G: Å ja.

B: (Ler litt) Og da var vi fornøyd. Da følte vi oss - da hadde vi god …. sjølfølelse etterpå…

G: Hvorfor vil du karakterisere henne som den mest intolerante?

B: Det er kanskje - det er det jeg sitter igjen med - den erfaringen jeg sitter igjen med etter det, det er kanskje at … det er typen på en lærer som jeg IKKE vil bli. - Som …. Den type - ja, altså den typen lærer som ikke - som spreker så fort og til den grad at …og sier såne ting til unger. Det er kanskje … skrekken - mitt skrekkeksempel på hvordan en lærer ikke skal være.

225 With Colnerud (1995:37) I understand professionalism as the integration of knowledge and skills with moral responsibility of and towards the persons one relates to in work.
This is a story of a completely unsuccessful class. The students are not doing as well as the teacher imagined they would. Her frustration is evolving, resulting in her bursting out of the room, blaming the children in not a very suitable language for the failure of the class, and leaving the children with a feeling of guilt.

In his reflection on the case, Bjarne is describing the teacher as an anti-ideal. He also is connecting the tolerant teacher to the able teacher, as Anita did earlier. The failure to be tolerant in this case lies in two perspectives: First, she did not tolerate the students’ limited resources in drawing. She misjudged the students’ abilities, and when things went wrong, she blamed the students for having limited resources. Secondly, she did not behave as a skillful teacher would. An excellent teacher would have adjusted the class when things did not work out as planned. She would not have lost her temper like this, Bjarne claims. This is the way an unprofessional teacher deals with problems in class and with her own emotions. Bjarne recalls how he himself once got so furious in class that he lost control and swore.

The problem was not primarily his temper or using profane language, but losing control over the situation and himself. To Bjarne, to be in control of the educational situation is a condition for being characterized as professional. Bjarne and the substitute teacher on one hand act as individual persons and on the other play the role of the teacher. To play the role of the good teacher is to be professional.226 There is no singular script for the good teacher, but there are expectations of educational and moral standards.227 How these standards are

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226 Bjarne expresses the distinction between the private and the professional role of the teacher in this way: “That when we are at WORK we have – we have- that can be a good concept – the moral of the school. But it need not necessarily coincide with your personal moral. – It is a job and there we are professionals, and there we must follow ... all rules ...” ("- At når vi er på JOBBA så har vi - da har vi – det kan nok godt være en moral - skolens moral. Men den behøver ikke å være overens med din private moral. - Det er en jobb, og der er vi profesjonell, og der må vi følge ... alle regler ...")

227 In an empirical study of teachers’ perception of professional moral dilemmas and conflicts Colnerud (1995:98) found that the informants found themselves divided between care and other general norms, between
reached is a matter of educational and moral judgment, and this judgmental space constitutes the autonomous room of the professional teacher.

Bjørg tells that she considers herself as being intolerant to students from time to time, in reacting too strongly on children’s rude language to herself as an adult. She was an immigrant herself, and found the cultural differences between her own home country and Norway somewhat hard to handle. She also emphasized an equivalent cultural diversity between Southern Norway, where she used to study, and the northern parts of the country where she had been living for a couple of years.

B: ... The problem I feel I work a bit with, in relation to cheekiness … to me as grown up, is that I have reacted very strongly to it sometimes and have perhaps been somewhat intolerant in relation to the student’s background, and what – how the STUDENT perhaps understood … or MEANT by the utterance or the way in which it was said. And -I don’t know if I shall call it intolerance when – it is obvious, all the situations when you feel that you overreact or react too unprofessionally in relation to what happens, if you see what I mean. That you … my own emotions become too strong or too engaged in the situation, and then feel that you perhaps treat the student unfairly. That I should have been able to – yes, retracted from the problem and … said things in a different way.

Bjørg characterizes herself as intolerant when failing to adjust her reaction to the specific character of situation. She reacts to what she interprets as rude language as such, but, she admits, being tolerant (or not intolerant) means interpreting the language in this particular situation. The three elements she mentions are the background of the student (context), the perception and meaning of the student (intention) and the way it was said (mode). She thereby indicates that there may be aspects in the child’s biography that can explain the use of rude language, or that the student’s intention was not to offend the teacher, but maybe to impress his classmates. And thirdly, the mode of expression has great local differences. What is considered as rude language in Southern Norway, may be everyday language in the northern parts. In this perspective the meaning of language is locally constituted, and in order to get the meaning it must be locally interpreted.

protecting students and respecting their privacy and integrity. The teachers also find themselves in dilemmas concerning honesty and justice.
4.2.1.5 **Professionalism and tolerance**

It is quite clear from the interviews that intolerance is understood as being unprofessional and tolerance as being professional. But how are professionalism and tolerance connected? There are two possible connections, and the first one is apparent in the quote above. Bjørg admits that not reflecting on the situational elements and their effect on the student’s action, easily leads to intolerance. That is, one has to understand the particularity and characteristics of the situation in order to be tolerant. And understanding the educational situation is part of being professional. This means that teaching cannot be conceived in purely technical terms, but is an act of an artist. Although Eisner (1985:87-119) does not develop his terminology explicitly in a discussion of professionalism, his concepts of educational connoisseurship and educational criticism are fruitful in describing what the informants mean by the content of professionalism. Educational practice is complex and situational in the sense that there are a numerous co-existing participants, relations and interests, and that the patterns that are created in everyday school practice are changing all the time. Educational connoisseurship, Eisner says, is the “art of perception that makes the appreciation of such complexity possible.” (Eisner 1985:104) Appreciation means awareness and understanding, including perception and interpretation. Educational criticism is a public act of critical description, interpretation and evaluation.²²⁸

Turning back to Bjørg, she in the second paragraph describes herself as not very professional when her reactions are not proportionate to the incidents in the school. Being the opposite, a professional, would in her mind, be to step back from the problem for a moment in order to restrain her emotions. One possible interpretation is that Bjørg conceives being professional as being distant and impersonal. That is, the professional teacher is the teacher that restricts herself, her reactions and values. As long as professionalism is a vital aspect of tolerance, it would mean that the tolerant teacher is the teacher that in certain situations can dispense from her own emotions and values. Another interpretation, more in line with Eisner’s concepts, is that being professional implies the ability to establish a critical distance. In order to perceive the particularity and complexity of the situation, interpret and evaluate it, a certain space for reflection is necessary. In the imaginative step back, Bjørg is reflecting on justice in her treatment of students and her possible modes of expression. The reflective space allows her to analyze the educational situation in the light of ethics (justice) and possible educational skills (modes of expression).

²²⁸ For another theoretical account that stresses the importance of educational criticism as fundamental for educational professionalism, see Dale 1999.
Professionalism in the sense of connoisseurship and criticism does not mean restricting oneself, but is an act of transforming. Through reflection the teacher’s immediate and impulsive response is transformed into an educational response. Still it is personal, emotional and value-laden, but it is professional in the sense that it is sensitive and reflective of the context, the motives and the modes of expression in the educational situation. This sensitiveness is related to a critical, ethical and educational understanding or conviction.

If it is correct that teachers understand professionalism along these lines, tolerance does not mean refraining from action or restricting one’s personal emotions, values and opinions. Tolerance means transformed authenticity as opposed to immediate authenticity. It means to engage fully, but to do so critically reflective of the educational relations of and responsibilities in a particular educational situation.

A vital aspect of the critical ethical reflection is the issue of justice. Gjermund answers like this when asked how he can practice tolerance as a teacher:

Gj: ... That was a terribly difficult question. (Laughter) To practise tolerance ... No ... That is, when you ask practise tolerance you must have your own strict rules about what should be tolerated and what should not be tolerated, and at the same time have the ability to assess because the situation is not always the same. It is not always the jargon used is the same as everybody knows. – Like, you must have a certain ability to evaluate the situation, and ... and then you must be fairly sure of yourself about what is right and what is wrong. And then it is important to ... to react in the same way to all the students ... I think. I think it is very important that nobody feels themselves unfairly treated ... I think.

Gj: ... Det var et forferdelig vanskelig spørsmål. (Latter) Å praktisere toleranse ... Nei ... Altså, når du spør praktisere toleranse, så må du i hvert fall ha klare retningslinjer for deg selv om hva som skal kunne tolereres og hva som ikke skal tolereres, og samtidig ha en vurderingsevne, for at det ikke alltid situasjonen er den samme. Det er ikke alltid at sjargongen som blir brukt er den samme, det er noe alle vet. - Sånn at du må ha en viss vurderingsevne til å se an situasjonen, og ... og så må du være ganske sikker på deg selv i hva som er rett og hva som er galt. Og så er det viktig å ... å reagere likt ovenfor elevene ... synes jeg. Jeg synes det er veldig viktig at ingen føler seg urettferdig behandlet ... synes jeg.

Gjermund stresses two aspects of tolerant practice. One is the need for rules, indicating the limits of tolerance. Equality and justice are fundamental values in drawing these limits. The tolerant teacher is the one who treats the students equally and with justice. The other aspect is the ability of situational educational and ethical judgment. The professional and tolerant teacher is the one who practices justice with situational judgment.

Colnerud (1995:34) uses with reference to Hellberg the term discretion as central in professionalism. The practices within professions cannot entirely be made routine, many situations are unpredictable and demand situational judgment. A condition for practicing

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229 The analytical term justice is here used broadly to cover justice as fairness, desert and entitlement (Beauchamp 1991:342).
this judgment is autonomy, that is, a personal control of judgment and actions. Society allows a profession this autonomy because of the profession’s discretion: It's reflection, carefulness, cautiousness and tact. At the same time persons with professional autonomy are expected to show discretion. It is exactly this discrestional teacher that the informants describe as the professional and tolerant teacher. Being brute, insensitive, without emotional control, but also distant, non-communicative to students and colleagues, disloyal, negligent of duty and agreement characterize the non-professional and non-tolerant teacher.

The common denominator of tolerance and professionalism seems to be respect and responsibility for students, the educational process and colleagues. Being professional is conditioned by tolerance of differences and complexities among participants and processes of education. This is a kind of tolerance that cannot refrain from action, because education consists in acting. The tolerant professional teacher is a master at finding the right mode of action.

Table 4.2: The tolerant teacher is the excellent teacher. Being excellent means caring and being professional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The tolerant teacher</th>
<th>Care</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Proximate</th>
<th>Immediate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The excellent teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Empathic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td></td>
<td>In control</td>
<td>At some distance</td>
<td>Reflectively transformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up: The practical cases the informants refer to often involve the image of the tolerant teacher. Tolerance is in these contexts understood as a virtue, as educational and moral excellence. More specifically, the tolerant teachers have the virtues of caring and professionalism. This means that professionalism is not a formal or technical term, but a moral one. Being professional means that the care is morally and educationally critical reflective. Tolerance does therefore not mean restricting oneself and one’s actions, but being immediate (care) and transformed (professional).
4.2.2 Tolerance in relations

Tolerance is not only a virtue, a dimension of persons’ characters. It is also relational. The relations of tolerance are numerous, but in an educational context, the primary relations of tolerance are between teacher and students, teacher and colleagues, teacher and parents and teacher and structural aspects of educational practice.

From the teachers’ point of view the main relation of educational tolerance is between teacher and students. And the focus is mainly on one direction, namely the teacher’s tolerance of the student. Very few informants reflect on the students tolerating the teachers. This may be because they did not get any specific questions in that direction. Still, neither questions nor dialogue did exclude such a perspective. Another possibility is that the teachers conceive themselves not only as practitioners of tolerance, but educators of tolerance. That way the teachers’ conception and practice of tolerance move into the center of attention. Many of the practical cases the teachers mention and many of their reflection concern tolerance in the fundamental relation between teacher and student.

4.2.2.1. Tolerating the student

Asked to describe the most tolerant person she could image, Camilla answers:

C: Yes, I think that is a person who is a good judge of character, and who sees … Yes, he even sees BEHIND the outside … Because I believe the students show us very many faces, as they do in relation to their class mates and … as - I at least think it is easier to tolerate him if you know somewhat more about the person. - It is like a teacher who … really is able to read what happens, in a sense, to the students … I believe this is something you cannot learn. It is something you … Either you ARE such a person who does it automatically, or then not you have to learn it over time, in a sense. I at least believe that you cannot learn it at a teacher’s college, in any case.

The relationship between teacher and student is a reading and personal one. The tolerant teacher is both able to and interested in getting behind the protective masks of the students in order to get to know the particular person. The ability to read situations and students seems to be both a mark and condition of tolerance. Read means to interpret and understand, and this ability, virtue or connoisseurship, is not learnt in formal education. The only way to acquire this ability is through self-development over a longer period of time.
Perception

A condition for good reading is careful perception. Many informants point to perception as a key aspect of the tolerant teacher in relation to students.

When asked if she can remember an incident where she would consider herself acting intolerantly, Anita remembers one episode when she was substituting for a colleague. A student was not responding to the corrections Anita gave to her behavior, and at a certain point Anita got angry.

Anita reacted to the student in a manner she would not have done, being aware of vital information about the student. Reflecting on the incident now, she describes her behavior as intolerant. It is crucial here to notice what the intolerance consists in: It is not the action in itself that is not tolerant – because it transgressed some norm, rule or value. It is the failure of perception: Her intolerance rests in her not seeing, in her lack of openness to the signals that the student sent. The illegitimate intolerant teacher is the ill-perceiving teacher. The tolerant teacher in the teacher-student relationship is the perceptive teacher. This also means that the sources of tolerance are found in moral psychology, more than in ethical theory stressing universal principles, choice and right action. (Blum 1994:30-61) According to Anita her intolerance consisted more in lack of empathy of the particularity (the student and the situation) than in the ability to legitimate and implement a moral rule.

Else is concerned with perception in the form of hearing:

G: You mention openness and the ability to listen. Do you think those are important aspects to be a tolerant teacher?
E: Yes.
Many of the informants emphasize the tolerant teacher as the listening teacher. Listening and seeing are the two main modes of moral perception. Through attentive listening and seeing the teacher is establishing relations between students and himself. The establishing of such relations is a condition for tolerance in the teachers’ minds. To them tolerating students means taking into consideration the students’ backgrounds, their motives and the particularities of the situation. In order to get access to the life-worlds of the students, the teacher must be receptive or other-concerned. He must have a developed empathy.

_Empathy_

Empathy is described as a hallmark of tolerance, as for instance by Alfred:

Vetlesen (1994:7-9, 204-218) describes empathy as the most basic of humankind’s emotional faculty, and as a precondition of moral perception. Through empathy one gains access to the other’s experience. Not in the sense that my emotion or experience is identical to the other’s emotion or experience, but that I recognize the otherness of other. Using Vetlesen’s understanding, the relation between empathy and tolerance becomes clear: Understanding tolerance as how to deal peacefully with difference, empathy is a key human faculty in becoming aware of and understand this difference or otherness in other persons. The truly tolerant teacher has a valid understanding of the otherness of students, and can therefore relate to and act accordingly.

An episode of lack of empathy and of intolerance is told by Frøydis. A student with behavioral problems started to scream and shout in one class, and the teacher managed to get him to a separate room. He then got violent, and together with a colleague the teacher managed to hold him:
Violence seems to be an increasing problem in Norwegian schools. Researchers assume that in the Western world one to three percent of all children have serious behavioral problems\(^{230}\), 10-12 percent moderate behavioral problems and 30 percent some form of behavioral or social maladjustment during his or her school-career. A study shows that over half of Norwegian teachers experience less serious problematic behavior in the classroom during a random week. 10 percent experience serious violations of norms or rules. (Sørlie 2000:70-71) This creates dilemmas for schools and teachers, one of which is how to deal with students that get attacks of violence. Such issues have not been part of a teacher’s education, and are still sensitive, with limited public discussion. One of the reasons is that teachers have to use physical force to prevent damage on persons and school material. There is often a thin line between legitimate physical prevention and illegitimate use of force by teachers. There is a fundamental imperative for Norwegian teachers not to use physical

\(^{230}\) Sørlie (2000:41) understands serious behavioral problems as the following:”A child or a youth has serious behavioral problems when he or she over a certain period of time shows an antisocial pattern of behaviors that causes considerable harm, demage or/and violation of human beings and/or animals and when his or her function- and mastering level at home or in school at the same time are considerable lower than the average level for youths and children at the same age. Serious behavioral problems is a relative, multidetermined and not easy moderated phenomenon that depends on individual relations, relational relations and contextual relations depending both upon the child or youth’s close surrounding and learning milieu.”
force towards students. Teachers can, however, be put in situations that require considerable self-control in order not to violate that imperative.

Frøydis describes such a situation. She has only seen parts of it, and it is impossible to reconstruct in more detail what happened and judge whether the teachers’ handling was adequate. With one exception: The kick in the groin. The situation at large was humiliating – especially for the student. And the humiliation was completed by a kick.

Humiliation is a kind of de-humanization. Empathy, and tolerance, is humanization. Frøydis describes the kick as one cruel example of intolerance. The reason seems obvious: The teacher has totally lost empathy with the student.

Frøydis goes on to tell another story involving the same teacher. Another student with behavioral problems was being transferred to a special school. The transfer took some time, and in the meanwhile he was denied participation in classes:

This is also a story of humiliation. The story resembles a prison scene: The student is banished from the class, relocated and sits under supervision, outside the office. That means everyone visiting the office will see him. This is a kind of public punishment, paralleled by the pillory in previous times. Deliberatively or not, he is supplied with a desk and chair that make him look small. He is literally put in the dark for weeks. According to Frøydis, a tolerant teacher would never give up on a student like this, and she would never violate the rights of the student in this manner. Giving up on a student is losing all empathy, refusing to see the other and understand his experience.

Still, there is a glimpse of re-humanization in the story: We can guess (because of how Frøydis now tells the story) that the boy lightens up when Frøydis enters the room and answers him. Her simple and apparently insignificant answer means taking the student as a person, a sense of empathy.
To have empathy means to be other-directed. As Vetlesen remarks, empathy is never directed towards oneself. This concern for others, this other-regarding direction, implies an attentiveness and openness as Else describes it:

According to Else listening and openness are important characteristics of the tolerant teacher. Empathy is the disclosure of the other’s experience. But hermeneutically the interpretive subject is also disclosing herself to the other and to herself (in the form of self-reflection). This is the way Else describes the tolerant relationship between teacher and student: As a dialectical disclosure of the experiences and life-stories of the student and the teacher. This way a moral space of trust and understanding is established in the relation. It is within this relational moral space that Else understands tolerance.

Tolerance between common rules and particular students

At the same time, Else claims, being open must not mean losing your authority as a teacher. At first this may seem like a conflict between a teacher’s authenticity on one hand and professionalism on the other. On more consideration being open does not necessarily suspend authority. Being open in the sense of being honest and authentic, also means recognizing the authority and power that are connected to structures and roles. Being a teacher can never mean being a student in every respect. Certain responsibilities are intrinsic to the role of a teacher. Some of these responsibilities can be delegated to the student, but the ultimate responsibility still lies with the teacher. Pretending that this is not so, is not honesty, authenticity or openness: It is trying to escape responsibility.

According to the informants, tolerance is connected to this kind of openness, honesty and authenticity: The one that is seeing the other as an interesting, unique individual, but at the same time is explicit on the responsibilities and rules that regulate the relationship between teachers and students.

Carsten expresses this combination of individuality and rules in tolerance like this:
G: If you think a bit more generally, how would you characterise a tolerant teacher?
C: I would – yes, perhaps he … No, what… as I see it – in relationship to the students, accept the students the way they are. That is on the students’ terms when it comes to … when it comes to their personality and allow for …individual varieties with them. - At the same time as you … as you manage to stick to society’s general tolerance concept that is at the back of your mind, saying that there are certain norms and rules that we have to relate ourselves to.

G: Hvis du tenker litt mer generelt, hvordan vil du karakterisere en tolerant lærer?
C: Jeg vil jo - ja, kanske han … Nei, det som … som jeg opplever som - overfor elevene, godtar elevene som de er. Altså er på eleven sine premisser når det gjelder … når det gjelder deres personlighet, og tar høyde for … for individuelle egenarter hos dem. - Samtidig som man … som man greier å ha det generelle tolerantsebegrepet i samfunnet som ligger altså i bakhodet, at her er visse normer og regler som vi må forholde oss til.

On one hand the tolerant teacher is perceiving the student and relating to him as an individual with a distinct personality. The tolerant teacher is accepting this particularity of the students, in other words, she is tolerating the otherness and difference of the other. In relating to the student, the teacher has a primary responsibility to act on the terms of the student. This, however, does not mean to be dictated by the student. When Carsten refers to “society’s general tolerance concept”, he probably means generally accepted limits of tolerance within the wider society. There are certain norms and rules that cannot be dispensed from in school.

The students are seen as individuals, as expressed by Alfred:

A: So … But tolerance means … then … then it means … it means tolerance then is to care, to penetrate into other peop - children’s … background and to understand the children … to do the best possible job.

A: Så … Men toleranse går.. da.. da går jo.. det med toleranse blir jo det å bry seg altså, sette seg inn i andre fol - ungen sin … sin bakgrunn og forstå ungene … for å gjøre en best mulig jobb.

Alfred continues:

A: True? Which makes, which makes you know that child in a quite … quite different way. And that can be a child that – on the surface seems, yes as many would surely say, “a nasty piece of work.” True? But as – you know that that child has a damned good reason for being nasty, or that there is at least one reason, more reasons that the child behaves in that way.
G: Mm. So going into the student’s background is important?
A: Yes Therefore I think it is important… that… at… at such a big school as we have here, it is important that there are many teachers who are familiar with the local surroundings. Because then - then it is easier to understand … the individuals’ backgrounds … and also why the children behave in this way or that.

A: Sant? Som gjør at, som gjør at du kjenner den ungen på en helt … helt annen måte. Og det kan være en unge som - som utad virker, ja, som mange sikkert vil si, en "herslig" unge, Sant? Men som - du vet at den ungen har jaggu grunn til å være herslig, eller at det i hvert fall er en årsak, flere årsaker til at den ungen oppfører seg sånn.
G: Mm. Så det å gå bak eleven, det blir viktig?
A Ja. Derfor så tror jeg det er viktig at … det … i … i en sann stor skole som det her, så er det viktig at det er mange lærere som er godt kjent i lokalmiljøet. Fordi at - at da har man litt lettere for å forstå … bakgrunnen til de forskjellige … og også da hvorfor ungene oppfører seg sånn og sånn.
Tolerance means to care, and care means to enter into the life story of each individual in order to understand her. The particular life story of the individual is seen as a key to understand the student and her actions. The differences of the children that the informants mention are of different kinds. One recurrent difference is connected to what is classified as problematic behavior.

A “nasty piece of work” (“herslig”) student means a student with a behavior that repulses others. The difference consists in diverging behavior. This kind of behavior seems meaningless taken at face value. But understood within the life story of the individual the reasons for the diverging actions are more understandable, and it becomes easier to tolerate.

The ideal tolerant teacher is able to see the student as an individual. This is a repeated theme among the informants. Gjertrud expresses this point of view most radically:

A tolerant school is where the students are seen as individuals, not as classes and groups. Characterizing students after group, either class or national or ethnic group is seen as intolerant. Although the seventh grade has a dubious reputation, many students in that class do nothing wrong. Neglecting the individual perspective may mean judging people on wrong assumptions. Intolerance in this case probably consists in not taking the individual life story seriously, not taking into account the particular otherness or difference of each individual. That way bonds cannot be built between autonomous persons. The stereotyping

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231 "det generelle toleransebegrepet i samfunnet."

232 Life story here refers to “the account given by an individual, [...] with emphasis upon the ordering into themes or topics that the individual chooses to adopt or omit as s/he tells the story.” Life story is related to the concept life history, which refers to “a series of substantive events arranged in chronological order.” (Miller 2000:19)
that goes with a group-identification is an obstacle towards seeing and understanding the other as a you and me as an I.

This distinct individual perspective is very dominant when the informants talk about students’ learning abilities, psychological and social development, attitudes and behavior. Like Gjertrud, many informants also take an individual perspective on students’ culture and religion. The aim is to tolerate a student because of her individual life story, not because she is a Muslim or a Sámi.

As mentioned this individual perspective goes hand in hand with an emphasis on rules, justice and unity. Camilla puts it this way:

Camilla summarizes the tolerant teacher in relation to the students in two points: In the first place it is seeing the students – that is perception and empathy. Secondly, it is to set boundaries. Boundaries refer to moral rules or norms for behavior. These rules mark fences for legitimate actions. Crossing a fence, in the sense of breaking a rule, means doing an illegitimate or immoral action. In Camilla’s mind these boundaries have one common purpose: To secure justice. She legitimates this by referring to students’ appreciation of justice.

**Justice and tolerance**

But how is the relationship between tolerance and justice conceived – more precisely? One interpretation is that rules of justice – boundaries or fences of legitimate action - are the limits of tolerance. That is, one could (or more radically should) tolerate differences in actions within the boundaries of justice – that is, as long as they do not violate norms of justice. On this reading, the rules of justice are identical with the limits of tolerance.

But then the rules of justice are not part of tolerance – they indicate the maximum extension of tolerance. Managing the rules of justice is external to the concept of tolerance. Still, it seems like Camilla is including establishing and managing the rules of justice within tolerance – actually, it is one of two marks of tolerance. How can this be understood?
The quote is not only representative of Camilla. When asked how his school (including teachers) can practice tolerance, Frank answers this:

F: Yes … It is this about that we - that we are all treated in the same way. - That the attitudes are the same, no matter … no matter what we are like – of course. – Yes … And that we can show in many different ways … And … and … but we must be a bit elastic in relation to fairness, that we … That is, we are all different, so we must take that as a starting-point and perhaps have a few negotiations that take that too into consideration … To make IT clear that … Get understanding for the fact that we ARE different. That the remedies … vary as a result of that fact.

F: Ja... Det er jo dette med å - at vi alle blir behandlet likt, da - At holdningen er lik, uansett åsen .... åsen vi er – klart – Ja ... Og det kan vi jo vise på mange måter da ... Og ... og ... men vi må jo være romslige også, i forhold til dette med rettferdighet, at vi ... Altså vi er jo forskjellige, så vi må ta utgangspunkt i det, og kanske ha noe forhandlinger her som går ut på det også ... Å få DET igjennom, at ... Få forståelsen for at vi ER forskjellige. At medisineringen er ... forskjellig ut fra det også.

Daniel puts it this way:

G: What do you think are the most important tolerance challenges here at this school? …
D: Perhaps not to be so tolerant.
G: How then?
D: Not... bend – or stretch the rules so much … I think this school should have been a bit cleverer at setting boundaries. So that it could be as fair as possible… But that means – that you are very little tolerant towards wayward students.

G: Hva syns du er de viktigste toleranseutfordringene her på skolen? ...
D:Å ikke være så tolerant, kanske.
G: Hvordan da?
D: Ikke ... bøye så - eller ikke strekke regelverket så mye.. Men bli litt flinke til å sette grenser, syns jeg denne skolen skulle vært. Så det kunne bli mest mulig rettferdig... Men det gjør jo at - da blir du jo veldig lite tolerant for en del problemelever da.

Frank starts out identifying being tolerant with treating everyone equally. At schools one should have the same attitude to students and other persons, independent of their backgrounds. This means that he also identifies tolerance as practicing rules of justice.

Daniel also emphasizes rules for justice as the primary challenge of tolerance at his school. This, and the fact that many informants mention the managing of visible moral boundaries as one of the key characteristics of the tolerant teacher, strengthens the interpretation that tolerance is understood as including the establishing and managing of justice.

Still, it is clear that both Frank and Daniel also conceive tolerance as meaning something else than and different from justice. In Daniel’s statement that the most important challenge of tolerance is not being so tolerant, lays a paradox. This seems to indicate that tolerance is used in two different senses. Tolerance a) includes rules of justice, while tolerance b) is the opposite of rules of justice. Tolerance b) is found in the last passage in the quote from Daniel: A stricter practice of the rules of justice will make you less tolerant to students with problems.
This illustrates the complexity of tolerance: That it can be conceived in a variety of ways. But more so: The variety is not only found between persons, but also within statements of one person.

_Tolerance as virtue vs. rules_

One question still demands an answer: How is the relationship between tolerance (a) and tolerance (b) conceived? One possibility is that tolerance (a) is conceived as a virtue and concerns the teachers’ character, while tolerance (b) is conceived as a rule and concerns teachers’ isolated actions. That is: Tolerance (a) describes the person who is not extremely tolerant in the sense of allowing the most, but the person that is legitimately tolerant – and intolerant. The tolerant (a) teacher is the one who has empathy and good judgment as to when she should tolerate or not and how. The intolerant (a) teacher then can either be the laissez faire- or the authoritarian teacher. The tolerant teacher knows where, when and how he should tolerate or not. It is her moral and educational skill – or virtue.

This means that a teacher can be tolerant (a) and not tolerate (b) – and that he could tolerate (b), but still not be tolerant (a). It is now clearer how justice can be a part of tolerance. The tolerant teacher (tolerance as virtue) is also the teacher who is practicing justice. To treat students unjustly is being intolerant because the teacher is showing some students less empathy than others. In one sense therefore the tolerant teacher is the one who is maintaining rules for justice in the class.

But tolerance and rules can also be in conflict. Frank’s reflection on equality and difference or justice and tolerance is interesting. His reflection can be distinguished into three parts: Firstly, he quite categorically says that practicing tolerance means treating everybody equally. Initially there is no conflict between tolerance and justice, difference and equality. Secondly, he is modifying his statement by saying that it is more a question of attitude than of action. One should have the same fundamental attitude of equality towards persons with different qualifications and presuppositions. This fundamental attitude can result in a variety of different actions, Frank maintains. Here equality is fundamental, and difference is related to the various ways equality can be practiced. Thirdly, he is saying that persons are fundamentally different, and that must be the point from where we are reflecting on tolerance and justice, difference and equality.
Equity and difference

This quote can be analyzed as an internal dialogue: Frank discusses with himself. First he presents a categorical statement, and then he modifies this in two steps. The modification concerns the relationship between equality or unity and difference – and is twofold: First he says that difference must be primary at the level of action, secondly that it is necessary to negotiate at the level of attitude or virtue between equality and difference. That is, there is a potential conflict between equality and difference, and between justice and tolerance.

This conflict is a major concern among all informants, and it materializes itself in for instance the question of general rules in order to secure fundamental justice on one hand and the tolerance of students breaking the rules on the other.

Most informants think that some fundamental common rules are necessary. As Else reasons:

G: Yes, Should all the students have the same rules? ...
S: Yes, from 1st to 7th, you mean?
G: Yes, and all groups of students and ... individuals and ...?
G: Hm! Yes, there I think we are into something ... That is ... you have to have something that is common, I think. That is – something deep down, which is something we have in common. In a way a foundation that says something about how things should be. - And then children are like us – it should be fair ... then we grown-ups are also different ... We have different backgrounds, we too. And it is obvious that we tackle different things in different ways ... And therefore I think that we should not have rules for the sake of the rules, because then nobody manages to stick to them. - But I think that when you have two or three main rules, I think they should apply to all the students, at all ages and all groups, for that is ... like a - rule of life almost.

All informants express one way or the other that some basic rules are necessary, in regulating the social and moral life at schools. The reason for this may be ideological: That the school ought to have a single vision, and that certain rules follow from this vision. Or the reason may be more pragmatic: That it is impossible to establish some basic order without core-rules and a common practice of these.

Accompanying this quest for a common core of rules and behavior, is the conflict between observing rules and tolerating that rules are broken. Else is experiencing this

conflict in her everyday practice. Therefore she would have a minimum of rules. She justifies these rules ideologically: They contribute to securing a necessary unity or equality in schools.

While emphasizing this necessary equality on one hand, most informants are ready to dispense from rules when they consider it necessary, as this quote from Gjertrud illustrates:

Gj: There are very many divorced parents. Almost none of the Norwegian children in the class have parents who are married or co-habitants … And … some of them probably have great social problems too. And it is important to get into that. But it is perhaps not SO obvious then … There is more to come that we learn little by little … But it is quite a lot … I think it is important that you are aware of such things to know how to react towards the students who … cross the line for what is acceptable in a way … Because I have to … That is, for my own part I tolerate more … negative behaviour from the students I know come from difficult homes. So I can’t treat all EXACTLY the same way, you see, even if I in principle will SAY that I do. But they certainly understand that themselves … And it is such a balance that is difficult to find because a spade is not always a spade, even if you say it is …

Gjertrud is reflecting on the students that step over the line, or break the rules. The fact that they are violating rules is in itself not a sufficient basis of response. Knowing the students’ background, for instance social problems, is important in deciding the mode of response. Gjertrud tolerates more transgression of behavioral norms from the student with a difficult family situation than from other students.

Then she recognizes the conflict between justice and tolerance – or equality and difference: She cannot apply the same yardstick to everybody, even though she in principle would say she does. And this is something she thinks the students know. This knowledge is, however, unspoken. The dilemma, she assumes, is known by students and teachers, but not verbalized.

Following quote by Frøydis also illustrates the conflict between justice and tolerance:

F: And I think that … students who have – That is, we have many – not many, but at least some – refugee children that have … I don’t really know what they have been through before, but I know for sure that they have been through much more than I have in my life that has been … fairly safe and stable.

F: Og jeg syns at … at elever som sitter med - Altså vi har mange - ikke mange, men vi har ihvertfall noen - flyktningebarn som har …. - jeg vet ikke helt hva de har opplevd for noe tidligere, men jeg vet ganske sikkert at de har opplevd ganske mye annet enn det jeg har opplevd i livet mitt, som har vært … ganske
And many of these have had to flee their homes, you see – I don’t know - that is, they have much to struggle with. And then I require that you shall stay at your desk and you shall ... Yes - And that – and when you are in a class, you are very much concerned that everything should be fair and so on.

On the ground of justice Frøydis has the rule that everyone shall sit at his or her desk in the classroom. This is a rule that applies equally to everybody. However, the knowledge that some of the students are refugees with painful experiences also demands that these students should have separate rules – because of their different backgrounds. These two principles are in conflict: The rule of equality and justice and of difference and tolerance.

This means that the informants practice justice to students on the basis of equal share, not according to individual needs, individual rights, individual efforts, social contribution, merit or free market exchanges (Beauchamp 1991:348). It is this quite strict egalitarian conception of justice that conflicts with difference and tolerance.

**Tolerance as creating space**

The difference between tolerance as care and justice also concerns the question of tolerance as creating space. Carsten reflects on tolerance, rules and space:

C: That is - I mean – we have to have SOME common rules. That is, the school as a unit must have some common rules. The class as a unit must have some common rules. But within the common rules, especially in class it is – I think it is important that there is room for a bit of individual freedom, as it were.

C: Altså - enten - vi må jo ha NOEN felles regler. Altså skolen som enhet må jo ha noen felles regler. Klassen som enhet må ha noen felles regler. Men innenfor de felles reglene, særlig i klassen, så er det jo - syns jeg det er viktig at det er rom for litt individuelle friheter, nærmest.

The common rules are boundaries, defining an area of liberty for the individual student. This is the space of tolerance. Tolerance along these lines consists in supplying the students with space in which they can unfold and express their individuality.

Einar discusses a colleague’s insensitive and intolerant response to a student who had thoughtlessly remarked derogatonly on another teacher:

E: In secondary school there often is a cheeky atmosphere and … you have to be able to accept a bit and overlook a few things and ... I interpreted that student quite differently. So I can’t really think that he actually INTENDED it as NASTILY as it was understood.  
E: For i ungdomsskolen så er det jo litt sånn fleipetone og ... og en må tåle litt, og noe må en overhøre og ... Så jeg oppfattet den eleven helt anderledes. Så jeg kunne liksom ikke tenke meg at han virkelig MENTE det så STYGT som han oppfattet det.
In order to create space for the students, one has to overhear. One has to perceive, but not act upon perception. One has to not-care, in order to create tolerant space. Both caring and consciously not-caring belong to tolerance as care and space. Too much care can suffocate space, and too much space may fragmentize care.

So far the individual student has been the focus of the teachers’ tolerance. There are however two more collective issues of tolerance discussed by the informants: That of culture and that of religion.234

**Tolerance and culture**

Three main themes of cultural difference and tolerance are recurring among the informants: 1) Regional and socio-economical differences in Norway, 2) immigration, and 3) the three "tribes" in Northern Norway. The first theme is discussed by teachers from all schools. The second theme is especially discussed by the teachers at Glimmerdale school, but to some degree also the others. The third theme concerns only teachers from Kjersund School. This, of course, shows that the cultural context of schools is decisive which issues that are focused as core cases of tolerance.

Immigration and cultural difference create challenges to tolerance. Else raises the issue of equality between genders:

E: But what is quite clear – which is an enormous challenge, and as I … think can be difficult, that is young girls – from other cultures, that is. You get 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th graders as we have here now – who in a way are locked out from many things, who get more knowledge than the parents do … and who take over the knowledge power at home, the parents’ – and especially the father’s and elder brothers’ only way to retaliate is through religious power. There is ONE thing I have a problem understanding – You have had girls in the 1st and the 2nd and 3rd grade - 4th grades who have walked around in training suits and played football with the boys, taken part in the Physical Education lessons and been part of the group. Suddenly they have to dress in a veil … and wear their traditional costume and shall suddenly be very Muslim girls who shall attend mosque every evening and not do anything. THIS is difficult for me to tolerate.

Else is very critical to what she conceives to be a lack of equality among genders in other cultures. She does not specify what she means by other cultures, but later in the quote she

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234 The distinction between culture and religion does of course not mean that they are unrelated.
explicitly refers to Islam. Going into puberty Muslim girls are transformed from something Else apparently appreciates – socially active girls, not different from the other students – to something negative: Religiously overactive and socially restricted youths. Her language in the latter part of the quote reveals a distinct dislike of this change in girls’ lives.

In another section of the interview Else elaborates her explanation of this transformation as the relationship between genders and generations. In the traditional family-pattern of the immigrants, the father had a distinct identity; respect and honor were related to his role as the head of the family. In a modern or postmodern Norwegian setting his knowledge, values and power are disputed, and religious power is the only means to hold on to his status and identity. This, however, leads to a suppression of girls.

Here is a case where the teacher dislikes or disapproves of a choice, and debates with herself whether to tolerate or not tolerate. She continues a little bit later:

E: But I really don’t know - that is, I can’t go in to them and tell them not to do that. In a way I don’t tolerate it, but on the other hand I can’t say that they shan’t do it, but I can in a way try to give way a little … respect that they are - they think differently from me. But I also have the right to say that you should give your child a possibility.

E: Men jeg vet ikke - altså jeg ... jeg kan jo ikke gå inn og si til dem ikke gjør sånn heller. Jeg tolererer det ikke på en måte, men på en annen måte så kan jeg ikke si at ikke de kan gjøre det, men jeg kan på en måte prøve å gi littegranne ... å respektere at de er - de tenker annerledes enn meg. Men jeg har også rett til å si det at jeg syns du skal gi ditt barn en mulighet.

Earlier she says:

E: So you should tread a bit carefully, for it is obvious that this system, such familiar systems are part of a culture … a culture that it is difficult to break with, so you shall show it respect – You can’t tell the child that it is WRONG or THAT is RIGHT … But what we are trying to talk about, that is this that … to help each other no matter whether you are man or woman, boy or girl, don’t you agree, that one must share the work and …

E: Så du skal trå litt varsomt, for at det er klart det at dette systemet, sånne familiære systemer, det er jo en del av en kultur … som er vanskelig å bryte, så du skal vise respekt for den også - Du kan ikke si til ungen at det er GALT, eller DET er RIKTIG... Men det vi prøver å snakke om, det er dette her at ... det å hjelpe hverandre, uansett om du er en mann eller dame eller gutt eller jente, ikke sant, at man må fordele på jobben og …

Else is caught in a dilemma. On one hand she does not tolerate this treatment of girls. On the other hand she does. These radical alternatives, the either-or responses, will not do. This is because there are valid reasons for both tolerating and not tolerating. The reason for tolerance lies in the conception of culture. It is difficult to break with cultural patterns one has grown into. The human perception and understanding and therefore also her judgment and behavior are embedded in cultural patterns. They do not have the same opportunity to break out of a family-pattern – if wishing to do so. This is a reason for tolerating the student.
A second reason for tolerance is the relativity of culture. Else is later in the interview rhetorically asking: “Is it like this that we are always right?” when asked what she thinks about cultural plurality when this plurality threatens fundamental Norwegian norms. She then goes on to differentiate *us* and *them*, arguing that plurality in values and behavior is as strong within cultural groups as between them. Therefore the distinction between us and them have basic limitations. This uncertainty of what is right and good leads to tolerance.²³⁵

On the other hand there are reasons for not tolerating. The view that there are few or none boundaries to what one can do with women, and that they do not matter is clearly not right, Else claims. This view is conflicting with the fundamental value of all human beings. On this matter she prefers “the Norwegian system”, that is the ideal of equality between genders.

These are both legitimate moral reasons in this case. The way out of the dilemma, or more correct, the way to handle the dilemma is through the mode of action – the way one is tolerating and not tolerating. You have to step carefully. But you have to step. Taking a judiciary approach, declaring something and someone right or wrong, is intolerant. Not doing anything is carelessness or indifference – and therefore not tolerant either on the conception of tolerance as care.

The tolerant approach lies in the teacher’s discretion and connoisseurship. Else sketches a mode that consists of dialogue and reflecting on how a different moral ideal, that of helping other people, can put new perspectives on the relationship between genders. The mode of action as a vital aspect of the teachers’ practice of tolerance towards students, is a recurring theme among the informants. The important thing is not only what you do, but how you do it. This means that tolerance is also connected to the form – the aesthetics - of action. A tolerant approach points to the necessity of attaching ethics to aesthetics.

**Procedural religious tolerance**

Not very often did the informants mention the students’ religion as a matter of tolerance. However, three different conceptions on religious tolerance can be sketched through three cases. First Gjermund:

Gj: Shall we be tolerant here, we shall have to accept [235]

²³⁵ The relativity of culture is a “soft” relativity. According to Else all cultures and religions have some fundamental rules that regulate human relations, and these are beyond tolerance. Equality among genders is not one of these rules, and therefore becomes an issue of conflict and tolerance.
Gjermund states a principle – that is; everybody has the right to equal treatment, independent of religious affiliation. His interpretation of this principle is illustrated by a story from his own practice. The case illustrates the reciprocal principle. When the Muslim student steals his classmate’s cap, he must accept his own being taken away. Otherwise he would demand other rules for others than himself. Hiding behind the cap’s religious status will not do, because equality requires the same rule for everyone. And a cap is a cap.

This conception can be called *procedural religious tolerance*. The aim is to find common rules that are fair to all persons, independent of their religious affiliation. Religion is therefore seen primarily as a private issue, and should be tolerated as such. In public sphere, as the school, religious symbols and religious language are not valid perspectives of reality. These symbols and languages have to appear in their secular form, so to speak. The Muslim boy can therefore not argue that taking his skullcap is a religious offence. It is not a valid argument. He has to conceive his cap as a cap, himself as a student (not a Muslim) and argue accordingly.
Procedural religious tolerance has clearly neutral ambitions. It is not the teachers’ task to take a stand on religious issues, but to step back and just regulate behavior in the public sphere according to non-religious rules.

According to Gjermund’s view religion is a personal choice and preference with little or no significance to the way to understand and treat students. This is a conception of religion that is reflected in many of the interviews. On this account, religion does not have much social and relational significance, and therefore rarely becomes a matter of tolerance. The cases where religious tolerance occurs in their minds, is when religion enters the public sphere – that is, interferes with everyday school life. Such cases can be demands of withdrawal of students from various school activities, like classes in the subject religion or celebration of religious and national festivals (especially Christmas, Easter and May 17th) or birthdays. This also means that religion becomes a source of trouble: It is one factor that threatens to break school unity and equality, like this quote from Alfred illustrates:

A: But we have had some … extensive rounds with certain religious groups when it concerns that … that they … take the children away or demand them taken away … in certain contexts, among other things it can be celebrations, it can be Jehovah’s Witnesses, who … If we have had – some arrangement for May 17th for instance and such things. And there we have had – there we had a few years ago some, at least a good deal such …yes call them strong controversies with - with parents. Because my starting-point was that they shouldn’t – that the children should take part in … what the rest of the school should do.

A: Men vi har jo hatt en del … omfattende runder med enkelte religiøse grupperinger når det gjelder å … at de … tar ungene ut eller forlanger de tatt ut i … i enkelte sammenhenger, blant annet så feires, det kan jo være Jehovas Vitner, sant, som …Hvis vi har hatt noe - noe opplegg før 17.mai for eksempel og noe sånne ting. Og der har vi hatt - der har vi hatt for en del år siden noen, i hvert fall en god del sånne .. ja, kall det knallharde forhandlinger med - med foreldre. For utgangspunktet mitt var jo da at de ikke skulle - at ungene skulle være med på .. på det som resten av skolen skulle være med på.

Religious tolerance and common good

The second conception of religious tolerance lies in the continuity of this quote. The arguments for demanding that the Jehovah’s Witnesses students should participate could be of two different kinds. One could be in line with a procedural conception of religious tolerance, that is, opting out of these classes and activities means breaking common rules. The other kind of argument is of a substantial kind: They are based in some idea of the good of the children.

Talking about parents opting their children out of activities and classes, Dora says:

D: Yes, I pity the child. To be small and not be allowed to go to a birthday party together with the rest of the class, for instance … Not to take part in the May 17th celebration … It is very often not very nice to that peculiar student …

D: Ja, jeg syns jo det er synd for ungen. For det å være liten og ikke få gå i bursdag sammen med hele resten av klassen, for eksempel … Ikke være med på 17. mai … Det er jo veldig ofte ikke noe hyggelig for den eleven …
Several informants say that they feel pity for the children that miss school activities like school camps, school parties, celebration of festivals and so on. That is, they conceive a good life of the children to include these activities. Here tolerance gets a dual meaning. On one hand the teachers feel they have to tolerate the parents’ rights and will for their children. One the other hand tolerance means promoting the good of the child. This duality is reflected in an experience told by Else. A few days after the interview, her class was going to sleep over in the classroom. Initially four children were not allowed to participate by their parents.

Else feels pity for the students that cannot participate in this activity. Although it is a voluntary activity, her ambition is to gather everyone in the class. This is because the good for the student consists (also) in such activities. Depriving students of these activities means depriving them of parts of the good life. Therefore, the tolerant teacher is the one who is pursuing the participation and inclusion from all students. Inclusion is important because the good life does not only exist in the activities as such, but in the community doing the activities. The good life is enjoying doing good things together, despite differences. This is namely a tolerant community, a community that can communicate, participate and transcend cultural and religious differences. The ideal of the class and the school as a tolerant community leads the informants to conceive the tolerant teacher as the one who is insisting on
communicative participation in activities and classes despite religious and cultural differences.

This insisting has its boundaries: At the bottom line the wish of the parents and students has to be tolerated as long as it is legal and morally possible. Two conceptions of tolerance are conflicting: Pursuing a tolerant community and teaching the students tolerance at one hand, and the tolerance of the parents and students convictions on the other. On this account of religious tolerance, however, religion leading to difference becomes a problem. It is leading away from the ideal, unity in difference. Else continues:

E: We had – when we went to swim last winter, there were at first two who shouldn’t swim … or perhaps it was three … but one of them came along, with T-shirt and bicycle shorts and things like that. It all went very well … But I think these children take it all right, – That is all right, – What I mean is that they take it all right. Because in a way you can’t force them, you see … That is … you see even if they say that – don’t you want to take part? Nooo - That is, they are very – or very kind of loyal in relation … to their things.

By using the expression ”their things” Else indicates a distance to the students’ religious practice and understanding, categorizing it as foreign. The students are not easy to convince, Else says, implying that is an aim. This religious tolerance is one out of necessity, creating a situation that is not desirable. But the students handle the situation satisfactorily because of their loyalty. Again religious difference that is exclusive - diviating from conventional practice and unity - is seen as a problem and a challenge, not as a resource.

Tolerance as understanding different religious languages

Bjørg has a different point of view on religious tolerance, which can illustrate the third conception of religious tolerance. As mentioned she works at Kjernsund school, which lays in an area of the “three tribes” the Sámis, the Kvens and the Norwegians. In addition to this cultural plurality, there is religious difference. One of these religious different groups is the Jehovah’s Witnesses:

B: … one can talk about, let us say, Jehovah’s Witnesses, because there is a group of those here, quite a big group. And … they have such – they have been removed from the teaching of Christian education, and are in a way stamped, and … I can give an example. - We have got one in the class, in my 3rd grade. She is a Jehovah’s Witness. And she
has General religious and moral education. – The only one to have been taken away. And then she is alone for that lesson. - You see, she has no fellowship at all. And then I realized that – or rather, she came to me one day and asked if she could be together with the others. Because they are in class this lesson. Then I went out and checked – or talked with – found out – she said where it was, and went there – and there was a parent – a parent who had taken on the task of teaching – A Jehovah’s Witness, you see, so they were a group a bit older than she. But not much. And they were … at least five or six together in the same lesson. - And then I thought it was important – even if I really think that … I can word it so strongly that I think, that it is perhaps indoctrination too, true – But then I think it is important to support her wish of being in a community, and also if the parents want it.

The interviews were done in the springtime 1998 – at a time when the new 1997-curriculum had been practiced one year. Religious education went through a major change from the 1987 to the 1997 school reform. Roughly speaking it was transformed from Christian education in a school context to broad religious education with special focus on Christianity. Parents had the right to opt their children out of the 1987-subject Christian education, and at most schools they were offered the alternative subject general religious and moral education. Students who were not offered this alternative subject or did not wish to participate (in 1993 about 4 000 or one percent of all students), did not have the right to educational activity during these classes. The 1987-curriculum also opened for religious communities to teach religious education in schools. These curricula had to be officially approved, and there were a number of requirements of contents that had to be fulfilled.

In the 1997-subject religious education one cannot opt out from the entire subject, only from certain activities that students and parents experience as religious practice. The new regulations for opting from classes after the 1997-curriculum is however not restricted to religious education, but apply to all subjects and activities (like for instance physical education, natural science, celebration of festivals, school projects).

236 The general part of The curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school was made effective September 1993.
237 The new subject was called kristendomskunnskap med religions- og livssynsorientering – literally Christian knowledge with religion- and life-view-orientation, officially Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education. In 2002 the name was changed to kristendoms-, religions- og livssynskunnskap, literally Christian-religion- and life-view-knowledge, indicating an equality in perspective between Christianity and other religions and secular world-views.
238 The Norwegian name was kristendomskunnskap, literally Christian knowledge.
239 The Norwegian term is livssynskunnskap, literally life-view knowledge, officially general religious and moral education (1987-curriculum). In 1993 24 650 (or 5.3% of all students) students was opted out of Christian education, and 20 417 (or 4.4% of all students) of these took “livssynskunnskap” (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet 1995:139).
The 1997-reform was implemented gradually during the 1997/1998 and 1998/1999 academic years. At the time of the interviews, the schools would therefore do religious education based on both the 1987- and the 1997-curricula, depending on age group. The exception was Glimmerdale school where they decided to implement the 1997-religious education at all class levels at once. The teachers’ experiences of religious education are, however, referring to the subjects Christian education, general religious and moral education and Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education.

The student in Bjørg’s class is a Jehovah’s Witness, and her parents have opted her out from Christian education. According to Marcussen (2002:3-5) the main reason for Jehovah’s Witnesses wanting to opt out from Religious Education is not the teaching of other religions than Christianity or that they do not want knowledge of other faiths, but that Christianity is thought according to a normative Lutheran conception. This understanding of Christianity is in conflict with the way Jehovah’s Witnesses perceive it. They claim to be in succession with early and therefore original Christianity.

Bjørg did not consider the situation of the student satisfactorily. The student was alone in general religious and moral education, and Bjørg took an initiative in order to get her in an educative community with other Jehovah’s Witnesses. Being a Lutheran Christian herself, the teacher was very critical of Jehovah’s Witnesses, describing their activity as indoctrination. Still she considers it vital to support the student’s wish for community. Bjørg is quite critical of the way in which the school treats Jehovah’s Witnesses students:

B: So THERE you can also see some prejudices AGAINST … There is not much brain work round the idea that one should strengthen their identity and … that you should support the idea that they shall actually not … shall take part in certain things. And then – and, if they complain on not being able to participate, so … yes … we have to find something for them, you see. We let them go out or - you see - If they don’t want to take part in end of term Christmas celebration or – yes … It seems that it is looked upon as a problem.

Against the conception of Jehovah’s Witnesses as a problem, she offers an alternative perspective: Religion as an aspect of identity. Instead of conceiving religious tolerance as 1) neutral, formal rules or as 2) conflicting with conventional good, she sees it as 3) actively supporting particular ideas of the good of the child in the religions (3). On this account religion becomes a resource of shaping of identity and of education.
On this third account of religious tolerance, the change of perspective or language becomes vital. A critical analysis of the episode of the caps told by Gjermund, may illustrate this: Another perspective on the case would be that a skullcap is not only a cap – it means something more. It has a religious significance and a symbolic meaning of identification that transcends the functions of a cap as keeping the ears warm and preventing a cold. To categorize a skullcap in a secular lingual scheme limited to physiological and perhaps aesthetic functions is an abridgement of meaning in the Muslim mind. In order to understand and tolerate the life-world of the Muslim, one has to distinguish between regular caps and skullcaps and their respective purposes and meanings. That way it is a different offence to steal a skullcap than a regular cap. The challenge of the teacher is to make this distinction known to and understandable for other students. That way they can better understand the Muslim student’s reaction, can understand his life-world better and be better equipped for tolerance.

This does of course not mean that teachers should tolerate that students are intolerant to fellow students or trying to establish a false religious protection or legitimization of their behavior.

Religious tolerance on this third account is conceived as trying to understand reality in different languages or perspectives. Practical tolerance is then a negotiation between these languages in order to create a situation that is actively supportive of minority languages and perspectives.

_Tolerating the student as individual_

So far tolerance in the relation between teacher and student has been explored and described. Before widening the horizon to the teachers’ relations to colleagues, parents and educational structures, Carsten sums it up:

G: Mm … If you think of - we have touched upon at G: Mm … Hvis du tenker på - vi har jo vært innom i

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240 Secor (2002:7-8) argues that dress is not only an individual choice of self-expression, but should also be read as a socially and culturally situated practice. That is, dress should be understood as “neither mechanically ascribed nor freely chosen, but as a choice within ‘an acquired system of schemes’.” On this view dress is a zone of negotiation and creation of identity in a specific space. This negotiation of meaning is taking place between religious and cultural group- and traditional identity on one hand and individual creation of identity on the other. 241 A school that seeks to be neutral regarding religious dress-codes is turning out to be an intolerant school, Singh (1999:187-204) argues. Reducing culture and religion of ethnic minorities to the private sphere is rejecting the right of difference, he claims, with reference to the French controversy on religious dress-code in schools. Walzer (1997:73) argues that the unwillingness to respect religious dress-code in schools is particularly strong in nation-states. The state’s attempt to socialize children of minority groups into “citizens” is seen as a threat by their families, and revitalizing of religious dress-codes may be seen as negotiating identity.
least four different tolerances for – here at this school, you see -
C: Yes.
G: You have ... you can say the three tribes and then you have ... the new refugees, and then you have mentioned ... children with bodily handicaps.
C: Yes.
G: And then we have touched upon Jehovah's Witnesses, that is, religious groups ... that create tolerance challenges. ... Which of those do you think is most important at this school? ... Or are there other than those four that ...
C: I perhaps think that ... that ... that the problem about individual students is fairly important. That – yes ...
G: What are you thinking of then?
C: Yes – both students with ... with special needs and ... That the students are now - you see – they are themselves ... and must be permitted to be that and we should not forget the single individual within the whole system here ... That we have room for it ... in school.
G: Tolerance for the individual, then?
C: Yes.

The main challenge for tolerance between teacher and students is the individual student. The differences that need most attention from the teachers are primarily not collective - cultural or religious - but individual. That means the practice and attention of tolerance is focused on isolated subjects more than relational phenomena. Carsten expresses something that is valid for most informants: Tolerance in their practice and minds is not primarily a case of tolerating race, religion, culture, sexual orientation and so on, but to tolerate the individual student with his or her specific (dis)abilities and life story. Tolerance is to perceive, empathize with and make room for the particular and different other. The implications of this conception of tolerance and the student will be discussed below.

4.2.2.2 Tolerance between colleagues

The teachers are, however, related to other persons in their work, and they have experiences and conceptions of tolerance in these. An interesting question is whether the conception of tolerance is changing from one relation to another. Are there other kinds of cases the informants tell regarding tolerance between colleagues?

Carsten emphasizes that the teacher-teacher relation is different from the teacher-student relation:

C: I perhaps think it is easier in regard to students than in regard to colleagues. Because there are ... -
C: Jeg syns det er greiere overfor kanskje elever enn overfor kolleger. Fordi at der er det sanné ... - du har
you have a quite different role in the relationships between the students and your colleagues.

G: How then, what are you thinking of?
C: No, in relation to the students you have – you are because of your position really. But in the relation to the colleagues we are … we are … we are equals and have our own – even if the school has its platform or lack of platform or … (laughs a bit) we shall – we are we are all personalities … and have our different … conceptions of things. - And we endure different things and tolerate different things.

Tolerance between colleagues is more difficult than between teachers and students, he claims.
The main difference is one of position. While tolerance between teacher and student in most cases places the teacher as a subject and the student as an object of tolerance, the structure of collegial tolerance is more complicated. Both actors may be subject or object, and one teacher who is the subject of tolerance in one situation may find herself in a reversed role in the next. This will naturally affect how teachers conceive and judge tolerance between colleagues.

In the teacher-student relation the teacher is to a large extent defining the conception and normativity of tolerance, while in the teacher-teacher relation she may find herself being defined by others. Teachers have different conceptions of things, Carsten says. That is, they understand the situation and challenge of tolerance differently. In addition they have different ideals and practices of tolerance. This complexity of difference creates an atmosphere of uncertainty as to interpretation and evaluation of tolerance. This is why collegial tolerance is more difficult and, according to the informants, not often a matter of collegial discussion.

This leads to an extensive tolerance in the sense of space. “[One] shall be careful of criticizing colleagues”, Einar claims – it is not his task to “form” colleagues. Later he continues:

G: What would be an example of what you … let us say didn’t like or disagreed with when other teachers were involved, but still let pass? …
E: That is – if I am in a class – it is THEN you can observe what a teacher says and does and see his/her behaviour. We have quite a lot of second teacher situations where two teachers are in the class-room. A secondary teacher and a main teacher. And if it is the form teacher that is in the class, I feel that I … that I let him do as he likes. If it is HIS class and he … has responsibility for it, I feel that it is so important – and I have been in that role myself, as form master -

G: Hva ville være eksempel på hva du … la oss si ikke likte eller noe du var uenig i, men likevel lot passere, av andre lærere? …
E: Altså - hvis jeg er inne i en klasse - det er jo gjerne DA du kan observere hva en lærer gjør og sier og oppfølger. Og her har vi jo en del sårne annenlærerfunksjoner hvor vi er inne to lærere. En hjelpelærer og en hovedlærer. Og hvis det da er klassestyreren som har klassen, så føler jeg at … at jeg nærmest lar han få … full rett til å styre som han vil. Hvis det er HANS klasse og han … har ansvar for den, så føler jeg at det er så viktig – og jeg har vært i den rollen sjøl, som klassestyrer -
As a form teacher the colleague has an ownership of the class – a teacher’s autonomy which the colleagues themselves enjoy and therefore are reluctant to interfere with or question. Einar describes this autonomy as a right – and this right of the colleague results in tolerance from fellow teachers. This conception creates a large space for tolerance.

This does not mean that the informants tolerate everything or most things. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between tolerance as thought on one hand and tolerance as actions on the other.

Limits of tolerance
Above Frøydis told about the teacher who kicked the student in the crotch. She continues the story:

F: Then … and then she does it … But the teacher quit a short while afterwards. Started at another school. So it was – in a way her final days, and it was as it were. Many people KNOW ABOUT it in a way. … And it is … and it is, … Also the other teachers are very upset over what they have seen, I believe … We - there was somehow no talk about it. I and another teacher I talk with talked a bit about it … For, as you see, what should we do about it and … And it is fairly difficult to go against a colleague that you …that you KNOW has done something very stupid. - That is – I couldn’t imagine anything worse than kicking … That is, it is all right that you take a firm grip and that the arm hurts because you wring it and things like that. It happens. - And it might happen that you might even have broken the arm because you get so wild yourself. - But to kick him when he is down and there are three or four grown-ups above him … THAT … But nobody did anything, and she was going to quit anyway … So it was as if …
G: You don’t think she was taken to task … by anybody? …
F: No, I don’t really believe so.
G: No
F: I don’t think so. But that … that I don’t know.
G: So it was all right?
F: No, I didn’t think so. I think it is very … It is rather horrible, I think, you see. It – If it had been – if it had been MY child that came home to tell such a thing, I really had … Yes, you see, then there really would have been trouble.

This is a case of the limits of tolerance. In Frøydis’ mind the colleague has violated a fundamental moral boundary: Intentional physical and mental harm to a student when the student was unable to defend himself. Frøydis admits that in some situations things get out of
hand – in a physical fight between student and teacher the teacher can do physical harm to the student in the chaos and heat of the situation. But this was not of such a kind. This was humiliation and retribution.

The puzzling point is that it seems as if the episode was hushed up. On one hand Frøydis does not tolerate this action – she describes it as horrible. But she would only act if it had been her own child, not this student. Tolerance in this case gets another duality – tolerance of thought and tolerance of action. In this particular case the two tolerances depart from each other – and so this case is like many others. It is worth noticing that not only Frøydis did take this stand in this case. Assuming that the offence never was officially reported, all teachers having some knowledge about it, made the same judgement: To do nothing.

When asked what they do not tolerate from colleagues, the informants mention inappropriate behavior and attitude towards students, not taking a fair share in common tasks, breaking collegial solidarity and extreme individualism.

Bjørg tells about a colleague:

B: There is a teacher who has – who got lots of pieces of negative criticism when … Mary and myself had an observation task and we brought a questionnaire to one of the classes and there was lots of criticism of one teacher, that he shouted at them and … and Mary had heard quite a lot about him before from the students and … In certain situations I have also seen that it looks as if he overreacts and … rather unaccountable, you can say … On the one hand –or one - suddenly he laughs and jokes with the students, then he is furious, because when HE was ready, you see - THEY weren’t and … Yes … Yes, what should be done about such things? - I haven’t said anything – anything to him. And I am actually working together with him this year.

G: Why haven’t you? …

B: That is, we have talked about it in that class, you see, together with – they have three or four teachers … and we have not expressed disagreement … with him … over matters then … No I think - I think it is difficult because … Again – you don’t see the complete picture. I am not quite sure whether … whether you might say this is an encroachment …

The informants tell a number of stories of how colleagues treat students in ways they dislike and think are not appropriate. There is a consensus that teachers should behave professionally and with empathy towards the students. However, only occasionally does this conception of tolerance lead to actions of any kind when the relationship to a colleague is at stake.
In this case Bjørg has clear indications of inappropriate behavior by a colleague, partly informed by students and a second colleague, but also by her own observation. Still she, or other colleagues, does not bring up this issue. The reason for not doing so is partly because he has not said anything that confirms, defends or explains this suspected way of behavior. That leaves her with merely observations, and she hesitates to act on those because of the possibility of misinterpretation of simply a difference and disagreement in style or educational theory. One has to tolerate a great deal of disagreement on educational matters with colleagues, and restrict the limits of tolerance to extreme cases “because you may have different views of the way to do formational work with children,” Bjørg argues.

Authority and trust

Inappropriate behavior towards students can be a variety of actions, depending on situation and intension. The main point to Else is that she does not tolerate colleagues who humiliate the students. Here she tells about a colleague who did so by losing her temper to a student in front of other students and adults:

E: Det er noe av det verste - jeg tror hvis det hadde skjedd med meg så - Det er klart jeg - det er klart du kan bli så i harnisk og så sint at du på en måte ikke kan styre – men jeg syns at en av - litt av jobben din er på en måte å etter hvert kjenne seg selv såpass godt sjøl at ... man bør stoppe før det har kommet SÅ langt. Da bør man be om hjelp.

G: Og hvorfor er det spesielt ille, syns du?

E: Fordi at jeg syns at da blir på en måte den ungen – For det første så er du da en autoritet for både DEN og de andre barna - hvis det er barn til stede, som det var her... Og ... og alle unger har et visst krav på ... - hvordan skal jeg uttrykke meg meg - ærbodighet eller høflighet eller ... Og jeg syns da at når en voksen autoritet på en måte gjør det samme som ungene gjør mot hverandre, og kan sjikanere, på en måte, så blir den ungen - Da har den på en måte mistet - for det første så har han mistet tryggheten i forhold til den læreren. Og om han nå har hatt en status eller ikke har hatt en status i klassen, så vil han automatisk miste den - ihvertfall fra en del.

The teacher is initially left with extensive tolerance from other colleagues, but this is based on a trust that he shows the students respect. Else argues that this episode violates the limits of tolerance for two reasons: Firstly, also students have the right to respect. Secondly, it means loss of safety and status – or trust and authority.
The teacher-student relation is based on authority and trust. In the educational relationship the teacher has as part of his role a responsibility that reaches beyond the students’ responsibility. That is, the teacher has a responsibility for the student in a way that the student cannot have for the teacher. In order to exercise this responsibility the teacher needs a certain personal and formal authority. In addition, in order to make an educational relationship fruitful, trust is essential. Understanding education as a dialogical change of the conception of reality, trust is the bedrock of the dialogue. To show trust means to make oneself vulnerable, to enter the risk-zone, and where trust is misused a cold atmosphere arises. Cold atmosphere suffocates communication - and education. Authority and trust are therefore fundamentals in education.

The lack of authority and trust does not only concern the teacher in question, but has implications for the relationship between teachers and students in the entire school. In the same way trespasses by a medical doctor or a lawyer influence the reputation of doctors and lawyers, misuse of trust and authority by one teacher will influence how students relate to teachers as such. Such incidents are therefore a step towards undermining the conditions for education and therefore the conditions for being a teacher.

_Tolerance, action and opinion_

So far collegial tolerance as the informants conceive it. Acting on this conviction, however, turns however out to be difficult. Else continues, telling about the difficulties with confronting her colleague:

E: And the child will also be stamped, because from other teachers – … it is the child’s fault that the teacher got so angry, it is in a way not the teacher that has misbehaved.
G: No.
E: You see, there is often that solidarity among us, but … Therefore I think it is awful.

E: Og den vil også få et stempel, fordi at ofte fra andre lærere – ... det er barnets skyld at læreren har blitt så sint, det er på en måte ikke læreren som har gjort noe galt.
G: Nei.
E: Altså det er veldig ofte den derre solidariteten mellom oss, men ... Så derfor så syns jeg det er ille.

She then goes on to tell how the conversation with the colleague went, concluding:

E: So … I felt that – we didn’t disagree or quarrel – that, is, there was no enmity between us or about it, in a way, because I think she was aware of it herself. - But it was an uncomfortable feeling to go in – or should go in and have to be a kind of … pointer in relation to a colleague, in a way.
E: Så ... jeg følte at - vi ble ikke noe uenig eller vi kranglet ikke - altså det var ikke noe uvæsenskap mellom oss mellom det, på en måte, for jeg tror nok hun var klar over det sjøl.- Men det var en ubehagelig følelse å kunne gå inn og - eller skulle gå inn og være en sånn ... pekefinger mot en kollega, på en måte.
Gjertrud tells about a situation where she did not tolerate her colleague, but still did nothing. The colleague is the form teacher of a parallel class, and from time to time the two teachers work with the two classes together in the same room.

Gj: But I have experienced that she who is form master … or who was form master in the class that is mine now, when she disappeared, I was left alone … with the responsibility for that class.
G: O.K.
Gj: And it … it goes a bit against what we agreed on to start with, And I feel it that when we have … joint projects that the other class gets more help because there are more teachers who know that class.
G: Right.
Gj: And it … it goes a bit against what we agreed on to start with, And I feel it that when we have … joint projects that the other class gets more help because there are more teachers who know that class.
G: Right.
Gj: And since one then has def- … said that they shall be regarded as a class or big group, then it becomes a kind of favouring one class before the other. And that isn’t … So there is a thing that I don’t really tolerate, but have done very little about.
G: Have you … have you brought it up?
Gj: Not so direct. But I have tried to solve it myself … taken on the whole responsibility and worked more myself … to avoid unpleasant situations.

Why do teachers tolerate more in action than in opinion? From the material three answers – which are not mutual exclusive - can be given: 1) They do not know what has happened 2) They do not know what is right or good 3) They are bound by collegial loyalty.

The uncertainties regard 1) the perception of the situation and 2) the moral and educational normativity. Episodes told or seen are fragments out of context, a context that is necessary for understanding and evaluating the behavior of the teacher. Tolerance in this case concerns situations where you watch action or phenomena you do not like or approve of, but which still can be understandable within certain contexts. As long as you are unsure of the proper context, you better tolerate. Perceptual uncertainty leads to tolerance.

Moral and educational normativity is a difficult issue. Moral and educational plurality results in various conceptions and practices of education. Although a colleague’s approach is different from yours and you may dislike or disapprove of it, there is no agreement on a final common denominator to judge good or bad. Therefore you better tolerate. Moral uncertainty leads to tolerance.

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242 The Education Act, the national curriculum, tradition, reason and discourse are a few possible common denominators.
The third answer concerns teachers’ professional loyalty. Gjertrud emphasizes the importance of loyalty:

Gj: Then with … I think that it is … that it is very important to be loyal in relation to one’s colleagues … That is … slandering and such things, it does happen, but … Of course it is … difficult to … to know … that is … There is a certain limit to what can be tolerated. - It can be such occasions or that you have a need for an outlet for your own frustrations But if there is … slandering … that is conscious … just to destroy for others … that I wouldn’t have tolerated. So I believe that it is very important that we as colleagues can stand together, that we have a good deal of common values that we want to convey to the students we have and that we want to preserve among us. And appear as good co-operation partners in face of our students … And … if two teachers face a class and don’t … and one do not do what has been agreed upon … if he for instance gainsays me if I had said something … public in the class, I would have had difficulties in tolerating that.  

Collegial loyalty among teachers is called a holy or taboo-norm, “a norm that demands that they shall overlook and hush up colleagues’ ethical transgressions” (Colnerud 1995:168, see also 126-129). Colnerud traces this loyalty as stemming from a protection of teachers’ authority. Loyalty to colleagues towards students is preventing external and internal criticism that would question and weaken the authority of the teachers. Teachers’ loyalty also means “hands-off”, protecting the teachers’ individual autonomy developed as a result of isolation in private classrooms. There is, however, a third drive towards loyalty that Colnerud does not mention: The dream of unity. In Norway the idea of the unitary school has been very strong. This is also evident in the interviews with the informants – the ideal of school as an institution of unity that produces unity is strong. This is however always a balanced unity – unity within plurality. Unitary does not mean similar in every aspect, but a social glue of some kind and strength – binding the plural school and society together.

Gjertrud expresses this by referring to the common values that are vital to transmit to students and which are fundamental in the collegial relationship. These values are collective, and each individual teacher would subscribe more or less to them. Loyalty to these values is a condition for keeping and promoting unity.

This leads to a possible understanding of the discrepancy between teachers’ tolerance in opinion and tolerance in action towards colleagues: They reflect on tolerance from a more personal point of view, but they act on tolerance primarily within collectivistic patterns. When
acting tolerantly towards colleagues they do not only act as private persons, but as representatives of and intrinsic parts of a collective. This leads to moral uncertainty because the teacher will not always know the collective response to a situation. The answer will be either tolerate in the form of non-interference or to enter established patterns of behavior in the colleague. To put it simply: Collective patterns of tolerance often defeat individual opinions of tolerance when relating to colleagues or as a colleague. And this moves collegial tolerance towards an understanding of tolerance as space with wide limits.

4.2.2.3 Tolerance between teachers and parents

Generally the informants stress the importance of tolerating parents. Else puts it like this:

E: But I think it is very important to have a ... a very open relationship to the parents, because that - Because I notice that -- that is in a class I teach where more than half the students -- have PARENTS who come from a different culture, whereas the CHILDREN have been born and bred in Norway and where I have 14 language groups among 21 children -- That is -- rather 14 languages. - And it is obvious there are lots of things I can tolerate or not tolerate, and in such a setting, I think you become - have to be quite tolerant because the cultures are so different.

E: Men jeg syns det er kjempeviktig å ha et ... et veldig åpent forhold til foreldre, fordi at – For det merker jo jeg - altså i en klasse hvor jeg har over halvparten som - hvor FORELDRENE kommer fra en annen kultur, men hvor UNGENE er født og oppvokst i Norge, og hvor jeg har 14 språkgrupper av 21 barn - Altså - eller 14 språk. - Og det er klart det at det er mye jeg kan tolerere eller ikke tolerere, og i en sånn setting så tror jeg du blir – er nødt til å være ganske tolerant, fordi at kulturene er veldig forskjellige.

Working at the multicultural Glimmerdale School, Else finds it vital to have an open relationship to the parents. In order to have and develop this open relationship, tolerating the many differences of the parents is the key. The last sentence is interesting. On one hand she says that there are things she does not tolerate by the parents, on the other she has to tolerate. The reason for tolerance is not some principle or value, but the setting – the situation. That is, her understanding of an imperative of the situation leads to a tolerance that is contrary to her private convictions, but essential in this particular relationship. Again the collective imperative overrules individual values. This does not mean that she surrenders her own convictions, but that these convictions have to be negotiated with “the setting”. She is, however, not forced to give priority to the collective imperative by some external threat or sanction, but simply by recognizing the imperative of the situation and relationship.

This means that an internal moral dialogue evolves between her conceptions of tolerance in different relations.

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243 This conclusion is of course limited to the informants’ descriptions of their actions, not how an external observer would describe and understand their actions.
Still, in spite of an extensive tolerance as space in the teacher-parents relation, there are issues of conflict concerning the limits of tolerance. These conflicts cluster around two themes: *Upbringing* and *educational mandate*.

**Upbringing**

Dora has been a teacher and principal for 28 years, and claims to see a change in the structure and content of children’s upbringing:

D: But we perhaps see … that the children are today not given so many chores to do in the homes as previously … There is not time for them, I assume, always … So that we must take on more things and spend more time on such things than we previously did.

G: Greater pressure on the school?

D: Yes, that’s a fact.

This is not the place to discuss the relationship between family and school in the upbringing of children in historical or sociological perspective. The point is simply that many of the informants experience conflicts when it comes to student formation. These conflicts concern tolerance in various ways: How far should the teachers tolerate diverging behavior of students stemming from their family-standards? Should teachers educate students for tolerance – and, if so, what kind of tolerance? How far should parents tolerate teachers’ behavior and attitudes they dislike?

One recurring theme of conflict between schools and home is the issue of retribution:

B: I try to say to talk – find out what the reasons are, and try and take it – take it in a calm way. If they cannot come to an agreement, contact a grown-up and make him or her mediate. And I have parents who say just the opposite –

G: O.K.

B: If you are pushed, push back.

G: Yes.

B: Kick back. Retaliate! And that crashes a bit with what I think about upbringing.

B: Jeg prøver å si liksom å snakke - finne ut hva årsakene er, og prøve å ta - ta det på en rolig måte. Eventuelt hvis de ikke klarer å bli enige sjøl, kontakt en voksen og få den til å megle. Og da har jeg jo foreldre som sier stikk motsatt -

G: Javel.

B: Blir du dyttet så slå tilbake.

G: Ja.

B: Spark tilbake. Ta igjen! Og det kræser litt med min oppfatning av oppdragelse.

Bjarne describes two different approaches to conflicts. One is dialogue and non-violence, the other is retribution. Bjarne and the school act on and promote the first – the problem is that parents tell their children to act on the second. The reason has to do with honor. If you do not strike back “you are not a man” (Gjertrud), the parents say. To be mocked around is to be brought shame upon, and the restoration of honor lies in retaliation.
Opposed to a shame-honor morality stands a morality of non-violence. This is a morality that schools prescribe, and even if several of the teachers say they understand the inclination of revenge, it is vital to practice and learn peaceful co-existence.

One solution to this conflict is that there is one set of rules at school, and another at home. That way the teacher can tolerate family boundaries at home – and at school as long as they do not conflict with common school rules. The problem still recurs when it comes to argument and formation. Gjertrud puts it like this:

Gj: … it is difficult for me to accept such utterances that say that you shall strike back. And I have talked with the students that have come and told it me, and said that at school there are perhaps other rules than those that apply at home. Because here we are so many that we just cannot do it that way. It is difficult to say that dad is wrong. You just cannot say that …

But –

At one level the students may accept different rules in different institutions and contexts. They may accept and obey. But if the aim is moral formation, that is, an ambition that education also should mean education in the direction of non-violence, the students have to be lead into a horizon where this is meaningful in a stronger sense than as a pragmatic arrangement. They need reasons for this moral attitude. And these reasons may contradict the reasons from the moral universe at home. This puts the teachers in a tolerance-dilemma that they find difficult. Still it is clear that retribution is a limit of tolerance towards the students and parents.

**Educational mandate**

The other issue that concerns tolerance between teachers and parents is educational mandate or authority. Many informants tell about cases where they think parents invade their professional sphere, and do not tolerate the teacher’s educational authority. The informants conceive educational mandate in the form of two distinct domains: The teacher’s and the parents’. An invasion into each other’s domains, demands a strong justification. The parents’ decision when their children can drop homework or go home for a snack during school hours, cannot be given a legitimate justification. Retribution and racism, however, are legitimate reasons for intruding.

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244 The focus on reason does not exclude other vital moral driving forces.
The idea of separate domains presupposes parents who can claim their domain and judge when to invade the teacher’s domain. That is not always the case. Frøydis talks about the problem with lack of interpreters at teachers’ conferences with parents:

F: But there are also students at this school who have acted as interpreters for their parents at conference sessions. And that I think … it is completely – I think it is rather … horrible. But I don’t know how to react apart from talking about it in a general way. Because I have said, in a way that … it is very important to check it up, and it is very important that … that the parents keep the parent role. Because what happens when they come to the conference sessions, and it is the CHILD who must tell what the teacher says, is that the CHILD who sifts out this, and in a way it is the CHILD who is the grown-up. And … and it – but I have been to a few conferences where the parents have had very bad Norwegian where the child says some things, but leaves other things out, and it is as if – the parents just sit there grinning. And I haven’t been able to say it clearly enough that I think this just isn’t good enough.

One problem is that the parents do not tolerate the teacher’s authority. Another is that they are tolerating it too much. Frøydis describes the situation of many immigrant parents who lack knowledge of Norwegian language and culture. The move to Norway often means loss of authority and fragmentizing or destruction of traditional family structures. The children often learn language and cultural codes faster than their parents. This, and the fact of unemployment and social isolation, challenge the authority of the parents and create a situation of diffusion of roles. The fact that the child itself is placed as the interpreter and lingual filter of his or her parents in the contact with teachers, strengthens the confusion of roles and deprives the parents of their parental authority. In addition many immigrants lack knowledge of the Norwegian school system and the division of responsibilities between teacher and parents. This leads to a false tolerance, where the parents have no chance of taking a stand on issues concerning their children and the school.

Showing tolerance and understanding in this situation would to Frøydis be to care for the parents in treating them with the same parental authority as parents with other cultural and lingual backgrounds. Taking responsibility for an interpreter to be present at school conferences is one vital step in order to establish a balanced tolerant relationship between teacher and parents. Frøydis is repeatedly contrasting the position of parents at Glimmerdale School with another school in a well-to-do neighborhood where she used to work. There
parent-involvement created stricter boundaries for what was tolerated of teachers and of the school.

4.2.2.4 Communal tolerance
This leads the attention to the issue of community, local differences and tolerance. In Norway there is a system of community schools: Students, with few exceptions, are placed in schools according to where they live. All participants in the web of tolerance live in and relate to the local community.

A: Therefore I think it is important that … it … in such a big school as ours, it is important that there are many teachers who are well acquainted with the local community. Because then it is easier to understand … the various students’ backgrounds … and then also why the children behave in this way or that. A: Derfor så tror jeg det er viktig at … det … i en sånn stor skole som det her, så er det viktig at det er mange lærere som er godt kjent i lokalmiljøet. Fordi at da har man litt lettere for å forstå … bakgrunnen til de forskjellige … og også da hvorfor ungene oppfører seg sann og sånn.

To Alfred local knowledge is important for a teacher in order to get a better understanding of the background of the students. As discussed above, the informants think information on background is vital in order to be a tolerant teacher. It is interesting to notice that Alfred focuses on the local community and not merely the individual life-stories of the children. The reason for this is probably that local knowledge can give teachers insights that are relevant to many children because in spite of their individual differences, they share language, values and conceptions with larger or smaller groups within the community. These cultural insights may work as hermeneutical keys in order to understand local behavior.

The Northern parts of Norway have a long history of hosting teachers from the South. Regional differences in ideals and conceptions have lead to numerous conflicts in schools and communities in Northern Norway. Although the percentage of local teachers has increased, there are still a substantial number of teachers from other parts of the country, like Bjarne, who is working at Kjernsund.

G: Do you think that there among the teachers is a fairly wide agreement about what tolerance challenges are here at this school? B: No, I don’t think so. Rather not … I think it is … it is – I believe … What I have felt is that there is a certain difference between US and THEM … That is, then I mean immigrants and … local people. That they have a somewhat different view … on tolerance, or what the tolerance areas are … - I think so. G: Tror du det at det er en sånn rimelig stor enighet om hva virkelig de største toleranseutfordringene her på skolen er, blant lærerne? B: Nei, jeg tror ikke det. Egentlig ikke … Jeg tror det er … det er - jeg tror … Det jeg har senset, det er at det er litt forskjell på OSS og DEM … Altså da mener jeg innflyttere og … lokalbefolkningen. At de har litt annet syn .... på toleranse, eller hva toleranseområdene ... - Jeg tror det.
There are local differences in the conception of tolerance, Bjarne claims. This is evident among colleagues, and it is hard to make the two groups of teachers – the outsiders and the locals – come to a consensus on tolerance.

The concept of life story can be fruitful to understand this. Life story does not only relate to the tolerated – understanding the object of tolerance – but also the tolerator. This means that life story is a crucial concept in order to understand not only the application of tolerance, but the constitution of tolerance within a person’s life and moral identity. The story of who I am and ought to be relates to the conception of the tolerating I.

Several of the informants do, however, see the story of me closely related to stories of us. That is, the story of who I am and what I tolerate is part of stories of who we are and what we tolerate. Carsten is a local teacher at Kjernsund and very concerned about tolerance and local identity:

G: What is a tolerant school?
C: Gosh! … That was a difficult one … No, it is probably a school that lets … It ought at least to be a school that lets … lets individual students be individual students, takes care of them as individuals, single individuals. And at the same time a school that … that mirrors what is our local community in … And not least that it is a school that lets … lets the staff remain what they are … But at the same time that one agrees on things.

Here is an interesting contrast between a distinct individual and collective perspective on tolerance. Carsten is all the way in the interview stressing individual liberty as central to tolerance. At the same time he understands tolerance in the context of the local community. How can that be? The following quotation can give a clue to an answer.

 Asked how he thinks students learn tolerance, Carsten answers “through their experiences”. Asked what kind of experiences he refers to, Carsten continues:

C: That it shall contribute to building up a tolerance … then … The point must be that we as a school and a local community shall be able to have so positive attitudes to and … in relation to … both this and that so that the students shall understand it –
G: Yes.
C: - and BECOME that way.
G: Yes.
C: It would be marvellous if we could do it, then –
G: Yes.
C: But that is – it isn’t - it isn’t quite impossible.
G: No … So over -

C: At det skal være med på å bygge opp en toleranse … så … Poenget må jo bli at vi … vi som skole og vi som lokalsamfunn skal greie å ha så positive holdninger og … overfor … både det ene og det andre, at elevene skal fange det opp -
G: Ja.
C: -og BLI sånn.
G: Ja.
C: Det ville jo være fantastisk hvis vi greide det, da -
G: Ja.
C: Men altså - det er jo ikke - det er jo ikke helt umulig det.
C: It is almost like this with – don’t you agree, Oslo’s chief police officer who says that we shouldn’t bother ...

G: Yes.

C: Don’t you agree -

G: Yes.

C: It is – it gives unpleasant signals … from such a person who has – occupies such a position … - in the whole country …

G: Nei ... Så over -

C: Altså det blir liksom sånn som dette her med - ikke sant, politimesteren i Oslo sier at vi ikke skal bry oss ...

G: Ja -

C: Ikke sant -

G: Ja.

C: Det er jo - det er jo skumle signaler det gir ... fra en sånn person som har - sitter med en sånn rolle ... - ute i hele landet ...

Starting at the end of the quotation, it is clear that Carsten in this context does not understand tolerance as non-interference. Quite the opposite, he refers to the Chief of Police in Oslo, who at the time of the interviews adviced people not to get involved when seeing someone being violently attacked. Tolerance is to care, to interfere.

Just before this quotation, Carsten talks about the importance of getting students to appreciate their local community. His community cannot match the English Spice Girls or the soccer-team Rosenborg from Trondheim, but it still has lots of qualities that the students do not see and appreciate, Carsten claims. As long as they think their community is failing, they do not care – neither for the community nor the school. Not caring means not tolerating. It is imperative for the school to be a creative part of a caring community – a community that is proud of itself, and cares about itself. It is a tolerance embedded in community that can reach out to tolerate and care for others. It is through communal identity, pride and solidarity that one can tolerate others.²⁴⁵

**Critical tolerance**

On Carsten’s account the school can promote tolerance by identifying with and enforcing local cultures. A somewhat different view on the relationship between school, community and tolerance is given by Frank.

Some years ago persons in the community where the school is located, mobilized a protest against receiving refugees to the area. People were asked to support the protest by signing a list.

F: It was a nasty episode, really. So I was not tolerated by the people who went round with the list and … I was asked to sign it – There was one who came into the house, and of course I refused … Yes,

F: Det var en stygg episode, altså. Så jeg ble jo ikke tolerert da av folk som gikk rundt med lista, og ... jeg ble jo spurt om å skrive meg på - Det var en som kom inn i huset, og jeg nektet jo selvfølgelig ... Ja, det er –

²⁴⁵ This conception of tolerance is parallel to Rorty’s conception of solidarity: “… our sense of solidarity is strongest when those with whom solidarity is expressed are thought of as “one of us,” where “us” means something smaller and more local than the human race. That is why “because she is a human being” is a weak, unconvicing explanation of a generous action.” (Rorty 1989:191)
that is – that is something of the worst I have experienced, I was on the local council at the time, and backed the Liberal representative there and … the local council was full up at that time … And worst of all: Some members of my family were turned up, and they held the opposite view. There was a great dissension, you see.

This is a case of mutual intolerance. The activists – including his own family – do not tolerate Frank, and he does not tolerate them. The communal tribe is divided into two: Those for and those against more refugees in the community. The division cuts right through families and other social and cultural bonds, and is primary to other dividing issues in the sense that members of the same families seven years later have not reconciled. In this conflict, the school is taking a stand:

F: There have been episodes with … stone-throwing against the walls of immigrants’ dwellings and -
G: Oh, yes
F: It is quite clear that these are attitudes that have been learnt at home. So here school has had a formidable task, of course.
G: Yes.
F: To take hold of this - is at least something we shouldn’t be afraid of doing,
G: No, how has it influenced school? …
F: That … that episode with the list, made schools go together to tackle this, and … be … and agree that we were together against what was going on in our community.

None of the teachers at Hopen School signed the protest-list. This made it easier to agree on working against what they considered as intolerance: Racial attitudes. In this case the school gets a more critical role in the community: Trying to work against what they consider as negative attitudes in the homes. Frank identifies two tasks of tolerance in the school:

Negatively, to be intolerant to racial attitudes and behavior, and positively, to promote racial tolerance. This means that the school must discuss legitimate and illegitimate tolerance. The issue of justice is at the center of this discussion. This is an example of the complexity of tolerance: In one perspective such a task can be identified within the limit of tolerance. In another it can be seen as promoting tolerance – towards other races and cultures. Legitimate tolerance is sought through legitimate intolerance.

It is, however, interesting to notice that to Frank it is not only a question of individual justice, but of a just community. During World War II there were a number of nazi-sympathizers in the community. The present conflict is just a new version of a fundamental
problem with the entire community: The hostility to otherness. Frank describes another society ideal; namely the US, where in his mind they have managed to change a structural racial society into an including one. The critical tolerant task of the school is therefore to work extensively with the community as a whole.

4.2.3. Tolerance in practice – a conclusion

This far I can give a summary of how the teachers conceive tolerance in contexts of practice:

1. The teachers’ conception of tolerance in education is embedded in experiences of practice. The cases which they associate with tolerance concern many and different aspects of the everyday life in schools. Tolerance in schools is therefore much more than, and even not primarily, issues of race, religion and sexuality. Tolerance is a key perspective of the teachers’ relations to others and self.

2. Tolerance is deeply connected to excellence: The tolerant teacher is the good teacher. Tolerance is therefore a positive ideal. The tolerant teacher is the one who can perceive difference and be sensitive as to the educational how, the educational means.

3. Still, the tolerant teacher is not too tolerant. This means that tolerance is at least conceived in two ways: As a virtue (the tolerant teacher is the teacher who wisely practices legitimate tolerance and intolerance) and as a rule (the tolerant teacher is the one who practices the rules of tolerance just.).

4. Tolerance is relational. Tolerance is exercised and understood in different relations. The character of the relation influences the conception of tolerance. I have not found one single principle behind the informants’ conception of tolerance. Tolerance seems to vary depending on the particularities of the relation.

5. The single most important tolerance-relation for the teacher is to the students. The student is perceived as an individual – and the tolerant teacher is the one who is able to treat the student according to her individuality.

6. In relation to colleagues tolerance is mostly understood as space. Teachers are more tolerant to colleagues in behavior than in opinion. Tolerance is often understood as professional loyalty.

7. In relation to parents one of the dilemmas of tolerance is whether to tolerate the students on the background of their different moral and cultural ideals and practices in their families or to try to promote a certain conception of tolerance.
8. In relation to community tolerance can take the form of tribal solidarity or self-critical reflection and action.

9. The tolerant teacher is the professional and just teacher. To be tolerant is to recognize the individuality of each student, and to treat students and other persons with equal respect. This leads to justice. The tolerant teacher is also the professional and predictable teacher, one that can be trusted to act on professional standards in various situations.

10. The tolerant teacher is the caring teacher. She can perceive the particularity of situations of difference, she can empathize with students, colleagues and parents in order to appreciate their perspective, and she can find means and actions that are calibrated accordingly.

11. Tolerance is one of the – if not the – most important tool in dealing with the frustrating pressure between the idea of a unitary school and increased difference or plurality. Most informants value the ideal of the unitary school on one hand and appreciate individual and cultural difference on the other. There are however major problems attached to practicing and creating a unitary local school in content and structure. It seems problematic to agree on some kind of unity – and if they should be able to do so, it is hard to establish a common interpretation and practice of the agreement. In this situation tolerance functions as a valve because it enables the teachers to see and accept difference and seek practical solutions.

12. So far it seems that various forms of difference give various forms of tolerance.

4.3. Conceptualizations of tolerance

It is now time to move on to a more detailed analysis of the conceptions of tolerance among the informants. I will make use of the categories that were created and discussed in chapter three.

Having explored the practical cases of tolerance that the teachers refer to, the question what do they mean by tolerance needs to be answered. First, I will raise the question of the importance and emotional value of tolerance among the informants. Secondly, the relationship between tolerance and synonymous terms is analyzed. Thirdly, the conception of tolerance is analyzed according to the analytical scheme developed in chapter three.

4.3.1 Positive and important

Initially it is worth noticing that the teachers generally conceive tolerance as a term with positive connotations. Carsten puts it this way:
The positive feature of tolerance is strengthened by the word “highly” in the beginning of the extract and by Carsten’s conclusion: Tolerance is an unconditionally positive word. The worth of tolerance exceeds a status as a necessary, but not ideal arrangement in plural conditions. Tolerance is a positive characteristic of one’s personality: To be declared tolerant is an honor. The positive feature of tolerance is connected to tolerance as the state of being positive to one’s surroundings. In some instances the teachers consider tolerance as an emotionally negative concept. These are cases of too much or inappropriate tolerance – that is, illegitimate tolerance. This does, however, not affect the overall conception among the informants of tolerance as a good. These cases of negative tolerance concern misunderstanding and malpractice of tolerance (b) (tolerance as rule and isolated actions), not tolerance (a) (tolerance as a virtue and excellence).

Conceiving tolerance as a positive term is not obvious. On an objective account of morality tolerance often gets the role of the last resort: It is in principle possible to find the right or the good in spite of cultural and religious differences. It is only in cases of deficiency tolerance is necessary. Reading morality this way, a too positive status of tolerance can lead to moral laziness: Tolerance means not resolving moral conflicts and dilemmas, but accepting to live with them. Tolerance is conceived as a necessary, but negative or at most neutral term.

This clearly is not the conception of the teachers in this study. Whether this is representative of the Norwegian population at large is of course still an open question. The uniform positive view of tolerance among the informants could be due to coincidence or to some common denominator like for instance the fact that they are teachers. What seems clear, however, is the relation between a high evaluation of tolerance on one hand and the practice of education on the other. This will be further elaborated below.

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246 Positive and negative are here used as describing people’s emotions towards the term, not the energy of the word itself.

247 See for instance MacIntyre (1999) and Weissberg (1998) who both are arguing against tolerance as a virtue. Williams (1996a:26) is suggesting that tolerance may be an interim value between an age of absolutism and an age of pluralism.
Tolerance is also generally described as the most important educational virtue or value. When asked if they think there are any attitudes all students ought to have, most teachers answer tolerance and respect. Frank puts it this way:

F: I think all students should like all people, all students, all children, no matter what view of life, no matter what colour, no matter what … language.
G: Is that the same as tolerance, or is it something different from tolerance.
F: It is the same as tolerance, I think.

Minding all possible attitudes and values that the informants could have answered, it is striking that tolerance is conceived so positively and with such great importance. The informants could of course have been influenced by the fact that the focus of the interview was tolerance. On the other hand several of them do not use the word tolerance initially, but when elaborating and understood in context they mean tolerance widely conceived – as in Alfred’s case:

A: Respect for differences, perhaps … I share … that is, I don’t share your view, but I accept that you have a view different from mine.

Three traditional marks of tolerance are present: Acceptance, difference and objection. The attitude respect is therefore here the same as tolerance. It may be so that the informants are influenced in their answers of this topic by the theme of the interview, but there is no automatic mentioning of tolerance. The informants do not seem to focus on tolerance as positive as a response to what they though would be expected of the interviewer. If so, it would have been reasonable to assume that more of the informants had mentioned the term tolerance explicitly. The teachers have a substantial, not only a formal, understanding of tolerance as a vital concept and value.

There are reasons to stress this first conceptual point: Tolerance is in the teachers’ minds a genuine positive and on the whole the most important attitude they can think of. This confirms the assumptions that motivated this study: The centrality and importance of tolerance as an educational ideal.

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248 Other attitudes were politeness and the intrinsic value of the human being.
4.3.2 Synonymous terms

The informants frequently use two words as synonymous to tolerance: Respect and accept\(^\text{249}\).

But how is the more precise relationship between tolerance and its synonymous terms?

In most cases and most informants use tolerance and respect interchangeably – without reflecting on conceptual distinctions. Bjørg is asked about the relation between the words:

G: Respect - you think … the same thing as tolerance, or is it something else, you think?
B: Yes, they are very closely related, as I see it.

There are however two diverging views on the relationship. One is expressed by Frøydis:

G: Du nevnte respekt - Altså betyr respekt og toleranse det samme, eller er det to forskjellige ord for deg?
F: Jeg følger ... Jeg tenkte på det i sted, faktisk. At – jeg følger at jeg blander begrepene litt. - Men jeg er ikke .... Altså ... jeg husker når jeg studerte en gang, så sier han ene foredragsholderen at ... at jeg kan ikke respektere ... en ... en som går hjem – jeg husker ikke - en som går hjem og slår kona si, for eksempel. Han kan ikke jeg - da kan ikke jeg respektere han. - Og så husker jeg at jeg liksom reagerte på det, for at ... jeg tenker liksom: Men du må jo respektere alle mennesker, liksom. - Men du - du kan på en måte - du kan si at du ikke tolererer at han gjør det, men jeg mener at ... Jeg tror jeg kanskje skiller - ja ... at ... Jeg mener at alle har krav på respekt.

Frøydis refers to a conception of respect that is related to desert or merit. According to her lecturer one should respect other persons according to their virtues or characters. Frøydis is developing her own conceptual position in opposition to this. Respect is not a matter of personal preferences or evaluations: Every person demand respect – but not tolerance.

Frøydis is elaborating her position in the following:

S: As long as you are a living being, you see – you have the right to be shown respect. And that is something you shouldn’t need to … But the lecturer thought that that is something you … you have to deserve. - And there are degrees of respect too – I think that – that is, everybody is anyway entitled to at least a minimum of respect.
G: Yes.

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\(^{249}\) Both Norwegian words akseptere and godta are here translated with accept.
S: But – but then you can of course make many - get into SO many situations that it becomes difficult. But … but … but I think that … that tolerance is something you can choose to … It is very difficult, because it concerns in a sense actions and person, and you have to – you have to distinguish … That is, I don’t tolerate what you DO, but … I tolerate YOU, in a sense.

G: But can you still respect the person?
S: Yes … At least ideally (both laugh a bit). But … I see that it can be difficult … No … I know. I think they are very difficult concepts.

Respect as a right is justified in biological humanity – that is every living human being, independent of autonomy, rationality, belief or merit – can demand fundamental respect. This is a respect of person, not of belief or behavior. Tolerance on the other hand is directed to behavior. On this conception respect is more fundamental than tolerance.

This position has some resemblance to Weale’s (1985:29) claim that “One can respect another as the author of his or her own values, without tolerating all the choices that the person makes.” Weale understands respect for persons as consisting of three ideas: That persons have meaningful goals, that persons are capable of reflecting on their circumstances and act upon these reflections and thirdly that their goals are in part self-chosen. This limits respect for persons to rationality and (relative) autonomy, which limits respect to rational and autonomous persons. On procedural accounts of rationality and autonomy this account is inclusive, but on more substantial conceptions it becomes gradually excluding.

Frøydis’ conception of respect related to biological humanity does not risk limiting respect in this manner. Still she does not seem to be entirely consistent in her distinction between respect and tolerance; initially she admits confusing the conceptions, and she ends her reflection with an emphasis on the difficulty of coming to terms with theory.

The other diverging view on tolerance and respect is found in this quote from Carsten:

G: Hvordan tenker du om forholdet mellom respekt og toleranse, er det ... to like - relativt like holdninger, eller er det forskjellig? ...
C: De har jo mye av det samme i seg ... Altså - vi skal respektere at folk er forskjellige ... Har sine behov og ... At noen er flink til DET og noen er flink til DET. Det er jo noe som i høyeste grad har med toleranse også å gjøre. - Så det er jo mye av det som ... som - jeg opplever jo toleranse som et veldig vidt begrep. - I forhold til veldig mye - Respekt blir jo litt mer - snever jo inn en del.
Here the relationship between tolerance and respect is the other way around. Tolerance is the wider concept, with respect as a subdivision. Carsten does not elaborate more on the differences, but as described above there is a tendency among the informants to use tolerance in a variety of different ways. The sum of these conceptions amounts to a wide conceptual extension of tolerance. On this conceptual account, tolerance is the wider concept, referring to peaceful navigation in plurality, and synonymous concepts are referring to more specific perspectives within this navigation.

The second synonymous term is accept. Accept is used interchangeably with tolerance by all informants. The one exception is a quote by Bjørg. She is telling about how relating to students can be difficult. Some days they seem ungrateful, they ruin preparation for classes by not doing homework, and they ignore corrections by teachers.

G: But these are things you feel you … you have to tolerate, or are thy things you … haven’t given up trying to change? …
B: Not tolerate it in the way that I accept it.
G: No.
B: Absolutely not. But tolerate it in the way that it is real life – yes.

Here a distinction is made between tolerance and acceptance. On one hand she does not accept this student-behavior – on the other she tolerates it because it is the way things are, it is reality. This indicates an interesting conception of tolerance: One which one does object to and does not accept, but still tolerates – because the reality is too overwhelming.

There are a number of other terms that are used interchangeably with tolerance, for instance space, understanding, openness and liberty. These are descriptive terms, in the sense that they supply somewhat different perspectives to tolerance – although not being equivalent. So far there are reasons to conclude that it is not possible to find any common or water-tight distinction between tolerance and synonymous terms among the informants. Tolerance takes on various conceptions, and the sum of these conceptions creates a wide extension of the term. The main point so far, however, is that tolerance is considered as one of the, and maybe the, most important value in education by the informants. Tolerance is not only a second resort, an intermediate value. It is also, and primarily, a comprehensive, central ideal.
4.3.3 Scope, energy and condition
This leads to the third and the main part of this conceptual analysis of tolerance. I will now make use of the analytical scheme worked out in chapter three to discuss the conditions of tolerance as the informants use the concept.

![Diagram of dimensions in conceptualizations of tolerance](image)

Figure 4.1: Reintroducing the model of dimensions in conceptualizations of tolerance (figure 3.1).

4.3.3.1 Scope: More than morality
I will start with the issue of scope. In chapter three I argued that the question of scope could be parted into two different sub-issues: First, whether tolerance is conceived as purely moral (thin conception) or as referring to other human spheres as aesthetical, epistemological and political (thick conception). Secondly, whether tolerance is conceived within a dichotomy of individual/society and private/public (thin) or in more complex relations involving the meso-level of group or tribe (thick). And: Whether the power of the tolerator, that is, her possibility to act in relation to the tolerated, is conceived substantial (thin) or relational (thick).
Cultural and epistemological tolerance

As described above Kjernsund School is located within an area of old traditions of plurality. There have existed three tribes, Sámis, Kvens and Norwegians, side by side in this community for over a hundred years since the Kvens emigrated from Finland. The Sámis and Norwegians have an even longer co-history. On the question of how he understands tolerance between the three tribes in the community, Carsten answers:

C: I think – I never experience … or very rarely conflicts or … that I get into – get into discussions with people, but that is mainly positive, apart from that there … that happens in relation to the functions of the Sámi Parliament and … that it is THOSE things … THERE … THERE I experience that there is a conflict that … does that tolerance in relation to the Sámis … is much lower than it should have been.

It is interesting to notice Carstens’s description of how he rarely experience cultural conflicts between the tribes. Here, however, the point is his use of tolerance. The object of tolerance is Sámis as an ethnic or cultural group, which transcends the conception of tolerance as a solely moral term. Since ethnicity and enculturation are beyond individual choice, it is not a moral issue. One cannot therefore morally disapprove of ethnicity or enculturation. Carsten is therefore using tolerance in a non-moral, or a cultural, sense.

His use is triggered by the question, though, which also uses tolerance in a non-moral sense. This illustrates the impossibility of conceptual neutrality for the interviewer: I had to choose whether to use tolerance in a strict, moral sense – or more broadly. Since the purpose of the study is to analyze different conceptions of tolerance, I chose a broad use myself.

There are however a number of examples in the interviews where the informants use tolerance in a cultural sense. Frank is concerned with local racism – past and present:

F: Actually the worst is what touches upon … upon racism. That is – I think that – THAT is the most dangerous.
G: Why so? …
S: It is … Yes, it has most to do with tolerance, as I see it … And … I think we can have great conflicts in the future … if we don’t attack it and do something with that policy – the conflict that IS found … in places.

F: Egentlig er det det verste, det som går på … på rasisme. Altså det - jeg tror det - jeg TROR det er farligst.
G: Hvorfor det? ...
F: Det er ... Jo, det har mest med toleranse å gjøre, etter min mening ... Og ... jeg mener vi kan få store konflikter i framtida ... hvis vi ikke tar tak i det og gjør noe med den politikken - den konflikten som ER ... på steder.
Frank is not only using the word tolerance with reference to racism. Racism is in his view the most important issue of tolerance. His primary use of tolerance is therefore racial or cultural tolerance. This is coherent with how informants at Glimmerdale School use and understand tolerance – culture and race are important challenges of tolerance.

Frank also understands tolerance as an epistemological concept – tolerance is justified in epistemological uncertainty. That is, as long as one cannot be sure that one’s knowledge is true or valid, tolerance is an appropriate position. Frank is describing a former colleague of his as the most tolerant person he can think of. When Frank is eager to judge other people or practices, the colleague is always reminding him of the uncertain aspects of the knowledge upon which Frank builds his judgment - and to be tolerant.

This is an interesting quote in the debate of the scope of tolerance. Frank initially disapproves of the person that had committed the violent actions. It seems that he did not see any reason to accept this person or his actions – he judged this to be a case beyond the limits of tolerance. Then his friend makes an argument for tolerance; not an argument for acceptance, but for the epistemological presuppositions of the objection. Frank’s knowledge of this case was mediated by the press – which raises questions of perspective, truth and credibility. The relevance of this quote is however wider than this particular example: In many cases the phenomenon one objects to, may turn out to be quite different and maybe not so objectionable when scrutinized or viewed from a different perspective. An acceptance of epistemological perspectives has profound relevance on the conception of tolerance. This shows that epistemological as well as moral reasons are valid for tolerance. Only a thick conception can include such an account of tolerance.
Figure 4.2 shows the approximate distribution between the use of tolerance as a solely moral concept and tolerance as a moral and non-moral concept. The informants use tolerance almost without exception in a thick or wide sense:

Figure 4.2: The informants’ use of tolerance as a strictly moral or a wider concept.

Now, one could ask, what does this result mean for theoretical reflections on the concept of tolerance? One answer is that it means nothing. Everyday-language and philosophical language are two different matters, and the last cannot be dictated by the first. Another approach would be to open up for the possibility that persons closer to the practice of tolerance relate in complex situations of tolerance – situations that become de-contextualized in general categories in philosophical analysis. This could prevent breakdown in the communication between philosophy and practice, or alternatively establish such communication in the field of tolerance.

The focus of morality
One of the issues that have no unisonous answer in philosophical theory of tolerance is what precisely constitutes tolerance as moral. There are as a matter of fact a number of possibilities of which elements that has to be moral in order to establish tolerance as moral: 1. The practice

\(^{250}\) Figures 4.3., 4.6., 4.7., 4.8. and 4.9. are based on numbers. All statements by the informants with explicit use of the concept tolerance has been interpreted, and categorized. The reason for not using numbers is that the point
beliefs, attitudes and actions) of the subject. 2. The practice of the object. 3. The reasons for objection of the practice. 4. The reasons for accepting the practice. 5. The power of the subject to interfere with the practice. 6. The power of the object to change the practice. In addition the constitution of the moral may be a combination of these.

This is not the place to discuss all the possibilities to establish tolerance as a moral concept. Instead I want to argue that understanding tolerance as moral according to alternative 1 have conceptual possibilities, and may unite an everyday and a theoretical conception. In the case of ethnical or racial tolerance one can understand tolerance as moral in the sense that the tolerator is taking a moral position. In understanding the moral perspective as related to the subject, there will be no restrictions on which area or type of practice (the object) that are meaningfully tolerated. Such an understanding also dissolves the strict division between moral, political, esthetical and epistemological tolerance. Tolerance as a moral phenomenon addresses political, esthetical and epistemological issues, and is therefore at the same time moral and political, moral and esthetical and so on. Still it is practical to distinguish moral tolerance from for instance technical or medical tolerance, which is only remotely related. Which of course leaves the possibility open to talk about moral tolerance within technical or medical practices. This implies a conception of morality as a certain perspective, not as a restricted domain, as discussed in chapter three.

Structure of tolerance

The second point concerning the scope of tolerance is focusing on the conception of the structure and actors of tolerance: How is the subject and object of tolerance conceived. On one side of the scale they are seen in a dichotomous individual-society scheme – on the other interwoven in complex relations, which also include a meso-level (groups). This has implication for the conceptual scheme of tolerance.

Fredrik is talking about how he imagines a tolerant school:

G: Is it a school that can also … shall we say contain differences, or … or should it work to create the greatest possible uniformity?
F: No … And there are dissimilarities both ways – both upwards and downwards … Quite clearly. One must … To create a society full of identical individuals, does not benefit society. THAT is not what society needs … It needs … And we must face it – it must be tolerated that people are different and have different abilities …

G: Er det en skole som også … skal vi si kan romme ulikhet, eller … eller bør den jobbe for å skape størst mulig likhet?
F: Nei … Og det er ulikhet begge veier – både oppover og nedover… Helt klart. En må …. Å skape et samfunn med fullt av like individer, det gavner ikke samfunnet. Det er ikke DET samfunnet trenger … Det trenger …. Og vi må innse - det må tolereres at folk er forskjellig og har forskjellige evner…

here is to show a more general trend, not to discuss detailed statistics.
Here Fredrik is separating between the individual and society. Society needs individuals that are different. The subject of tolerance is “we” and the object “the individual”. The act or virtue of tolerance is not specified; it may be refraining from actions towards uniformity or supporting difference.

The dichotomous scheme of how the structure of tolerance is conceived is described like this by the informants: A tolerator (subject of tolerance) is tolerating (the act or virtue of tolerance, including not acting) a certain practice or person (object of tolerance). This can be illustrated as a conceptual triangle of tolerance:

![Figure 4.3: A thin conception of structure and actors of tolerance.](image)

A more complex structure is described by Gjertrud:

Gj: That is, it’s the way in which one IS conservative. But … if one practices the teaching of a subject on the teaching plan of -39, I think that that … And it is wrong too. But I wouldn’t have tolerated it, if somebody had done it with MY students, for instance. If there had been another teacher who had given my students that type of teaching, I wouldn’t have tolerated it at all. - For I think … you have a job to

251 See for instance the thorough discussion of the structure of tolerance in Newey 1999:18-52.
Here there are three actors of tolerance: Two teachers and a group of students. Gjertrud raises an interesting question as a conclusion of her reflection on how she would react on an educationally conservative teacher that holds on to old ways of teaching that are abandoned by the current national curriculum: Who is tolerating who? At face value the reflection operates with herself as the subject of tolerance and the colleague as object. But by the last question Gjertrud invites me to reflect on alternative conceptualizations of the structure of tolerance. The situation also concerns the colleague’s tolerance towards his colleagues: Although he would find alternative approaches to education different from his own and maybe object to them, he would be tolerant to his colleagues (and his student and the curriculum) by using them. On this reading the colleague is the subject and Gjertrud (together with others) the object. A third reading can be whether the curriculum tolerates different educational approaches – the curriculum is the subject, the colleague and Gjertrud (among others) are the object.

This phenomenon I would call the *flip-side of tolerance*. Many situations have this structure of relational tolerance: It is not only a case of a tolerating b, but relational tolerance between a and b (and c). The way the structure of tolerance is framed establishes the conditions of further discussion. Gjertrud’s story may either be the story of progressive teachers tolerating the reactionary colleagues or the experienced teacher tolerating inexperienced colleagues’ need to test alternative educational approaches with implications for the entire staff. To be the object of tolerance implies deviation from the standard – or worse: Something people dislikes or disapproves of, but still endures. The object of tolerance may be stigmatized as something endurable. To describe or redescribe oneself or one’s cause as the subject of tolerance is therefore preferable and tempting.

The crucial questions are: Who has defining power of the conception of the actors and the structure? Why is the situation conceived like this? And which alternative readings can be made?

On the alternative account the scheme of tolerance is more complex. It is not always clear who or what is the subject or object of tolerance – and the structure is rarely a one-to-one relationship. It is more a question of a web of tolerance:
Figure 4.4: A complex conception of structure and actors of tolerance.

The informants conceive the actors of tolerance primarily in dichotomous terms, as figure 4.5 shows:

Figure 4.5: The informants’ conception of tolerance as a dichotomous concept or a concept of complex relations.
Why this is so, is hard to tell. On one hand one might think that teachers who practice in complex and relational situations would conceive the actors of tolerance accordingly. The individual focus may be understood in light of the teachers’ emphasis on the child as a unique individual. The focus on individuality and the development of the individual has had a strong hold on educational psychology, and the uniqueness of the child coheres with the idea of the child as subject, not object, of learning. A conception of the child along these lines is dominant among most informants. This account, however, tends to underestimate the self as relational. This may lead to devaluation of the various contexts and groups that are constitutive of the child’s identity.\textsuperscript{252}

The dichotomous conception of actors may also be traced to liberal theory. This will be discussed below.

\textit{Power of tolerance}

A related issue concerning the scope of tolerance is the question of power. In chapter three I distinguished between a narrow, sovereign conception of power and a wider, relational conception.

Daniel tells a story about a colleague of his that he considers very tolerant – and himself. They were sitting around a campfire with students on a fieldtrip, and one of the students told a repulsing story involving mutilation of animals. The colleague did not censure or stop the story or react by spontaneously condemnation. Instead he asked the students critical questions for self-reflection, and the episode resulted in the student admitting to himself and others that the story was inappropriate. Asked whether he thinks this was tolerant towards the student, he answered:

\begin{quote}
D: Yes. I thought it was a little tolerant – tolerant in relation to that student. Because you – you accepted the story he told then, without … killing it at once, and say – and moralize.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
D: Ja, jeg syntes det var litt tolerant - toleranse overfor den eleven. For du - du aksepterte historien han fortalte da, uten å … å slå den ihjel med en gang, og si – og moralisere.
\end{quote}

The colleague had the power to "kill" the story, but chose not to use it. This is a kind of power that the colleague had sovereignty over – it was clearly identifiable, acknowledgeable and understandable.

\textsuperscript{252} For a related and an interesting discussion on liberal and traditional identity and an emphasis on "the individual’s need to locate himself within a group” related to the Rushdie-affair, see Mendus 1993:193-206.
It is interesting to notice that this conception of power mainly is used in two different situations: Either the teacher tolerating the student or the principal tolerating teachers. Power is not understood along these lines when tolerance concerns colleagues. This indicates that the conception of power is related to the structure of tolerance. One main difference between teacher-student- and principal-teacher-relations on one hand and teacher-teacher-relations on the other is the hierarchical structure. Many of the teachers describe tolerance in teacher-teacher relations as the most difficult. This may be because of the equality in formal authority. On this reading inequality of authority implies substantive power – which one can choose to refrain from or use positively in a situation of tolerance. This substantial power is however not clearly identifiable in relations with equal formal authority, which creates confusion whether one is tolerating or not.

It is vital to underscore that this is the informants’ conception of power in hierarchical structures. It does not mean that it is the only way to see them. But before continuing that discussion, it is time to present the other conception of power, the relational.

On the question whether there are particular groups or students he thinks ought to be tolerated at his school, Bjarne focuses on students with problematic behavior. When these students are offending him, he tries not to care because confronting the students will not make things better.

Bj: From the beginning of I think it SHOULDN’T be like that, really.
G: But have you given up?
Bj: To be quite honest: YES.
G: Yes.
Bj: I haven’t given up, but you see – Yes, I think I really have. Because … If I should have done anything with it, I should have had to go against both the students and the staff – Because that’s the way it is – it is just the way it is. An unwritten law that says that … that student you have to tolerate and so on.

Bj: Men jeg syns i utgangspunktet at det IKKE skal være sann, egentlig.
G: Men du har gitt opp?
Bj: Ja. For å si det rett ut: JA.
G: Ja.
Bj: Jeg har ikke gitt opp, men altså - Jo, jeg har vel egentlig det. Fordi at … hadde jeg skullet gjort noe med det så måtte jeg ha gått imot både elevene, ansatte - For det er sann - det er bare sann det ER. En uskreven regel som sier at ... den eleven må du bare tolerere og sann.

Bjarne tolerates harassment from students with problematic behavior because there is an unwritten rule saying so. He thinks that things ought to be different. The word “initially” is important: As a starting point he disagrees and is ready to work for his conviction. But at the same time the conditions at the school are not similar to an initial position. The school code, the practice of the school, allows this kind of behavior. The other teachers and students have not opposed this code and are probably reinforcing it by their practice. Still, by naming it an unwritten rule, Bjarne suggests that this is a silent code, not open for discussion. If discussed
it would probably have to be refused, but that would have cultural costs that the colleagues were not ready to take.

This code and practice is described as a part of how “things are”. The code is a part of the reality at Kjernsund School. This is of course a socially constructed reality, and in principle changeable. A thin or de-contextualized ethical analysis would therefore have to conclude that Bjarne has the power to interfere or act towards both students and colleagues. Such an analysis, however, is not very helpful to Bjarne. His potential interference would change the relations he himself has to students and colleagues. But not only so, it would challenge the conception of reality at Kjernsund school in a way that would have influence beyond himself. It is therefore not his choice alone. His choice is also his colleagues’ and the school community’s choice. - Bjarne is drawn between feeling powerless and having the power to choose.

In this quote the relational structure of power is evident. The conception of a relational power is related to a relational conception the structure of tolerance. A dichotomous conception of the structure of tolerance, viewing Bjarne as an “atomized” individual, would not be able to catch the complexity of his situation.

*Trust, power and relations*

As the figure below shows, the informants tended to understand power more in a sovereign model than as relations.
This result should however be understood in the light of the focus in the interviews. In the interviews the relationship between teacher and students was the predominant. Accepting that the teacher tends to conceive these relations more as involving sovereign than relational power, an interview focusing mainly on tolerance towards colleagues may have given a different result. Still, a question remains: Why is power in the teacher-student-relationship sometimes understood as sovereign, but on other occasions as relational?

A possible answer may be the phenomenon of trust. Peter Johnson (1992:159) sums up an interesting discussion of tolerance, relations and power in Oliver Twist in these words:

In Oliver Twist autonomy does not present itself as “an adequate range of choices”, in fact, the characters we have discussed “are not isolated free choosers, monarchs of all (they) survey, but benighted creatures”, struggling to achieve some degree of moral awareness and moral good in the context of the imperfections of their own natures and the risk created by damaging behaviour of others.

There is no clear cut distinction between power and powerlessness in human relationships, Johnson (1992:156) argues. The relationships persons are constituted of are guiding and limiting not the possible, but the realistic choices. Realistic here refers to the reality created in the community of relations where the issue of tolerance is raised. Such a human relational reality is always constituted by some sort of and degree of trust. If the student does not trust
the teacher, her words, actions and values will have no or negative educational effect. Parents have to trust the teacher and the school in order to hand their children over to them. The informants underscore the importance of colleagues trusting each others’ professional judgement – even at times when the actions do not seem to have any meaning. They also emphasize how vital it is for a teacher to be trusted by students. In a relationship of trust, the persons surrender something of themselves in the hands of the different other. That means that everyone is constituted also by the relational and different others – and that she has an internal responsibility for the different other. It is impossible to think myself as responsible excluded from these relations. This has consequences for tolerance. It means that in moral reflection the different other always has a voice. This above all goes for cases involving me specifically as a part of a community, like the community of teachers or of the school. Tolerance to the different other is therefore an initiate part of my virtuous reflection and action.

It also has the consequence that trust results in tolerance and tolerance in trust. The opposite is evident in the case of illegitimate intolerance: Distrust creates the soil of intolerance, and intolerance produces distrust. As a teacher I would tolerate less from a student that I do not trust than from a trustworthy one, and this intolerance would in return result in less trust between the student and me.

In the case of trust the dialectic is positive: In order to tolerate a student or a colleague a teacher needs to trust the judgement and character of the other. This tolerance, in return, prepares the soil for trust to grow.

Because of established trust and the need for establishing trust the teachers choose, or as they experience it, have to choose tolerance.

As mentioned above Frank was torn between the feeling of powerlessness and power. Tolerance as a result of this complexity – knowing that you may do something, but on the other hand may not – can be called the tolerance of powerlessness. On this account one tolerates because of relational trust extends power to persons, groups and institutions. That is, one tolerates because one’s own and other’s powerlessness. This can be read in following quote from Gjertrud:

Gj: That we HAVE to be able to function in a fellowship, even if we are different. THAT is perhaps the most important. And the fact that you have to accept and tolerate that people ARE different. That one … can manage to … perhaps manage to turn the negative into something positive.

Gj: At vi MÅ kunne klare å fungere i et fellesskap, sjøl om vi er forskjellig. DET er kanskje det viktigste. Og det at man aksepterer og tolererer at folk ER forskjellige. At man … kan klare å … kanskje klare å snu det negative til å la det få bli noe positivt.
If we want to function well in a relationship, we have no choice but to participate. This participation however is an act of trust and implies extending the different other power over you. This means that you cannot act as an unrelated individual, but as a related body. This can explain the paradox between power and powerlessness, between not giving up and giving up. Using Mead’s (1934:173-178) distinction between the *I* and the *me* in the individual’s personality, the acting *I* has power, but the relating *me* is powerless. And because *I* and *me* are both distinct and integrative aspects of the self, there is a constant negotiation in the self between power and powerlessness. This does, however, not have to end in a forced, negative tolerance. Gjertrud’s point may be interpreted like this: The realization of the relational *me* is a motivation for the acting *I* to actively and positively tolerate.

To conclude on the scope of tolerance: The informants use tolerance in both a thick and a thin sense. They do, however, use tolerance as referring to and motivated by many different areas, not only moral ones.

### 4.3.3.2 The energy of tolerance: Positive and negative

From the issue of thin or thick tolerance I will proceed to the question of means, that is positive and negative tolerance. In many cases tolerance is used in a negative sense: Tolerance means the same as in-action, to refrain from action, to allow, being passive. Reflecting on what he does not tolerate from his students’ parents, Carsten says:

> C: Then I think – I tolerate – I do nothing about it in a way - but I don’t think it is a good thing when parents let children do things that … I think they are far too small for, for instance - That they accept that children from 10 to 12 are driving mopeds and scooters around quite on their own. That - but I don’t do anything about it – So in a way you can say I tolerate it.  
> G: You tolerate it, but you don’t like it?  
> C: I don’t like it.

Here tolerance is constructed along traditional lines, including a double negation, disapproval and non-interference. Carsten does not approve of kids driving motorbikes and scooters at ages 10 to 12. Still he does not intervene. This non-intervention he calls tolerance. His reason for tolerance is that the privacy of the parents overrides his view on formation and upbringing.

Camilla is conceiving tolerance differently when talking about how she teaches and practices tolerance in her subject, home economics:

> C: There is in a way tolerance towards other groups  
> C: Det er jo liksom toleranse overfor andre
of people and ... And that you – like in secondary school in home economics lessons it is – you shall make ... arrangements for older people or children of other age groups outside your own, you see. And that too, is part of tolerance, that you ... learn to know other people.

Tolerance is here understood positively. Tolerance is actively doing something, not passive endurance or non-interference. In this case it is an activity in order to widen one’s horizon. Tolerance is therefore construed differently from what is the case in Carsten’s quote – there is no double negative, but a double positive (approving of difference and interference).

The informants use tolerance both as a negative and a positive concept:

Figure 4.7: The informants’ conceptualization of tolerance as implicating negative or positive means.

Figure 4.7 illustrates that the informants tend to use tolerance more frequently as a positive than a negative concept. Still, both conceptions are widely used. It is also interesting to notice that all teachers use tolerance in both conceptions, with one exception. Anita consistently uses tolerance in a positive sense.

This dichotomous figure must, however, be understood with reservations. In many cases it is hard to decide whether the informants use tolerance in a negative or positive sense –
because it is more a mixture of the two. That is, the conception of tolerance is best understood as operating along a continuum between positive and negative. One example is the following quote by Frank. He is reflecting on moral diversity, and the importance of creating space for a variety of different moral and religious practices, including pietistic movements:

F: And we shall not force – I have a student in my class now who … who is treated very strictly at home. They haven’t got a TV … They have a radio - listen to the radio, but don’t want the children to be influenced by what goes on on the screen. Fair enough that. Let them - one must be tolerant. That’s all right. I don’t go around looking up rules and regulations so that you shall have rock and things, you too. I have to accept that that’s the way it is - the father has asked me if they can be exempted from the music lessons when we have rock and things like that – Fine … Quite O.K. with me. We needn’t be so stubborn that we MUST work that way, and that they HAVE to be present, because rules and regulations in school are for them too. Let them be exempted …

F: Og vi skal ikke tvinge - Jeg har jo en elev i klassen nå som … som har det veldig strengt hjemme. De har ikke TV … De har radio - hører på radioen, men vil ikke at ungene skal bli påvirket av det som foregår på skjermen da. Greit nok det. La dem - en må være tolerant overfor det. Det er helt i orden. Jeg driver da ikke og leter opp i lover og regler og sånn at dere skal ha rock og greier, dere også. Jeg får innfinne meg med at sånn - faren har spurt meg om kan de ikke kan slippe å være med i musikken når dere har rock og sånn – Greit … Helt i orden for meg. Vi behøver jo ikke være så sål strengt at vi MÅ drive sånn, at de SKAL være med, for lover og regler i skolen er for dem også. La de slippe …

At face value this seems like a negative conception of tolerance – the teacher does not interfere with the students’ opting out from activities including rock music. On the other hand it is not a simple matter of leaving things as they are: Frank has to actively create space for the students. He has the educational responsibility for them whether they are in the classroom or not. Frank could have enforced his own view on the students, but chooses not to. That does however not mean that he in every other respect related to the case is inactive or does not interfere. His choice of allowing the students’ opting out has consequences for fellow students, other teachers and Frank’s relations to these students and colleagues. Such a choice has consequences for a number of relations, and these he has to deal with actively.

Einar emphasizes an interesting point: Tolerance is letting the students speak and develop commitments. But letting this happen (negative tolerance), demands creating and securing space for openness (positive tolerance). In this way negative tolerance often presupposes positive tolerance. In greater society other institutions take responsibility for creating space, and the individual may use it. In schools the teacher has to both create and use it.

The informants understand the means of tolerance as a variety of actions between a negative and a positive pole. It is a matter of managing a repertoire of more or less interfering actions than a dichotomy between non-action and action.
How can this variety be understood? Tolerance is conceived differently – not only interpersonally, but also intrapersonally. The negative conception of tolerance is coherent with the practice and idea of developing individual autonomy. As discussed above, the tolerant teacher is the professional teacher, and the professional teacher allows distance to and space for the students. A condition for this is that the teacher holds back on occasions where she is inclined to interfere.

On the other hand the tolerant teacher is the caring teacher, and the caring teacher is close and empathic. He is actively perceiving, listening and seeing, and acting. Tolerance as caring is a positive tolerance.

Previously I argued that that the informants describe the tolerant teacher as both the caring and the professional one. This is coherent with their view on tolerance as both positive and negative.

4.3.3.3 Double or simple condition of tolerance

The paradox of tolerance here refers to the objection-condition: One can only tolerate in cases where one objects to something or someone. As described in chapter three this is one of the classical conditions in the philosophy of tolerance. Even though it has been questioned by some authors, the condition of objection is still common in philosophy of tolerance.

Above I concluded that the informants use and conceive the objection condition not only as moral, but also as esthetical and epistemological. Here the focus will be directed to the question whether they operate with a double condition at all: That is, both objection and acceptance – or a single condition only (acceptance).

Frank clearly conceives tolerance as both objection and acceptance in the following description of his tolerant colleague:

G: Why do you want to say that just HE is so tolerant?
F: Yes it … it has to do with the fact that … he accepts that people are different from what he wants them to be.

G: Hvorfor vil du si at akkurat HAN er så tolerant?
F: Jo, det ... det har med det at han ... han godtar at folk er på en annen måte enn det han sjøl ønsker at de skal være.

The colleague objects to their behavior or character, but still accepts them. It is interesting to notice, however, that later in the interview Frank conceives tolerance in a completely different way:

F: I think all students should like all people, all
students and all other children - no matter their view of life, no matter what colour of their skin, no matter … language …
G: Is that the same as tolerance or is it something different from tolerance? …
F: It is the same as tolerance, I think …

Here Frank constructs tolerance with a single condition: Acceptance. And acceptance is here not understood negatively or passively, but as a positive “like”. That is, tolerance is conceived not as a last resort, as a pragmatic, political safety device in a situation of moral plurality. It is on the contrary a pregnant moral ideal, as Else expresses it on the question of which attitude she considers the most important in education: equality, liberty or neighborly love:

E: But what is most important? Love of one’s neighbour … I would – We call it love of one’s neighbour – we could as well have called it tolerance.

Else is not the only one associating tolerance with love. One interesting point here is the extension in Frank’s conceptualization of tolerance: The same person understands tolerance both as acceptance of something objectionable – and as liking all human beings of all religions, races and cultures. This supports the conclusion so far that persons have a register of different conceptions of tolerance, which they use in different contexts.

Still, using tolerance both with and without a double condition, tolerance without objection is the most common use among the informants:

Figure 4.8: The informants’ conceptualization of tolerance as a double (objection and acceptance) or single (acceptance) construct.
Accepting difference

There are however a wide range of middle positions available between tolerance as accepting the objectionable and love, for instance this quote from Camilla:

C: That is that the students should be more tolerant towards each other … To tolerate, accept other people as they are.

C: Det er jo at elevene skal være mer tolerante for hverandre det … Det å tolerere, akseptere andre mennesker som de er.

This is a familiar expression among the informants. Students are different – and the challenge lays in accepting this state of affairs and tolerate difference. This does not mean that one has to love all students, neither that one objects to them. One simply accepts difference.

Haldis is expressing another sense of difference. She used to be a part of a cooperative and open community of teachers at Glimmerdale School, but one year ago many of her former experienced associates resigned. Younger teachers with less experience took their places, and Haldis finds herself in a new relationship with her colleagues:

H: Because I feel now that I in a way in a way … I do my job as I have to and then I go home, you see. Because now I have come in a kind of vacuum. Because now there are so many new teachers, and they are on a different footing from what I am today. Where I was when I started as a teacher. But of course I have to tolerate and accept them too, so it is … but there is something about it … There is something lacking, the intermediate position and in a way the pedagogical bit. I miss that. Very …

H: For jeg føler nå at jeg er på en måte ... jeg gjør jobben min jeg nå og så går jeg hjem altså. For nå har jeg kommet i et vakuum. For nå er det kommet inn så mange nye lærere, og de er på et annet ståsted enn hva jeg er per i dag. Der var jeg når jeg begynte å jobbe som lærer. Men så selvfølgelig må jo jeg tolerere og akseptere de også, så det er ... men det er noe med det ... Det mangler litt den derranne mellom-sjiktet og liksom den pedagogiske biten. Den savner jeg. Veldig ...

Haldis is tolerating her new and younger colleagues. She does not disapprove of them, dislike them or object to them in any sense – they are just different. They are standing at different “places”, which means they have different perspectives on their practice. Haldis is missing a kind of educational reflection in their perspective – they might miss something else in Haldis’ perspective. This is, however, not an objection; it is a description of necessities of a phase or a state. Every phase in a teacher’s biography has its characteristics, its possibilities and limitations. It does not make sense to demand reflection and experience beyond the other’s phase. One has to live with the differences, and here tolerance is a key concept. This does not imply a strong determinism - within every phase there is space for choice and action, but this is imprinted by the characteristics of the phase.

In Haldis’ everyday professional life, similarity and openness are exchanged with difference and vacuum. Haldis’ others have become strange others, and this calls for
tolerance. One could of course object that Haldis and her colleagues could do more to establish communication, and that things do not have to be like this. That objection, however, misses the point, which is that in every human relationship there is a, continuously changing, sense of being strangers and this correlates with tolerance, in Haldis’ account.

This does not mean that the need of tolerance disappears with openness in a relationship. Else is working close to an associate of hers, who she describes as tolerant:

E: No, she has a very good ability to listen, and to produce truths, but … in a nice way. That is … is direct in her way to talk to people, and … accepts in a way - that is, we both do, but we can in a way both of us accept to hear the truth at the same time as we can discuss it. That is WHAT I think of as tolerant. I don’t know how you define the word, but … tolerant can be defined in many ways.


At face value this may seem like a different conception of tolerance – here it is described as essential in a close relationship, previously it was the way to handle distant relations. However, from one point of view these accounts have identical foci: In every relationship one constantly confronts strangeness or difference – in a close relation entering the other’s life world is walking into a foreign country. In close relations one is allowed and expected to react honestly on strangeness, and the other is expected to handle it. Tolerance is not to endure the other, but to react honestly. Tolerance is authentic confrontation and dialogue on Else’s account. This means that tolerance according to both is the way to meet difference and the other as stranger, but that tolerance takes different shapes in different relations.

Two results need some further reflection in order to be understood: One is the phenomenon that informants tend to use tolerance more as a single than a double construct. The other is that they use both conceptions interchangeably.

Initially it is important to emphasize that the conditions of tolerance is one thing, and the limits another. That is, whether tolerance is constructed as a single or double concept does not have any necessary effect on the issue of the limits of tolerance. It is a quite common misunderstanding that tolerance as pure acceptance is without limits. The objection condition alone is, however, not decisive for the limits. The characteristics of tolerance are actually that the objection is overridden by some arguments for acceptance. These arguments for acceptance are conclusive for the issue of limitations – not the arguments for objection.

In the two examples above tolerance as acceptance does not mean that Haldis and Else would tolerate everything different from their colleagues. Standing in a tolerating relationship
does not prevent them from reacting on non-empathy or injustice. Quite the opposite: When
tolerance is understood along the lines of empathy and justice, tolerance would demand
reaction.

**Single construct**
The 15 teachers do conceive tolerance primarily as a single construct – and stand in
discontinuity with a historically line that conceives tolerance as restricted to issues of
disapproval or dislike. How can this discontinuity be understood? It may be a case of
individual difference – that these teachers have a particular conception of tolerance compared
with colleagues and the rest of the population. There are, however, no obvious reasons that it
should be so. The teachers are of different ages, sexes and have different experiences. They
are from different schools and parts of the country. And there are no notable differences on
this issue between the three schools.

Alternatively one could understand the phenomenon in the educational context. In
chapter three, I outlined an educational argument for tolerance as a single construct. The
problem is objection and difference. It is hard to see how the teacher can identify a common
understanding of objection internal or external to the different students, which is necessary in
order to talk about tolerance as a common concept. Using tolerance as an individual concept,
identifying the objectionable internally and individually, would be practically impossible in
classes with 25 students of diverse backgrounds. It would besides limit the possibilities of
using tolerance as a common term – where it has its primary function.

This plurality or difference is obvious in the classroom, but of course not restricted to
the school. The problem of objection and difference may therefore be seen in a wider context,
as a distinct feature of (late) modernity. Baumeister’s (1991:6) concept “value gap” describes
the condition that modernity gives persons a wide register of forms of meaning, but little help
in the guidance about fundamental values. With the emergence of modern society the social
force of religion, morality and tradition has decreased:

> As a result, the modern individual faces life with fewer firm criteria of legitimacy and fewer
> reliable ways to tell right from wrong. Modern individuals find their sources of justification to
> be fewer, to be fuzzier, and to be more full of gaps and ambiguities, in comparison with people
> who lived in previous eras. (Baumeister 1991:92)

This is a description of a situation of plurality or difference that is equivalent to the everyday
world of the informants, as they describe it. This means that tolerance is not primarily about
objection (and acceptance), but about difference (and acceptance). This difference can be of various kinds: Psychological, cultural, sociological, moral, religious and so on. And there is a variety of possible positions to difference, from strong objection to a point where one meets a world that seems impossible to understand - to celebration of pluralism.

In this material difference and acceptance are therefore the conditions of tolerance. Tolerance is broadly conceived as accepting difference. Objection is understood as one possible perspective on difference, not as a necessary condition of tolerance.

One way to understand this is to focus on the dichotomy right/wrong or good/bad. On an absolutist account of morality it is possible to reach an objective or universal result whether an act is right or wrong or a person good or bad. In practice, however, we relate to different people and groups with various accounts of moral right or good. Besides, no single absolute moral theory has reached uniform acceptance, and the teachers live in moral plurality where no single theory can give clear guidance on how to handle this situation of difference. It seems that the conception of tolerance has been transformed with the emergence of thorough cultural difference or plurality.

On an absolutist account of morality, tolerance is a safety-device within the domain of wrong or bad, as illustrated in figure 4.9:

![Figure 4.9: Tolerance as a last resort on an absolutist account. Tolerance and intolerance are here conceived as legitimate.](image-url)
Uncertainty and ambiguity

The informants reflect a situation of thorough plurality, and a common sense of uncertainty and ambiguity. On the question whether she thinks there are attitudes that are absolute and that every student should acquire, Camilla answers:

C: Yes, that’s the thing (laughs a bit). They are – they are MY attitudes, which I think are fine. So it’s so - (laughs a bit) - I’m not certain that THEY are any better than anybody else’s, in a way, so it is … But that everybody has the same value – has the same worth. That is, as we know … a basic attitude … to me. - And that attitude I want all my students to have too. - Learn it ... Mm.
G: Is it a value to you only, or is it what you think everybody should have?
C: No, I think everybody should have it.

It seems that Camilla feels a little embarrassed by the question. This may be because she feels the challenge to formulate something absolute as awkward. It is also interesting to notice how she starts her answer: Not by identifying the attitudes, but by declaring her position as uncertain and relative to others. On the other hand she clearly thinks everybody should think the same: That all human beings have equal value. This ambiguity between relativism and absolutism, between uncertainty and certainty, between individualism and collectivism is quite typical of the informants.

Relativism is a difficult analytical term because it very often is used as a vague label. Initially it has to be remarked that the discussion of relativism takes place within very different spheres: Ontological, epistemological, moral, semantic and aesthetical. Relativism in one sphere (say epistemological) does not necessarily imply relativism in another (e.g. moral). Relativism is also a matter of degree; simply put one can talk about strong or weak relativism. Contextual relativism is an example of weak relativism, where truth and morality differ between, but not within, traditions. (MacIntyre 1989:182-204, Astley 1994:257-289)

Giddens (1991:36, 141) describes this phenomenon as insecurity. In late modernity there are no final authorities – even the beliefs underlined by expert systems are open to revision. The subject is left with no option but to create a self through reflection. This process creates uncertainty and ambiguity: "On the other side of what might appear to be quite trivial aspects of day-to-day action and discourse, chaos lurks. And this chaos is not just disorganization, but the loss of a sense of the very reality of things and of other persons.” And further: “What makes a given response ‘appropriate’ or ‘acceptable’ necessitates a shared – but unproven and unprovable – framework of reality. A sense of the shared reality of people and things is simultaneously sturdy and fragile.” Harré and Krausz (1996) operate with the four first.
Many of the informants operate with a sense of contextual moral relativism, as for instance Bjørg:

G: Do you think it is all right that people have different standards for what they tolerate? From place to place.
Bj: It just has to be that way. But I think it is problematic. Because ... that is obvious – it can be confusing to children. They perhaps learn something quite different at home. - But that, perhaps, is something they have to learn that ... people are different, we have different limits for what - yes, how things are regarded and what one thinks is right or wrong, don’t you agree? - And mainly I think we are fairly – we are not far apart, I think, but ... it might happen, perhaps that too, perhaps one is far ... think quite differently about what is right and wrong.

Bjørg describes moral difference or plurality as a cultural and social condition of life.
Plurality may be shallow or deep, but everybody, students included, have to relate to it. The difficulty appears when different moral standards or languages are socialized simultaneously. Educating in difference itself may be a help to understand this ambiguity.

Parallel with this contextual relativism many of the informants are convinced that some attitudes are or ought to be valid across different contexts. This ambiguity between a firm conviction which reaches beyond the individual on one hand and uncertainty and relativism on the other, is described in following quote from Else, when describing a tolerant colleague:

E: If there are discussions or something like that, she isn’t the one to pour out, but when she takes part it is well considered ... and ... she knows what she stands for, in a way, at the same time as she, like everybody else is uncertain of things, but ....

E: Altså hvis det er diskusjoner eller noe sånt, så er ikke hun den som pøser ut, men når hun liksom kommer med noe så er det veloverveid ... og ... hun vet hva hun står for, på en måte, samtidig som hun akkurat som alle andre er usikker på ting, men ...

Relativism in this context primarily refers to its lexical meaning as relating. As described above to tolerate is a way to relate to others and oneself. Else’s colleague has authentic practices and reflections, which she extends beyond herself. At the same time she is uncertain. She may of course be uncertain of other things than her authentic reflections, but in the light of the rest of the material the opposite may as well be true: Conviction and uncertainty are complementary perspectives.

255 According to Webster’s new world dictionary (1984:1199) relative means “1. related each to the other; dependent or referring to each other. 2. having to do with, pertinent; relevant 3. regarded in relation to something else; comparative 4. meaningful only in relationship; not absolute.”
This might be because of the informants' lack of reflections or moral laziness. Although there are differences in the level of reflections, and it is hard to characterize the informant’s personal moral life based on the interviews alone, they contain little to support such explanations. There is no support in the material that ambiguity does relate to the level of reflection. Ambiguity in some form and strength is characteristic of most informants.

Ambiguity takes the form of a dialogue between the teacher and the other (student, colleague and so on), but can also be an internal conversation and negotiation between different voices of the self. Gjertrud is asked whether moral plurality is positive and something to strive for. Her reflection can be read as a dialogue between two possible selves (Gergen 1991:72), here identified as two different voices:

**Voice 1**

Gj: Of course, if it goes very much against what I think, it is very difficult to accept it.

G: Mm …

As long as it isn’t directly HARMFUL … that is … if there are some who really SUFFER from … their upbringing by for instance having EXTREMELY morally strict parents. That can happen in – Christian milieus as well as in Muslim ones.

G: Mm.

Gj: I think it is … it is wrong …

G: Mm.

Gj: Then the question is whether what I mean is correct …

I think that … it is a bit difficult, perhaps, because … That is, if you have children who grow up in a society … that is, in a Norwegian society … who have a … very strict Muslim upbringing at home, they may get into strong conflicts, because they then … hear one thing at home, and then experience something else away from home.

G: Mm.

Gj: That is, I think it is very important for these parents … to try and learn to know how the Norwegian society functions, and perhaps not only look for the negative aspects about us. Then I think it will be … it will be equally easy that way as it is with us, as it were. That is what I believe …And one often sees with … people who have grown up in strict Christian milieus, that when they move away from home, they completely change their lifestyle. Because they have to … they in a way have to try it out.

G: Yes.

Gj: And it is actually in a way a totally different
I think it is important that one … tries to help one’s children as best one can, as parents even if one perhaps doesn’t agree with the way the Norwegian society functions and the attitudes we have, but … everything cannot be wrong with the Western society, you see … So they have to find what is positive in both cultures.

Stemme 1

Gj: Det er klart, hvis det strir veldig imot hva jeg sjøl mener så syns jeg jo det blir veldig vanskelig å akseptere det da.

G: Mm...

Såframt det ikke er direkte SKADELIG ... altså ... altså hvis det er noen som virkelig LIDER under ... altså den oppveksten de får, f.eks., ved at de har EKSTREMT moralske strenge foreldre. Det kan jo også være i – altså kristne miljøer såvel som i muslimske da.

G: Mm.

Gj: Så mener jeg det er ... det er feil...

G: Mm.

Gj: Altså jeg tror det er innmari viktig for de foreldrene ... å prøve å gjøre seg kjent med hvordan det norske samfunnet er, og ikke bare kanskje finne det negative ved oss da. Det tror jeg det blir ... det blir like lett det venien som det er hos oss, liksom. Det tror jeg... Og det ser man jo ofte med ... folk som har vokst opp i strengt kristne miljøer da, at når de flytter hjemmefra så endrer de livsstil fullstendig. Fordi at de må ... de må på en måte prøve det ut.

G: Ja.

Stemme 2

Gj: Men så spørs det jo om det JEG mener er det riktige da...

Jeg tror jo det at .... det er jo litt vanskelig, kanskje, for ... Altså hvis du har unger som vokser opp i et samfunn ... altså et norsk samfunn, som har en ... veldig streng muslimsk oppvekst hjemme, at de kommer i veldig store konflikter, fordi at de da ... får høre det ene hjemme, og så opplever de det andre ute.

G: Ja.

Gj: Og det er på en måte en helt annen verden, altså.
This is a dialogue of ambiguity: Voice 1 tries to formulate moral truths, while voice 2 is the voice of the other. Voice 2 is the relative voice – it relates moral truth to other worlds. The voices may be read separately – and they would give independent meanings. It is no simple pro et con scheme with a conclusion – the dialectics between the voices are more subtle. The dialogue ends in one categorical statement (there are different worlds), and one compromise (find the positive in both cultures). The ambiguity is not resolved, but through negotiation Gjertrud tries to handle it.

Sphere of difference
This leads to a conclusion: In order to understand the informants it is fruitful to operate with a sphere of moral and epistemic ambiguity. This does not mean that they are strong relativists: They have more or less deep convictions, which they consider valid beyond their selves. Still, there is a sphere between what they consider obviously right or good on one hand and obviously wrong or bad on the other where their convictions always imply some kind of uncertainty. This is the sphere of difference – where they try to position themselves in the different relations that constitute their identity and context.

Tolerance on the absolutist conception is based on a dichotomy, which leaves little room for the middle ground. An alternative conception of tolerance, which is coherent with the material in this study, looks like this:
Compared with figure 4.9, figure 4.10 illustrates the conceptual expansion of tolerance. Tolerance has expanded both in status and in meaning. From being an ideal in the moral and political outskirts, it is conceived as a very central term in a situation of difference. As described above, tolerance takes on a variety of different meanings among the informants. This conceptual plurality can be understood in the light of the conceptual expansion of tolerance in a situation of moral and epistemic uncertainty. Tolerance is simply put a very important and very wide concept among the informants. And it is tightly connected to difference or plurality. As difference increases and changes in a society, it is reasonable to believe that the conception of tolerance also changes.

This is tolerance as understood by the informants in the study, and probably many contemporary teachers. One can of course argue whether this is a valid or workable conception. For now I will only claim that any normative conception and theory of tolerance should relate to how tolerance is conceived in various social and cultural contexts. These conceptions in their context-sensitiveness and practical reflexivity are both descriptive and normative resources in working out a theory of tolerance in education.
4.3.4 The teachers’ conception of tolerance – a conclusion

To sum up this second part of the chapter, the conceptual analysis of tolerance as understood and used by the informants:

1. Tolerance is widely conceived as both a moral and non-moral concept.
2. Tolerance is understood along a continuum from an individual-society dichotomy to a web of complex relations. The emphasis is on the first.
3. Tolerance is conceived in relationships of both substantial and relational power. The emphasis is on the first.
4. The informants conceive tolerance both as positive and negative, that is, the means of tolerance vary from active interference to passive non-interference. The emphasis is on the first.
5. Most teachers conceive tolerance as a single construct, that is, with acceptance as the single construct. They do, however, also operate with a double condition (objection and acceptance).
6. The informants operate with a sphere of moral ambiguity, uncertainty and relativity. This sphere is located between the cases of obvious good/right and obvious bad/wrong. The informants do position themselves within this sphere-in-between, but every positioning is complemented with a sense of uncertainty – caused by a sense of difference.
7. Objection is only one possible reaction to difference or plurality. Other reactions can be feeling as a stranger, not understanding, be overwhelmed, enlightened, or feeling pity.
8. Totally the informants – and every single informant - use a variety of different conceptions of tolerance. Tolerance is a plastic concept: It means broadly accepting difference, but gets a variety of more precise meanings in different contexts.
9. There are reasons to talk about a conceptual expansion of tolerance, which refers to an increase in status and meanings.

4.4 Theories of tolerance

So far the focus in this chapter has been on how teachers experience and reflect on tolerance in their everyday practice and how they more precisely conceive the term tolerance. In the third part I will try to draw a broader picture of theoretical contexts of tolerance as understood by the teachers. That means ascending from the levels of details to search for broader lines and patterns in the material. In forming these patterns I will turn to theories of tolerance as described in chapter three for help.
I do not separate (but still distinguish) between the abstract level of theory in social science and the level of practice-theory formed by the teachers. In *Everyday Life Philosophers* (1996) Marianne Gullestad analyzes four autobiographical life-stories with the same approach:

The sharp division within much social science between "theory" provided by the scholars and "data" provided by common people is a central part of socially constructed hegemonic dominance. [ .. ] I would instead argue that social life is theorized by those who live it, and that their reflections – crude or sophisticated – contribute to social understanding. There is continuity, rather than sharp division, between the narrative reflections of the autobiographical authors and my scholarly analysis of their narratives.” (Gullestad 1996:307-308)

The teachers do reflect systematically on tolerance – and do reflect on the relationship of their own experience and a more comprehensive, theoretical conception. The systematical and conscious level of these practice-theories varies among the informants. Being tested against everyday experience it is not hard to imagine that these theories are in constant change. They are more fluid, and more complex in their attempt to try to understand all the different situations, relations and persons that are involved in educational practice.

As emphasized above the teachers’ conception of tolerance is complex and ambiguous. This is also true on the theoretical level. The teachers have no single theory of tolerance. Or more accurately: There is no complete fit between philosophical and political theories of tolerance on one hand and the teachers’ practice-theories of tolerance on the other. Still, it is possible to read the teachers’ theories as moving in the space between different “pure”, abstract theories of tolerance – for instance liberal, communitarian and critical.

In the following I will discuss three different theoretical continuums along which the teachers’ practice-theories of tolerance will be interpreted:

a. Justice versus care
b. Solidarity versus recognition
c. Modernity versus postmodernity

These continuums have been chosen because they are central both in philosophy of tolerance and in the teachers’ reflections.

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256 The word practice-theory (praksisteori) is used by Handal and Lauvås (1983:14-38) and is an individual, systematic understanding of practice consisting of 1) personal experiences 2) transformed knowledge, experiences and structures and 3) values.
4.4.1 Justice versus care

A recurring theme among the informants is that the tolerant teacher is acting in a *just* way. As described above just in most cases means equal in an egalitarian sense. What just is, is described in rules and principles, and these rules have to be enforced equally. This conception is connected to the idea of equal worth and equal right: All human beings have the right to equal respect. To value and treat students unequally is to be intolerant – either to the student if treating him worse than the others, or to the other students if treating him better than the others. But tolerance on the account of justice is not only understood as equality, it is also related to a liberal view of individual autonomy and rationality.

*Tolerance on the account of justice*

Einar is perhaps the most liberal of all the informants in his understanding of tolerance. This may seem surprising considering the fact that he used to work for a conservative Christian association (which he at the time of the interview still is a member of). He explains why he favors pluralism in the subject *Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education* (RE):

E: I don’t think I go on terms with the fact that I am a Christian, and I have worked in an organisation where I was a preacher and preached the gospel … And that now in my spare time I still do it now and again … I, in a way, distinguish between the regiments.

He clearly distinguishes between being a Christian as something personal and his role as a preacher as something that belongs to his spare time on one hand and his role as a teacher and a public figure on the other. He refers to Luther’s distinction of governments: The *spiritual* and the *worldly* (or secular). God rules the world twofold: In a spiritual government where the issue is the justice of Christ, and in a secular government where the focus is the justice of the external world. (Althaus 1965/1972:45) Einar develops this to a double account of ethics: One private Christian and one public secular. For instance he says that he “has his view on homosexuality” as a Christian, but “that is a side of me that I choose not to advocate …”.

Religion and religious morality are privatized, as for instance sexual orientation and attitudes towards race:

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257 This, of course, does not mean that justice also can be seen as a virtue (MacIntyre 1985:244-255), but in this context justice refers to the broad liberal theory represented by for instance Rawls, where justice is formulated in principles and rights. For a criticism of treating justice and care as binary, “exclusively and internally unified moral approaches”, see Blum 1994:264. Here the dichotomy – or rather continuum - is just one of several used and possible perspectives.
E: But there I think … that when there in class come forward such views … then I feel it as a kind of duty as a teacher to LET the person in question argue.

E: Men der mener jeg at … at når det i klassene kommer fram slike syn så … så opplever jeg det nesten som en slags plikt av meg som lærer å LA vedkommende få argumentere.

And later on the student “Viggo”, who expresses racist points of view:

E: That is, a youth shall really be allowed … to have opinions about almost everything, and almost no matter what contents … And then - OK … And then … I feel in a way that it is important that … - then it isn’t MY task to – I was on the point of saying convert Viggo -

G: No …

E: - to not become a racist.

G: No.

E: But if he in discussions can get counterarguments, that will affect Viggo, I guess, in the same way as it influences in the other direction.

E: Altså en ungdom skal egentlig få lov til å … å ha meninger om nesten hva som helst, og nesten uansett mening … Og så - og la det gå… Og da … da føler jeg på en måte at det er viktig at … - da er det ikke MIN oppgave å - jeg holdt på å si omvende Viggo -

G: Nei …

E: - til å ikke bli rasist.

G Nei.

E: Men hvis han i diskusjoner her kan få motargumenter, så vil vel det påvirke Viggo, på samme måte som det påvirker den andre veien.

Later, on the question why we should tolerate Viggo, Einar says that Viggo has the right to an opinion. This means that tolerance in Einar’s mind is justified in the idea of individual rights. It is his duty as a teacher to tolerate Einar – and toleration in this case means tolerance of speech. Just tolerance means that the same principle goes for everyone in any situation. It is universal in character.

Therefore everybody has a duty to obey this principle. This is also in our own interest, Einar points out: To argue for the rights of homosexuals and racists is also an indirect argument for Christians’ rights as a minority. The problem with the racist is of course that he will not accept this account. The only tolerant mean available to make him change account, is rational argument or dialogue. Tolerance means securing rational argument, and everyone’s right to participate in such an argument. It also means securing the rights to individual autonomy. To tolerate is to respect the autonomy of the individual, and being a tolerant teacher is to set the stage for development towards increased autonomy. Along with Mill and Rawls this theoretical position understands tolerance as respect for each person’s choice of his autonomy.

\[258\] This raises the theoretical problem of tolerance towards the intolerant, that is, in this version of liberal tolerance, those who do not accept the primacy of autonomy. Is autonomy a distinct liberal ideal, and does the subscription to autonomy depend on a set of distinct liberal presupposition of the human being and society? Or is the ideal of autonomy more general, a necessary condition for moral human social life? The thicker the conception of autonomy is constructed, tolerance tend to be restricted towards liberals only. And the thinner autonomy is constructed, its justifying function is severely weakened because of differences in reaching an agreement on the understanding and value of autonomy. For a discussion on this, see Rawls 1971:201-221, Rawls 1996:72-81, Kymlicka 1996:81-97, Williams 1996a:18-27 and Mendus 1989:102-109.
or her good, including religion, sexuality and attitude towards other ethnic and cultural
groups.

Einar is again and again stressing the importance of tolerance as freedom of speech.
Even when tested on a situation with racist speech in a classroom with a student of the race in
question, he holds on to this principle:

E: So ... so then, it is EXTREMELY important that
these different arguments come to light. So ... so that
the person who IS a foreigner to our country gets to
hear the arguments and learn that it is not only those
AGAINST, but there are many FOR us. - So that the
conflict is part of ... the milieu we have... But it is
evident that it would have been uncomfortable ... 
And I think I would have – would have registered and
observed the person in question very carefully.

The theme here is not primarily immigration, but racism. Difference, here the difference of
race, is interpreted as difference of arguable opinions and choices. This may of course seem
strange as long as race and ethnicity for the most of us is not open to choice. If the argument
should conclude with the disadvantage of Norwegians compared to Somalis, this would not
help Norwegians very much other than explaining the contempt they experience.259

The underlying assumption of this theory is the idea of individual autonomy and
individual difference, as Kymlicka (1996:93) puts it: “The mere fact of social plurality,
disconnected from any assumption of individual autonomy, cannot by itself depend on the full
range of liberal freedom.”

In a situation of plurality, the individual should have the opportunity to autonomously
and rationally choose the good. The task for public policy and agents is therefore to secure
and tolerate the individual right of choice and conscience.

This account of tolerance fits well with the Lutheran stress of freedom of conscience
and the pietistic idea of individual conversion and conviction, Einar’s religious context.
Religion is primarily an issue of justice as salvation, and salvation is ultimately a question
between the individual and God. This leads to an individualistic approach to religion and
morality – which makes it possible to operate with a personal, Christian tolerance on one hand
and a public, liberal tolerance on the other. As a professional teacher Einar operates on the
second account.

259 This is of course why some authors argue for the irrelevance of tolerance in issues of racism (Mendus
This is probably why he, when asked why we should tolerate Viggo, does not justify tolerance theologically in the idea of human beings as God’s equal creations, but instead philosophically in the idea of individual rights of conscience.

This is primarily a political account of tolerance. Tolerance is understood between generalized moral agents, not particular persons. One can get to know Einar in two ways: As playing his political role, or as a person with a particular life-story, emotions and virtues. Educational tolerance in this theoretical context is connected to the first. This is characteristic of liberal theories of justice and tolerance. And more so: It is characteristic of this approach that such a conceptual separation is thought possible.

Although not always as clearly and consistently put as in Einar’s account, most informants include some aspects of a liberal theory of tolerance. But there is another perspective on tolerance that is even more striking in the interviews: Tolerance understood as an aspect of care.

Tolerance on the account of care
Considering the focus of literature on tolerance, this is quite surprising. As to my knowledge little is written in philosophy and education explicitly on care and tolerance. As I have discussed in chapter three, tolerance is mainly treated as a liberal ideal – challenged mainly by socialism and critical theory, communitarianism and postmodern theory. Theory of care is often associated with feminist theory – and although tolerance is used by for instance Gilligan (1982/1993), a theory of tolerance is undeveloped.

Theories of care are developed partly in opposition to and partly as a supplement to theories of justice (Noddings 1999a:1). Identifying ethics of justice with a masculine morality of liberty, rules and principles, individuality, dissociation, universalism and individual autonomy, feminine morality of care is characterized by responsibility empathy, relations, attachment, particularity and complexity (Gilligan 1993:97-105, 151-174).

As described in the beginning of this chapter care is central in the informants’ reflection on tolerance. But how can tolerance and care relate theoretically? Traditionally to tolerate has been not to care, that is, to leave actions and persons as they are when one is inclined to interfere because one dislikes or disapproves of something or someone. Care has moved the actor towards intolerance, not tolerance.

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260 Political is here not used as distinct from moral (as for instance Rawls 1996, Williams 1996b:35-48 and Weissberg 1998), but as a perspective of human relations which is focusing more on general structures and general agents than a personal which is focusing on the particularity of persons and relations.
In order to understand how a theory of caring tolerance is perceived, it is vital to see human beings as relational. On the question of how she thinks students learn tolerance, Anita emphasizes the teacher as a role model.

G: … so to be a model works better than sanctions and rules?  
A: Mm. Yes … I think so … But of course it is not always enough – to be in front and be a model … That … that is the sad thing about it. Perhaps one sometimes has to go with the forefinger … But if you instead of giving sanctions could have taken the student on your lap, and been a person of care.

G: … så det å være et forbilde virker bedre enn sanksjoner og regler?  
A: Mm. Ja… Tror det … Men selvfølgelig, det er ikke alltid det er nok - å gå foran og være et forbilde … Det … det er det triste med det. Kanskje noen ganger må man gå med pekefingeren. … Men hvis man da i stedet for å gi sanksjoner, kunne tatt eleven ned på fanget, og vært en omsorgsperson.

Here two models for tolerance education are sketched: One rule-based and one relation-based. Being a role model and caring person works better than rules and sanctions, Anita thinks. This does not mean that rules and sanctions have no place in education, but that the caring relation is primary. The rules-and-sanction model is impersonal and general in character: The rules are the same independent of person, and have their legitimacy in some principle external to the particular relation and persons. The relation-based model is personal and particular: The caring act is motivated and decided by the specific relation, and the act is (here) physically and emotionally personal.

This does of course not mean that Anita thinks every educational problem can be solved with care and without rules, but it implies a particular perception of students and self: All are primarily seen as relational selves. Gilligan (1993:43) remarks on aggression and relation:

If aggression is tied, as women perceive, to the fracture of human connection, then the activities of care, as their fantasies suggest, are the activities that make the social world safe, by avoiding isolation and preventing aggression rather than by seeking rules to limit its extent.

A phenomenon like aggression is primarily understood relational, not individual. Therefore rules to limit the individual are not addressing the real issue: The fragility of human relations. Making the social life world safe for students is showing and practicing tolerance – and care, in Anita’s mind.

Taking a student on her lap is inviting to and showing physical care and proximity. In describing how she can be a tolerant teacher at Kjersund School, she also emphasizes psychological proximity:

G: If we think of going from school level and down to …  
G: Hvis vi tenker å gå fra skole-nivå og ned til lærer-
Being tolerant is to give the other a part of oneself. This is very similar to Løgstrup’s (1956/1991) approach to morality: “But to show trust means to give oneself away.” This means that the soil of tolerance is not impersonal principles, but particular, personal relations - proximity, not distance. Gilligan (1982/1993:100) notices that women tend to react and reason differently between hypothetical and particular, real dilemmas:

However, the reconstruction of the dilemma in its contextual particularity allows the understanding of cause and consequence which engages the compassion and tolerance repeatedly noted to distinguish judgments of women.

This statement is very similar to what several of the informants stated: Knowing the reason for a student’s behavior or character, made tolerance easier. That is, proximity prepares the ground for tolerance. To Anita care is to act according to the particular attachments that constitute oneself. Care on this account transcends sameness and the right, and is directed to the other. Care is located in the relation between oneself and the other. This relation is both characterized by mutual dependence and difference. And it is the vital point for understanding tolerance within theory of care. Nel Noddings (1984:16) says:

Apprehending the other’s reality, feeling what he feels as nearly as possible, is the essential part of caring from the view of the one-caring. For if I take on the other’s reality as possibility and begin to feel its reality, I fell, also that I must act accordingly; that is, I am impelled to act as though in my own behalf, but in behalf of the other.

Caring means to feel another’s reality as possibility. Since difference (the other) could have been the same (myself), I should tolerate the other. It does not mean that I can realize the other within me, but that I can imagine it as a possibility. This also explains why the

261 The one-caring is a term for the subject, or the I, in the I-you caring relation. The cared-for is the object or the you.
262 Henriksen (1999:30-32) argues for not dissolving the other in sameness of the self – because that would imply the loss of a radical plurality which demands treating the other as distinctively another. This is an important point: A construction of the other as reality independent of our construction is necessary in order to be
informants underscore empathy and perception as central features of tolerance. These are
means in approaching the other’s reality.

Proximity means loss of distance, a distance that is a condition for individual
autonomy, as described under justice and tolerance. The image of the moral agent as
autonomous, rational and free, is reconceptualized by Gilligan (1982/1993:102-103) to a more
conditioned and contingent self:

Moral judgment is renounced in an awareness of the psychological and social determination of
human behavior, at the same time that moral concern is reaffirmed in recognition of the reality
of human pain and suffering.

Gilligan is here not talking about determination in a behaviorist or controllable sense; it is
used in contrast to a strong rational and individual autonomy. In human relations people have
conflicting responsibilities, and these conflicts are also internal and interwoven with one’s
own particular life-story. This means that the moral issue cannot be understood separated
from the particular life-story of the moral subject. On the account of the autonomous self, the
moral subject is measured by the standards of rational understanding, free will and self-made
choice. On the account of the contingent self, the moral subject is measured by the standards
of being conditioned by her own life-story, including conflicting present relations and
responsibilities. This leads to tolerance – because of one’s own and other people’s
insufficiency and dependency.263

This is a helpful perspective on the emphasis Anita puts on the openness of the
tolerant teacher. By inviting colleagues and students into one’s own life-story, and entering
others’ stories, stronger and more tolerant relations are built.

**Negotiating theories**

Neither Anita nor Einar express a “pure” theory of tolerance. They both negotiate their
theoretical conception of tolerance between justice and care – although differently. That is,
they stand in an ideological dilemma between liberalism and feminism, between just
treatment and personal care. Rules and principles for everybody collide with empathy for the

263 Gilligan (1982/1993:172) puts it this way: “Since the reality of connection is experienced by women as given
rather than freely contracted, they arrive at an understanding of life that reflects the limits of autonomy and
control.”
particular. This results in two different theories of tolerance, both internal coherent, but external contradictory.

Einar is reflecting on this dilemma in the following experience: A group of students were in the library. Time was up, and the librarian addressed one of them in order to have them leave. The student replied by called her by the name of a female sexual organ. Einar always reacts strictly on students’ use of profane and improper language, and took the student to the headmaster’s office as a sanction:

E: And then I remember – after I had mentioned it to the deputy head, then he says something … something that … was a bit interesting. He says that… he hasn’t learnt any other language, he says… And that he says in a somewhat woeful voice. - Then I think: O.K. he hasn’t learnt any other language … I’m quite sure the deputy head meant that he couldn’t use it. But in mitigating circumstances it is part of his language and … perhaps you can say in inverted commas and a simple way … his way to react in front of a grown-up.

Einar acts on tolerance of justice – the student broke a general rule, a violation that needs a sanction. The vice-principal, who Einar describes as his most tolerant colleague, brings the particularity of the student in question into consideration. Because of the particular life-story, the student has now a certain vocabulary. And this vocabulary directs and limits his possibilities in relating to other people. Einar identifies the dilemma. He tends to deal with it by insisting on the rules, but evaluates the trespassing milder due to circumstances. The caring perspective has got a role in the understanding of tolerance. Anita would perhaps have handled the dilemma differently – for instance by actively working with broadening the vocabulary of the student.264

4.4.2 Solidarity versus recognition

The theme of difference and unity is reappearing in numerous variations in this analysis of tolerance. The theme is urgent in the Norwegian primary and lower secondary school because it lives between the demands of unity and equity on one hand and difference and tolerance on the other. In this landscape tolerance can be constructed as an ideal of solidarity or recognition. First to tolerance as solidarity:

264 For theoretical discussions on justice and care (or benevolence), see Kohlberg 1990, Habermas 1990b and Katz, Noddings and Strike (eds.) 1999.
Tolerance as solidarity

Alfred is the principal of Kjernsund School. In the interview he praises the phenomenon of difference, which he sees as a condition for tolerance. Tolerance is one of the fundamental values in education, Alfred states. Still difference is understood and only tolerated within a certain unity.

Alfred’s position on tolerance has resemblance to Habermas (1990b) and discursive theory, but also to liberalism. Although Alfred does not use the term, solidarity describes his concern for a unified care for the-not-well-to-do student. His position on tolerance can be described as social-liberal. Unity in the form of a shared conception of education is to be the result of a discourse among the teachers:

A: Yes it … it is that – that a teacher shan’t – shan’t go on his own and neither shall the principal – neither shall others in the school society go on their own. But we shall have … we shall have COMMON … we shall have common understanding of school.
G: Is an I-teacher tolerated then?
A: We still have … still have I-teachers here, and … They are tolerated because we haven’t come far enough in the process. But there is also a task for … among others for me to prepare for – for that there will be a WE-school. And if I don’t … don’t manage it, then I must use somewhat, what shall I say - stronger means.

Alfred conceives the school as being in a process towards unity, more specifically a common understanding of the school. He elaborates on this conception later in the interview:

A: And then there is the hope that we get a - a common understanding in the end and perhaps a common platform for - for the school, that we can …
G: Yes.
A: … sest safely on …
G: Yes.
A: … hopefully.

The common conception of the school is described as a platform, a safe ground. This educational approach, the formation of a common educational and moral vision or platform of the school through dialogue among the teachers, is well known and to various degrees used in many Norwegian schools. The approach is inspired by discursive or communicative theory, and puts emphasis on unity through dialogue.
Implicit in this conception is, however, an image of the present school as lacking this unity in a dissatisfactory plurality. The school is in a process towards unity and solidarity, but is now characterized by difference and conflict. The safe ground lies in the future, which means that the ground now is unsafe.

Before discussing this further, it is necessary to take a closer look at how the idea of the unitary school correlates to tolerance. Alfred connects the idea of difference gathered within the unified society of the school to the ideal of the unitary or equal school.

To Alfred the unitary school is necessary to secure a unified structure of difference, and difference is needed to create tolerance. Habermas (1990a:87-89) operates with five pragmatic presuppositions for a discourse:

Every subject with competence to speak and act is allowed to take part in a discourse.
Everyone is allowed to question any assertion whatever.
Everyone is allowed to introduce any assertion whatever into the discourse.
Everyone is allowed to express his attitudes, desires and needs.
No speaker may be prevented, by internal or external coercion, from exercising his rights as laid down above.\(^{265}\)

It seems that to Alfred the unitary school is the place where these presuppositions can be met, and where true discourse can be realized.

Alfred believes that the outcome of a multicultural or pluralistic discourse will be tolerance in the form of solidarity. His role as a principle is not to make substantial policy for the school. As he stated above, his task is to prepare the ground for, or secure the process of, discourse towards unity. This role of the procedural guardian raises however problems of tolerance both towards colleagues and students. The “privatized” teachers, the non-discursive

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teachers, are moving at the boundaries of tolerance, and so are the non-discursive groups of students and parents:

S: Then you must rather as a starting-point be a bit intolerant towards them and say: - No, you are going in … into the unitary school because there we shall forward tolerance in the whole Norwegian … Norwegian society. - We shall educate the next generation for it. Then you must … whether you want to or not, (laughter) you better start here.

Alfred says this when arguing against private education. On one hand he is very appreciative of difference, and underscores the importance of Sámi and Kven cultures and the presence of new cultures of immigrants. On the other hand he is much less enthusiastic and even quite critical of religious groups, like Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Laestadians. This could be understood as a reaction originating from negative experiences of certain forms of Christianity. But it might as well be understood as something more general.

*Universal solidarity and particular groups*

Habermas (1990b:247) is arguing for the interconnection between the autonomy of the individual and the individual’s embeddedness in consociates.

… without unrestricted individual freedom to take a position on normative validity claims, the agreement that is actually reached could not be truly universal; but without the empathy of each person in the situation for everyone else, which is derived from solidarity, no resolution capable of consensus could be found.

Solidarity, or tolerance, is not only an outcome of education as a discourse, but a condition for discourse. And solidarity is here conceived universally, contrary to a premodern, particular conception, which is restricted to internal solidarity within a specific group. This is where certain religious groups fail to meet the required standard of entrance to the communicating community. They cannot subscribe to this universal solidarity or tolerance as primary to their particular tolerance. Their difference transcends the boundaries of tolerated difference that the pragmatic presuppositions of discourse establish.

As a consequence these groups are pressured towards assimilation into the unity of difference, while other groups are more easily integrated into the discursive community. (Pihl 2000:308-319) This different kind of plurality, the resistance to be integrated into a
community of solidarity, tolerance and equal communication between persons with different cultures, ethnicities, moralities and religions, challenges the limits of tolerance.

Joron Pihl (1999:128-143, 2001:14-33, 2002:25-37) argues that in Norwegian education the last decade, the strong pressure towards an inclusive school on the majority’s premises, has resulted in exclusion of ethnic and cultural groups (“immigrant” groups). The dilemma of discursive tolerance is parallel: The eschatological dream of a unitary school which can include all difference, creates a pressure towards exclusion and assimilation of groups that do not adapt.

Tolerance is vital within discursive theory, as a condition for doing discursion, as a characteristic of the process of discourse and as a result of discourse. The approach is also a way to conceive the idea of an equal, unitary school within a multicultural society. The ambiguity lies in exclusion as a result of inclusion.

Unity in Alfred’s and Habermas’ minds is constructed as a universal phenomenon – disconnected from any particular life-stories or identities. Religion and culture are particular phenomena, and tolerance must therefore be constructed and understood independently of these spheres. The universal account of tolerance will therefore have priority over particular conceptions of religions and culture. And further: The subjects cannot primarily be tolerated as members of religions, cultures or other groups, but as individuals. As in the case with Alfred and other informants, this leads to a perceptual priority of the subject as individual. Only secondary is the subject seen as constituted by groups. Only rarely do the informants see groups as the object of tolerance. An alternative account of tolerance, where community has an essential role in the conception of identity, does however give perceptual priority to the group in issues of tolerance.

Tolerance as recognition

Bjørg verbalizes this different position, with emphasis not on solidarity, but on recognition and community. Her own context is multicultural in several respects: She is herself an immigrant. She has spent most of her time in Norway in the South-Eastern part, only recently having moved to Northern Norway. She describes herself as a Christian, and is reflecting on her conception of and way of life in relation to the multicultural Kjernsund School.

To Bjørg tolerance is open-mindedness. Open-mindedness in Bjørg’s sense is however not only directed towards the other, but also an invitation to the other to enter a relation to oneself: It is so to speak a downgrading of fences between self and other. This requires recognition of oneself: Recognition in this context implies both a mental awareness and a
value-appreciation of a phenomenon. This process of recognition of oneself is necessary in order to establish the ability of tolerance. In reflecting on a colleague, whose behavior towards student is unstable for instance in the form of groundless and uncontrolled anger, Bjørg says:

B: ... it can ... topple over so that the students become victims, don’t you agree, for a grown-up man who has his own things that he perhaps hasn’t sorted out ... And perhaps THAT – I have also thought of that, this about ... tolerance and ... perhaps in relation to religious matters. It seems as if many people have an un-clarified relationship to their own – own mental platform, and THEN ... it is VERY difficult with openness. Because then one is – it seems as if one is very unsafe in conversations about such things.

The recognition of oneself gives the necessary security to open up for a relation to the other. The teacher who has not recognized aspects of her life-story, is closing these aspects to the other, and limiting potential relations to the other. To Bjørg this is narrow-mindedness and not-tolerance.

The road to tolerance is therefore the road of an authentic identity. Bjørg does, however, not think this process of identification as primarily inwardly directed. She understands identity as relational and dialogical. The cultural groups I relate to, have a central role in her understanding of who I am. It is therefore imperative to recognize one’s own life-story: The relations I come from, live in and search for. This is apparent in a quotation, where she tells about her attempts to create a project on the religious and cultural group, the Laestadians:

B: Whereas ... many people seem to have a problematic relationship to their backgrounds ... I RECENTLY heard that two of my colleagues had, - one of them had grandparents a grandfather who was Laestadian – a Laestadian preacher. - And how did she have it when she grew up in relation to not knitting and such things. ... And another, who has very religious parents, Laestadians ... She - or at my age – who did not know before – you know, nothing ... That should indicate they having Laestadian background, without showing, don’t you agree ...
B: And when I talked about Laestadianism that I wanted to have a project around it last year, then ... I tried to get a cooperation going, then it was ... she who worked with RE in the other class – no, she didn’t want to. Then ... too big – she didn’t want to make too much out of it and ... And ... I also asked the form teacher if she wanted some cooperation around it in relation to ... Social studies or ... Norwegian or – Was not interested ... She is a secular humanistic – Yes. - So in a way, she feels it personally difficult, but ... 

Laestadianism is a part of several persons’ life-stories and of the communal story, but it is largely untold. The lack of personal and cultural recognition of this cultural and religious group and tradition means that it is mentally and conceptually ignored. On an account of positive tolerance, this leads to not-tolerance. Put another way: Not to recognize the groups that shape persons’ and communities’ identities, is not to recognize the identity of the individuals. And not recognizing the identity of the individuals is illegitimate intolerance.

With reference to Jehova’s Witnesses, she puts her point like this:

B: So THERE on can see a good deal of prejudices AGAINST ... There isn’t much thinking around the fact that one shall strengthen their identity and ... that one shall support the fact that they shall not ... take part in some things. And then –and, if they complain that they are not allowed to take part then ... yes ... we shall have to organize something, don’t you agree. We send them out or – don’t you agree? – If they don’t want to take part in the end of term Christmas celebration or – yes ... It seems as if it is largely looked upon as a problem.

Here Bjørg contrasts prejudices and tolerance. Prejudice is ignoring the constitutive role of the group in the formation of identity – tolerance is strengthening identity through recognition of the group. Being supportive of the particular groups’ perspectives and practices, means recognizing the students’ relations to this group, whether cultural, ethnic or religious.

Tolerance and identity

This perspective of identity, group and tolerance is elaborated by authors like Charles Taylor and Michael J. Sandel. Sandel (1998:178-183) argues against a deontological perspective on the self, represented by Rawls, but one which also is implicit in the understanding of tolerance as solidarity as described above and argued for by Habermas. According to Sandel deontology
views ourselves as independent selves; identity is constructed independent of aims and attachments. Aims and attachments can be changed without fundamental consequences for my identity. Aims and attachments are something I have, not something I am. This conception, Sandel argues, does not recognize the moral force these aims and attachments, loyalties and convictions have on the particular person. We cannot understand ourselves separately from them. We live and understand ourselves “as members of this family or community or nation or people, as bearer of this history, as sons and daughters of that revolution, as citizens of this republic.” These relations are more than preferences or values I choose, they are constitutive of who I am, of my identity. Imagining a person without these deep relations, is conceiving a person without character. The conception of character means that the person is placed within a particular historical and cultural context, which is beyond command and choice, and this context has consequences for choices and conduct.

For the theory of tolerance as recognition this means that tolerance is directed towards group-identity, that is, the collective stories that I share with others within a certain context. These stories constitute a certain perspective on the world, a perspective with a certain language and grammar. Tolerance then means to learn, understand and recognize second languages. The teacher does not have a neutral language, which can be a basis for tolerating individual agents, but is forced to speak within her own language. The challenge of tolerance is to learn and recognize second languages in order to communicate and understand.

The example above concerning the cap can illustrate this. The object cap can be given at least two different meanings: A secular language will understand a cap in terms of functionality (keep the head and ears warm) or aesthetically (be pretty, a signal of life-style). In a Muslim language a cap in this context is a scull-cap, and that scull-cap has a meaning far beyond keeping the ears warm. The meaning of the scull-cap can only be understood in the light of certain traditional and religious stories, which relate the object and the beholder of the object to a certain history and identity.266 A common secular language is not capable of expressing the meaning of the cap or give reasons for recognizing the cap as a sign of identity. Only through understanding a Muslim language is recognizing the difference between the functional cap and the religious skullcap possible.

266 In her study of young Norwegian-Pakistani muslims, Østberg (2003:120) found that dress is a central perspective in their self-description as Pakistani and Muslims. When asked what makes her feel Pakistani, a 12 years old girl answers: That she is Muslim, that she celebrates id and that she uses Pakistani clothes.
Tolerance as recognition is trying to challenge the dominance of the major language. Minority languages are not restricted within a majority language, but recognized as separate and different perspectives of the world.

Tolerance as recognition therefore is in the broad tradition that is called multicultural education, that is, an education where dialogue between and appreciation of different cultural, religious and ethnical groups and traditions characterizes the classroom. This conception of tolerance is, however, not identical to a superficial every-thing-is-all-right relativism. As Bjørg reflects:

G: I wondered if you agree – if it is – if you agree that it is an aim. That is, to have the same rules for everybody …
S: Not necessarily rules then, as such.
G: Or limits …
S: One has to look again to see what is the best … Because I am not very much concerned - even if what – I said a minute ago – the students look very … unjust, unjust – don’t you agree? - It’s not necessarily unjust that one gets it this way and another that way, from the presuppositions … It can be frightfully unfair to the weak student who has had little ballast from home, to be demanded to do exactly like the rest of us. - But I think it is important that the IDEAL is the same.

Justice should not be understood in an egalitarian sense, Bjørg argues, it must be understood in the relation to what is “the best” – that is the good. Being asked about the possibility of rules in education, Bjørg herself introduces the conception of the good. There is no way but answering the question of the good. Tolerance does not dispense from issues of the good, but opens up for different perspectives of good. The multicultural dialogue is therefore in itself not done on neutral grounds, but in a certain historical and cultural contexts. Bjørg identifies this context partly on a national level, and therefore argues for a unitary school based on certain values. Still at the same she argues for context-sensitiveness on a local level: The importance of local recognition.

Carsten is also underscoring the imperative of tolerance as working for recognition of local identity:

C: That it should contribute to building up a tolerance … then … The point must be that we … we as a school and we as a local community shall manage to have such positive attitudes and … in relation to … both this and that, that the students shall grasp it.
G: Jeg lurte på om du var enig - om det er - om du er enig i at det er et mål. Altså det å ha samme regler for alle ...
S: Ikke nødvendigvis regler da, sånn sett.
G: Eller grenser...
S: Man må jo se igjen på hva som er det beste .... For jeg er ikke så veldig opptatt - selv om det - som jeg sa i sted - elevene ser jo veldig ... urettferdig, urettferdig – ikke sant. - Det er ikke nødvendigvis urettferdig at en får det slik og en får det slik, ut ifra forutsetninger ... Det kan være fryktelig urettferdig for den svake eleven som har hatt liten ballast hjemmefra, å bli krevet at ... at de skal gjøre akkurat sann som vi andre. - Men jeg syns at det er viktig at IDEALET er det samme.

C: At det skal være med på å bygge opp en toleranse … så … Poenget må jo bli at vi … vi som skole og vi som lokalsamfunn skal greie å ha så positive holdninger og ... overfor ... både det ene og det andre, at elevene skal fange det opp -
G: Ja.
On the account of tolerance as recognition, tolerance is related to group-identity. Taylor (1989, 1994b, 1998) develops a conception of identity as relational and dialogically created. In this interpretation of the self, transindividual horizons are inescapable. The subject can only be authentic through an understanding of self in relation to these horizons and their understanding of the good. The narrated common conception of good is creating coherence in a situation of fragmentation. Therefore, equal respect to Taylor is not only respect for the isolated, or as he would say, atomized individual, but also for the contexts or traditions the self is situated within. In his famous essay *The politics of recognition* (Taylor 1994b:68), he states: “Just as all must have equal civil rights, and equal voting rights, regardless of race and culture, so all should enjoy the presumption that their traditional culture has value.” The lack of recognition of constituting groups can result in the deprivation of these traditions and consequently loss of valuable horizons for interpreting identity. It is not only a question of survival, but of worth. Recognition of minority groups and traditions means positive tolerance: Giving these attention and goods.

Walzer (1997) is arguing along the same lines with explicit reference to education and tolerance. The threat today is the dissociated individual, and he sees the group as rescue. The group can give concepts of common goods, tradition and coherence to the fragmented individual.

… no regime of toleration can be built solely on such "strong" individuals, for they are the product of group life and won’t, by themselves, reproduce the connections that made their own strength possible. So we need to sustain and enhance associational ties, even if these ties connect some of us to some others and not everyone to everyone else. (Walzer 1997:105)

The school has a task in this sustaining and enhancing work. Firstly, Walzer (1997:109-110) argues, public school should produce national (here: Norwegian) citizens, giving a sympathetic account its particular history and philosophy of regime of tolerance. This does not mean the exclusion of criticism: “Democracies needs critics who possess the virtue of tolerance, which probably means critics who have loyalties of their own and some sense of

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267 Taylor (1992:66) says it like this: "Briefly, we can say that authenticity (A) involves (i) creation and construction as well as discovery, (ii) originality, and frequently (iii) opposition to the rules of society and even potentially to what we recognize as morality. But it is also true, as we saw, that it (B) requires (i) poenness to horizons of significance (for otherwise the creation loses the background that can save it from insignificance) and (ii) a self-definition in dialogue. That these demands may be in tension has to be allowed. But what must be wrong is a simple privileging of one over the other, of (A), say, at the expense of (B), or vice versa.”
the value of associational life.” This means, secondly, that the schools should teach about and value different groups. This way the school is creating hyphenated citizens: Through the experience of difference they will defend tolerance within their own community and at the same time valuating the differences.

Through this theoretical sketch Bjørg’s concern is understandable: On one hand giving attention and value to groups (Jehova’s Witnesses and so on) and on the other working towards a national citizenship in the unitary public school. This way an understanding of difference is created, and the duality Walzer is promoting: Belonging and tolerance.

However, a problem which arises is the fact that persons relate to a variety of groups in a complex manner. This leads to the issue of modern and postmodern tolerance.

4.4.3 Modern versus postmodern tolerance
In this last section of this chapter I will read the understandings of tolerance from modern versus postmodern-debates. The underscore of the plurality of debates is important, because there is no consensus as far as terminology or core issues (Harvey 1990:10-65 and Henriksen and Krogseth 2001:31-37). There is also a complex relationship between the construction of the dichotomies modern - postmodern, modernity - postmodernity and the modern project - postmodernism. Whether one should understand postmodernity in terms of late modernity, a cultural mentality in the succession of modernity, or as POSTmodernISM, a radical break with the fundamental grand stories of modernism, is an open question. I will here use the dichotomies interchangeably and not discuss the issue of (dis)continuity.

In this context I will focus on the understanding of difference (plurality), identity and morality in the modern – postmodern debates in relation to the informants’ construction of tolerance. I will identify two perspectives, respectively as modern and postmodern – in an attempt to draw a rough sketch at an even greater analytical distance than above in this chapter.

The perspectives of modern and postmodern tolerance do not divide informants in two camps – they run across all informants and can be read in various degrees in all interviews. In this sense the informants live in a dilemma between two mentalities of tolerance: A modern and a postmodern.

The construction of difference lies at the heart of tolerance. The informants use and understand tolerance as a response to difference – difference conceived as a collection of a variety of characterizations like disagreeable, dislikeable, inconceivable, incommensurable,
foreign, unfamiliar, various, multicultural and renewal. Difference is therefore a key concept within both modern and postmodern readings of tolerance.

Accounts of difference
Harvey (1990:10) cites Baudelaire when he in 1863 wrote: “Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent: it is the other half of art, the other being the eternal and the immutable.” Difference is of course not a new phenomenon: Modernity is often characterized by differentiation of culture in spheres (science, morality and art). At the same time the modern project is trying to overcome difference: Its ambition was (and is) objective science, universal morality and autonomous art. From Hegel to Habermas the modern project has been to find or create universal unity in a situation of difference. (Schrag 1997:6-7)

To simplify: On the modern account of tolerance difference is understood in dichotomy with unity: Difference is negotiated against the demands of unity, and vice versa. This is obvious within the language of the unitary Norwegian school. Any construction of difference must be balanced with or understood within some kind of unity. This leads to a sense of unity and sameness as normality. Difference that can be located within the – often broad – conception of normality is valued positively, in contrast to the difference that transgresses the constructed boundaries of normality.

The postmodern turn or revolution is accepting and valuing difference as incommensurable. Heterogenity, not homogeneity, becomes both reality and ideal. According to Harvey (1990:44) postmodernism is characterized by the total acceptance of ephemerality, fragmentation and discontinuity of the first part of Baudelaire’s description.

But postmodernism responds to the fact of that in a very particular way. It does not try to transcend it, counteract it, or even to define ‘the eternal and immutable’ elements that might lie within it. Postmodernism swims, even wallows, in the fragmentary and the chaotic currents of change as if that is all there is.

In contrast to this difference-within-unity account, postmodern tolerance conceives difference versus difference. This means a radicalization of difference, in the sense that difference is not seen as diversions from unity as normality. Difference is a constitutive perspective of society and culture, including the school – and also constitutive for tolerance. Tolerance is not endurance of deviations, but recognition of difference. On this account tolerance is a way to live in relations with persons, groups and institutions with different perspectives of the world.
It is not (only) an attitude towards the persons or groups that deviate from the conception of normality.

Modern tolerance relates to the other primarily as an isolated individual. One is tolerating the other because there are differences between individuals, and that each individual has the right to be respected as such. Difference is therefore located between individuals.

Postmodern tolerance locates difference also within the subject (Walzer 1997:87-92). The particular subject can be understood only in the contexts and relations he or she is located. The identity of the subject is constituted in these relations. This means that the subject is not only challenged with tolerating the other, but also oneself. The informants on several occasions have internal dialogues – and they reflect on aspects of themselves as tolerable or intolerable. Einar has acted very aggressively towards students on incidents of sexual intolerance and profanity – and is reflecting on this aspect of his identity or character, with a different voice.

E: What one does privately, that is their responsibility then and there, but I feel that I as a teacher must react in a school society. And if you think of the consequences then – is it in THIS way you can behave? Is it possible to go on with it? Can one feel … boobs for instance, or grab the crotch and things like that? So THAT, I know – it is some of the times I have reacted most SEVERELY (laughs a little). And one can perhaps reflect on why do I react so VIOLENTLY on just that, because I have had a couple of episodes where I really have fled into a rage, you see … It was a few years back, where I … reacted on a boy, and then it was to march the boy in question out of the room and … up to the principal to talk about it. THEN… THEN – and that is a very strong reaction.

G: Yes.

E: It is a very strong reaction.

G: Do you think so – when you look back upon it now – what do you think about it?

E: I don’t really know … It frightened me a bit to feel the tremendous … I was on the point of saying hat the anger reactions and aggression I got … That frightened me. And what would have happened if the student had hit me or something of the sort, you see, (laughs a bit). Defended himself … Yes, it is difficult to say what would have happened. Because you know – when you are angry you may do stupid things.

G: Syns du det var - når du ser tilbake på det nå – hvordan tenker du om det da?

E: Ja, jeg vet ikke helt … Det skremte meg litt å kjenne på de voldsomme … jeg holdt på å s i sinnereaksjonene, aggresjonen jeg fikk … Det skremte meg. Og hva hadde skjedd hvis eleven hadde dratt til meg eller et eller annet sånt, ikke sant (ler litt). Forsvart seg … Ja, da er det ikke godt å si hva som hadde skjedd. For du vet - når du blir sint så kan du jo gjøre dumme ting.

Kvale (1992:15) argues that in psychology “[t]here is a move from the archaeology of the of the ‘psyche’ to the architecture of current cultural landscapes.”
Einar did scare himself. He recognizes that he lost control – and only coincidence prevented him from physically attacking the student. An aspect of himself made him lose behavioral power; he was unable to reflect on alternative actions. Indirectly he is expressing criticism of his own way of acting, but he also raises the question of why he lost control. He got so angry that he did not have a choice at the time of action. Only by a later, reflecting different voice, he is able to start the process of understanding himself in the light of his own life-story. This was not the purpose of the interview, of course. The point here is simply that on an account of postmodern tolerance, the subject understands itself in different voices. On a modern account Einar’s story can be interpreted in individual psychological language. A postmodern account, however, can interpret Einar’s story as not only an individual, but also a cultural one. The phenomenon of multivoiced selves is not only an individual, psychological problematic deviance. It is maybe a cultural condition, a way selves tend to verbalize themselves in contemporary culture.

Between voices there is a question of tolerance. Can Einar tolerate his own behavior? Postmodern tolerance is therefore not only directed towards others, but also towards oneself. And as long as the subject is understood as constituted by a web of relations, tolerance becomes a way of handling ones own plural identity.

The account of modern tolerance rests on the ideal of moral unity. The informants construct this ideal of unity differently: Some interpret unity in liberal terms – that is individual moral plurality within certain social boundaries or rules, while others understand unity in terms of moral universalism: That is, thorough search will actually find similarities and universal ideals across a variety of cultural forms of morality. Moral unity is also formulated as positive law – either in the form of existing Norwegian law or the national curriculum. Then of course unity is limited to the Norwegian context.

All these constructions of moral unity share the idea that unity in some form is possible and vital. This does in some instances lead to modification of difference in order to fit the construction of unity. In other instances experiences of incommensurable difference on one hand and the ideal of unity on the other lead to frustration. These constructions of unity do share the idea that moral languages are commensurable – that is, they can be understood and compared through translation.

*Life-worlds and languages*

On the account of postmodern tolerance different moralities is a matter of different life-worlds. These life-worlds are not automatically commensurable, and can only be lived and
understood within their own language. Any attempt of translation of one life-world’s moral language to another is a construction or a new language, departing from the original life-world and creating a new one – with a language of its own. Some of the informants argue along these lines when reflecting on the difference between moral language and life-world of the Southern and Northern regions of Norway. The Northern moral language did shock some of the Southern teachers moving to Northern Norway, but can be understood as a part of that region’s culture and language. That moral language does, however, not communicate well in the South, and translation is difficult.

Postmodern tolerance does however recognize that the subject relates to persons, groups and institutions with different moral languages. On a postmodern account the subject is not isolated from these, but embedded in or constituted by them. This creates a context of plurality of moral languages, which again leads to moral ambiguity. Moral situations can be interpreted and understood in different moral languages. Above I have described instances where the teachers experience ambiguity in how they should read moral situations, and ambiguity in their different relations to for instance students, colleagues, church and community and the distinct moral languages of these contexts.

All this makes it hard to come to a conclusion of the disapprovable – which is necessary on the account of the double condition of tolerance. And even more: In a school context the understanding and practice of tolerance must be socially coordinated, and that presupposes a common or external determination of the disapprovable. It is not hard to see that postmodern tolerance works towards a conceptual expansion of tolerance, as described above. On a modern account tolerance has its legitimacy primarily as an *interim concept and value*. It is hard to give a theoretical defense of tolerance within a scheme that presupposes unity on the approvable and disapprovable. Only when some other instance like autonomy, uncertainty, plurality or relativity takes precedence over the (disapprovable) under certain conditions, is it possible to form a theory of tolerance within moral philosophy. It is interesting to observe the tendency to consider tolerance as a last resort or a matter of pragmatics or politics – not ethics. (Williams 1996a, Williams 1996b, Weissberg 1998) On this account tolerance does not fit into the moral languages of modernity. It is an alternative solution to pluralism when the solution is not found within the moral languages themselves. And it is a foreign value – a political negotiator between competing moral languages.
**Tolerance – a key concept**

Postmodern tolerance is not only political, but also moral. That means, tolerance has shifted position from an interim to a *central concept and value* within different moral languages. Tolerance gets its legitimacy from within ethics, not from without. Tolerance has risen to a key concept within the different practice-theories of the informants. It is a way of negotiating between different relations, a way of navigating in plurality. This upgrading of the value of tolerance has gone hand in hand with a conceptual expansion and shift – as described above. Tolerance gets a plurality of meanings: Many of them in the road of positive tolerance and tolerance as recognizing difference, but not only so. Negative tolerance – and disapproval – still has its function.

This also means that the assumption that tolerance is a common denominator across cultures and moralities is futile. The plurality of theoretically and conceptually understandings of tolerance makes it impossible to talk about tolerance as one. Any attempt to give a uniform, precise definition of tolerance is condemned to fail. The upgrading of tolerance has been at the cost of the universality of tolerance. Modern tolerance was for decades synonymous with liberal tolerance – a proposed defense of tolerance transcending individual religious, philosophical, cultural and ethical differences. As the debate on liberalism and liberal tolerance has given reasons for changing the status of this theoretical defense from a universal to a particular, tolerance is left without universal clarity and legitimacy.

Postmodern tolerance is therefore theory-laden in the sense that the theoretical context is determinate for how tolerance is understood. The different theories of tolerance among informants (above) and theorists (chapter three) illustrate this. Tolerance needs a theoretical horizon in order to be understood. Tolerance is also contextual in the sense that it can take on different conceptualizations in different contexts, within one theoretical framework and one person.

**Pragmatic tolerance and tolerance as a position**

This leads to a distinction between pragmatic tolerance and tolerance as a position. Pragmatic tolerance is the main locus of modern tolerance and equivalent to tolerance as an interim value and last resort. Tolerance has instrumental value – it is not an aim in it self, but has its value according to the effect it has on giving a good result. Tolerance is a value-in-between different theories and cultural practices. It is a way to handle plurality of unified and strong theories and practices – for instance Christian endurance of Muslims, or the unitary Norwegian school’s endurance of Jehovah’s Witnesses. On this account tolerance is not an
integrative part of Christianity or a social-liberal school ideology, but something to turn to in incidents of unsolvable difference.

Tolerance as a position is an integrated tolerance – tolerance is then given a central position within Christianity or social-liberalism. Tolerance as a position is mainly a postmodern term, and a consequence of the view that tolerance is theory-laden. This also means that the school can educate and form the students to a tolerant position. On the account of pragmatic tolerance, this is impossible because such a position does not exist. One can educate and form students to one or a variety of positions – but not to tolerance. Tolerance is the way the students are taught and brought up to relate to the other, i.e. other positions.

Postmodern tolerance does, however, not defend one position as the only right one, but recognizes the plurality of different tolerant positions. Tolerance is therefore no meta-term to resolve difference, but difference can be understood and recognized through the different positions of and languages of tolerance.

It has been claimed that postmodern tolerance is recognition of difference – a positive, single construct that affirms and appreciates cultural difference (Conway 1997). The findings of this study show, however, the plurality of understandings of tolerance. It is therefore more fruitful to conceive postmodern tolerance as a plastic concept within a plurality of theories. Postmodern tolerance is not one conceptual or theoretical position. It is a conceptual and theoretical expansion of tolerance, which opens up for new, but still holds on to earlier, understandings of tolerance. In this sense postmodern tolerance is not one single theoretical position on tolerance, but a description of the cultural and theoretical conditions of conceptualizations and theories of tolerance.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ This corresponds to Henriksen’s (1999:39) view that “… postmodernity cannot be regarded as one among several cultural phenomena, but that postmodernity is a certain way of perceiving and interpreting the entire cultural sphere. As cultural phenomenon postmodernity is a way culture as a whole – in all its different, diverse, fragmented expressions – appears.”
Table 4.3: Marks of modern and postmodern tolerance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern tolerance</th>
<th>Postmodern tolerance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difference versus unity</td>
<td>Difference versus difference</td>
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<tr>
<td>The self as individual</td>
<td>The self as inter- and intra-relational</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moral unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last resort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberal, universal conception</td>
<td>Theory-laden, contextual conception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single conception of tolerance</td>
<td>Plastic conception of tolerance</td>
</tr>
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4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter teachers’ conceptions of tolerance has been analyzed. Tolerance in educational practice is seen both as a characteristics of the excellent teacher and of the different relations the teacher is part of. Tolerance in educational practice means both to be professional and to care.

Tolerance is conceptualized as a plastic concept, as having the capacity to change meaning with context. The concept is used and understood thin and thick, negative and positive and as a double and single construct. There is however an emphasis on a thick, positive and single constructed tolerance. This is called a conceptual expansion of tolerance. Included in this conceptual expansion is also a shift in value of tolerance: Is means a movement from tolerance as a last resort to tolerance as a key to handle difference.

Tolerance is theoretically understood as justice and care, as solidarity and recognition, modern and postmodern. Moral and epistemological uncertainty results in ambiguity and a postmodern tolerance which accepts plurality as a situation of difference versus difference in contrast to modern tolerance which conceives plurality as difference versus unity.

After having analyzed tolerance at one curriculum domain, the perceived curriculum, it is now time to move on to another: The formal.
5. Tolerance in the formal curriculum

The main question of this chapter is how tolerance is conceived in the Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school (1997) (C97).\(^{270}\)

Aiming at a comparison of the three curricula domains – the perceived, the formal and the ideological – I will use a similar analytical scheme as in the previous chapter. The analysis is therefore threefold: First, the focus is on the image of the practice and context of tolerance in compulsory school. Secondly, the perspective shifts to a conceptual analysis of tolerance in the document. Thirdly, I will attempt to place the understanding of tolerance in C97 in theoretical contexts.

Even though the focus is C97 as final text and not its genesis, I will briefly give an oversight over the status of tolerance in the Education Act.

5.1 Tolerance in the Law

In 1969 an Education Act for primary and lower secondary education was passed.\(^{271}\) The part of section one concerning the purpose of compulsory education, reads:

\begin{quote}
The object of primary and lower secondary education shall be, in agreement and cooperation with the home, to help give students a Christian and moral upbringing, to develop their mental and physical abilities, and to give them good general knowledge so that they may become useful and independent human beings at home and in society. The schools shall further intellectual freedom and tolerance and emphasis shall be placed on creating satisfactory forms of cooperation between teachers and students and between the school and the home. (C97:10)
\end{quote}

\textit{Grunnskolen skal i forståing og samarbeid med heimen hjelpe til med å gje elevane ei kristen og moralsk oppseding, utvikle deira evner åndeleg og kroppsleg, og gje dei god allmennkunnskap så dei kan bli gagnlege og sjølvstendige menneske i heim og samfunn. Skolen skal fremje åndsfridom og toleranse, og leggje vinn på å skape gode samarbeidsformer mellom lærarar og elevar og mellom skole og heim. (L97:10)}

The section has a two-part structure regarding values. First, it emphasizes that the school is to give the students a Christian and moral upbringing. Secondly, it shall promote intellectual freedom and tolerance. Ever since the text was proposed and then passed, there has been a political disagreement on the relationship between the two parts. The political left gave

\(^{270}\) In the following I will refer both the English and the Norwegian text in The curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school. When referring to the English version I use the abbreviation C97, when explicit referring to the Norwegian version I use L97 as an abbreviation of Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen.

\(^{271}\) In 1998 a new Act of education for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education was passed. There was no major change in the section of the purpose of the education. Equality in value and status has been added, and the section has been edited also to fit upper secondary education. (Act Relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act) 1998.) I will concentrate on the text in the 1969 Act since it was the existing law when the C97 was written.
priority to the second part (tolerance) and saw tolerance as a censure of a too dogmatic and confessional Christian upbringing and education in compulsory school. They saw tolerance as referring to the practice of the school. In order to realize a tolerant school consensus on moral matters was of great importance.

The political centre and right gave priority to the first part (Christian values), and argued that tolerance required firm values. Tolerance therefore did not so much address the school as such, but the students’ attitudes towards international plurality. The school had to teach the students right and wrong and make a choice of values and norms. Such a conscious choice was not contrary to tolerance, they argued, but a condition for tolerating a different view. (Sandsmark 1982:65-70)

Partly, this is a disagreement on the conceptualising of tolerance. On the latter view tolerance is constructed with a double condition of both disagreeing/disliking and accepting. The first interpretation seems to open up for conceiving tolerance with a single condition only: Acceptance.

Sandsmark argues that the view of the political left is indifferentialism – in not allowing any one religion or life philosophy the primacy. This is however confusing the issue of conditions of tolerance with the limits of tolerance. Constructing tolerance with one condition only does of course not mean allowing everything, or exclude the possibility of establishing criteria for limits. The criteria for limits of tolerance are not found in the condition of conceptualization. The question of conceptualization concerns the appropriate use of the word. In addition one needs a theory of tolerance, included a theory of its limits.

The difference in views runs therefore deeper than mere conceptualization. It seems like the center-right view understand tolerance as a secondary value, and Christian values as primary. On this account tolerance is not integrated in Christian ethics – it is a way of Christian ethics as an entity to relate to different views of the good and right. Christian ethics is seen as the source for moral unity within the school. Within the school the primary issue is not tolerance of difference but securing and creating unity. Tolerance is not so much a necessary practice within the school as a preparation for difference in the space and time outside of and beyond school. Tolerance is not internalized as a school practice, but externalized as a preparation for life in plurality outside of the unitary space of the classroom.

The political left’s account of tolerance is different. Tolerance is a primary value, and Christian values secondary. This means that tolerance has its place within the school. Tolerating the different student within school means working towards a more pluralistic morality – one that ideally can embrace all students. The idea of consensus emerges as one
such theoretical frame that on one hand allows plurality and on the other secures unity. Another question is whether Christian ethics along these lines or a morality of consensus are able to establish a common framework for a unitary school on one hand and offer resources for tolerance in a situation of plurality on the other.  

Anyway: Both Christian ethics and an ethics of consensus imply limits of tolerance. In either interpretation tolerance belongs to one of the two most important value-sets in the Education Act of 1969. With this brief sketch of the debate on tolerance in the Education Act, I will move on to the document that is to explain and apply the ideal of tolerance to the various aspects of compulsory education: C97.

5.2 The practice of tolerance

C97 consists of two parts. The first, the general part, consists of the Core curriculum (CC) and Principles and guidelines for compulsory education (PG). The CC is the general part of both C97, Curriculum of upper secondary education and adult education. The PG, also named The bridge, is meant to link the general part and the subject curricula in C97 together. The second part of C97 consists of 14 subject curricula (SC).

The word tolerance is used 14 times in C97: Three times in CC, twice in PG and nine in SC.

Table 5.1: Periods with the word tolerance in the three main parts of C97.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tolerance in C97</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General part (CC and PG)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. CC Christian and humanistic values both demand and foster tolerance, providing room for other cultures and customs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CC Education should counteract prejudice and discrimination, and foster mutual respect and tolerance between groups with differing modes of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CC Tolerance is not the same as detachment and indifference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PG Pupils with secure identities rooted in their own cultures are better placed to meet other cultures, as stated in the educational objectives of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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272 See Rescher (1993) for a critical analysis of the practical and theoretical limitations of consensual philosophy, especially as formulated by Habermas.

273 On issues of values and education the Norwegian political landscape changed in the decades following the Education Act, particularly in the Labour party. See below.
| 5. PG | In the course of their schooling, children and young people should have imparted to them such basic democratic rights as intellectual freedom, tolerance, the rule of law, freedom of opinion and religion, freedom of organisation and freedom of speech. | Opplæringa skal gi barn og unge del i grunnleggende demokratiske rettar som åndsfridom, toleranse, rettstryggleik, trus- og religionsfridom og organisasjons- og ytringsfридom. |

**Subject curricula (SC)**

| 6. RE | The subject must be approached openly and contribute to insight, respect and dialogue across the boundaries between faiths and philosophies, and promote understanding and tolerance in religious and moral questions. | Faget skal være åpent og bidra til innsikt, respekt og dialog på tvers av tros- og livssynsgrenser og fremme forståelse og toleranse i religiøse og moralske spørsmål. |
| 7. RE | Pupils should have the opportunity to develop respect for and tolerance of others through such themes as teasing/bullying, backbiting, and racism, as well as showing compassion, and daring to stand up for others | I opplæringen skal elevene utvikle evnen til respekt og toleranse overfor andre mennesker gjennom temaer som plaging/mobbing, å baktale, rasisme, barnhjertighet, å våge å stå opp for andre |
| 8. N | Pupils should have the opportunity to formulate their own views, be able to express agreement or disagreement with others, and develop tolerance of others’ opinions | I opplæringa skal elevane formulere eigne synspunkt, kunne uttrykke semje eller usemje med andre og arbeide seg opp toleranse for synet til andre |
| 9. NSL | Pupils should have the opportunity to practise formulating their own views, expressing agreement/disagreement with and tolerance of others’ opinions | I opplæringen skal elevene få øvelse i å formulere egne synspunkter, uttrykke enighet/uenighet med andre og toleranse for andre syn |
| 10. NSL | Pupils should further develop their understanding of and openness to story-telling and other forms of sign language communication in different cultures. | Elevene skal videreutvikle sin forståelse og toleranse for muntlige tradisjoner i ulike kulturer |
| 11. SS | Pupils should have the opportunity to become acquainted with contemporary immigration into Norway and learn something about emigration from Norway in the nineteenth century; be able to develop tolerance of people with other backgrounds and different points of view | I opplæringa skal elevane gjere seg kjende med innvandringa til Noreg i vår tid og lære noko om utvandringa frå Noreg i førre hundreåret. Kunne utvikle toleranse overfor menneske med ulik bakgrunn og ulike føresetnader |
| 12. E. | Such insight lays the foundations for greater respect and tolerance, contributes to new ways of thinking, and broadens their understanding of their own cultural roots. | Slik innsikt legger grunnlag for respekt og økt toleranse, og det bidrar til andre tenkemåter og utvider elevenes forståelse av sin egen kulturtillhørighet. |
| 13. MU | General aims for the subject are: For pupils to experience and understand that their own singing, dancing and musical expression can have quality and worth, and that music and dance can lay foundations for understanding and tolerance | Opplæringa i faget har som mål at elevane oppleve og forstå at deira eigne song-, dans- og musikkuttrykk kan ha kvalitet og verdi, og at musikk og dans kan skape eit grunnlag for forståing og toleranse |
| 14. PE | Pupils should have the opportunity to constantly change pairings and groupings so as to develop tolerance of one another’s strong and weak points, in play, sports and dance | I opplæringa skal elevane arbeide i stadig nye par- og grupperelasjonar i leik, idrett og dans for å utvikle toleranse for dei sterke og svake sidene til kvarandre |

**RE** = Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education  
**N** = Norwegian
In analyzing understanding of the practice and context of tolerance in C97, I will first focus on the content and structure of these 14 quotes of tolerance. Then I will focus on the construction of difference and unity in C97 as a path to a broader understanding of the conception of tolerance. Before proceeding to the description and discussion of the conception of the practice of tolerance in C97, some methodological issues have to be addressed.

5.2.1 Methodological reflections

In contemporary curriculum theory it is quite common to understand formal curricula as political documents of conflict, compromise and struggle for power (Engelsen 1988:204-208 and 1993:59). In an interesting study of Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education as an answer to the multicultural unitary school, Gravem (2004) is arguing for a method of holistic coherence. That is, the theory that best can give a coherent understanding of most elements in the material is the preferable (Gravem 2004:5-8). While the method of identifying and understanding conflicts can be described as deconstruction or critical interpretation, the method of working out a holistic theory can be described as systematic reconstruction.

Systematic reconstruction as formulated by Gravem (2004:207-208), has an ambition to contribute to a holistic understanding of curriculum that can be helpful for teachers and other actors in the curriculum field. Gravem takes the formal curriculum as a given in the sense that teachers have a duty to practice the politically passed formal curriculum. A systematic reconstruction of C97 is therefore aiming at giving a critical recommendation of interpretation of the formal curriculum in order to help educational practice. In a criticism of a deconstructive approach to curriculum, Gravem (2004:208) says:

But this prospect has a price. It gets little relevance for the teachers and their teaching. Professionally they are ethically obligated to practice the binding subject to the best of their judgment. That is only possible from an understanding of how the subject positively should be interpreted. Through a systematic reconstruction this study is aiming at such a positive interpretation of the subject.

274 The word toleranse, i.e. tolerance, is used in the Norwegian text.
How teachers ought to practice the subject is a normative perspective. The problem is that teachers do not do what they ought to. Or put more precisely: The teachers have a lot of normative obligations and goals to relate to, not at least internal to the daily practice of education – and all have to be negotiated in a complex educational reality. A normative perspective that does not take into account descriptions of actual practice and understanding is in risk of idealizing. This means that in order to give a helpful interpretation of curriculum, one should also methodically include curricular practice. Relating to the curricula model argued for in chapter two, it means that the question of understanding curriculum cannot be answered in one domain only. Curriculum is occurring in relation between curricula domains. This does of course not mean that curriculum studies cannot be done within one domain, but that the results have conditioned value for other domains, here the perceived and operational.

Deconstruction or critical interpretation as understood in this study is not delimited to the intentions of the formal curriculum. That is, the authority of the curricula domains is not only a normative question, but also a descriptive one. Put plainly: Even if politicians insist that the formal curriculum is the normative one, the fact may be it is not the case. The issue is whether curriculum theory should work on the political and legal normative premises or ask what kind of normative processes are going on – and how they should be understood. The next phase could be a return to the normative question: Understanding how normativity in these curricula processes works, how ought we to understand curriculum?

The distinction between curricula reconstruction and deconstruction as described here, is parallel to the debate between curriculum theory as \textit{curriculum development} and as \textit{understanding curriculum} (Pinar et.al. 1995). Curriculum development works within the priorities of the formal curriculum. Curriculum understanding questions these priorities from different perspectives. Curriculum understanding does not aim at creating a coherent account of the formal priorities. The formal priorities are put into question – as is the ideological and perceived. It is the coherence within and between different curricula domains that is the main question of this study, and the question of coherence within the formal (and other domains) must therefore be left open. Through different perspectives a coherent account is created, but this coherent account be about incoherent curricula domains and lack of coherence between them.

The results of Gravem’s study are important in the debate on \textit{Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education} and C97. Particularly interesting is his attempt to make a pluralistic meta-theory of RE which is neither drawn from a particular religion or world view,
nor an idea of liberal neutrality. The aim of his study results in a different method and way of interpreting texts than is the case in this study. Another difference is that he on one hand is working top-down in the sense of starting with the hermeneutical principles in the documents preceding C97 and in the general part of C97 and trying to fit the different parts of the C97 within one theoretical perspective. In this study the movement is down-top, from a detailed analysis of one single concept (tolerance) to broader theoretical perspectives, and trying to make a coherence between everyday complex educational practices of tolerance, political, formal texts on tolerance and more theoretical schemes of tolerance. The aims, methods and results of the two studies are therefore somewhat different.

5.2.2 C97, tolerance and identity

One theme is recurring when tolerance is addressed in C97: Namely a distinct, “secure” partly common, national and partly individual identity. Tolerance is often used as an addition to a firm identity, as for instance in PG: “Pupils with secure identities rooted in their own cultures are better placed to meet other cultures, as stated in the educational objectives of tolerance and democracy”\(^{275}\) (C97:50).

_Tolerance, us and them_

Identity and culture are the two concepts that in most cases accompany tolerance in C97. Tolerance concerns the relationship between I and other and between us and them. In understanding this relationship identity and culture are key concepts.

A detail in the translation of the quote above is worth noticing. In the Norwegian text identity and culture is in singular, not plural: That is, “pupils with a secure identity rooted in their own culture ..”. The plural is more of a lingual necessity in English than in Norwegian. It may however also be more than an issue of lingual technicality – a shift in perspective. This disparity between the Norwegian and English texts raises some central issue that will be explored in this chapter. How is identity and its relationship to tolerance understood? And correspondingly concerning culture: What does culture mean, and how is its relationship to tolerance conceived?

The Norwegian text opens up for a reading, which is not possible in the English version: The students have _common_ identity and culture. There is a collective unity in identity

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\(^{275}\) “Har elevane sjølv ein trygg identitet knytt til sin eigen kultur, møter dei òg lettare andre kulturar ut frå målet til skulen om toleranse og demokrati.” (L97:64)
and culture across plural individual and cultural identities and cultures. The rest of the paragraph after the quote above supports this reading.\textsuperscript{276}

Familiarity with one’s own cultural background and knowledge of other cultures are prerequisites for critical reflection and for the ability to resolve conflicts. Education should promote international understanding and solidarity across borders, and schools must make the most of the knowledge and understanding which minority groups and Norwegians with other cultural backgrounds can contribute. Education must counteract discriminatory attitudes and emphasise the value of coexistence with other people and of work for peace. (C97:70)

Å være fortrolig med sin egen kulturbakgrunn og ha kunnskap om andre kulturar er ein føresetnad for kritisk refleksjon og for å kunne løyse konflikter saman. Opplæringa skal fremje internasjonal forståing og solidaritet på tvers av grenser og må gjere seg nytte av den kunnskapen og forståinga som minoritetsgrupper og nordmenn med ein annan kulturell bakgrunn har. Opplæringa skal motverke diskriminerande holdningar og leggje vekt på verdien av å høyre saman med andre folk og arbeidet for fred (L97:64)

Norwegians with other cultural backgrounds and minority groups are identified as the others. This is of course a lingual construction with an implicit understanding of an us – an us that is a majority (contrasted by minority) and one common cultural background (which is contrasted by the others). Assuming such an interpretation, tolerance in this case is understood as a consequence of the sense of belonging to a common, secure majority identity and culture. Tolerance and collective identity are interwoven.

The paragraph is emphasizing tolerance (understanding, solidarity and non-discrimination) – but tolerance within a distinct us/they-structure. Constructing they is a way of delineating and understanding us as a group. Gullestad (2001) is pointing to the constructive element in such collective identities. There are a number of differences in a given population, and some or a category of these has to be magnified in order to make borders. The unity that constitutes an us-identity, she calls imagined sameness. In making sameness the core of identity, difference gets a connotation of something negative, something that threatens the secure, safe and harmonious imagined sameness. Gullestad argues that culture in the form of ethnicity most often is the magnified difference in contemporary Norwegian debate, not for instance social class. Another ethnicity than the Norwegian is therefore a threat.

\textsuperscript{276} The following quote from CC expresses the idea of common identity and culture well: “A good general education must contribute to national identity and solidarity by impressing the common stamp from local communities in language, tradition, and learning.” (C97:45). In Norwegian: “God allmenndannelse skal bidra til nasjonal identitet og solidaritet ved å gi et felles preg forankret i språk, tradisjon og lærdom på tvers av lokalsamfunn.” (L97:39)
Hers is a critical account of an us/them-dichotomy, which marginalizes minorities like immigrants. Gullestad’s alternative seems to be a more formal conception of citizenship as a common identification for everyone who is a Norwegian under the law. This is however not the only option. Taylor (1990) argues that liberal – individual and negative – freedom is dependent and not opposite to civic freedom – the common governing of a society. Cohesion is necessary in a society with civic freedom. There has to be some kind of commitment to the society by the citizens. The commitment is expressed towards what is valued in the society – in most cases national pride and identification. In these strongly held common values religion may have a place. That way religion can transcend a privatized boundary in the form of deconfessionalized disestablishment. In this way religion is never fully integrated, nor fully excluded from the state. I will return to the discussion on nationality and difference towards the end of this chapter.

It is also important to emphasize that the us/them-dichotomy is inescapable. Assuming that persons identify with groups as an essential aspect of their identity, group difference will be a vital part of pluralism in a given society. The boundaries between groups, between us and them, are establishing these differences. Dissolving the us/them-dichotomy in a global we or extreme individualism is in great danger of diffusing and downplaying cultural differences.

Gullestad’s point is, however, that us/them differences are not naturally given, but culturally and socially constructed. And it is vital to critically analyze a given lingual construction in order to understand how difference is conceived in a given context. The fact that the us/them-dichotomy is inescapable does not mean that every individual is identifiable within one group only. Persons belong to different groups and traditions, and move between these different contexts. This means that groups and traditions are important entities in order to understand cultural difference, but that these differences work in complex ways on an individual level. Individual transfer means that differences between groups are not absolute and that they change with time.

The point here is to focus the issue of the structure of tolerance. Claiming that we for instance should tolerate immigrants, lays an implicit structure of us as a normality group and immigrants as a deviant minority. On one hand the statement may seem to promote tolerance, on the other the underlying structure may in itself be intolerant. One group is excluded, but tolerated.

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277 See the discussion on boundary-crossing in chapter eight.
278 To the issue of inclusion and exclusion, see Pihl 1999 and 2001
The same construction of us and they is found in CC. The paragraph Cultural heritage and identity starts:

The development of individual identity occurs through becoming familiar with inherited forms of conduct, norms of behavior and modes of expression. Hence education should elaborate and deepen the learners’ familiarity with national and local traditions - the domestic history and distinctive features that are our contribution to cultural diversity in the world. (C97:25)

Identity is formed through “becoming familiar” with tradition, in the form of inherited forms for actions, rules for behavior and modes of expression. Tradition is further understood as national and local, which together form the domestic history. National and local do not seem to conflict. It is more a question about level. That is, the nation consists of a variety of local contexts, and the local contexts are particular and distinct variations of the national. When “forms of conduct, norms of behavior and modes of expression” is used in the plural, it seems reasonable to interpret it as referring to local variations within a national unity – “the domestic history”, an expression in the singular. “Distinctive features” then refers to other characterics of the national than its history.

The us is identified by domestic history and forms a distinct unity that is a part of the cultural diversity of the world. Diversity is primarily internationally located, not nationally. National plurality, beyond local variation, is created by lingual and cultural minorities:

The school system embraces many pupils from groups which in our country constitute minority cultures and languages. Education must therefore convey knowledge about other cultures and take advantage of the potential for enrichment that minority groups and Norwegians with another cultural heritage represent. Knowledge of other peoples gives us the chance to test our own values and the values of others. Education should counteract prejudice and discrimination, and foster mutual respect and tolerance between groups with differing modes of life. (C97:26)

Education should aim at tolerance and working against prejudice between groups. This is done by teaching about minority groups, a process where own and others’ values are tested. This is one of the texts that seem to suggest otherness as a resource for identity. Still, it is interesting to note the use of our and other. Education should include other cultures, Norwegians with another cultural heritage, knowledge of other peoples and others’ values.
“Norwegians with another cultural heritage” may refer to the Sámi and Kven population, while “minority groups” is not qualified as Norwegian. This does of course not mean that they are not regarded as such – but it illustrates the dilemma of the text. Other is implicit contrasted by us, and us seems to be “our country”, that is the Norwegians as a cultural group. If *us* are the cultural Norwegians, the *other* are not. But at the same time they are Norwegian citizens. Tolerance is here conceived in relationship between *us* and *they*, where *us* is the major Norwegian culture, and *they* are divergent minority-groups. Tolerance of others is conditioned by firm collective identity.

In the following, the importance of firmness accompanying tolerance is emphasized:

Education should provide training in cooperation between persons of different capacities and groups with diverse cultures. But it must also expose the conflicts that can arise in encounters between different cultures. Intellectual freedom implies not only allowance for other points of view, but also courage to take a stand, confidence to stand alone, and the strength of character to think and act according to one’s own convictions. Tolerance is not the same as detachment and indifference. Education should develop resolve to assert one’s rights and those of others, and to stand up against their violation. (C97:26)

Utdanningen skal oppøve evnen til samarbeid mellom personer og grupper som er forskjellige. Men den må også gjøre tydelig de konfliktene som kan ligge i møtet mellom ulike kulturer. Åndsfrihet innebærer ikke bare romslighet for andre syn, men også mot til å ta personlig standpunkt, trygghet til å stå alene og karakterstyrke til å tenke og handle etter egen overbevisning. Toleranse er ikke det samme som holdningsløshet og likegyldighet. Oppfostringsen skal utvikle personlig fasthet til å hevde egne og andres rettigheter og til å reise seg mot overgrep. (L97:20)

Education should promote cooperation, but not in disregard of differences and conflicts. Tolerance is delimited from strong relativism in the sense of non-discrimination or indifference. Tolerance is not only allowance for other points of view, it requires “to take a stand” – to defend what is right or good – independent of others. The right is here understood as (human) rights. Firmness is described in more individualistic language than in the previous paragraph, and in terms of rights more than identity. The scheme is however identical: Firmness, then tolerance.

One finds the same scheme of tolerance in several of the subject curricula. The most obvious example is this quote from Norwegian: “Pupils should have the opportunity to formulate their own views, be able to express agreement or disagreement with others, and develop tolerance of others’ opinions.” (C97:129) This is taken from third grade under the section “listening and speaking”. The students should be learning to produce their own texts, as a part of the process of making the students autonomous. Tolerance in this case concerns

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279 In Norwegian: "I opplæringa skal elevane formulere eigne synspunkt, kunne uttrykkje semje eller usemje med andre og arbeide seg opp tolerant for synet til andre. (L97:119)"
the liberty of speech. As in the previous quote the scheme is firm autonomous speech accompanied by tolerance of others’ speech-acts.

So far tolerance is not seen as a vital part of identity-formation. Tolerance concerns the navigation of the unitary and firm us or I in a situation of plurality. Tolerance is secondary and external to identity.

*Tolerance as a second language*

Looking closer at tolerance in two other subject curricula, English and Music, one finds that the context still is the relationship between identity and tolerance.

Learning foreign languages presents pupils with the opportunity to become acquainted with other cultures. Such insight lays the foundations for greater respect and tolerance, contributes to new ways of thinking, and broadens their understanding of their own cultural roots. This gives them a stronger sense of their own identity. *(C97:237)*

Ved å lære fremmedspråk får elevene mulighet til å bli kjent med andre kulturer. Slik innsikt legger grunnlag for respekt og økt toleranse, og det bidrar til andre tenkemåter og utvider elevenes forståelse av sin egen kulturtilhørighet. Gjennom dette styrkes elevenes egen identitet. *(L97:223)*

General aims for the subject are: For pupils to experience and understand that their own singing, dancing and musical expression can have quality and worth, and that music and dance can lay foundations for understanding and tolerance. *(C97:254)*

Opplæringa i faget har som mål at elevane opplever og forstår at deira eigne song-, dans- og musikkuttrykk kan ha kvalitet og verdi, og at musikk og dans kan skape eit grunnlag for forståing og toleranse. *(L97:240)*

The English curriculum underscores second language as a source of tolerance. Assuming that a language is a cultural expression - a pattern of understanding and evaluation - learning a second language also means insights into a different mode of understanding the world. Understanding a second language makes difference understandable. And this prepares the soil for greater respect and tolerance, the curriculum seems to argue.

While English understands language as a mode of learning tolerance, the Music curriculum gives an equivalent role to music and dance. It does not elaborate, but one understanding is that music and dance are common modes of cultural expression. There are different traditions of music and dance, but the form constitutes a common medium for communication.

On this account tolerance has a role in the formation of identity. Through learning and understanding the cultural expressions and codes of the other, the self is challenged and expanded. So far, both curricula expand the main understanding of tolerance in C97. On the other hand the English curriculum emphasizes that this process should result in “stronger
sense of identity”, a formulation that seems to understand second language as an instrument to a more definite delimitation of the self. The Music curriculum likewise emphasizes that our own music and dance has worth, but says nothing about the worth of the culture of others. The context of tolerance in these two curricula, therefore, addresses both a firm, collective identity prior to tolerance – and tolerance as a part of identity-formation.

Tolerance in the context of identity-formation with no reference to a collective majority identity is found in Norwegian Sign Language as first language (NSL):

Pupils should be confident in their use of the language in different situations and for different purposes, and become skillful at exploiting the possibilities inherent in the use of various genres. They should participate in conversations, discussions and meetings where they question, inquire, test and confirm their understanding so that they can develop into active and constructive citizens. Pupils should develop their abilities to actively perceive, experience, evaluate and express themselves in NSL and learn to assume responsibility for their own development and to contribute to that of others. Pupils should further develop their understanding of and openness to story-telling and other forms of sign language communication in different cultures. (C97:158)
This is taken from the general aims for eight grade. It is interesting to compare this conception of identity-development with the one found in Norwegian above. The development is in Norwegian viewed in relation to national identity and heritage as a substantive, historically given entity. In NSL the perspective of identity-formation is different. The horizon of a collective identity has disappeared. The students are thought to develop their identity through dialogue with others and other cultures. This is where tolerance has its function: Through tolerating other cultural expressions or languages, the students develop themselves – and contribute to others’ development. Tolerance in the Norwegian text is here translated with openness in the official English version of C97. This may due to more technical considerations in the process of translation, but it may also be caused by the somewhat different use of tolerance in this quote compared to those above.

On this account tolerance gets a more prominent place: It is internal to identity-development. Tolerance of the other is a necessary condition for the development of identity. Tolerance is integrated in the formation of the self – not something that is added to a fixed self in order to handle plurality.

There is a striking difference between Norwegian and NSL in these matters. Why is this so? One answer may be: Coincidence. In the process of making the C97 one group for each subject were appointed to produce subject-curriculum proposals. Although they had the Core curriculum and other common documents for guidance, the conception of tolerance might not have been made explicit enough in order to establish a common understanding. Therefore tolerance got different conceptualizations as a result of personal differences and group processes.

Another answer may be found in the fact that people with hearing disability constitute a minority group with their own language. This is a form of minority that cannot be privatized or marginalized – the minority cannot be assimilated into the majority us without changing the conception of us radically. The conception of us as a cultural majority is constituted by Norwegian language. It is in this language one finds common national history, norms and values, symbols and constructions of reality. The Norwegian Sign Language is a different cultural expression. Assimilating this language as a constituting part of us create following problem: If the common substance of us is the addition of Norwegian and NSL, every Norwegian has to learn NSL in order to be Norwegian. If the common substance of us is reduced to a common denominator many of the qualifiers of us used in the C97 would have to be abandoned, and the borders between us and them would be less rigid.
A conception of tolerance that also is used in the context of identity-formation is found in Physical Education:

Pupils should have the opportunity to constantly change pairings and groupings so as to develop tolerance of one another’s strong and weak points, in play, sports and dance. (C97:285)

I oppføringa skal elevane arbeide i stadig nye par- og grupperelasjonar i leik, idrett og dans for å utvikle toleranse for dei sterke og svake sidene til kvarandre. (L97:271)

This is a parallel conception to the one above – with one exception: The focus is on individual student-student relation, not on student versus culture or culture versus culture. Because of both ones own and others’ weaknesses (and strengths), one should tolerate. Individual, not collective, difference is in focus.

_Tolerance as dialogue_

In the curriculum of Christian Knowledge and Religious and Ethical Education (RE) the context of tolerance is somewhat different. Identity is not mentioned in these cases. Tolerance in the first quote below is constructed as a way for equal actors to act – in a dialogical pattern. Dialogue is explicitly mentioned in the period. The particular issues are religious and moral questions. Tolerance in this context is not understood as the majority religion tolerating minorities, according to a normality-deviance scheme, but as mutual tolerance.

The subject must be approached openly and contribute to insight, respect and dialogue across the boundaries between faiths and philosophies, and promote understanding and tolerance in religious and moral questions. (C97:97-98)

Faget skal være åpent og bidra til insikt, respekt og dialog på tvers av tros- og livssynsgrenser og fremme forståelse og toleranse i religiøse og moralske spørsmål. (L97:89)

In the second quote the conception of tolerance is different from the cases so far. This is the only case in C97 where tolerance is used in the sense of care and empathy, although not explicitly stated:

Pupils should have the opportunity to develop respect for and tolerance of others through such themes as teasing/bullying, backbiting, and racism, as well as showing compassion, and daring to stand up for others. (C97:104)

I opplæringen skal elevene utvikle evnen til respekt og toleranse overfor andre mennesker gjennom temaer som plaging/mobbing, å bakte, rasisme, barnhjertighet, å våge å stå opp for andre. (L97:95)

Students should learn to tolerate through themes as teasing/bullying, backbiting and racism. The objects of tolerance are students who are victims of such dehumanizing practices. This does not mean that tolerance should stop with these cases, the cases may be substantial.
examples of practices that develop a more general empathy. The second part of the quote links tolerance with compassion – tolerating the other is not only doing it at a distance, but includes proximity. The *standing up*-motive is also present here, but not in the form of a firm, collective identity or knowing what is right. Standing up is not referring to an act of delineating oneself, but to an other-directed act of care and empathy.

To sum up so far: When tolerance is used in C97, the issues are mainly identity or dialogue. Identity is used in two senses, as a substantial national identity and as the process of individual identity-formation. The quotes in C97 can be placed along a continuum between identity and dialogue:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National identity</th>
<th>Identity-formation</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>NSL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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Figure 5.1: The practice and context of tolerance in C97. For abbreviations, see table 5.1.

Two quotes concerning tolerance cannot without difficulty be placed along this line. In social science (se #11 in table 5.1) tolerance is used in the context of migration, and concerns primarily neither identity nor dialogue. As described above, the second quote in RE concerns care more than identity and dialogue.

With the exception of these two cases, there are some striking differences and similarities in the understandings of tolerance in C97.

First a *difference*: It is striking that the general parts of the curricula along with some of the subject curricula understand tolerance as something external and secondary to firm identity, while some other subject curricula conceive tolerance as internal to identity formation. This means that there is a change in conception between the general part and the

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280 This does not mean that identity and dialogue theoretically should be thought of as opposites. (Skeie 1998) The terms are just used to describe the main focus of the texts, not the relationship between them.
subject part of the curriculum. The change is not only a matter of different practices and contexts. It is also a change in how tolerance is conceived.

The differences may be due to personal factors or coincidence. The change seems however to be of a more systematic kind, that demands another kind of explanation. One possibility is that the CC and PG see themselves as links between the Educational Act and the subject curricula. That means the Educational Act has a direct influence on the general part of C97, but only an indirect effect on the subject curricula. On this account CC and PG has an understanding of tolerance that is mainly politically conditioned, while the subject curricula to a larger extent is conditioned by the everyday use of tolerance by the persons producing the texts.

The more exact historically process of the text is not important for this project. Some of the tolerance-texts in the subject curricula may for instance have been a result of political editing. The focus in this study is how one can understand texts on tolerance in C97, not their genesis.

5.2.3 Tolerance and the construction of difference

There is a striking similarity in how the C97 conceives tolerance and difference. The construction of difference is essential in how tolerance is conceived. An indirect path to understanding tolerance is therefore the conception of difference. To put it simply: The less conceived difference in a certain context, the less need for tolerance. And: The more fundamental difference is conceived in a certain context, the more need for fundamental tolerance. But the relationship between difference and tolerance is not only one of quantity. As mentioned above, the construction of difference as ethnical us and they do affect the conception of tolerance. More generally put: The structure of difference affects the conception of tolerance.

Individual difference

The main concept for difference in C97 is ulikhet (dissimilarity). The words forskjellighet (difference) and mangfold/mangfald (multiplicity) are also used, but significant less frequently. Dissimilarity is mainly used in three contexts: 1) Difference in subjects 2) Individual differences and 3) Differences in values and culture.

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I will not restrict myself to these English translations of the terms in the following, but use them synonymous. The terms are made explicit when necessary.
Dissimilarities in subjects can be different parts (literature and grammar, different genres), methods and other parts and perspectives that together constitute a subject as a unity. Rarely difference refers to disagreement within a subject. One example is found in RE, where in ninth grade the theme “the question of the Bible as The word of God” is followed by “different (ulike) views on this [question]”. This refers to a main difference in how to understand and do theology, and is a difference of another kind that the others. It implies that difference is not limited to various parts of the subject, but concerns the constitutive perspectives of the subject. This raises important questions of tolerance. But as long as difference is constructed within a harmonious, unified subject, tolerance is no pressing issue. Different genres and methods do not challenge tolerance.

Individual difference refers to learning abilities, interests, gender, social background and so on. All these dissimilarities are however in most cases understood as possible to unite within one unitary school:

How children and young people develop gives us useful information on how schools should be organised and how best to plan learning activities for different age groups. The compulsory school shall embrace groups of pupils with varied backgrounds and abilities, and it is the responsibility of the school to guide these pupils towards growth and development irrespective of their differences.

(C97:62)

Similarity is possible despite these differences. Growth, development and educational unity transcend difference. There is no acute need for tolerance regarding these main responsibilities of the school. There are individual differences and will always be. But these differences can be handled by matter of organization. On this account individual differences do not constitute a fundamental challenge of tolerance. Tolerance is restricted to arrangements, to different means addressing the variety of individuals.²⁸₂

Difference is something that not only can be, but also ought to be, overcome. Difference should be compensated and neutralized in order to reach common goals. Then difference is imaged as a counterforce, as something not to respect, but to ir-respect. In PE difference is described somewhat differently in the context of tolerance: “Pupils should have the opportunity to constantly change pairings and groupings so as to develop tolerance of one

²⁸² For a critical account of understanding cultural difference in individualistic categories, see Pihl 1999. Such individual difference may easily slip into the concept of individual deficiency that has to be compensated. This implies a devaluation of the cultural identity of minorities, despite the rhetorics of the unique individual.
another’s strong and weak points, in play, sports and dance.” Here individual difference is constructed as a resource of education. Difference is not something that should be overcome, but through experiencing the complexity of difference, learning occurs. Difference is also not constructed as referring to the relationship between self and other; difference is intra-subjective. Tolerance is therefore constitutive in human relations, not only because the other is different, but also because a complex pattern of weaknesses and strengths of the self. I tolerate because I know myself to be imperfect. And realizing a complexity of perfection and imperfection in the self and the other, means operating with a relational tolerance – a tolerance that goes both ways.

Still this quote belongs to the exceptions in the construction of individual difference in C97. The main image is that individual difference is something that can and should be compensated. This means that fundamental individual difference can be overcome without having to turn to tolerance.

*Cultural difference*

Difference in culture and value is a recurring theme in C97. As mentioned above difference is constructed in terms of culture, often in the sense of ethnicity. Tolerance of difference is as a rule accompanied with emphasis on a firm, common identity. This relationship between difference and unity is expressed in this quote from Norwegian:

The school must lay the foundation that enables us to trace our roots, to counteract social divisions, and to build bridges between groups in a society that has become more international and ethnically diverse. Developing a secure sense of national identity along with cultural openness towards others gives us deeper insight into our own culture and helps us to understand the significance culture has for other peoples and countries. The subject Norwegian, then, is about becoming educated. (C97:121)

Skulen må gi eit slikt fundament både for å trekkje linjer bakover, for å motverke sosiale skilnader og for å byggje bruer mellom grupper i eit samfunn som har vorte meir internasjonalt og etnisk variert. Å utvikle ein trygg nasjonal identitet og ei kulturell opning mot andre gir oss djupre innsikt i vår eigen kultur og hjelper oss til å forstå kva verdi kulturen har for andre folk og land. Norsk er eit danningsfag. (L97:111)

In this quote the Norwegian society is described more diverse than most places in C97. Difference is frequently described *in us/Them* terms – where *them or the other* is placed at some distance. In the following quote, also from Norwegian, the other is described first as other cultures that are located abroad. Secondly otherness is described as particular lingual groups: Immigrants and other minorities. These groups are placed in the role of the other – as something that is not us.
Lead and discuss translated texts from other cultures, participate in and listen to performances, and gain insight into lived experience and understanding of the norms and values of foreign cultures. Encounter the written culture of immigrant or minority languages, including Sámi. (C97:139)

In the following quote it is very interesting to notice how nationality (and locality\textsuperscript{283}) is contrasted with other cultures – as exactly something other. Otherness is something external, here even foreign, included in the “Nordic, European and global perspective”:

Education shall deepen their knowledge of national and local traditions, include knowledge of other cultures, and promote understanding and solidarity between groups and across boundaries. Nordic, European and global perspectives must be promoted. (C97:73)

Tolerance, here formulated as understanding and solidarity, is therefore understood as a phenomenon between us, constituted by a national culture, and they, understood as other groups that are at some distance from us.

\textit{Difference within national unity}

That leads to the issue of us – that is, how is the unity of us conceived? The unity and similarity of us is mainly formulated in the concepts community, common and shared. This quote from PG elaborates the understanding of community and common:

\textsuperscript{283} Locality is here used equivalent to nationality – that is as a connection with a particular geographical and cultural sphere.
Identity and a sense of belonging are developed in many ways, including becoming familiar with behaviour, norms, and forms of expression within the community – by acquiring and developing knowledge, values and positive attitudes. Growing up means growing into a shared culture, while at the same time developing individual features and characteristics. The individual acquires roots and self-assurance within a culture and a tradition. Shared frames of reference are an important prerequisite for communication between people and for active participation in a democratic society.

Common frames of reference make it possible to communicate across cultural and geographical boundaries. School must therefore be a mediator both of a national culture and of an international culture of learning. Sámi is a part of the common Norwegian and Nordic culture which all pupils must become familiar with. In a multicultural school, the common content must have a wide range and embrace other cultures and religions. There is increasing pressure from global mass media. Experience, which used to be largely local in origin, is now communicated and shared across nations and continents. Common frames of reference are even more important when culture becomes international.

(C97:61)

Identitet og tilhøyrsle blir mellom anna utvikla når ein blir fortruleg med veremåtar, normer og uttryksformer i fellesskapet - når ein tek opp i seg og vidareutvikler kunnskap, verdiar og holdningar. Å vekse opp vil seie å vekse inn i felleskulturen, samtidig som ein utviklar særpreg og eigenart. Det gir den enkelte forankring og tryggleik i kultur og tradisjon. Felles referanserammer er eit viktig grunnlag for mellommenneskeleg kommunikasjon og for å kunne ta aktivt del i eit demokratisk samfunn.


Here community is used in two different senses. Initially, it is argued that identity is formed within the context of a community. Community is here not specified, that is, it refers to different kinds of communities at different societal and cultural levels (for instance international, national, regional or local). This can be labelled community 1. The argument of this quote as else in especially the general part of C97, is however that there is a need of establishing a commonality at a national level. Later in the quote community and common is used in a specific, not a general sense. The commonality that identity is shaped within is “Norwegian and Nordic culture”. This can be labelled community 2.

The two different conceptions are in themselves not problematic. The problem occurs when they are used interchangeably, and when an argument regarding community 1 is transferred to community 2. For instance above: Few would argue against the initial assumption that identity formation is related to a collective community. When community or common below means Norwegian national culture, the assumption is of another kind – and more controversial. Then the nation as community is given primacy to other groups, which is a debatable position both descriptively and normatively.

The idea of a unitary national culture creating a national identity strong enough to transcend difference is explicit:
On the other hand, the increasing specialization and complexity of the global community requires a
deepened familiarity with the main currents and traditional tones of our Norwegian culture. The
expansion of knowledge, moreover, demands heightened awareness of the values which must guide
our choices.

When transitions are massive and changes rapid, it becomes even more pressing to emphasize
historical orientation, national distinctiveness and local variation to safeguard our identity - and to
sustain a global environment with breadth and vigor. A good general education must contribute to national
identity and solidarity by impressing the common stamp from local communities in language, tradition,
and learning. This will also make it easier for pupils who move to find their footing anew as migration will
mean relocation within a familiar commonality. The bonds between generations will be closer when they
share experiences and insights, stories, songs, and legends. Newcomers are more easily incorporated into
our society when implicit features of our culture are made clear and exposed to view. (C97:45)

The idea is that national unity shall be able to create familiar commonalities everywhere in
Norway. The pressure from globalization and fragmentation is met by an idea of the cultural
unity or communal, strong and firm nation. Firmness needs an image of a substantive identity,
and this substance is found in national history or heritage. Common history, language, values
and norms are constitutive elements of national culture. Both the general and the subject part
of the curriculum specify the substantive content of such a common Norwegian culture that is
meant to shape a common identity.

The argument for the promotion of such a common national culture in schools is that
this culture is constitutive for being Norwegian:

The Christian faith and tradition constitute a deep
current in our history - a heritage that unites us as a
people across religious persuasions. It has imprinted
itself on the norms, world view, concepts and art of
the people. It bonds us to other peoples in the rhythm
of the week and in common holidays, but is also an
abiding presence in our own national traits: in
architecture and music, in style and conventions, in
ideas, idioms and identity. (C97:23)

This, however, results in a paradox: If this common culture already is a fact, there is no need
for a common culture as a counterweight to globalization and fragmentation. On the other
hand, if such a common culture is not a fact, the argument for promoting such culture in schools must be framed in a normative mode. That is, the value of tradition must be argued for not from a description of a cultural situation, but from the normative value of the tradition.

*The Sámis as we or they*

Another problem with this substantial conception of national culture is the Sámi culture. In some cases the Sámi culture is incorporated in the conception of the Norwegian, in other cases it something distinct, something different. The PG states:

Sámi culture and social life are important parts of the common cultural heritage, which all pupils in compulsory school should learn about. The Sámi culture, language, history and social life comprise part of the common content of the different subjects.

The education of Sámi pupils shall promote their roots and security in their own culture and to develop the Sámi language and Sámi identity. At the same time it shall ensure that Sámi pupils are able to participate actively in the community and obtaining education at all levels. (C97:71-72)

Initially, Sámi culture is understood as a part of a Norwegian common heritage. Then, however, Sámi culture is seen as something distinct, something with its own history and language. This is also evident in for instance this quote from Norwegian:

Pupils should have the opportunity to listen to folk tales, legends and proverbs from other countries and cultures, including the Sámi culture, and tell them to younger pupils. (C97:132)

Sámi culture is understood as one among several other cultures. It is other in relation to an us – and it is reasonable to assume the us to be something like Norwegian culture. Then Norwegian culture is not including Sámi culture – it is something else. There is a difference between Norwegian and Sámi culture. This is clearly a dilemma. In order to create unity and commonality, Norwegian culture has to embrace and include national differences. The re-awakening of Sámi culture and identity is however a process of understanding the Sámi as something different from the Norwegian. Sámi means a different language, different history, different norms and values, different habits, different world-view than a Norwegian. As an answer to this, the conceptualization of *Norwegian* can be developed in two directions: Either it can be understood as a distinct culture and different to Sámi and other minority-cultures. Or
it may be constructed broader, including Sámi culture. This last alternative does however mean that other cultures, minority cultures, that are identifying themselves as something different than Norwegian, also have to be incorporated. This will lead to a radically more open, fluidly and diverse conception of Norwegian culture concerning for instance language, values and history than what is the case in C97.

Engen (1989:82-107) has tried to meet this challenge by making a distinction between central culture (sentralkultur) and national culture (rikskultur). Central culture is the partial culture of the political, economical and geographical elite, while national culture is common and contains a diversity of local, partial and subcultures. Cultural imperialism has consisted in the confusion between the two and particularly in passing on central culture as national culture. National culture in Engen’s terminology is only what is considered necessary to secure national unity, not what is desirable.

Gravem (2004) is using Engen’s theories in order to argue for the need for a common culture (felleskultur) in a situation of group pluralism. Gravem is imagining this common culture as consisting of both majority and minority perspectives. It seems however that C97 is using national cultural heritage more than common culture. There are many examples where minority groups are defined as other, but not much explicit reflection on the evolvement of a common culture in the direction of a multicultural commonality, including both majority and minority cultures in the us. Another problem is that the more substantial the common culture is made, the more exclusive it is towards minorities. There are good arguments for deciding the common on basis of democratic choice or acquiescence (Rescher 1993:163-169), but then the common culture cannot include all minorities. It is the combination of democratic chosen substantial common culture and the idea of common culture as all-embracing that lead to exclusion of and pressure towards assimilation for minorities.

**Difference as distant and secondary**

To repeat: The construction of difference and unity in C97 is constitutive for its conception of tolerance. The main account of difference in C97 is difference as instrumentally positive, but otherwise distant, conditionally negative and secondary. The image of compulsory school is one of institutional and cultural unity – or commonality. Difference threatens to fragmentize unity – in this respect it is a negative force. Still, difference is frequently depicted as a positive strength. Positive difference is however able to subordinate within or adapt to

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284 The most obvious example of this is the Norwegianization (fornorskningingen) of the Sámi population in the 19th and first half of the 20th century.
substantial unity – or it is a difference that is not a part of us. It is a difference at distance in time and space. This makes difference secondary, and the quest for unity primary. Rarely in the C97 is difference appreciated without any accompanying condition of unity. This means that C97 is operating within a difference vs unity, not a difference vs difference, scheme.

This means that also tolerance is distant and secondary. In a context of unity there is no need for tolerance – other than accepting individual differences. These individual differences are however not constitutive, and therefore tolerance is not constitutive either. The main task of the schools and the teachers is to establish common frameworks of meaning, to create unity – not to promote understanding and tolerance of difference. This does not mean tolerance is unimportant, but it is secondary.

Still, the problems with the description and prescription of educational and cultural unity resurface in the curricular text from time to time. There are reasons to believe that difference does actually play another role than is described above as the main line. This also means that divergent conceptions of tolerance appear. These have already been identified in form of tolerance in PE and once in RE.

To sum up so far: An analysis of the practice and context of tolerance in C97 shows that tolerance mainly is not a primary value,— it regards difference at some distance. On this account it is no surprise that tolerance is not mentioned frequently as a part of the school practice and teachers attitudes. There are however a few exceptions to this image of tolerance – where tolerance is conceived as proximate and primary.

As previously mentioned the The Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway was made in a second version: The Sámi Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway, in Norwegian shortened to L97S, here C97S. The Sámi Curriculum has the same Core Curriculum, the first and main general part, as the C97. The Principles and guidelines for compulsory education is however partly adapted to a Sámi context, partly rewritten. So are the subject curricula – to varying degrees.

On one hand the C97S is no translation of C97; it is an independent curriculum for Sámi schools with somewhat different perspectives. On the other hand the two curricula are similar in many respects. A separate analysis is therefore not necessary. It is, however, interesting to see where C97S is differing from C97 in the conception of tolerance – particularly because Kjernsund School used C97S.

285 See Gullestad’s (2001) account of difference as something negative.
The three quotes of tolerance in CC are the same as in C97, so is also practically the two in PG. However, tolerance is used a third time in PG in C97S, in the very beginning of the chapter:

The education shall contribute to secure the individual student a positive development of identity. To form and develop a good and positive image of the self will give a foundation for breath of vision, tolerance and positive attitudes towards own language, community and culture, for the culture of others and for cooperation with persons from other societies and cultures. (L97S:59)

Opplæringen skal bidra til å sikre en positiv identitetsutvikling hos den enkelte elev. Å forme og utvikle et godt og positivt selvbilde vil gi grunnlag for vidsyn, toleranse og positive holdninger overfor eget språk, samfunn og kultur, for andres kultur og for samarbeid med mennesker fra andre samfunn og kulturer. (L97S:59)

This way of understanding tolerance represents something new in relation to the main conception of tolerance in C97: Tolerance of ones own culture. This is also expressed in Social Science:

Most Sámi students are going to grow up in a multicultural society. Through working with Social science the aim is to develop attachment, respect and tolerance for own cultur, but also respect and tolerance for other cultures. (L97S:231)

De fleste samiske elevene vil vokse opp i et flerkulturelt samfunn. Gjennom arbeidet med samfunnsfag er siktemålet at elevene skal utvikle tilhørighet, respekt og toleranse for egen kultur, men også respekt og toleranse for andre kulturer. (L97S:231)

In the Sámi Curriculum the Sámis as a group is seen as hetereogenous, as well is the society where Sámi students live. Difference is a part of us – and tolerance is therefore directed not only outwards, but also inwards. Tolerance then is not restricted to bear over with, but is positively integrated in one’s own identity development.

It must however be emphazised that this conception of tolerance in C97S is not the only one. The main account is along the same lines as in C97.

5.3 Conceptual analysis

This leads to an analysis of the conceptualization of tolerance. I will also here distinguish between tolerance as a concept and a word, and start with the synonymous words of tolerance in C97.

286 For an account of the distinction between concept and word, see chapter one.
5.3.1 Synonymous words

The word intellectual freedom (åndsfrihet) is used in the section on the purpose of compulsory education in the 1969 the Education Act for primary and lower secondary education. It is however only used twice in C97.

Accept/acceptance is only used once in the entire C97, namely in Norwegian (second grade). It is used in a wide positive sense with a single condition: “Pupils should have the opportunity to [ ] learn to express acceptance and appreciation of what others say and write”. Acceptance is here used in the sense of valuing the other, the different.

Solidarity is only used in the general part, and not in any subject curricula. There can be several reasons for this. One may be that solidarity is a difficult concept to fit into the conceptual schemes of the different subjects. Another may be that solidarity is not an established ideal in the actual subjects. The third possibility is that the meaning of solidarity is equivalent with tolerance, respect and others. Still, this does not explain why the other concepts are chosen, and not solidarity. In CC and PG solidarity is mainly understood as a way for different groups to relate to each other. As with tolerance, solidarity is therefore mainly a distant and secondary concept, and it is conceptualized in mainly the same way.

The two main synonyms to tolerance are understanding and respect. Understanding is used in both a cognitive (forståelse av) and a moral sense (forståelse for) and sometimes with both perspectives in combination. Understanding as a moral concept is conceived mainly as tolerance. The context is the students’ understanding of their own culture in the sense of a Norwegian national heritage. Secondary it is the students’ understanding the other – at a distance. The same is also the case with respect. It is quite similar to the understanding of tolerance both regarding practice and conceptualization, and is also in several cases used together with and synonymous with tolerance. In most cases respect means recognition, that is, a positive, single conditioned tolerance. Still, respect is also used with a double condition, in the sense of respecting something or someone that is beyond our sphere of values:

While compulsory education is based on a clear set of values, it must also be inclusive and respect different views of culture, faith and values (C97:70).

Samtidig som grunnskulen har ei klar verdiplattform, skal han vere inkluderande og vise respekt for ulike kultur-, trus- og verdioppfatningar (L97:64).

Maybe the most striking feature about the use of tolerance in C97 is that is only used as a noun, not as a verb or an adjective.287 Interpreted in the light of other findings about tolerance
in C97, this is an important point. A verb indicates “existence, action or occurrence” (Webster’s comprehensive dictionary 2003:1394), an adjective is used “to limit or qualify a noun or other substantive” (Webster’s comprehensive dictionary 2003:18), while a noun is a “word used as the name of a thing, quality, or action existing or conceived by the mind; a substantive” (Webster’s comprehensive dictionary 2003:866). To put it simply: Verb most often implies action, while noun implies the image of an object. Using the verbal form puts tolerance into motion, often bodily motion. Tolerating is something that is making some kind of change. Tolerance as an adjective means qualifying the subject of tolerance – a tolerant teacher, student or school. To be tolerant is a feature, a qualification of a character. It is personal (even in the case of an institution as the noun) because it is something character-dependent.

Tolerance as an object is something one can observe, a thing independent of oneself. Tolerance as an objective ideal is constructed independent of persons, of empirical characters. This means that the form of tolerance is coherent with the image of practices of tolerance accounted for above.

Still, the form of tolerance may also be a result of the scheme of the curriculum. The aims of C97 are formulated as “Pupils should have the opportunity to ….“ followed by for instance” acquire knowledge of”, “become acquainted with”, “work on” and so on. This form makes it more natural to use a noun instead of a verb or an adjective. Still, it is not impossible. Moreover, tolerance is used several places in more general texts than in the specific aims. Also in these cases tolerance is only used as a noun.

Then to the issue whether tolerance in C97 is used in a thin/thick, negative/positive or double/simple conditional sense (see chapter three and four). Two factors make such an analysis more difficult than in the part describing the teachers’ conception of tolerance. Firstly, there are so much fewer cases where tolerance is used in the curricula. Secondly, these cases do not elaborate on tolerance – it is simply stated as a given ideal. One example is: “Pupils with secure identities rooted in their own cultures are better placed to meet other cultures, as stated in the educational objectives of tolerance and democracy.” (C97:70)

Tolerance is just referred to as a given objective, with little or no description of the word. A conceptual interpretation therefore has to be careful and made with reservations.

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those as a verb. Respect and tolerance is put in motion in relation to the students. This supports the image of a somewhat different conception of tolerance and respect in PE compared with the general part of the curriculum. The quote is from PG. In Norwegian: ”Har elevane sjølv ein trygg identitet knytt til sin eigen kultur, møter dei og lettare andre kulturar ut frå målet til skulen om toleranse og demokrati.” (L97:64)
5.3.2 The scope of tolerance
On the issue of the scope of tolerance, it is quite clear that tolerance is not restricted to a moral sphere. Tolerance is addressing for instance culture, habits, racism and aesthetic issue as well as morality. This is particular clear in the second quote in RE (C97:104): “Pupils should have the opportunity to develop respect for and tolerance of others through such themes as teasing/bullying, backbiting, and racism, as well as showing compassion, and daring to stand up for others.”

Since tolerance is formulated as a noun, the tolerance in question does not have a distinct subject – which tolerate as verb or tolerant as an adjective would make clearer. This is making an analysis of the issue of power and structure more difficult. Actually, the main finding is that the treatment of tolerance in C97 does not communicate these aspects of the concept. In making it a distant concept, in objectifying it, tolerance is cut loose from actual persons and situations, and therefore issues of power and personal and institutional relations.

Still, there are quotes that can be interpreted as substantial and relation power. In the quote from Norwegian (C97:129) the subjects of tolerance seems to have the possibility to infer towards objects of tolerance: “Pupils should have the opportunity to formulate their own views, be able to express agreement or disagreement with others, and develop tolerance of others’ opinions.” Not tolerating other opinions can be done by a variety of actions – and these possible actions do the subjects of tolerance have. These possibilities therefore constitute substantial power.

Power as a relational concept is found in PE (see above) where tolerance is described relationally as tolerance of strengths and weaknesses of each other. Power is not something one has – it is the relational power, the reciprocal dependence, that constitutes tolerance.

In the quotes where the subject of tolerance is more or less explicit, it is the students. That is, tolerance refers to the result of education, and the result is that the students should understand, develop ability of and learn tolerance. It is striking to notice that never is the teacher or the school subjects when the word tolerance is used. The C97 does not explicitly refer to the tolerant or tolerating teacher or school at all. One noteworthy exeption is when not tolerance, but respect is discussed in the section on teachers in CC:

Teachers determine by their manner whether pupils’ interest is maintained, whether learners feel competent, and whether learners’ enthusiasm abides. Lærerne avgjør ved sin væremåte både om elevenes interesser består, om de føler seg flinke og om deres iver vedvarer. Den viktigste forutsetning for det er

289 For the Norwegian text, see above. 290 For the Norwegian text, see above.
The most important precondition here is a respect for the pupils’ integrity, a sensitivity for their uniqueness and an urge to assist pupils in exploiting their potential and enticing them into their own borderland. (C97:37-38)

The context is that subject-knowledge is not enough in order to be a good teacher – engagement and the ability to pass knowledge on is also necessary. Therefore, tolerance or respect for the students’ different abilities and characters is vital in order to create a security, which again is a condition for students’ learning. Here the teacher is subject of tolerance, and tolerance consists in positive interaction with different students. However, this quote is not representative for the use of tolerance and respect in C97.

This may partly be due to the lingual scheme of aims in C97, where the student is necessary subject. Again, however, tolerance is described both in the general parts of the curriculum and the particular subjects. In these cases the tolerant teacher is not very visible. The structure of tolerance is firstly unclear since it is to a large degree described in impersonal terms. Secondly, it is thin – in the sense that it is describing students as subjects of tolerance and certain more or less defined objects. Tolerance is not described as relational - with the exception of the quote from PE where the (thick) structure of tolerance is reciprocal, and where tolerance is directed towards the complexity of the self as well as to the complexity of the other.

5.3.3 The energy of tolerance

The same problem of the impersonal use of tolerance in C97 returns when trying to analyze the energy of the ideal. In most cases the problem is not to determine whether it has a negative or positive energy, but to find energy at all. Two examples, the one from PG (C97:70, L97:64) and one from a subject curriculum (C97:97-98, L97:89) can illustrate this point:

Pupils with secure identities rooted in their own cultures are better placed to meet other cultures, as stated in the educational objectives of tolerance and democracy.

Har elevane sjølv ein trygg identitet knytt til sin eigen kultur, møter dei òg lettare andre kulturar ut frå målet til skulen om toleranse og demokrati

The subject must be approached openly and contribute to insight, respect and dialogue across the boundaries between faiths and philosophies, and promote understanding and tolerance in religious and moral questions.

Faget skal være åpent og bidra til innsikt, respekt og dialog på tvers av tros- og livssynsgrenser og fremme forståelse og toleranse i religiøse og moralske spørsmål
It is impossible to decide whether tolerance is positive or negative. In both quotes tolerance is described as a value in the sense of something valuable, a goal, to be achieved. There is little if nothing at all in the quotes that indicate what this value or goal is about. The value is simply taken for granted – or, as in the first quote, referred to.

The quote from Norwegian (see above #8) and Norwegian sign language as first language (see above #9) may most likely be interpreted as conceiving tolerance with negative energy. Tolerating other views means allowing other points of view to be expressed. It may however also mean actively preparing the conditions for opposing views to be put forward. In that case tolerance gets a positive energy.

A clearly positive conception of tolerance can be found in the second quote from RE (see above #6). Here tolerance means actively to intervene on the side of the weak or the oppressed. Tolerance is not to refer from action. The quote from PE (see above #14) also clearly implies a conception of tolerance with positive energy.

5.3.4 The condition of tolerance

The third conceptual issue concerns the condition of tolerance – that is, under which conditions one properly can use tolerance as a concept. Here I will return to the question of double or simple condition of tolerance.

The double condition is a) objection (disagreement or dislike) and b) acceptance, while a simple construction is acceptance alone. In most of the cases where tolerance is used in C97, there is a sense of a double condition. It is quite explicitly formulated in Norwegian (and very similar in NSL #9). Students get an autonomous view of the right, good and true through formulating their own view. Where there is disagreement with other students, one should tolerate. This is a quite typical formulation of tolerance with a double condition.

An interesting passage on the issue of conditions of tolerance is the following in CC (C97:26, L97:20):

Intellectual freedom implies not only allowance for other points of view, but also courage to take a stand, confidence to stand alone, and the strength of character to think and act according to one’s own convictions. Tolerance is not the same as detachment and indifference. Education should develop resolve to assert one’s rights and those of others, and to stand up against their violation.

Intellectual freedom, or tolerance, requires two conditions: Allowance for other points of view and a conviction. Also here the two conditions are explicitly made. The text proceeds by claiming that tolerance does not mean detachment or indifference. It is not clear whether this refers to the conceptual conditions or the theoretical limits of tolerance. As previously underscored, it is important to separate between the conditions and limits of tolerance. It is quite possible to operate with a one-conditional tolerance combined with distinct limits. The point is that objection as a conceptual condition is a disagreement that is potentially overruled by some overriding argument of tolerance. The limit of tolerance cannot be overruled. Objection as a conceptual condition is not the same as the limit of tolerance.

To illustrate this one can imagine a teacher who disagrees with and dislikes swearing, but still accepts it in the classroom because of respect of autonomy or cultural and educational context. His objection will then not constitute his limit of tolerance. His limit of tolerance is constituted by a virtue, value or norm that the argument of tolerance cannot overrule. This can for instance be one student physically or mentally attacking another. Preventing physical or mental exploitation would have moral priority over individual autonomy.

When the quote refers to developing resolve to assert individual rights, and to stand up against infringement it does not sound like a matter of conditions of tolerance, but its limits. Still it is not clear. It is quite possible to argue that there are legitimate cases where one may or should tolerate restrictions of one’s own rights. This is anyway clearly dependent on the understanding of what constitutes a right. Whether the quote is addressing 1) the conditions of tolerance or 2) its limits – or 3) is mixing the two issues, is not obvious - even after a more detailed analysis. Assuming 1), personal conviction and individual rights are legitimately overruled in cases of (legitimate) tolerance. Assuming 2), personal convictions (supposedly certain kinds) and individual rights constitute the limits of tolerance. Assuming 3), it is unclear what constitute both conditions and limits of tolerance. A rather detailed analysis is not able to establish a clear conception of tolerance in one of the central quotes. There are reasons to ask how and to what degree does the text communicate tolerance to teachers.

Some of the quotes of tolerance in C97 clearly operate with tolerance as a single construct. The two quotes from PE (#14) and RE (#7) do not assume some objectional practice or vice. In the case of RE tolerance does not evolve out of disagreement or dislike, but empathy. Tolerance is not an act of separation, but connection.

This is however not the conception of most of the cases of tolerance in C97. Tolerance is instead understood in the scheme of I versus the other or us versus them. It is hard to determine whether tolerance in these cases have a single or double condition. On one hand
objection towards the other(s) is never explicitly made, on the contrary, getting to know the other is emphasized as a way to know oneself. On the other hand the image of a strong, autonomous individual or national identity implies a sense of the other as something not valuable enough. It has an instrumental value as a help to understand ones own identity, but not an intrinsic value that is important to incorporate into me or us.

Anyway, the main conclusion of this conceptual analysis of tolerance in C97 is:

1. It is hard to get a grip on what tolerance means in C97. Tolerance is referred to more than discussed and elaborated. Tolerance is with a few exceptions never in motion. It is a rather static pre-given noun, which do not describe any actions or persons.
2. Tolerance is a concept at distance both in time and place. Its main focus is the difference between a common national identity and other groups. As long as the school is imaged as a place of unity, the main challenges of tolerance lies ahead of (distance in time) and outside of (distance in space) the school.
3. There is a difference in the conception of tolerance between the general part of the curriculum and a few of the cases where it is used in subject curricula, especially in Physical Education and Religious Education. In the general part tolerance is distant, in PE and RE tolerance is proximate.

5.4 Theories of tolerance in C97

So far in this chapter the image of the practice and conceptualization of tolerance in C97 has been analyzed. It is time to try to construct a theoretical understanding of tolerance that can illuminate the shape and content the ideal is given in C97. As help for establishing such a theoretical understanding, I will first turn to David Miller’s theory of nationality and tolerance, secondly, to the modern – postmodern debate on tolerance using Zygmunt Bauman’s conceptions of distance and proximity and Mary Elizabeth Moore’s metaphor of dancing with difference.

5.4.1 Nationality and tolerance

As mentioned in chapter three Miller (1988, 1995a, 1995b) has a socialistic framework for his conception of tolerance – a similar framework to the former Secretary of Education and Research, Gudmund Hernes, who probably was the singular most influential person in the
process of the educational reform leading to C97. Miller (1988:241) is operating with a weak form of socialism that combines individual particularity and liberty with political control of the social world in its overall pattern – i.e. the economy and socially significant institutions. Such a political scheme is seeking to establish a just distribution of welfare not based on merit, but on need.

In order to make such a political arrangement democratic, it is necessary for people to identify with it. This does not mean that all the decisions and arrangements made by political bodies are approved by all, but that the subjects of society can identify with the political institutions.

**Nation-state as community**

This identification should take place at the level where most of the vital political decisions are made – the *nation state*. It is the national state and not the smaller communities or groups that can assure just distribution of goods, Miller argues. At the other hand global institutions do not have the political status or potentiality to secure social justice. Therefore the national state is the primary political level – it is a bulwark against a global market economy with very limited political control on one hand and the fragmentation of different ethnical, religious and cultural groups within the nation on the other.

In order to secure a strong enough nation state and democracy, Miller is emphasizing national identity and citizenship. Democracy requires communication, and communication requires a common language and understanding and identifying with a common language requires identification with the cultural history and symbols of the language.

A nation is in Miller’s (1995a:19) conception something different than state and ethnicity. While *nation* refers to a community of people’s aspiration to political autonomy, *state* refers to the political institution this self-determination implies. *Ethnicity* is a denotation of a group that has a common descent and share cultural features as language and religion. *Nationality* is constituted by five elements (Miller 1995a:27) – it is a community.

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291 See Haug (1996) and Øzerk (1999:256-283) who interpret Hernes’ project as restorative and neoliberal. The more national-communitarian or republican perspectives one can find in Miller gives however a complementary and in many ways more attuned theoretical perspective to understand the political and ethical framework in C97, and particularly the construction of difference and community. For an interpretation along these same national-communitarian lines, see Raan 2002:231-279.

292 “It is once again worth stressing that this common identity must exist at national level. Small-scale or local communities may of course practice distribution according to need internally, and there is ample historical evidence of this occurring. But there is no reason to believe that separate distributions at this level will add up to a just distribution overall, when one takes into account local and regional variations in productive wealth, in population profile, and so forth. Only a national distributive mechanism can guarantee fairness; and this requires ideological support at the same level.” (Miller 1988:243)
… (1) constituted by shared belief and mutual commitment, (2) extended in history, (3) active in character, (4) connected to a particular territory, and (5) marked off from other communities by its distinctive public culture.

This is a situated or thick conception of nationality – that is, a nation is not just a voluntary association of people who wants or has to live together. In a national community people are held together by

… a dense web of customs, practices, implicit understandings, and so forth. There is a shared way of life, which is not to say that everyone follows exactly the same conventions or adheres to the same cultural values, but that there is a substantial degree of overlap in forms of life. (Miller 1995a:41)

A national language is therefore the primary language, and national identity is overriding particular identities in matters of conflict. This common identity and agency is described as citizenship. Citizenship means to share beliefs, responsibilities and history – citizenship and nationality are therefore not given, but constructed or imagined ideas.\(^{293}\) This also means that they are fluid and in constant change. A substantial conception of nationality does not imply status quo. Miller’s conception of nationality is therefore different both from a conservative conception of an all-embracing nationalism and a liberal, procedural conception of a nation-state. A person therefore has a dual substantial identity: One as a citizen and one as an individual (belonging to smaller groups).

There is no need for these identities to conflict, Miller claims. He sees the relationship between the community of nationality and smaller groups as a dialogic and dialectic one: The nation has to change in order to accommodate to component groups, and groups must embrace what Miller calls an inclusive nationality – and change accordingly. This change is in the groups’ self-interest: The groups are guaranteed equal treatment by the nation. The existence of a strong nation protects groups against unequal treatment by other groups.

This dialectical relationship of change and accommodation is however not symmetrical: The nation is the primary agent: “For the dialogue ideal to have a chance of success, participants must share a common identity as citizens that is stronger that their separate identities as members of ethnic or other sectional groups (Miller 1988:248).

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\(^{293}\) Miller calls this republican citizenship (Miller 1995b) as opposed to liberal and libertarian. This is an indication of the communitarian influence on Miller, having some of the same concerns as for instance Walzer. They share a particularistic perspective. To Miller though, the primary community is the nation-state, not local communities as is the case in for instance MacIntyre’s communitarian theory.
Fostered nationality

This means for instance that states must make sure that different ethnic groups are inducted into nationality. Nationality has to be politically and educationally fostered. The public school has a key role in this task. Among other things, schools should be seen as: “[ ] places where a common national identity is reproduced and children prepared for democratic citizenship.” (Miller 1995a:142) This is particularly important towards immigrant ethnic minorities: The school should be conceived as a counterweight to their particular cultural identity. Therefore the school should be public, and governed by a national curriculum, Miller claims. In Norwegian translation: The school should be the place where Norwegians are made.

This is where radical multiculturalists go wrong, Miller argues: They are promoting a view of education that is parasitic on national identity. It assumes national identity, but by fostering particular identities only, they are destroying the foundation of such a common education.

Resources and limits of tolerance

Miller is therefore concerned with the resources and limits of tolerance. Tolerance has to get its resources from a national, communal us. We have to know who we are first in order to tolerate they, the other. Tolerance has to do with identity, and since identity is a matter of communal identity, promoting national identity is a condition for tolerating. Tolerance without such identity will fragmentize and destroy the tolerating subject. But then the limits of tolerance are clear: The characteristics of small-scale groups that cannot be assimilated into or integrated in a national identity, cannot be tolerated.

Miller’s theory of national identity and tolerance gives a broader understanding of the implicit theory of tolerance in C97. The emphasis on national heritage and identity in C97 is on this account an attempt to secure a democratic nation state as a guarantee for just distribution of goods and a bulwark against fragmentation. The aim of C97 and Miller’s theory of nationality is not national restoration as such, but substantial cultural unity on a national level in order for the state to secure justice and democracy. Both C97 and Miller stress the myths as essential in creating national identity. It is however not the historical context of the myths that constitute an ideal, but the function of the myths in giving the citizens a sense of belonging in time and space. The virtues of the national heroes of the myths are transformed to responsibilities of the citizens.
Miller is pointing to the necessity of recognizing boundaries between nations and groups in order to conceptualize difference and tolerance. However, if the groups and nations are conceived too homogenous, there is little need for proximate tolerance.

This means that tolerance as a political and ethical ideal is located somewhat remote from the center of attention. Commonality despite differences is the main focus. Differences are accommodated within national unity, and therefore tolerance is not vital. Us – be it group or nation – is though as mainly homogenous entities. Difference and tolerance belong to the sphere between small-scale groups and individuals and the sphere between us and they. In the first case communication between different groups are secured by a common identity, and tolerance is therefore secondary. In the other case tolerance is something external – it is not a part of our self-understanding, but a way of handling the relation to other nations, states or ethnicities. As long as we as a nation are self-sustained, the relations of tolerance can be kept at a distance.

These theoretical perspectives of Miller are attuned to how tolerance, difference, community and nation are understood in C97 (see above). One quote from the curriculum (C97:42-44, L97:36-38) is a pregnant expression of these ideas:

Those who do not share the background information taken for granted in public discourse, will often overlook the point or miss the meaning. Newcomers to a country who are not immersed in its frames of reference often remain outsiders because others cannot take for granted what they know and can do - they are in constant need of extra explanations.

Such common contexts, references for understanding, encompass historical events (“The 9th of April”), constitutional principles (“The Division of Powers”), the classics of literature (“Peer Gynt”), cultural idioms (“The camel and the eye of the needle”), or the symbols used on weather charts. Without possessing these common reference points - that make it easy to decipher and decode, to construe and relate - and hence to communicate effortlessly - one can become alienated in one’s own country.

Without comprehension of these overarching paradigms, it is difficult for ordinary citizens - nonspecialists - to participate in decisions that deeply affect their lives. The more specialized and technical our culture becomes, the more difficult it will become to communicate across professional boundaries. Common background knowledge is thus at the core of a national network of communication between members of a democratic community. It is the common frames of reference which make it possible to link what one sees, reads or hears, to a shared, tacit mode of thinking. It makes it possible to fathom

De som ikke har del i den bakgrunnsinformasjon som tas for gitt i den offentlige debatten, vil ofte være ute av stand til å fatte poenget eller gripe sammenhengen. Nykommere i et land, som ikke deler de felles referanserammene, blir ofte outsiderd fordi andre ikke kan ta for gitt hva de vet og kan – de trenger stadig ekstra forklaringer.

Slike plattformer for forståelse spenner over historiske hendelser («9. April»). Grunnlovens maktfordelingsprinsipp, klassikerne i litteraturen («Lille Marius»), kulturelt fellesgods («kamelen og nåloyet»), tegnene som brukes på værkartet osv. Besitter man ikke de felles forståelsesformene som gjør det lett å tolke og formidle - og dermed kommunisere smidig - kan man bli fremmedgjort i eget land.

Uten overgripende referanserammer blir det vanskeligere for vanlige samfunnsmedlemmer - ikke-spesialister - å ta del i beslutninger som griper dypt inn i deres liv. Jo mer spesialisert og teknisk vår kultur blir, desto vanskeligere blir det å kommunisere på tvers av faggrenser. Felles bakgrunnskunnskap er derfor kjernen i et nasjonalt nettverk for kommunikasjon mellom medlemmene av et demokratisk fellesskap. Det er felles referanserammer som gjør det mulig å knytte det en ser, leser eller hører til et sams, underforsått tenkesett. De gjør det mulig å begripe komplekse budskap og å tolke nye
complex messages, and to interpret new ideas, situations and challenges.

Education plays a leading role in passing on this common background information - the culture everybody must be familiar with if society is to remain democratic and its citizens sovereign. Education must therefore provide the fertile soil for cultivation of coherent knowledge, skills and outlooks.

A national community is constituted by a common core of knowledge, tradition and language. This will create unity within community, and be the basis of tolerance of the difference beyond the commonalities of the community.

5.4.2 Distant and proximate tolerance

Distance is therefore a key word of tolerance in C97. In establishing commonality and a strong we, the different and the other is put at a distance. And so is tolerance. In Bauman’s (1993:84) conception of distance and proximity this would be a modern conception of tolerance:

If postmodernity is a retreat from the blind alleys into which radically pursued ambitions of modernity have led, a postmodern ethics would be one that readmits the Other as neighbour, as the close-to-hand-and-mind, into the hard core of the moral self, back from the wasteland of calculated interest to which it had been exiled; an ethics that restores the autonomous moral significance of proximity; an ethics that recast the Other as the crucial character in the process through which the moral self comes into its own.

On this account of morality, the other and difference is not distant, but proximate. Difference constitutes not only close human relationships, but also human selves. In the postmodern conditioned society there is no firm and secure space for construction of safe identity. To create and secure a unified, managed and controlled space where identities can be formed, is a modern project, Bauman claims. This modern space is however under pressure – and the more pressure, the more resources have to be put in the establishing and maintaining of such a space. (Bauman 1993:233-240)

The phenomenon of culture in the form of national collective identity should be understood in this context. Such a national community is however a masquerade, a made-up community, primarily brought up by its inhabitants decision to identify with it. Such a community lives in a condition of constant anxiety – and is becoming exclusive and intolerant in trying to secure itself: “a community which has to be built tear by year, day by day, hour by hour, having the liquid fuel of popular emotions as its only life-blood.” (Bauman 1993:235)
In Bauman’s mind identity under postmodern conditions can never be secured from ambivalence and uncertainty in some form of tribal community or universal order. It is only through the caressing of the other in proximity of the self and other that identity is shaped. Morality is bodily. Although Bauman is not using the term frequently, tolerance is moving towards the center of such a conception of difference and identity. Tolerance on this account is caressing the other, the different – not keeping otherness at a distance.

The C97 has in this terminology a distinct modern conception of tolerance: A conception that demands the establishing of a unified and firm identity prior to tolerating difference. Difference, ambiguity and uncertainty are making any evidently secure foundation of identity fluid in a postmodern perspective. Such a conception of tolerance is only partly visible in two cases in the subjects: Physical education and Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education.

The bodily perspective on tolerance in PE is worth noticing. Tolerance is not an impersonal ideal or value as in most of C97, but is due to bodily difference. Tolerance then also takes a bodily shape. Through play, sports and dance one experience difference and tolerance in bodily practices. This is a similar perspective to Moore’s (2001) conception dancing with difference. Her perspective starts with the claim that education is usually designed for the majorities and the average students. Difference is marginalized to special sectors like special education and multicultural education. She is arguing to put difference in the center of all education and to respect particularity. This can take the form of dancing with difference. Dancing with difference is a rich metaphor that implies a bodily response between trying to control difference at one hand and giving oneself over to chaos on the other. Dancing with difference means participating creatively and cooperatively with an equal other. The act is risky and cannot be controlled, but at the same time one is responding actively in the dance.

A danger of difference is trying to dichotomize it too quickly, Moore argues. In categorizing difference in England-Ireland, Israel-Palestine, men-woman and rich-poor we are trying to reduce difference to understandable and predictable entities. “In fact, even talking in categories, or in the royal “we”, is problematic because many will not be included [ ] and some will be ambiguously included.” (Moore 2001:127) Educating dancing with difference means meeting and valuing difference and learning to dance.

We also need teachers and administrators who value the dance, who have some experience in negotiating difference, and who are willing to be learners in the process. In such a dance, no one has all of the answers; if they did, the dance would cease and education would become stylized and rigid. (Moore 2001:128)
Taking Moore’s metaphor of dancing with difference into the sphere of tolerance, the dance itself is the act of tolerance. It is a proximate, relational, bodily action accompanied with risk. Such a postmodern tolerance is constitutive in the shaping of identity and meaning. Allowing the other in one’s proximity and seeing oneself as another\textsuperscript{294} and seeing difference as radical, means allowing chaos into one’s life and education (Doll 1993:86-108). Dancing is however not passively surrendering to chaos. Henriksen (1999:137-138) sketches a modern and a postmodern ethical response to chaos. The modern reaction would be rational: To calculate and order life according to general ethical principles and leave rest to providence. A postmodern response would be withdrawal and resignation in a maximizing of immediate positive emotion. Dancing with difference is however a more active response to chaos – it is a co-effort to create meaning between chaos and order.

Tolerance as dancing with difference is with the exception in the PE-curriculum (and maybe the second quote in RE) an opposite of the modern conception of tolerance in C97. The formulation in PE gives however a glimpse of this conception.

5.5 Conclusion

To conclude: Tolerance in C97 is a tolerance of distance, not proximity. It is not a part of identity shaping, but something that require a firm identity. It is a device of establishing and continuing safety, not risk. Tolerance assumes a substantial cultural content from which the object of tolerance deviates. Tolerance is further directed to outsiders, not insiders. And it is mainly described as a general impersonal principle, not bodily practice.

\textsuperscript{294} This phrase refers to Ricoeur (1992:3): “Oneself as Another suggests from the outset that the selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other, as we may say in Heglian terms. To “as” I should like to attach a strong mening, not only that of comparison (oneself similar to another) but indeed that of implication (oneself inasmuch as being other).”
6. Tolerance in the Norwegian educational and ethical debate

This chapter will focus on the understanding of tolerance in a third curriculum domain – the domain that Goodlad (1979:60-61) calls the ideological. In this study the focus of the ideological domain is the academic one. Or more exactly, curriculum and curricula issues in academic and professional publications.

It is striking how scarce the academic contribution to the issue of tolerance is in Norway, in view of how important the ideal is in an increasingly pluralistic society as the Norwegian. To my knowledge there is no Norwegian major theoretical or empirical work on tolerance at all. The material in this chapter consists therefore of articles in journals and books. They all refer to education – but in varying degree. The reason for this lack of academic curiosity of the conception and theory of tolerance is an open question. One answer may be that the phenomenon of tolerance is dealt with under other headlines and concepts. The articles I will analyze as representations of the ideological curriculum of tolerance, are:

Table 6.1: Norwegian academic publications on tolerance 1984-1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Journal/book</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berg, Arthur</td>
<td>Livssynsmessig tolerance (Life philosophy and tolerance)</td>
<td>Religion og Livssyn</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eidsvåg, Inge</td>
<td>Om tvil, tro og toleranse (On doubt, faith and tolerance)</td>
<td>Kirke og Kultur</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gule, Lars</td>
<td>Hvor går toleransens grenser (The location of the limits of tolerance)</td>
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<td>Gule, Lars</td>
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<td>Toleransens plass i et pluralistisk samfunn (The role of tolerance in a pluralistic society)</td>
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<td>Om konflikt og tolerance (On conflict and tolerance)</td>
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<td>Sanvig, Bente</td>
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<td>Thorbjørnsen, Svein Olaf</td>
<td>Et toleransesamfunn eller et tolerant samfunn – hvor står vi og hva ønsker vi? (A tolerance-society or a tolerant society – where do we stand and what do we wish?)</td>
<td>Tidsskrift for Teologi og Kirke</td>
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<td>Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift</td>
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<td>fremje åndsfridom og toleranse (contribute to spiritual freedom and tolerance)</td>
<td>Hva er skolens mål? (NKS-Forlaget)</td>
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<td>Tønnessen, Finn Egil</td>
<td>”Toleranse” må ikke forveksles med ”overbærenhet” (&quot;Tolerance” must not be confused with “indulgence”)</td>
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<td>Vestre, Bernt</td>
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<td>Wyller, Trygve</td>
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<td>Arv og utfordring. Menneske og samfunn i den kristne moraltradisjon (Universitetsforlaget)</td>
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<td>Aadnanes, Per Magne</td>
<td>Livssynskunnskap. Ei drøfting av fagprofilen (Generel religious education. A discussion of its subject profile)</td>
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<td>Aadnanes, Per Magne</td>
<td>Toleranse (Tolerance)</td>
<td>Religion og Livssyn</td>
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<td>Aadnanes, Per Magne</td>
<td>Kulturkonfliktar, toleranse og kulturell identitet (Cultural conflicts, tolerance and cultural identity)</td>
<td>Prismet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aadanes, Per Magne</td>
<td>Toleransens grenser (The limits of tolerance)</td>
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The focus of the chapter is how tolerance is understood in these publications. Tolerance is more explicitly discussed in this material than among the teachers and in the national curriculum. These views will be presented. But I will also try to analyze the more implicit understanding of tolerance in the texts, using the same analytical schemes as in the previous two chapters, which are discussed in chapter three. First, I will focus on how the practice of tolerance is described. Secondly, how tolerance is conceptualized. And, thirdly, which theories of tolerance the various articles use explicitly and which theories that can be used in order to understand tolerance in the articles.

6.1 The practice of tolerance – viewed from the academia

What kind of practical issues and cases concern tolerance in the ideological domain? Three themes are recurring in the material: Religion, culture and, to a lesser degree, education.
6.1.1 Religion, difference and tolerance

Historically, theories of tolerance were worked out in the context of religious difference, for instance in the case of Locke. Over three hundred years later, theories of tolerance still understand tolerance situated in religious plurality. This may be because religious difference still is the primary challenge of plurality and tolerance. But it may also be because the articles are drawing on older theories of tolerance (Locke, Voltaire, Mill); their focus was primarily religious difference (partly with the exception of Mill). The authors of the articles adopt parts of the social and historical context of the theories. That is, it may be that the theories are only partly recontextualized.

Religion and truth

Be that as it may, religious tolerance is a paradigmatic case of tolerance. There are, however, various reasons for focusing on religion. The theological approaches (particularly Thorbjørnsen 1984 and 1987, Taxt 1989, see also Tønnessen 1984, Berg 1989 and Hiort 1996) are concerned with the status of (religious) truth in a situation where Christian truths no longer are self-evident in society and culture. These articles are attempting to sketch an understanding of tolerance that allows for individuals’ and religions’ exclusive claims for truth. The implicit issue is absolutism versus relativism – where tolerance is understood within a frame of absolutism. The relationship between absolutism and relativism is – even if not made explicit - conceived as a dichotomy – an either-or.

These articles operate with a distinction between material and formal tolerance (Taxt 1989:178).

In short, we can say that the material concept of tolerance occurs to the same degree that tolerance is associated with and based upon valuation of the content of the opinion or worldview at hand. Likewise, it is a characteristic of this concept of tolerance when it directly or indirectly expresses the setting of objective (in terms of content, “material”) limits for what a person believes is “worthy of tolerance.”

The defining characteristic of this [the formal concept of tolerance] is that the tolerance is utterly dependent on the content of the worldview or

Sammenfattende kan vi si at det materiale tolerantebegrep foreligger i samme grad som tolerantance knyttes til og begrunnes ut fra en vurdering av innholdet i den mening eller det synet som det er tale om i den aktuelle situasjonen. I samsvar med dette er det også et kjennetegn på dette tolerantebegrep når det direkte eller indirekte gis uttykk for at det gis sålige (innholdsmessige, ”materiale”) grenser for hva en person synes er ”toleranseverdig”.

Dette [det formale tolerantebegrep] kjennetegnes ved at toleransen er fullstendig uavhengig av innholdet i det syn eller den tro det er

\[295\] Neither of the authors discuss the issue in these terms. For the terms absolutism and relativism, see Harré and Krausz 1996.

\[296\] Taxt draws upon Thorbjørnsen 1984:27. This distinction was, as far as I have been able to track it, first used by Dale (1979).
belief involved. The tolerance becomes an attitude and a behavior practiced towards other human beings, regardless of the opinions they represent. (But there may be some disagreement, for otherwise there would be no point in talking about tolerance. Tolerance presumes disagreement.) As the tolerance is independent of the content, we call it formal.

Material tolerance is substantial, and relatively equivalent to what I have characterized as tolerance as a position. It means that one moral or epistemological position can be characterized as more tolerant than another. The problem with material tolerance is that one tolerant position may conflict with another, and at the outset define a different position as intolerant. Therefore a formal tolerance is preferable, Taxt argues. It is directed towards tolerating the person, not the issue, despite difference in opinion on truth.

The focus on religious tolerance within theology is therefore based on an attempt to frame philosophical absolutism within the reality of plural societies and cultures. On this account cultural difference does not imply philosophical relativism.

Religion as depth dimension

Another reason for focusing on religious tolerance is found in Eidsvåg (1990). Eidsvåg is understanding religion as the depth dimension in human life (Eidsvåg 1990:84-85).

The crucial question becomes: is there more than one religious truth? My answer is a cautious yes. There are many truths about the phenomenon that I consider the inherent truth – religion in and of itself. Religion is a deep dimension in our lives. It is ineradicable quite simply because the human being is the only being that knows it shall die. In its deepest nature the human being is therefore a religious being. Now I do not talk about religion molded in dogmas, but of religion as wondering about the mysteries of life, as meditation on the completely other, as openness and joy over what we can sense, but not know. Religion prevents the human hearts in drying out in sterile intellectualism. It gives us a language to use on our uttermost concern – on birth and death, caos and cosmos, mening and meninglessness. Religion gives us a mythical-symbolical language to sound the depths within us. I think that the fatality of the modern human being of today is due to our suffering from the lack of such a meaningful symbols.
While Thorbjørsen (1984, 1987) and Taxt (1989) seem to have a substantial understanding of religion, Eidsvåg is operating with a functional conceptualization\textsuperscript{298}. Religion is primarily anthropological conceived – as religiousness, a human faculty that is primary to and transcends religions as particular historical traditions. Although Eidsvåg does not say so, this conception of religion explains putting religion in front when discussing tolerance. Religion is on this account embedded in identity – it is a way of making meaning of oneself and the world. Instead of being differentiated as one social or psychological sector, it is the glue holding perspectives of life together. It is therefore likely to think (although Eidsvåg does not explicitly say so) that if one can learn to tolerate this essential aspect (religion) of the other, other aspects will be likely to follow. At least, the issue of religion is the most pressuring.

Further, religion seen as a general human faculty, gives resources for founding tolerance in something human universal: Namely, its capacity and need for meaning.\textsuperscript{299} This perspective opens up for a common foundation and conception of tolerance. Tolerance has the capacity of transcending particular religions and life-philosophies and becomes a high-road to peaceful co-existence. This status does however depend on a functional and anthropological conceptualization of religion, a conceptualization that in its partiality and lack of common support among religious groups, is problematic.

\textit{Religion as life-philosophy}

Quite another account of religion is given by Lindholm (1995). He is distinguishing between the sphere of life-philosophy on one hand and the cultural sphere on the other. Religion is one of the categories within life-philosophy, together with secular world-views. Lindholm (1995:244) distinguishes life-philosophy (including religion) and culture on following criteria:

In conflicts of religion and worldview, tolerance is an acceptable moral basis for peaceful coexistence, but in relation to other cultures, tolerance is not an appropriate ideal. There are simply no morally acceptable grounds for disapproval of others having a culture different from mine.

\textsuperscript{298} To the relationship between substantial and functional conceptualizations of religion, see Winsnes (1988) and Skeie (1998).

\textsuperscript{299} Schrag (1997) identifies this aspect of human identity as transcendence. In the transcending capacity of human language, action and communication lays a resource for cultural criticism and commonality. Modern theories of the self that have excluded religion as a main cultural spheres, underplays the role of religion and transcendens in the process of identity formation.
He later elaborates on this distinction between life-philosophy/religion on one hand and culture on the other:

Beliefs and worldviews are certainly deep-seated, but they can in principle be discussed, criticized, and defended, and can be modified or abandoned through conversation and personal experience. But to the extent that people’s social lives are shaped by traditions and cultural codes that cannot be eliminated through cross-cultural dialogue, nor are such traditions and codes appropriate objects of tolerance. Differences that are neither chosen nor modifiable through discussion or processing of experience provide no grounds for reasonable mutual disapproval.

In contrast to conflicts based on worldview, communication barriers and misunderstandings originating from cultural differences give the parties no morally reasonable grounds upon which to disapprove of one another.

Lindholm’s point is that what persons cannot change, is beyond the conceptual sphere of tolerance. Tolerance can only refer to acts, speech and virtues that can be changed. This criteria will be discussed below. Here I want to focus on the conceptualization of religion in relation to culture. On Lindholm’s account there is a distinct difference: Religion is in principle alterable, culture not. Therefore the terminology of tolerance is appropriate in issues of religion, but not in issues of cultural difference. Framed within the terminology of life-philosophy, religion is primarily understood as individual choice, on a cultural background. Religion is therefore the focus of tolerance, not because it is fundamental, but due to the differentiation of culture from the sphere of tolerance.

Some of the authors also touch the issue of religious education (Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education). Gule (1997:19-22) argues that the intention of RE in C97 is to develop and consolidate a Norwegian identity. He argues that this is an anti-modern politics, and an attempt of dedifferentiation that is not tolerant. In tradition lies a lack of

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300 On this point Lindholm is not entirely clear. On one hand it seems that he does not mean that all cultural expressions are unalterable. On the other he argues that there is a clear cut distinction between life-philosophy (including religion) and culture. If however culture is both alterable and unalterable, it makes sense (according to Lindholm’s conception of tolerance) to talk about tolerating some aspects of culture. Then the general claim that life-philosophy is object of tolerance, and culture not, does not hold. Another problem with the distinction lies in excluding religion from what Lindholm calls “heavy tradition-given characteristics”. For a critical discussion on this, see below.
understanding of otherness, which is characteristic of intolerance. Continuing a traditional way of life is therefore an intolerant program. Accordingly, RE in C97 is intolerant.301

6.1.2 Culture, difference and tolerance
The second theme of tolerance in the academic articles, is culture and ethnicity. Aadnanes (1995) says that immigration from foreign cultures is representing one of the most important social and cultural challenges in Norway in the 20th century. This fact is challenging the conception of tolerance in the modern Western world. Modern Western tolerance has had subjectivism as ideological condition. This conception works on the assumptions of religious, moral and political liberty of the individual and a common, secular, post-traditional state. The critical issue is whether such a conception of tolerance is capable to deal with a cultural plurality that challenges this modern, secularized and individualized ideal of the public sphere.

The present cultural plurality also consists of premodern cultural forms that have cultural formative ambitions, which threaten the image of the neutral, common public sphere. In addition the cultural phenomenon of postmodernity consists in the disbelief in commonality in reason and values, the foundation of the modern state.

Aadnanes does not give any definitive answers. In another article (1989:43) he says that the modern ideals of tolerance lack a historic experience with such a cultural and religious plurality that now is the case in the Western world. The ideal of tolerance is not ahistoric, and needs to be reflected upon as a product of its historical context:

In plain words: tolerance in the modern sense is a product of Western culture. In the West, it can never be tolerant to allow exceptions to a view on humanity in which human rights are utterly central and which apply regardless of sex, race, religion, and social status. If one allows exceptions from such rights in the name of tolerance, one also compromises the fundamental values from which the tolerance has grown, and without which it cannot survive.

Sagt med reine ord: Toleranse i moderne meining er eit vestleg kulturprodukt. I Vesten kan det aldri bli tolerant å gi dispensasjoner frå eit menneskesyn der individuelle mennerettar står heilt sentralt, og at dei gjeld utan omsyn til kjønn, rase, religion og sosial status. Dispenserer ein frå slike rettar i toleransen sitt namn, går ein samstundes på akkord med det verdigrunnlaget toleransen har vakse fram av, og som han ikkje kan greia seg utan. (Aadnanes 1989:45-46)

Still, tolerance has to be interpreted and practiced within the specific context that Aadnanes calls post-Christian. This term tries to describe the cultural conditions for identity processes in contemporary Norway. Post-Christian means that the culture has lost Christianity as an indisputable common frame of meaning, but is still a dominating and inescapable historic

301 According to my analysis in chapter five, the general parts of the C97 and Norwegian are the sections that primarily underscores national identity, not RE.
horizon. It seems that Aadnanes conceives tolerance as a distinct Western and modern ideal, which experience conflicts with a particular cultural history (post-Christian), premodern culture of immigrants and a postmodern cultural condition.

Also Gule (1997:3) takes cultural plurality as the point of departure in an article on tolerance. Modern societies are irreversible differentiated, and this demands tolerance:

In the modern world, people are migrating all over the globe even as increasingly far-reaching distribution of labor and social specialization are creating new subcultures. This is putting new demands on our capacity to live together with others whom we perceive as different.

In spite of the use of “us” and “other”, the focus is on the individual. Difference or plurality is conceived distinctively modern – as difference between individuals, not between groups (traditional) or within subjects (postmodern) (Walzer 1997:87-92):

One point of departure is that we should respect all fundamental cultural characteristics connected to individual integrity. We should also tolerate all cultural characteristics that do no harm to others in the sense of violating their human rights, while oppressive cultural characteristics should be changed.

The perspective of culture is through the individual, and the criteria for evaluating culture are individual rights. The focus of tolerance is therefore the individual, not culture as a collective, transindividual phenomenon and process. Gule is also concerned with the state as tolerating subject; on one hand securing a politics of live-and-let-live, and on the other protecting the individual against transgressions of its human rights. The modern state is the organizer and defender of individual liberty, which is the focus of tolerance.

As described above Lindholm (1995) separates between life-philosophy (including religion) and culture. While world view is debateable and alterable, culture is not. He argues that one can reason with a Catholic that is too loyal to the Pope. But you cannot argue with a Pakistani immigrant on his appearance, accent or cultural code. Culture is on this account understood per definition as the unalterable – Lindholm (1995:243) mentions ethnicity, language and “heavy” tradition-given characteristics. On this account tolerance has little or nothing to do with culture.

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302 See also Skeie (1998:22-32) for a somewhat similar account of plurality, although not using postmodernity/postmodernism as a distinct cultural description.
Lindholm’s concept of culture is however highly problematic. Culture on this account is understood as static and substantial. That means the more dynamic and processual aspects disappear – which is particularly problematic in a situation where cultures are changing and interacting in complex ways. It is hard to distinguish an unalterable unchanging cultural core in for instance a Pakistani culture. Ethnicity can be seen as much a social construction as a biological “given”. Language is changing. To some degree the individual has a choice to influence both ethnicity and language. As Giddens (1991:81) says: “[W]e have no choice but to choose”. This does not exclude cultural horizons against which the choices are made. It does however rule out a conception of culture as a given, beyond social construction and interpretation. And even more important: It is problematic to limit culture to these potentially unalterable characteristics. That is, even if one could make a case for ethnicity as unalterable, reducing culture to ethnicity would be strongly problematic.

6.1.3 Education, difference and tolerance

But what about education? So far I have pointed out religion and culture as two issues of tolerance that are discussed in the academic articles. Some of them also addresses education, although briefly.

Tønnessen (1984:16) argues that when tolerance presupposes a point of view, being tolerant in the school and preschool does not mean educating for neutral forbearance, but for engaging commitment:

If we are to bring up children to be tolerant, we must not approach them with indifferent forbearance; such irresoluteness will also affect the children. We must rather teach children by example what it means to live with a point of view and a sense of commitment. In practice, we must show them what genuine tolerance means.

In this area, children must be given early training and role models. We must teach them to strike a balance between the indifference of relativism (neutrality) and the narrow-mindedness of fanaticism. We must give children the courage and the strength to have beliefs and opinions that unite commitment and openness in life and learning. People who are themselves committed to a belief are most capable of teaching the meaning of tolerance. They soon experience how hard it is to be treated with intolerance due to their opinions and beliefs.


Tønnessen is arguing against a relativism that claims everything to be equally good and true. Tolerance in this relativistic scheme is false, a tolerance of commitment is true. An education
of tolerance of commitment is therefore primarily concerned both with creating commitments and openness.

Sandvig (1989) argues that tolerance in education means to extend variation and difference – and to see human and cultural multitude as a resource, not a threat. Tolerance therefore means to view human difference as equally valid. This does not mean indifference, she claims. Indifference means avoiding difference – keeping difference at a distance.

The classroom is one of the arenas where tolerance in terms of culture and worldview is put to the test. But it is also where we have the opportunity “to care” - in the sense of caring about what other people actually believe in.

The Norwegian primary school is founded on a purpose not everyone finds valid, which is an inherent problem in public schools meant to serve everyone. The schools have problems differentiating between assigning equal worth and being indifferent when it comes to pupils whose background embraces a worldview other than that of the Norwegian State Church. A school where tolerance is on the curriculum must have a fundamental acceptance of the equal worth of all pupils as ballast. Its objective should be genuine diversity and its method one of ethics and logic, empathy and interaction - time to care about the motivations and explanations behind that which may seem peculiar. (Sandvik 1989:7)

By this Sandvik claims that the aim of the Education Act which explicitly refers to a Christian upbringing as an aim of education in compulsory schooling, is in conflict with tolerance as ideal. She goes much further than Tønnessen in thinking a tolerant education as being interested in and open to the different and unknown. An aim that favours one particular group (even if it is the majority) is putting severe restrictions on educational reciprocal tolerance.

Tolerance in class
The only article that discusses tolerance and education in some detail is Thorbjørnsen (1990). He points out that tolerance is a relatively new term in Norwegian education, firstly present in the Education Act of 1969. Since World War II Norway has been gradually secularized and pluralized, with a variety of different secular and religious positions and traditions. Increased cultural plurality combined with a unitary school created tensions, which made the need for tolerance as a lightning rod pressuring.
In an attempt to clarify the conception of tolerance and distinguish between what he calls true and false tolerance, he establishes four criteria: 1) It has to incorporate the conception of truth. 2) It has to incorporate the relationship between authority and liberty. 3) It has to incorporate a concept of identity. 4) It has to incorporate different traditions and points of view.

Torbjørnsen then sketches three understandings of tolerance, a classical, a modern and a pragmatic. Classic tolerance is a tolerance of double condition. Modern tolerance implies objectivity and neutrality, with teachers showing no or little preference to students when teaching life philosophy or values. A pragmatic tolerance sees broader Christian values and culture as a common denominator in the Norwegian society and for the compulsory school – together with the aim of tolerance which could cover for persons that did not identifying with Christian culture, and which could delimit the kind of Christianity educated in schools.

Evaluating these three understandings according to his criteria, Thorbjørnsen concludes that the modern understanding fails. Neutrality and liberty has priority over truth and authority. This is not the case with the classic model, which initially is evaluated highly. Still, Thorbjørnsen (1990:22) reflects:

The question is whether such understanding consistently applied is compatible with a school reality in which the compulsory school ideal plays an important role and a social reality where the pluralistic tendency has in any case not slowed down since the 1960s and 1970s. This does not necessarily mean that one should lighten demands for tolerance, but the situation seems to require orientation in a direction that is common for the children attending school, both with respect to culture and background in terms of worldview. It should be possible to move some distance down that path without allowing personal convictions and the values the school stands for to disappear in the fog of relativism and indifferentism. [ ] A too-rigid understanding of tolerance may have to be “smoothed a bit around the edges” in today’s society.

The pragmatic model is judged too hazy, but a “healthy” understanding of tolerance in the contemporary situation, seems to be found somewhere in-between the classic and pragmatic model of tolerance.

Thorbjørnsen ends his article with issues of tolerance in everyday school practice. He sketches following aims for education in tolerance at school: 1) It has to be created a consciousness of differences. 2) Students must be helped to self-reliance. 3) Respect for the
truth must be promoted. 4) Respect for individual integrity must be created. 5) An environment for dialogue must be established.

As discussed above, Thorbjørnsen sees the establishing of truth as a condition for talking about tolerance. When claiming that tolerant education must lead to respect for the truth, he continues:

If pupils have assimilated something as truth, directly or indirectly, proven or unproven, they must be encouraged to be proud of it and to respect the assimilated truth as something valuable. But they must also infer that if it is an assimilated truth, there is no danger in talking about it with others, and perhaps allow them to be examined against truths that other pupils may have assimilated. That the teacher in this situation should refrain from using his or her superior powers of argument should be obvious.

This is an attempt to keep two vital aspects together: On one hand, the respect for truth and on the other, the value of dialogue. This implies a shift from one particular theoretical perspective, according to which it can be argued that truth is one, to a meta-perspective that recognizes that there is a disagreement of what the truth is, but still claims that truth is one and can be understood and acted upon as such. 303 This meta-perspective implies a sociological perspective which can help describing the situation as one of plurality.

This plurality of conceptions of truth does not represent a major problem in issues of ontology, as for instance whether God exists, what characterizes God or whether life has a purpose. There is no need for an agreement on these issues in order to establish a learning community. 304 However, at least in issues of moral truth such an agreement has to be established. Thorbjørnsen does not discuss the pressuring issue of moral pluralism, moral truth and the necessity to establish some kind of moral agreement in the classroom and at the school. In the school one has to agree on whether the students can use religious dress or not, and on which moral grounds this decision is made. Leaving the issue to individual choice is in

303 Such a position is not made explicit by the authors, but could for instance be objectivism; there are beliefs which hold and entities that exist independent of social beliefs (Harré and Krausz 1996:5). Or it could be a kind of pluralism as preferentialism, where one admits a plurality of possible answers (truths), but only one acceptable answer (truth) (Rescher 1993:98-126).

304 Still, it could be argued that in an educational context these ontological issues cannot merely be treated as opinions on existence, but as aspects of identity. I understand myself as a Christian, which is something more than stating an ontological opinion. There are reasons to claim that particularly in the case of children discussions of and relations to ontological questions, imply issues of identity. This does not mean that one should not discuss ontological issues, but doing that with an attitude of tolerance towards the other as other, not only to a variety of opinions. This is probably what Thorbjørnsen means when urging teachers to be reluctant to use their superior ability of argumentation.
this case not a neutral alternative or the obvious tolerant choice. It is one particular moral position among other alternatives. The point is of course that in this issue, and very many like it, the choice of the individual will affect others. It is therefore not for the individual alone to choose – it is a matter of moral truth, right and good that involves a community. Individualizing the truth makes tolerance not too difficult. It is when truth or agreement has to be commonly established in a particular context, that tolerance is put to a greater test. This is the problem many of the teachers in this study feel problematic and reflect on (see chapter four).

Thorbjørnsen’s article is one of the very few that addresses the issue of what tolerance more concretely means in an educational practice. When a teacher or other readers ask: What is an tolerant act or a tolerant person, they are not likely to get many answers from the ideological curriculum domain. Thorbjørnsen (1990:23-24) is sketching a variety of approaches – indicating that he understands tolerant education as something positive and active. In establishing an environment of dialogue, he emphasizes the importance of actively listening, looking for the positive in the other’s speech and interpreting everything with the best intentions. Tolerance has to do with sensitivity and empathy.

One reason for the lack of paradigmatic cases of tolerance is that tolerance in many of the articles is conceptualized as negative (i.e. passive). On the account of tolerance as refraining from action, simply not doing anything is the only possible act of tolerance. The focus will then not be on the act itself, but the conditions for allowing or non-interference and the limits of tolerance.

Tolerance, law and stigmatization

The focus in these articles is moved from tolerating to not tolerating. The question will then be: What kind of actions of not tolerating can be considered as paradigmatic? Here there is, however, no agreement or clarity. One example of reflections of non tolerance is found in Gule (1997). He claims that the statement “human beings of a particular colour are less intelligent than white” is not an encouragement to a direct assault. It should therefore not be prosecuted. The statement should however not be tolerated. It should be accepted because the right of liberty of speech overrules the right of dignity.

Gule therefore implicitly operates with two categories of non tolerance: 1) Non tolerance and acceptance and 2) non tolerance and non-acceptance. Shouting “kick him to death” to a person fighting another should be neither tolerated nor accepted. The racist example in the paragraph above should be not tolerated, but accepted. The acts – or non
tolerance - in category 2 should be moral and legal prohibition and prosecution. Actions of non tolerance in category 1 should however not be legal prosecution, but other kinds of moral and rational pressure and argumentation:

As an example, we can imagine “social stigmatization,” i.e., that the racist is isolated – “turn your back on the racist” – and condemned in all contexts. Other than to present anti-racist arguments, one does not speak to the racist in the schoolyard or in the workplace. This kind of instrument can actually be much more powerful than a fine or a few months in jail. But precisely because social stigmatization can be such a strong instrument, it should be used with care. (Gule 1997:15-16)

Tolerance to Gule is refraining from legal means or social stigmatization. Because one can only be tolerant to what one dislikes, even despites, tolerance is always accompanied by argumentation for the opposite act, opinion or character of what one tolerates. On this account tolerance does not amount to more than abstaining from legal sanctions or social stigmatization.

Firstly, to legal sanctions: Since the alternative of legal sanctions is very remote from most situations in the classroom and also for most persons, the practical difference between tolerance and not tolerance becomes unclear. The persons who dislike or despite something will (at least) argue against it anyway – whether declaring herself tolerating or non tolerating. Or put in another way: Tolerance does not amount to very much in practical actions or attitudes on this account. The only way of showing one is not tolerating something is by using legal means. Since the tolerator cannot prescribe law, she is dependent on the existing law. Tolerating someone is in practice therefore reduced to the question whether to report someone to the police, or not.

The other alternative is tolerance as refraining from social stigmatization. Social stigmatization in the way Gule described it, is morally problematic in any situation in school context. Although sanctioning can be experienced as socially stigmatizing, systematic stigmatizing as described above is highly de-humanizing. Social stigmatization is therefore no alternative for non tolerance. Then again, tolerance does not amount to more than not reporting the students to the police - which means that there is little practical difference between tolerance and non tolerance.

The visible act of tolerance in education on this account of tolerance is therefore hard to find. And so is an image of a tolerant teacher (or another character).
The image of the practice of tolerance in the ideological curricula can be summed up as follows: The focus is on religious and cultural difference and how tolerance should be conceived in a situation of such plurality. With a few exceptions, the contemporary, practical educational context is not described or reflected on in any detail. There is generally a greater emphasis on the normative conceptualization of tolerance than the paradigmatic cases and educational practice of tolerance. In other words, the articles are more concerned with how people should conceive tolerance properly, than with how this conception relate to the challenges of tolerance in actual school practice.

6.2 Conceptualizing tolerance in the ideological domain

The following conceptual analysis is using the theoretical scheme, described in chapter three. At this analytical level it is done independent of the articles’ own theoretical categories and structures.

6.2.1 Scope: Conceiving tolerance thin or thick?

The first question is whether the conceptualization of tolerance is thick or thin. Two criteria are used: 1) The issues of tolerance: Whether tolerance is strictly a moral term or wider than so. 2) The actors and structures of tolerance: Whether the actors of tolerance is described in dichotomous or in more nuanced terms, and whether the issue of power is non-relational or relational.

Issues of tolerance

Vestre (1986:28) raises the issue of dislike as a condition for tolerance, and suggests two criteria for dislike, in order to talk about tolerance.

1. That which the tolerant individual disapproves of must be something that is ethically praiseworthy to disapprove of – otherwise, his tolerance is not a virtue.
2. A particular type of tolerance (such as the Lutheran’s tolerance of the Catholic) may be a virtue in one historical situation, but not in another.

Vestre points out early in his article that a condition for talking about tolerance is dislike. From statement 1) above, it is clear that he interprets dislike as a moral category. In statement two he opens up for a more contextual tolerance, claiming that tolerance can change from one
situation to another. It is not perfectly clear when Vestre is referring to the conceptualization or theories of tolerance. The conceptualization of tolerance has to be wider than a particular theory of tolerance. If one’s conceptualization of tolerance does not include other theoretical approaches than one’s own, alternative theories are dismissed a priori, in that they do not address the issue in question, namely tolerance.

Still, understanding Vestre’s criteria as conceptualization, he places the condition of morality in the subject of tolerance. Alternatively, it could have been placed in the object or in the issue. For instance in order to talk about tolerance, it has to refer to an issue of morality (act or character) within the object. Being a Lutheran or a Catholic is not primarily a moral issue – it is more an issue of belief or epistemology. How to treat a Catholic as a Lutheran, is however a moral issue. In Vestre’s statement two, therefore, morality as a condition of tolerance understands morality within the tolerator (the subject of tolerance).

This raises, however, an essential question: Does any moral disapproval or dislike qualify as condition for talking about tolerance? No, Vestre says, it has to be praiseworthy. He then goes on to discuss what is morally praiseworthy to dislike.

In this context the interesting point is that Vestre is understanding tolerance as primarily referring to moral issues, where morality is understood as a feature within the subject. Not any morality quality, but a praiseworthy one. The condition of praiseworthy morality needs however a theory of the good or the right. Conceptualizing tolerance in this manner therefore is always accompanied by some kind of moral theory. It can never be a meta-concept, independent of moral theory.

On Vestre’s account, tolerance is restricted to issues where one does not act upon legitimate moral disapproval. Talking about tolerating race or something one approves of, is not correct. Vestre (1986:22) is aware of the fact that tolerance is understood differently:

Some might claim that it is wrong to talk about misuse of the word tolerance when it is not used in the normal way here, as there are other and very widespread standards of usage. My response is that the sense in which I use the word is the original historical meaning and to refer to indifference, for instance, as tolerance ignores an important distinction.

Vestre is deliberately operating with a thin conception of tolerance, where tolerance is restricted within a normative moral sphere.
Lindholm (1995:239) is also operating with moral dislike or disapproval as a condition for tolerance. In a discussion of where tolerance is used appropriately, he draws a distinction between tolerating Christians on one hand and Sámis and Pakistanis on the other:

Christians should tolerate being tolerated, both because their beliefs may be disapproved of by those of other faiths and because they have chosen a belief position that is associated with serious moral miseries. On the other hand, Sámis or Pakistanis in Norway have stronger grounds upon which to demand “a bit more” than tolerance because the disapproval they may actually arouse in others is not morally defensible.

Two points are worth noticing: Lindholm is using morality as a criterion for talking about tolerance, that is a condition of tolerance. Secondly, there is something more than tolerance. That is, tolerance is a limited, thin concept – a way of handling religious, philosophical and moral difference. Cultural plurality is beyond morality – and therefore beyond tolerance.

Gule (1996, 1997) is not using morality as an explicit condition for tolerance, but a definite position is necessary both for the tolerator and the tolerated. This position must in principle be changeable by the actor. It does not make sense to talk about tolerating a character or behavior that the object is in no position to change, he argues (Gule 1997:9):

It is however noteworthy that tolerance is an irrelevant concept in certain areas. Tolerance is a matter of taking a position towards attitudes and actions – that which a responsible person can do something about, take responsibility for, be criticized for, and possibly change after having listened to argument. This means that in relation to characteristics about which one can do nothing – such as sex, skin color, and age – we cannot speak of patient forbearance. These “characteristics” must be respected as an inseparable part of the whole person. To dislike or disapprove of the color of someone’s skin is therefore intolerant. It is to fail to acknowledge the individual as a complete human being. For that reason, this disapproval is unacceptable and if it is expressed, it can only occur as discrimination in word or deed. When we say that tolerance means recognizing a person’s right to be different, we do not mean in the sense of being of another sex or race, but rather different in attitudes and actions. This means that racism must not be tolerated.

Gule says that tolerance concerns the issue of different attitudes and actions – different to what I mean is right or good attitudes and actions. In practice Gule is therefore also operating with tolerance within the moral sphere. He is, however, confusing the issues of conceptualization and theory. Operating on the conceptual conditions above, it is not intolerant to object to someone’s race or color – it is a-tolerant, that is, an issue beyond the conceptual sphere of tolerance. It is therefore not morally wrong to object to race – it does not make sense (according to the conceptualization in question).

A middle position

In a middle position on the issue of morality as a condition of tolerance, lies Thorbjørgsen (1984, 1987, 1990), Taxt (1989) and Tønnessen (1984). They are concerned with the true (epistemological issues) more than the good or right (moral issues). They have a common agenda in the point that tolerance is independent of epistemological position. Or put another way, that tolerance does not imply one or several specific epistemological positions, but concerns the relation to other different positions, with which one disagrees or dislikes. On this account morality is not visible as a condition of tolerance, but the concept of position is. That is, a condition of tolerance is a certain position – both of the subject and object of tolerance:

It is important to establish that tolerance, on the contrary, presupposes disagreement. We do not say that we tolerate those who share our opinions! It is also important to understand that such disagreement presupposes an opinion. It follows that tolerance is incompatible with relativism that asserts that everything is equally good and true. (Tønnesen 1984:16)

Det er viktig å slå fast at toleranse tvert imot forutsetter uenighet. Vi sier nemlig ikke at vi tolererer våre meningsfeller! Videre er det viktig å være klar over at en slik uenighet forutsetter standpunkt. Av dette følger det at toleranse er uforenlig med en relativisme som hevder at alt er like godt og sant. (Tønnessen 1984:16)

True tolerance therefore requires epistemological absolutism. Epistemological relativism implies indifferentialism, which is the opposite of true tolerance, they argue.

Schmidt (1995) is in an interesting article on the conceptualization of tolerance discussing whether conviction (or position) is opposite to or a condition of tolerance. She argues that tolerance cannot be a meta-theoretical value. If tolerance is independent of all value-systems, the problem arises at the decision of legitimate intolerance, that is the limit of tolerance. If no particular theoretical argumentation can be used, one is left with intolerance as the limit of tolerance. This is however a circular argument, because intolerance has to be defined by tolerance and vice versa. We are left with no substantial help in deciding where to limit for instance freedom of speech.
This leaves no alternative but understanding tolerance in the light of different theories. Tolerance is no theory-exceeding ideal or value; it is embedded in particular theoretical positions. Tolerance, therefore, does not stand in opposition to a position of conviction; a position of conviction is a necessary condition of tolerance:

There is no neutral “impartial” concept of tolerance that can be instrumental in relation to all different value systems, which only arranges and organizes their contacts. When I say that tolerance is based on a more deeply seated value, I do not mean that there is one system capable of providing the only valid and best grounds for tolerance. On the contrary, many different systems (Christianity, Islam, humanism, liberalism, etc.) can provide a basis for tolerance, although the bases may be different and shape the tolerance somewhat differently. Tolerance is not only compatible with having convictions of a religious, political, moral, or other nature, it is conditional upon it. (Schmidt 1995:48-49)

All of these conceptualizations so far are thin. Some of them delimit tolerance to the sphere of morality; others also include issues of epistemology. The majority of the articles have such a thin conceptualization of tolerance. There are however some exceptions. An example of a thicker conceptualization of tolerance is found in Tranøy (1985:104):

Tolerance in matters of race is one of the thorniest problems we face by reason of the demand for tolerance, in part because discriminatory attitudes based on race are an age-old cultural product in Europe. The seeds are in most of us, perhaps in us all, and so deeply rooted that they are below the threshold of consciousness. [ ] Tolerance is here used in the context of race and culture. It is quite obvious that Tranøy does not operate with a condition of moral objection or position. Tolerance is used in a broader sense, not limited to what we morally disapprove of.

The actors and structures of tolerance

As described in chapter three another indicator of whether tolerance is conceptualized thin or thick is the image of the actors of tolerance. A thin conceptualization of tolerance restricts the
actors of tolerance to dichotomous state - individual or individual – individual relations and
definite subject – object relations. A thick conceptualization would be inclined to see the
actors of tolerance on a variety of levels, including the group-level, and as webs of tolerance,
where the role of subject and object depends on perspective.

Lindholm (1995) initially says that the actors of tolerance can be everything from state
agencies, organizations, schools and associations to individuals. The pressuring issue in his
and almost all the other articles, is cultural differences and the plurality of cultural and
religious groups. Therefore the group as subject of tolerance, appears occasionally.

In the quote below, Lindholm (1995:242) briefly touches one liberal dilemma with
state tolerance: The combination of objection as a condition of tolerance and the idea of the
state as neutral of the good and true, disqualifies the state as subject of tolerance. Since the
state cannot take a stand on preference of religion, it cannot object to religious groups or
issues. And therefore it does not make sense to talk about the religious tolerant state. 305
He then goes on to locate religious tolerance at a meso-level, the sphere between the state and the
individual:

Practice of genuine religious tolerance is incumbent
on coexisting churches and sects in society –
especially in their mutual relations. Secondly,
religious tolerance requires that all churches and sects
agree not to use force or manipulation to gain, retain,
or discipline members. Inside their own walls and
fences, however, churches and sects may make
judgments on heresy, false cults, and sin according to
their own norms and procedures. Religious tolerance
entails no obligation to practice theological and moral
tolerance on home ground.

Utøvelsen av egentlig religiøs toleranse påliggende
sameksisterende kirkene og sektene i samfunnet – for
det første i deres innbyrdes relasjoner]. For det andre
krever religiøs toleranse at alle kirker og sekt
forplikter seg til ikke å bruke tvang eller
manipulasjon for å vinne, holde på eller disiplinere
medlemmer. Innenfor sine egne vegger og rekker,
derimot, kan kirker og sekt dømme om vranglære,
falsk kultus og synd etter egne normer og prosedyrer.
I religiøs toleranse er det ikke innebygd noen
forpliktelser til å praktisere teologisk og moralsk
toleranse på hjemmebane.

On Lindholm’s account, religious groups can practice tolerance towards two objects: Other
religious groups and their individual members. Still, religious tolerance towards members
does not mean for instance openness or non-prejudice – it means certain limits of actions.
Force and manipulation are intolerant means. Although Lindholm does not elaborate on the
relationship towards other religious groups it seems that he understands tolerance along the
same line also in that context. The issue is therefore more the limits of tolerance, than
tolerance itself. Or put in other words: It is what can be tolerated (probably by the state) of
religious groups practicing their religious liberty.

305 The fact that Lindholm continues to use the term state “tolerance” - with quotations marks – indicates that this
strict analytical language is not very useful.
As I have pointed out Lindholm draws a distinction between religion on one hand and culture on the other. Since issues of culture mostly fall outside the sphere of tolerance, cultural groups are irrelevant actors of tolerance. Tolerance has therefore at best little relevance in cultural issues, little relevance in state’s relation to religion, and between different religious groups. In the area of cultural and religious plurality as one often think is the main focus of tolerance, only religion in the individual sphere remains.

Lindholm constructs a consistent account of tolerance from the conditions he assumes. He does however end up with a marginalized conceptualization of tolerance, which he explicitly states:

A superb alternative to tolerance and intolerance is simply for people to respect their fellow human beings’ inviolable freedom and equal worth – including their right to develop and pass on their own culture.

Implicit in this statement is a distinction between tolerance and respect, where the last term is the broader and better in contexts of cultural difference.

The focus on the individual and the state as the actors of tolerance is common in most of the articles. Also Gule (1997:3) understands cultural difference and tolerance primarily in terms of an individual-state dichotomy:

The multicultural society has become a reality. These days, Norwegian society is made up of many different cultures. Some are connected to our new countrymen of another ethnic background, religion, and other customs, while other cultures have emerged from the historically speaking rather homogeneous Norwegian society. In the modern world, people are migrating all over the globe even as increasingly far-reaching distribution of labor and social specialization are creating new subcultures. The modern world is for that reason less homogeneous than a traditional society. This is putting new demands on our capacity to live together with others whom we perceive as different. We must, in short, be tolerant, but are we? [...] And that requires reflection about and awareness of what is the private citizen’s individual responsibility in terms of being tolerant and what is up to the state in order to secure a tolerant society.

Cultural difference is understood within the frame of modernity. Communication and professional and social differentiation are creating new subcultures. Difference – or plurality – is a sign of the transition from a traditional to a modern society. The situation of cultural
difference is however primarily conceived through the perspective of the individual. The multitude of cultural groups is a horizon of difference, against which the individual is creating her identity. The individual is the primary focus, the group secondary: "A starting point is that we shall respect all fundamental cultural features related to the integrity of the individual. At the same time we are to tolerate all cultural features which do not cause individuals harm in the sense of infringe their human rights, while repressing cultural feature are to be changed."³⁰⁶ (Gule 1997:11) Culture is here valued as a functional concept of the individual – not as an entity or process of its own. Or put differently: Culture is primarily localized within the individual or subject.

That is why, when it comes to the challenges of tolerance in modern difference, the main actors are the individual and the state – it is “the single citizens’ individual responsibility” and “the task of the state” (see above).³⁰⁷ The role of the state is to create legitimate limits of individual tolerance. Here, however, the conceptual point is the important: The actors of tolerance are conceptualized within an individual-state dichotomy.

This conceptualization is a result of what Aadnanes (1995:48-49) describes as the subjectivism or individualism of modern western societies. With subjectivism Aadnanes understands the point of view that the human subject or the individual “is the obvious point of departure in almost all possible situations.” He continues later:

Subjectivism has thus brought forth new and closely connected values. This seems to apply to things we now readily connect to modern secular humanism, that is, ideals of human rights, democracy, and tolerance. We might say that the latter ideal, understood as a demand for freedom for the subject in all matters of religion, worldview, and politics, best sums up the ethical consequences of subjectivism. Subjektivismen har såleis fødd fleire nye og nær samanbundne verdiar. Det gjeld til dømes slike vi i dag gjerne knytter til den moderne sekulærhumanismen, nemleg ideala om menneskerettar, demokrati og toleranse. Kanskje kan vi seia at det sistnemnde idealet, oppfatta som eit krav om fridom for subjektet i alle religiøse, livssynsmessige og politiske spørsmål, summerer best opp dei etiske konsekvensane av subjektivismen.

On this account the individual takes a natural conceptual priority. The state is the collective protection of individual liberty. And so the focus of tolerance is on the individual and the state. This dichotomous conceptualization is therefore no coincidence, but a result of a certain perspective of society and culture.

³⁰⁶ “Et utgangspunkt er at vi skal respektere alle fundamentale kulturtrekk knyttet til individets integritet. Samtidig skal vi tolerere alle kulturtrekk som ikke påfører individer skade i betydningen krenker deres menneskerettigheter, mens undertrykkende kulturtrekk skal endres.”
³⁰⁷ To Gule (1997:5 and 20) true tolerance is inseparable from modernism. He argues that traditionalism is intolerant per se – because traditionalism lacks ability and will to understand the others’ points of views and lifestyle. The nation-building he finds in C97 is therefore not only anti-modern, but also intolerant as a project.
Following Aadnanes, this modern subjective frame of tolerance is challenged from different angles. One is by a conception of religion and culture that transcends the private sphere – as one finds among for instance Muslim immigrants. Another is by traditional cultural identity – in Norway a Christian cultural heritage. Aadnanes calls the balancing between secularism and Christianity *post-Christianism*. Thirdly, the modern subjective frame is challenged by postmodernism in the sense of the end of trust in universal reason and values. On a postmodern account the subject cannot be conceived isolated from its relations to such a degree that the language of subjectivism does.

On the background of this cultural sketch the conceptualization of the actors of tolerance can be understood as a modern conception of agency versus a traditional or postmodern. The focus of a modern conceptualization of the actors of tolerance is the individual subject – delimited by the state. This is also the major perspective in the articles – shared by Aadnanes. Most authors tend to understand tolerance as a distinct modern ideal, and therefore conceptualizing the actors of tolerance in a modern scheme. There are however reasons to argue that this conceptualization is seriously challenged in a situation of cultural plurality, where differences are not easily understood in a modern scheme of subjectivism.

This conceptual ambiguity between a strict modern dichotomy of agency and a more complex web of actors and scripts can be read in the articles. The focus is however on the first.

*Tolerance and power*

On the issue of power and tolerance there is not much to say but that all authors operate with a substantial conception of power. This is clearest and most explicit made by Schmidt (1995:47):

Secondly, we can only talk about tolerance in relation to someone when the one exercising tolerance has power in relation to the one to whom tolerance is being shown. A shows tolerance in relation to B, with reference to a particular activity, only when A (a person, group, or state) has the power to prevent or impede B from practicing the activity.

For det andre kan vi i tillegg bare tale om toleranse i forhold til noe der den som øtøver toleranse har makt i forhold til den toleransen utvises overfor. A utviser toleranse i forhold til B, med henblikk på en bestemt aktivitet, bare når A (en person, gruppe eller stat) har makt til å forhindre eller vanskeliggjøre B i utøvelsen av denne aktiviteten.

"To put it plainly, the tolerance we speak of here is a Western cultural product, insolubly connected to the Western subjectivist worldview and the associated respect for individual autonomy." ("Sagt i klærtekst: Den toleransen vi har tala om her er eit vestleg kulturprodukt, uløyselig knytt til den vestlege subjektivistiske livssynsramma og den tilhørende respekten for den individuelle autonomien.") (Aadnanes 1995:53)
In chapter three I made the distinction between substantial and relational power. Simply put substantial power is something one has, while relational power is conceiving power as a web of power-relations where one is both subject and object depending on perspective.

The conception of power in substantial terms in the articles is related to the understanding of the actors of tolerance. The actors are almost without exception understood as definite subject-object relationships, not as reciprocal. This means that tolerance is directed one way – from the tolerator to the tolerated. There is a distinct subject and a distinct object of tolerance. On this account the subject of tolerance must have some potential sanction at hand against the tolerated. Otherwise she would not be able to not tolerate - there would be no alternative but to tolerate. In order to make a (tolerant) decision, one must have a choice. And left with no power of sanction, there would be no choice but refrain from action. This is how the actors and structure of tolerance is conceived in the articles.

There is however an alternative conceptualization that is not discussed explicitly or used implicitly. Tolerance can be seen as reciprocal. Not in the sense that my tolerance of you require your tolerance of me (as for instance in Tranøy 1985:104 and Aadnanes 1995:53) – but conceptually. In other words, a situation of tolerance can be seen as reciprocal relational in that the subject of tolerance also can be conceived as the object of tolerance and vice versa. In addition third parties are often involved, expanding a reductive subject-object conceptualization to a web of actors and issues of tolerance. The issue of Muslims’ religious dressing is one example: It concerns the non-Muslims’ tolerance of the Muslims, but also the Muslims’ tolerance (in their practicing of dressing) of non-Muslims. In addition the fact is that Muslims dress very differently – and the issue also concern reciprocal tolerance between Muslims on the issue of dress.

It is meaningful to use the word tolerance in all these cases – although the potential of power is very different from actor to actor and situation to situation. Conceiving power as relational – as the actors embedded in structures of power – would create an image of human beings in a field of ever-changing powerlessness and empowerment.

6.2.2 Energy: Conceptions of positive or negative tolerance?
Then to the issue of positive and negative tolerance, that is the energy of tolerance. Here the articles differ: Some conceive tolerance as negative, some as positive (and negative).

Negative tolerance
Vestre (1986:22) conceives tolerance as follows:
One is thus tolerant – allow me to repeat this – when one has no desire to prohibit or suppress religious, moral, and political attitudes and opinions of which one disapproves. And conversely, one is intolerant when one wants to prohibit or suppress that of which one disapproves.

Tolerant er man altså – la meg gjenta det – hvis man ikke vil nedlegge forbud mot eller undertrykke religiøse, moralske og politiske holdninger og synspunkter som man misliker. Og motsatt: man er intolerant hvis man vil nedlegge forbud mot eller undertrykke det man misliker.

Tolerance is defined by dislike and refraining from action – that is, the sort of sanctioning action that was discussed above. Tolerance is bearing over with something one dislikes, disapproves of or denounces. The act of doing nothing is therefore the sign of tolerant action, but it must be qualified by the moral (or epistemological) objection in order to be characterized as tolerance and not indifference.

On this account tolerance is clearly conceptualized as negative regarding means. Schmidt (1995:46-47) also understands tolerance along these lines: “Tolerance is thus to accept the presence of something I dislike or disagree with.” She argues for a separation between enduring the existence of another point of view on one hand and the recognition of its validity or truth on the other. In a footnote she connects this distinction to the discussion of positive and negative tolerance:

Negative tolerance is thus what I understand by tolerance, that is, endurance of that I disagree with, while positive tolerance goes much further and acknowledges the rightness of the latter. But therewith, one has reasonably also departed from the point of aversion and disagreement as a condition for the concept of tolerance.

On this account tolerance is characterized by its negativity in means – that is, by refraining from action. The reason she gives for the conceptual correctness of negative tolerance is however debatable. It seems that she is confusing the issue of condition with the means of tolerance. As argued earlier it is possible to imagine a person operating with a double condition together with positive means of tolerance. Theoretically this means that when reasons for tolerance have been given priority over reasons for not tolerating, this implies no logical restriction on means. As argued earlier, even if disagreeing with a Muslim world view or anthropology, it is quite possible and in some respects virtuous to lend a hand in building a Mosque. This does of course not mean that positive action is necessary on an account of positive tolerance. It simply means that the register of means include everything from not doing anything to active participating.
To be more specific, it simply means that if one values the other’s right to opinion or the others’ autonomy higher than the disagreement on a particular point of view, this does not necessarily mean I will not act in your favour. If one only were to act on one’s convictions in all social contexts, and the only alternative option were refraining from action, cooperation in institutions like the school would fail.

The alternative would be to reserve tolerance to the issues where one strongly disagrees, and where such a strong objection would make positive action unthinkable. Then, however, one is approaching the sphere of legitimate intolerance, that is, the limits of what one can tolerate. Tolerance would then conceptually be squeezed between not tolerating on one side and medium or low strength of objection on the other. That would lead to a thin conceptualization of tolerance, indeed.

What may appear to be a position between negative and positive tolerance is found in Lindholm (1995) and Gule (1996, 1997). Lindholm (1995:237) puts it this way: “Those who tolerate have a favorable attitude to the extent that they acknowledge the right to exist of those who are tolerated, and are prepared to defend the right of others to assert or practice it.” This means that tolerance implies positive action. This positive action does however not refer to the means of tolerance, but to the right of or reasons for tolerance. The right of tolerance, tolerance as an institution, is to be positively defended. This does however not mean that the means of tolerance are positive action – quite the opposite actually. In Gule (1997:4 and 6) this is particularly clear: “Somewhat more precisely, we can say that tolerance is to patiently endure another’s beliefs and behaviors that one does not personally accept.” Tolerance is defined as negative tolerance – as endurance.

**Positive tolerance**

Another approach is found in Taxt (1989:180). Here he discusses tolerance in educational practice and points (with affirmative reference to Myhre) that tolerant means are characterized by: 1) Giving the opponent the possibility to express her opinion. 2) Being willing to listen and actively trying to get the intentions of the other. 3) Not caricaturing the opponent’s position in one’s own argument. This implies a positive conception of tolerance. On a

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309 What persons object strongly to, differ. There is therefore not possible to establish common areas or issues of tolerance. This means that the appropriateness of tolerance as a concept must be decided from case to case, depending on the motivation and reasons of the person or group in question. This would create a very difficult conceptual situation for third persons trying to describe the situation and motivation as valid as possible. That is, it seems like a practically unworkable conceptualization.
negative account of tolerance, there would be no means or actions to discuss at all, because only one would be available – endurance or refraining from action

As described above, Thorbjørnsen (1990) ends his article with a discussion of what tolerance may look like in every-day school-life. He expands the characteristics of tolerant practice from the sketch of Myhre/Taxt to a more comprehensive practice consisting of education for understanding difference, identity, truth and dialogue. This is clearly positive tolerance.

This opens the conceptualization of tolerance for aspects like care and openness. Sandvik (1989:7) expresses these aspects of tolerance:

Tolerance does not mean that I am not allowed to ask questions about behavior, customs, and beliefs that are foreign to me. It does not mean that I must accept conditions that contravene the values I hold to be true. But it does mean that I must take more time to care – to search for the foundation of that which I do not immediately understand: Is my repudiation based on prejudice?

This expresses a positive view of tolerance – it is in this context understood as active care. This paragraph expresses a combination of a position, objection and positive means in tolerance. Tolerating difference one objects to, does not necessarily end in endurance, but may just as well result in actively pursuing to understand the other better. But not only so – understanding the other also implies understanding oneself. On this account tolerance contains a hermeneutical challenge of understanding the other and oneself as different.

Eidsvåg (1990:84) expresses a similar concern:

Seen from without, it is too often neither understanding nor tolerance that has characterized – or characterizes – religious communities and milieus. From without, they have often seemed more like fortresses than open, living communities. Something must be defended – by all possible means. Behind moats and intellectual barbed wire lie rigid dogmas, rituals, opinions, and attitudes. Above the stronghold is raised a pennant. Written upon it is: we are right! How many have not been coldly and cynically turned away at the gate when they sought shelter in the night? How many have not been downtrodden, crippled, broken going through the entrance to the sacred halls? How many have not been turned into hard and callous robots of the faith by living for years inside the walls?
Implicit in this quote lies the conceptualization of tolerance as positive openness. The quote must be read in the historical context of religious intolerance. But as a systematic point of view it is an indirect criticism of a conceptualization of a thin conceptualization of tolerance. Such an understanding of tolerance does not lead to any caring, curious or open tolerance. It is a cold tolerance in the sense that it is more concerned with one’s own truth and securing space for criticism of the other within the conception of tolerance than being other-directed. One can of course argue that in cases of racism and other kinds of in-humanity such a strict conception of tolerance is necessary. The problem is that such a conceptualization makes tolerance a very peripheral analytical term – very distant from both everyday use and use in different theories of tolerance.

6.2.3 Conditions of tolerance: Double or single?

This leads to the even more debateable issue on whether one should operate with a double or single condition of tolerance. Is objection necessary in order to speak about tolerance or is acceptance of difference enough? Which positions do the articles have on this question?

From the quotes above it is quite clear that the majority of the articles understand tolerance as constituted by the conditions of both objection and acceptance. It is a very central perspective in the conceptualization of tolerance in for instance Gule (1996, 1997), Lindholm (1995), Schmidt (1995) and Thorbjørnsen (1984, 1987, 1990).

None of the articles operate explicitly with a single condition of tolerance. In the articles where the possibility is mentioned, such a conception is identified with indifference and dismissed. Three of the articles do however not operate with an explicit objection and acceptance condition – and their conceptualization of tolerance is best understood as acceptance of difference. In Tranøy this is quite clear when he talks about tolerating other races and not assuming any objection of these. He also talks about respect and tolerance as synonymous:

For at the same time, we are also inclined to agree firmly with something that is on the way to becoming an element of our culture: the demand to respect other cultures, their distinctive character and value systems, even those that differ strongly from our own. That is why we are unsure what we should do in such situations: when the person who benefits from our tolerance uses those advantages to combat tolerance as a value. There may be no universally applicable answer to such a dilemma, but most would probably agree that this is where the boundaries of what the tolerant person should tolerate lie.

For samtidig vil vi også gjerne holde fast ved noe som er på vei til å bli et trekk ved vår kultur: kravet om respekt for andre kulturer, deres egenart og verdisystemer, også de som avviker sterkt fra våre egne. Derfor er vi i vilrede om hva vi skal gjøre i slike situasjoner: når den som drar fordel av toleransen hos oss, bruker disse fordeler til å bekjempe toleransen som verdi. Kanskje finnes det ikke noe allmennliggjort svar på et slikt dilemma. Men de fleste vil vel si at her går grensen for hva den tolerante bør tolerere.
This way of conceptualizing tolerance as accepting difference is also implicit in the quotes of Eidsvåg and Sandvik above.

To sum up the conceptualization of tolerance in the ideological curricula domain, represented by the articles that have been analyzed in this chapter: Tolerance is mainly seen as a thin negative concept conditioned by both objection and acceptance. Still, the image is more complex than so, especially on the issue of the means of tolerance where some of the articles also operate with positive tolerance.

I have already quoted Lindholm who sees respect as a generally superior alternative to tolerance, especially in the context of cultural difference. Operating with a thin conceptualization of tolerance is accompanied with in some cases serious reservations of the importance and possibilities of tolerance as an ideal: 310

Finally, I believe it is essential to underline that tolerance is actually inadequate as a model for how we should deal with beliefs and behavior that differ fundamentally from our own and with which we deeply disagree.

Tolerance is definitely a better way to coexistence than intolerance. But it is necessary, I believe, that we eventually manage to go further than tolerance: that we not only tolerate others’ way of life, others’ traditions and beliefs, but that we also encourage genuine involvement and interest in others’ beliefs.

The travesty of tolerance is lack of interest in others. In this sense as well, tolerance is never a goal in and of itself, but a means towards furthering mutual understanding and insight. (Schmidt 1995:52)

As the analysis of the teachers’ conception of tolerance (ch 4) and the analysis of theoretical conceptualizations of tolerance (ch 3) shows, such a thin account of tolerance is not the only option. In this study the crucial question is the relation between understandings of tolerance in different curricula domains. Differences have appeared along the analysis and discussion of tolerance in the three curricula domains (the perceived, the formal and the ideological). These

310 The same point is made by Hiorth (1996:38): “A lot of minorities would prefer being more than tolerated. Tolerance is “only tolerance,” it is not fellowship; it is less than equality and not the same as freedom. We might say that tolerance is a stopgap solution when true respect and admiration are lacking. There is something condescending in tolerance, meaning that tolerance is not entirely advantageous as an ideal.” (”Mange minoriteter vil helst bli mer enn tolerert. Toleranse er ”bare toleranse”, det er ikke brorskap, det er mindre enn likhet og ikke det samme som frihet. Toleranse kan sies å være en nødløsning, når virkelig respekt og beundring mangler. Det ligger noe nedlatende i toleranse, og det er derfor ikke bare en fordel med toleranse som ideal.”)
differences will be systematically discussed in the next chapter. But before doing so, it is necessary to do a more systematic analysis of theories of tolerance in the ideological domain.

6.3 Theories of tolerance

The articles do not have a common theory of tolerance. Still, some features are more or less similar. I will discuss three of them: Tolerance as a right, liberal tolerance and modern tolerance.

6.3.1 Tolerance as right

The language of tolerance as a right characterizes most of the articles. Gule (1997:6) is justifying tolerance in the assumption of human rights:

As said, that which is tolerated is something with which one deeply disagrees, something one disapproves of. That one cannot respect. When one nevertheless comes to terms with the thing one disapproves of and opposes, it must be because the person who believes or does that with which one disagrees demands respect for his or her person and the right to do as he or she wishes. If we generally accept that people have rights, we must also accept that they may use their rights and freedoms for “things” we dislike. That is why we are duty bound to be tolerant.

The only reason for tolerating what we oppose is the recognition of the other person’s rights to do what she wants to. The right of the other overrules or dispenses our natural actions. This means that tolerance is seen as a dispensation from our moral judgment. The idea that rights are like “trumps” in a card game, is developed by Dworkin (1977, 1984). This again, means that morality is implicitly two-part: One condition for the dispensation is that there is some kind of moral position (in the form of objection) in the first place. It seems that this is a sort of primary morality, and the morality of rights is a secondary one. Primary and secondary is here however used chronologically. In the issue of importance the relation is the opposite: The morality of rights always overrules the original moral position. For the case of simplicity I will call the morality of the original position “private morality”.

The distinction between private and public morality is not made explicit in Gule, but is still an implicit assumption. Lindholm (1995) is also assuming the private-public distinction. Tolerance is also here justified by and understood in the context of rights. These rights belong to the sphere of public morality.
... [Religious tolerance] is inconceivable without a system of universal and generally accepted rights, rights that also govern things other than people’s religious circumstances. One cannot assure religious tolerance in a multi-religious society only or mainly by ordering or fostering members of society to practice an attitude of religious tolerance.

A legal and political framework is required, first and foremost a system of generally acceptable and universal rights that is reasonably effectively enforced. Only when universal individual rights gain prevalence can this in turn affect attitudes and conditions within many religious communions. The question of what prevails as religious authority and legitimate interpretation of scripture will not be unaffected by the transition from authoritarian to liberal and pluralistic norms, equality, and free debate in the greater society. (Lindholm 1995:242)

And he continues:

The basis and boundaries of our tolerance now follow to a great extent our support for a democratic system, the principles of the rule of law, and fundamental human rights.

Lindholm here distinguishes between rights and attitudes.

Rights have to be commonly acceptable and in a general form. The object of rights is not specified, but rights are more comprehensive than religious and moral rights. Rights here also refer to the legal and political sphere. Rights on this account are principles that can be politically approved and given a legal status. When given a legal status, rights can be enforced. Rights in this sense can give tolerance a safe foundation, Lindholm argues.

Attitudes cannot provide equal foundation. Attitude seems to refer to persons’ character or virtue. Religious tolerance can not be secured by influencing persons’ character or virtue, either by persuasion nor formation, Lindholm claims. He does not elaborate on the reason for this lack of confidence in tolerance as virtue. It seems that the critical point is the individuality, particularity and lack of commonality: “What is the moral foundation for tolerance, when tolerance is appropriate? It should be clear that the question cannot be answered, as the possibilities are endless.”311 (Lindholm 1995:239)

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311 This does not refer to tolerance as a right, where the issue of moral justification is quite clear. It seems therefore that Lindholm here is addressing tolerance as a virtue.
On Lindholm’s and Gule’s conception of rights, one has to secure that general rights always overrules or dispense from particular virtues. This security can not be found in an appeal to persons’ character. Rights have to be given firmer ground, in the form of law.

Right and virtue
On Gule’s and Lindholm’s account tolerance is therefore twofold: Tolerance as a right and tolerance as a virtue. Tolerance as a right is by far the primary of importance, and they do not dwell with the issue of tolerance as virtue. In fact, Lindholm points out in the quote above, that tolerance as a virtue can be positively influenced by the conception of tolerance as a right. On this account the affirmation of general human rights are increasing. This can in turn lead religious communities from authority to the direction of liberty, pluralism, equality and free communication. That is, the idea of tolerance as a right can transform particular virtues of tolerance to common ideals.

Lindholm identified the common ideals in the quote above as “democratic systems, the rule of law, and fundamental human rights.” The conception of human rights in Lindholm and Gule is connected to an understanding of a historical development, where the respect of fundamental human rights is increasing, and where they get a principle and common justification. Human rights as a concept seems to refer to modernization as a historical process, to the declarations and laws where the rights are made explicit and to the idea of human rights behind the historical texts.

Justification of tolerance as right
This leads to the critical issue of justification: Why should I grant the other certain rights? Why should I make the other’s rights my obligation?

These issues are not very explicit discussed in Gule and Lindholm. Almond (1993:265) distinguishes between three different traditions in the justifications of rights. One is the broad tradition of social contract theories, another is utilitarianism and the third is simply arguing that rights are morally exigent and need no further justification.

In the quote above Lindholm is using both the forms accepted and acceptable. The term accepted rights seems to imply some kind of factual consensus. The term acceptable seems to imply another kind of consensus, namely an imagined or ideal one. That is, as long as a rational person hypothetically would be thought to subscribe to the principle, it gets a status of common without factual consensus.
Both of these justifications belong to the social contract tradition. Factual and ideal consensus point to two different theoretical positions within this tradition; the discourse ethics of Habermas and Apel, and Rawls’ theory of justice. In a section Lindholm is discussing the importance of religious dialogue. This dialogue is however not interpreted as a discourse, and does not constitute a foundation of rights. Neither is Lindholm drawing explicitly on Rawls or his veil of ignorance.

Therefore, even if there are traces of understanding rights and tolerance according to social contract theories, these are not elaborated. The perspective of utilitarianism is neither apparent. Both articles do however operate with rights as an almost self-evident fact. This leads to the third type of justification, namely to consider rights as morally exigent.

In both Lindholm and Gule rights are conceived as a fact. There is no doubt that human rights are universally valid. There seems to be an image of the “coming” of rights in society and culture, a development that is interwoven with modernization. This image of rights can be described as an eschatological image of a “here and now - and yet to come”. On this account human rights is a fact and a promise, a description of common ground in today’s societies and a normative goal for morality, politics and law to fulfil. This way of conceiving rights seem to transcend the divide between rights as “a description of a state of affairs” on one hand and “some kind of decision, proposal or rhetorical utterance” on the other (Almond 1993:263).

The object of coming is however not the kingdom of God, but modernity. Modernization, rights and tolerance are therefore interwoven on this account. This also means that a necessary condition for tolerance is modernization. This opens up for problems that will be discussed below.

Rights in Lindholm and Gule are universal and absolute in the sense of always being a potential trump of the individual. This constitutes a protection of the individual in relation to the state. Rights imply limits of the enforcement of state power over the individual. In respecting these individual rights the state is tolerant, in a live and let live sense. These rights are universal in the sense that they are valid in any place and time.312

312 It is interesting to compare Lindholm’s and Gule’s account of tolerance as human right with the UNESCO’s “Declaration of principles of tolerance”. The understanding of tolerance is also here in the tradition of human rights, but there is no condition of objection in tolerance: “Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world’s cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human” (United Nations 1996:209). Tolerance is not negative acceptance, but “openness, mutual listening and solidarity” (United Nations 1996:211). The declaration also focuses on tolerance as supporting vulnerable groups socially and culturally, and describes tolerance education as “educating caring and responsible citizens open to other cultures” (United Nations 1996:212). This is a much wider and different conceptions of tolerance than the one in Lindholm and Gule – and most other articles analyzed here. To put it simply Lindholm and Gule understands tolerance as a
**Right as historically conditioned**

An alternative account of tolerance as a human right is found in Schmidt (1995) and Aadnanes (1995). Tolerance as a right is here not seen as universal or the only foundation of tolerance, but as a historically conditioned answer to the challenges of plurality. Schmidt is arguing that tolerance cannot be understood apart from a value-system that gives criteria for the limits of tolerance. That tolerance only can be understood as parts of different particular value-theories, does not mean complete relativism. In seeing pluralism as a resource for knowledge and truth, tolerance is a necessary condition for increased epistemological, moral and political knowledge. In this pluralistic debate tolerance and the limits of tolerance can be agreed upon. Schmidt (1995:51) suggests the equal and fundamental value of human beings and human rights as an example of an agreed limit:

> And this is, I believe, something other than to begin with the rights of the individual, for instance to exercise freedom, as the basis of tolerance. For upon such a basis, freedom and tolerance become their own boundaries, with all the difficulties that entails. The worth of a human being is an understanding of “the good” whose content has been determined, while the right to freedom is a formal category that does not necessarily imply any understanding of “the good.”

> If we accept such a basis, we cannot understand tolerance as a superior value, independent of more comprehensive separate value systems, but it can be understood within those systems. Tolerance gains legitimacy through helping us protect utterly fundamental values inherent in these systems, values upon which we can agree, as well as across the systems, but with no pretensions to universality.

Tolerance is here seen both as a good and a right. Tolerance as a good means that tolerance is seen as a substantial value, in light of a particular theory of what it means to be moral and tolerant. Tolerance as a right, on the other hand, tries to find procedural or formal principles of tolerance that everyone can or should assign to, independent of their particular conceptions of the good. A conception of tolerance as a procedural right means trying to justify tolerance in the way or procedures of plurality rather in the different particular positions.

Aadnanes (1995:53) has a more historical perspective on tolerance as a right:

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negative right, the UNESCO declaration understands tolerance as a positive right. According to the United Nation tolerance is more than the right to liberty and non-interference.
The tolerance we speak of here is a Western cultural product, insolubly connected to the Western subjectivist worldview and the associated respect for individual autonomy. For that reason, it can never be tolerant in the West to grant exemptions from the intersection between a Christian and a humanist view on humanity that has put focus on individual human rights, rights that apply without regard to sex, race, religion, and social status. If one grants exemptions from such rights in the name of tolerance – regardless if one calls it multicultural integration – one also crushes the fragile cultural identity of which this tolerance is a function. On this point, Western morality is succinct: he who demands tolerance for himself must to an equal degree demand tolerance of himself.

On Aadnanes’ account, tolerance is a historically and culturally given, not a universal, ideal. Still, it is an integrate part of Western culture and collective identity. For this contextual reason the limits of tolerance are identical with human rights. This means that tolerance is understood within the context of rights.

While Schmidt gives a logical reason for conceiving rights and tolerance as not universal, Aadnanes gives a historical one. Both operate with the idea of tolerance as right, but in a more contextual and pragmatic sense. This approach is very similar to Walzer’s (1983:8) ideas on values, contextuality and politics: “There is no single set of primary or basic goods conceivable across all moral and material worlds – or, any such set would have to be conceived in terms so abstract that they would be of little use in thinking about particular distributions.” On this account rights cannot be constructed as universals, but as contextual principles. Walzer (1994) separates between Liberalism 1 and Liberalism 2. Liberalism 1 is a universal liberalism, a liberalism that is valid across different ideologies and cultural contexts. Liberalism 2 holds on to mainly the same ideals as Liberalism 1, but conceives itself as a historically conditioned way of conceiving society. Liberalism 2 has legitimacy in contexts where the ideas of liberalism have a strong hold.

Changing the language of liberalism to the language of right, it means that tolerance as right 1 is universal and absolute. Tolerance as right 2, however, is contextual and can be overridden depending on historical circumstances.

*Rights, difference and unity*

This leads to a critical discussion of tolerance as a right. I have already pointed out that tolerance as a right cannot stand alone. On Gule’s and Lindholm’s account, where tolerance as a right is primary and the almost solely focus; there is an implicit and partly explicit
conception of tolerance as particular and private. This is equivalent to Schmidt’s conception
of tolerance as a particular good. This means that tolerance as a right assumes tolerance as a
good. In order to construct or find tolerance as a universal right across differences, one has to
assume differences in the form of particular conceptions of morality.

As discussed above Lindholm addresses the issue of tolerance as attitude or virtue. But it is striking that the conception of tolerance as universal human right do not give help to understand or develop the specific theories and practices of tolerance students and teachers have, across their possible conceptions of tolerance as right. The only help that is offered is that the conception of tolerance as right can help developing tolerance as particular attitudes towards a more liberal point of view.

It is quite clear that Lindholm and Gule give priority to tolerance as right. One issue that is not made explicit is Mendus’ (1989:119-120, 126-129) question of the how far this priority goes, and why. Or put differently: Which theory is deciding the border between common right and particular good? It seems that Lindholm and Gule are using a liberalist theory in which rights gets priority over good. Before looking into tolerance on this account, another critical issue must be addressed.

Tolerance as a right is based on commonality and unity, not plurality. The justification of right is often found in some common feature of the human being, as for instance rationality. Further, rights on an individual account are equal and common. Tolerance, however, deals with how to handle plurality in a peaceful manner. The critical issue is that in order to handle difference, one has to share something in common. In tolerance as right there is a pressure towards unity, because the idea of rights is conditioned by some kind of common features across plurality.

This creates a dilemma: A strong justification of rights needs strong unity. But this in turn, risks framing difference in a scheme of unity that excludes the more radical different. When tolerance is restricted to those who are similar to us in some respect, the different is beyond tolerance. The very idea of tolerance leads to intolerance of the different, contrary to the intension. The other side of the dilemma is: If justifying tolerance as a right in a more restricted commonality, the very idea of tolerance risks loosing normative strength. Particularity may override common rights and tolerance as a right.

To sum up on tolerance as a right: Tolerance as a right is tolerance as trump. Every individual can put a trump on the table, claiming that “this is my right”. The state, or fellow citizens, then has the obligation to respect that right, assuming that the right is legitimate. The tolerant institution or person is therefore the one who respects other individual’s rights. This
also means that tolerance is an act of dispensation. There are moral reasons to do something. Tolerance means dispensing from these reasons, because the other’s right overrules our moral judgment.

The danger of this conception is that tolerance is removed from our everyday morality and made an exception. Tolerance is turned into the overruling of our moral judgment. This does not help our moral outlook in navigating in plurality. Or put differently: Tolerance as a right does not address all those instances where I or we relate to difference, but where these relations do not involve human rights. This is apparent in classrooms and at schools: There are lots of moral and cultural differences that do not violate any human rights, and where the issue is how to deal peacefully with these differences. Tolerance as right seems to give limited help in that respect.

6.3.2 Liberal tolerance
Now to the issue of liberalism. Not many of the articles address liberal tolerance explicitly. The idea of liberalism seems to be conceived more as an existing, factual horizon, than one among several political theories. In the quote from Lindholm (1995:242) above he described the values following the extension of human rights as a development from authoritarian to liberal and plural. Elsewhere liberal values and schemes are assumed valid without further discussion, for instance in the ideal of the religious neutral state (242) and the liberal separation between politics and religion (243).

As mentioned the articles mainly draw upon theories of tolerance by Locke, Mill and the broad liberal tradition. It seems therefore that the liberal conception of tolerance is assumed as an inescapable conceptual and theoretical scheme. This scheme is with two exceptions (Aadnanes 1995 and Schmidt 1995) not critically examined.

Which ideas of liberal tolerance are assumed in the articles? First of all it is individualism. Tolerance is an ideal to secure the individual his or her liberty to pursue his or her personal good. This is in the line of Mill’s (1859/1991:63) ideas that “… free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being …” In order for the individual to be free, it must be liberated from tradition, which imposes collective imperatives and habits on the individual. Autonomy is the ideal:
tolerance should be overriding. And it can hardly be
assigned particular importance if the parties, in
support of their specific opinions, cite anonymous
authorities such as “Norwegian customs” or “Islamic
tradition” without more detailed grounds. The mutual
understanding between Norwegians and Muslims that
is confident in terms of religion and worldview is
actually rather good. (Lindholm 1995:246)

The key word is ”self-conscious”. To be conscious of oneself and one’s actions is a criterion
of autonomy, in addition to act intentionally and free of controlling influences (Beauchamp
1991:386). On this account the road to tolerance goes through autonomy. This does not mean
that one rejects tradition, but that tradition is chosen. The individual has to be able to distance
herself from tradition to such a degree that she can choose freely. This is an important point in
Mill (1859/1991:63): “Where, not the person’s own character, but the tradition or customs of
other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of
human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.” Individual
choice is a key to personal and collective happiness, and Mill thinks of happiness in terms of
progress. The primacy of tradition is not creating the necessary space for autonomous choice:
“He who does anything because it is custom, makes no choice. He gains no practice either in
discerning or in desiring what is best. The mental and moral, like the muscular powers, are
improved only by being used.” (Mill 1959/1991:65) Lindholm also trusts individual,
autonomous choice: The chances of tolerance between autonomous individuals are pretty
good, he argues.

The problems, according to Lindholm, appear where “anonymous authorities” like
particular habits and tradition are invoked as support for point of views. This seems to imply
an ideal where a point of view has to be justified by a source that is known by all participants.
At the same time there is a need for an explicit justification in the sense of a rational
argumentation for the specific point of view.

The ideals of dialogue in situations of difference are therefore commonality, leaning
towards universality and rationality. When these two criteria are met, the possibilities for
tolerance are quite good, is Lindholm’s empirical claim.

6.3.3 Modern tolerance

Individualism, autonomy, unity and rationality are not only ideals within a broad liberal
tradition, but also in modernism as a project (Harvey 1990, Schaanning 1993). In addition
there is an optimistic tone of social and moral progress in many of the articles: Through
autonomy the possibilities of tolerance and peaceful co-existence are pretty good. This reflects a trust in social and historical progress following modernization.

This means that tolerance in the articles, with some exceptions, is conceived within the language of rights, the scheme of liberalism and the horizon of modernization. The belief in modernization is most apparent in Gule (1997:7): “The act of maintaining and passing on a traditional lifestyle is in many respects the same as being intolerant. Inherent in the tradition is a lack of capacity and will to understand the beliefs and lifestyles of others.”

At first sight the conception of intolerance as a lack of understanding the other seems to be in conflict with Gule’s conception of tolerance as patient endurance of what one objects to. There is no condition of understanding the objectionable (beyond identifying the objectionable), nor any positive image of understanding the other as tolerance. Gule is however separating the terms tolerance and intolerance. Not-tolerance and not intolerance is the opposite of tolerance. Intolerance means “lack of the ability or will to understand the point of view of others” (Gule 1997:4-5).

What the lingual positive opposite to intolerance is, Gule does not make explicit. It cannot be tolerance. There are at least two problems with this conceptualization. Tolerance is what the reader automatically would think of as the opposite of intolerance. There is clearly a need for clarification in order to avoid conceptual confusion. The other problem is that this conceptualization requires a different theory of intolerance, different from the theory of tolerance. Gule does not supply such a theory. In fact he seems to be using tolerance as the positive opposite to intolerance as well. Tolerance in Gule therefore gets a double meaning. The second meaning is tolerance as understanding the other as different.

**Differentiation, autonomy and universalism**

The point in this context however, is that Gule assumes that this is an exclusively modern conception. This is apparent towards the end in his article from 1997 (20-21), where he argues against nation-building as a traditional and therefore intolerant project:

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This form of nation-building is anti-modern. Modern society is necessarily characterized by differentiation and diversity in many ways and such nation-building is an attempt to create uniformity where the basis for social and cultural homogeneity no longer exists. From that perspective, the project becomes an attempt at social dedifferentiation. The practical necessity of tolerance lies in the irreversible social and values-related diversity of modern society. The homogenizing nation-building project therefore

Denne formen for nasjonsbygging er anti-moderne. Det moderne samfunn er nødvendigvis preget av differensiering og mangfold på mange måter og slik nasjonsbygging er et forsøk på å skape ensartethet der grunnlaget for sosial og kulturell homogenitet ikke lenger finnes. Slik sett blir prosjektet et forsøk på sosial dedifferensiering. Toleransens praktiske nødvendighet ligger i det moderne samfunns irreversible sosiale og verdimessige mangfoldighet. Det homogeniserende nasjonsbyggingsprosjekt blir
becomes politically reactionary. The philosopher Kant teaches us that even our reason is differentiated. Dedifferentiation of values therefore represents an intellectual regression, an intellectual decline, because we cannot do away with differentiation of values and reason without losing key social and scholarly insights. Such a nation-building project is also intolerant because there is no room for those who think and believe differently, for the lifestyle and culture of “the other.”

Gule’s argument is that tolerance requires differentiation, and differentiation is a modern phenomenon. A politics aimed at resisting differentiation and achieving some kind of substantial unity, is therefore intolerant. In addition it is a step backwards, working against progress. Intellectual, societal and scientific progress is dependent on the differential processes of modernization, Gule says.

The autonomy of the individual cannot be restricted by anything else than global or universal norms, in the form of human rights. A system of norms and values at a meso-level like the national, is a form of collective particularism that restricts the individual and her rights to liberty on one hand, and undermines the universality of human rights as a minimal ethics on the other. The idea of values at a meso-level in the form of nation- or group-morality, does not fit within Gule’s conception of modernization. The only legitimate restriction on individual autonomy and liberty are global norms, independent on particular cultures and religions. Cultural and religious morality has a role in the sphere of individual choice, not in the public sphere.

Tolerance is such a universal, transcultural and –religious ideal that belongs to the public sphere. Such a public morality can only be an ethics of minimum. Trying to expand it on a national level is claiming too much of collective norms and values.

Secular tolerance
This results in a deconnection of religion and culture on one hand and tolerance on the other. It implies a secular tolerance – in the sense that tolerance is understood in the context of rational and universal ideas of the right, not religious and particular ideas of the good.

This deconnection of religion and tolerance is understandable against one of the distinctive processes of modernization, namely secularization. Høibraaten (1993:247) describes secularization like this:
Both Christians and Post-Cristians have, during the process of secularization, stepped beyond the pre-secular, non-tolerant Holy Circle of Christianity. Both Christians and Post-Christians live, by now together with representatives from all other world religions, in a new religious sphere of society, a sphere where organizations or individuals may keep their sanctities to themselves, but also communicate about them. We could therefore, speak of a sphere of secularized religion that has emerged or is emerging in modern society, in which believers are often just as secularized as unbelievers, and unbelievers still preoccupied with religious questions in our wide sense.

This interesting perspective on secularization does not see secularization in opposition to religion, as a process of diminishing of religion. Secularization is a transformation of religion, namely a modernization. Secularization is therefore the specific term of modernization in the sphere of religion. Modernization does not offer a substitution of religion as such, but requires a certain kind of relationship to religion, namely a step beyond the Holy Circle. A step beyond the Holy Circle means the possibility to be at a distance of your own religion. This distance constitutes the possibilities for individual, autonomous choice: “… a secular society is a society where options of religious disbelief and doubt are freely available, along with options of belief.” (Høibraaten 1993:239) Choice between different possibilities is not only a possibility; it is a necessity in a secularized, modernized society.

It is this distance of choice and autonomy that creates necessary space for tolerance. Tolerance is constituted by the transforming process of secularization and modernization. Being in the Holy Circle means being intolerant. The Holy is not a source of tolerance, potentially for intolerance. It is the modern distance to the Holy that creates tolerance.

This account of tolerance as a strictly modern ideal is implicit in many of the articles. So also in the theological account of tolerance in Thorbjørnsen (1990:23)

Tolerance is actualized when one allows individuals (my emphasis) to maintain the truth as an existentially determining truth in and of itself (sic). If pupils have assimilated something as truth, directly or indirectly, proven or unproven, they must be encouraged to be proud of it and to respect the assimilated truth as something valuable. But they must also infer that if it is an assimilated truth, there is no danger in talking about it with others, and perhaps allow them to be examined against truths that other pupils may have assimilated. That the teacher in this situation should refrain from using his or her superior powers of argument should be obvious.

As discussed above Thorbjørnsen is concerned with tolerance and truth. Tolerance does not imply relativism, he argues, it is conditioned by a specific position. It is however clear from
the quote above that truth in a school context cannot be seen as one. A strict absolutist view on truth would claim that all students have the ability to reach the truth, and the teacher’s obligation is to argue for truth. Thorbjørnsen instead is concerned that the individual is free to hold his or her truth, and that this truth should not be tested upon external criteria. It is therefore a highly individualized account of truth: The teacher should actually actively support the different individual students’ truths.

Here difference is understood as primarily between individuals. This account of difference Walzer (1997:83-92) describes as modern. The modern process of differentiation is accepted and respected. Differentiation between individuals does however not imply abandoning the concept of truth – on an individual level. Still the teacher has to recognize the plurality of truths in the classroom. The role of the teacher is to negotiate between these truths, and her own truth, in a way that respects the individual and secures educational cooperation.

**Separating epistemology and morality**

In another context Thorbjørnsen (1987:113) is separating between epistemological and moral issues:

When it comes to fundamental questions of doctrine, the church can never yield if it wants to stay faithful to the truth that Jesus and his apostles have entrusted to them. In this sense, the church has little room for negotiation. When, on the other hand, the demand for tolerance is put forth in relation to our fellow human beings, it is no longer imposed only on the basis of the truth, but on that of compassion and altruism. This is the arena of true tolerance.

As far as epistemological truths concerns, the church cannot dispense from its doctrine. In moral issues, however, there seem to be more space for negotiation. This fits within a modern horizon of securing liberty of private beliefs together with establishing a public morality that regulate the public sphere. Thorbjørnsen (1987:111) does not believe this public sphere to be absolutely neutral, but is must be consensual. This means that Thorbjørnsen’s conception of tolerance is not built upon a conception of neutral public agency (the state). In this sense his conception of tolerance is not strictly liberal. It is however, still modern: The important thing is to secure individual liberty: “Freedom is upheld when the individual is allowed fully to own his convictions, to argue for them, and to work towards their realization.” (Thorbjørnsen
In respect of liberty and the opposition to moral and epistemological relativism, Thorbjørnsen’s conception of tolerance is similar to Gule’s and Lindholm’s.

As mentioned, Aadnanes (1995) and Schmidt (1995) are somewhat more critical to such a uniform modern horizon of tolerance. Still, they do not offer any clear alternative to the modernist perspective on difference and tolerance.

A more critical discussion on the theoretical conceptions of tolerance described here is found in the next chapter. It is however not clear how the negotiating and plural respecting teacher can operate on the conception of tolerance that Thorbjørnsen argues for. It seems that tolerance in such a context demands more than merely being a lighting rod, and that the focus is more on difference in the classroom than on the objections of teachers as a necessary condition for tolerance. More fundamentally, the question is whether the modernist horizon in most articles is able to embrace the wide spectre of cultural difference in Norway and the Western world. The critical issue is whether such accounts of tolerance that are found in the ideological curricula are able to address the issues of group tolerance on one hand and the moral ambiguity of the subject on the other.

In sum, the tolerance theoretically understood in the articles analyzed can be described by the language of rights, the scheme of liberalism and the horizon of modernism. On this account tolerance gets a distinct individual meaning in the sense that tolerance constitutes a protection of individual rights to liberty and truth from collective or state intervention.

6.4 Conclusion
How then is tolerance conceived in the ideological domain? First of all, it is more of a last resort than a vital resource in a society of difference. That is, tolerance is in most articles seen not as a primary good, but as a way to secure individual’s epistemological, moral and political rights. Tolerance secures the space to claim the truth as one in a pluralistic society.

Tolerance is understood within practices and contexts of religious and cultural differences, tolerance in educational practice is with few exceptions not addressed. Conceptually, the discussions focus on how tolerance ought to be understood, and not how this conception functions within educational practices. Tolerance is conceptualized as mainly a thin, negative concept with a double condition. The concept is also mainly used and seen as a modern, liberal one – with emphasis on individuality, autonomy, liberty, truth and rights.
Part IV Conclusion and critical discussion
7. A comparison of the understandings of tolerance in different curricula domains

So far I have analyzed the conception of tolerance in three curricula domains, the perceived curricula of teachers, the formal curricula – the national curriculum of Norwegian compulsory education and the ideological curricula in form of academic articles on tolerance. In this chapter I will compare the results of these analyses in order to see whether there are similarities and differences in the conception of tolerance between the various domains.

This will, anyway indirectly, point to the degree of communication and need for communication between the three curricula domains. That is, if tolerance is conceived rather differently in the domains, there is a probability of lack of, and anyway need for, communication. If tolerance refers to different kinds of practices, is conceptualized differently and understood systematically different in two curricula domains, what is argued about tolerance in one domain, will have little effect on the other.

If one finds a rather similar conception of tolerance between the three domains, this does not necessarily imply communication. But at least it confirms that the conditions for communication are met in form of a shared conception. That is, when arguing about tolerance in one domain, this is understood in rather the same way in another.

There is however another indication of curricula communication between domains, namely explicit reference to another domain. The usual thing to do would be to search for references to the formal curricula among teachers, looking for signs of implementation of a curricular reform. On the account of curriculum theory in this study, relations between curricula domains are understood in terms of reciprocal communication more than implementation. The second indication of communication is here understood as references in all three domains to one or two of the others.

The two indicators – comparison of conceptions and explicit references – will indicate the degree of actual, and the need for more, communication. This chapter will try to map the communication between curricula domains. The next, and last, chapter will interpret these results in theoretical perspectives, trying to give a theoretical understanding of the communication of tolerance and values in curricula.
This means the chapter has a two-part structure: First, a comparison of the conception of tolerance in the three curricula domains of the study, and secondly, a search for explicit co-references between domains. The comparison is structured along the same scheme as the analysis so far: The practice, conceptualization and theory of tolerance.

7.1 A comparison

7.1.1 Images of tolerant practice

The issue of tolerance is not only a matter of theory, but also of practices. If the relationship between theory and practice is thought as a continuum, it is possible to put the weight on different sides. Independent of this positioning, the continuum is established not only by theory, but also by understandings of practice.

Which similarities and differences can be found within the images of tolerance as practice in the three curricula domains?

In the perceived curricula practice is constitutive for the conception of tolerance. That is, the understanding of tolerance is formed in reflection on experiences from everyday school-life. This was quite obvious in the pilot-study where the teachers were asked more direct questions on the conceptualization and theory of tolerance. The teachers found the questions very hard to answer. Formulating tolerance in such an abstract, principle manner was difficult. In this study, however, they were asked to reflect on tolerance in relation to everyday experiences at school, which was much easier and produced many interesting stories and perspectives. It seems that in the perceived curricula tolerance is embedded in experiences of practice.

At the same domain tolerance is understood as excellence, as a virtue characterizing the good teacher. And even more so: In most cases as the primary virtue of a good teacher. Understanding tolerance as a virtue is combined with understanding tolerance as a rule, in the way that a tolerant teacher (as a virtue) does not tolerate everything (as a rule). This means that the teachers have a pragmatic relationship to ethical theories. Their ethical language and reasoning cannot be understood along one theory only. A combination of theories is necessary.

At the same time tolerance is understood differently in various relations. Tolerance between teachers and students is understood differently from tolerance between teachers and colleagues or parents. The particular relation is not only a particular implementation of a principle of tolerance, but constitutive for the conception of tolerance. This can be understood
as related to the fact that the conception of tolerance is embedded in practice in this domain. The particular features of a relation are primary to principles.

The tolerant teacher is both the professional and the caring one. And last, but not least, tolerance is seen as a way to deal with the pressure between plurality and unity.

Moving to the formal curricula domain the image of the practice of tolerance is not very detailed at all. Tolerance is described in contexts of identity and/or dialogue. That is, tolerance is dependent of cultural identity. A firm identity is giving resources to tolerating other cultures and the other. This means that tolerance is conceived in the practice of identity-formation. Identity is understood twofold, both as individual and as common in the sense of national. National identity is connected to cultural heritage. Heritage is understood as cultural glue, holding the nation as cultural and political entity together.

Difference is understood partly within, partly outside this unity. The difference within does not represent a challenge to tolerance, because the commonality binds difference together. The difference outside is not constitutive for the school or education. It is a resource for dialogue and development, but a dialogue that primarily is located beyond the school in time and distance. Both radical difference and tolerance is therefore conceived at a distance. Tolerance is something that the students are educated to. The practice of identity-formation is therefore in focus, with a few exceptions that tend to understand tolerance as a more constitutive aspect of everyday school-life.

In the ideological domain tolerance as practice is connected primarily to religion and culture. This means that the practice of tolerance is primarily connected to situations of religious and cultural difference. Educational practice is, with a very few exceptions, hardly described or reflected upon at all. This does not mean that education and tolerance is not addressed, but it is done so by discussing principles not actual practices.

The emphasis is on true and false tolerance. That is, on finding the right conception of tolerance and the disclosure of misconceptions. The focus is on normative understandings of tolerance, more than the actual challenges of tolerance in education and culture.

The main difference between the domains on this issue is the detailed and elaborate image of practices of tolerance in the perceived curricula domain on one hand and the striking lack of description and reflections of tolerant practice in the other two domains on the other. At the formal and ideological curricula domains tolerance is imaged more as the last resort than educational excellence. The different relations of tolerance is not discussed, neither the perspectives of educational professionalism versus care on tolerance. The differences between the domains are not only a matter of quantity, but also of focus. In the few places where there
are descriptions and reflections on practices of tolerance at the ideological and formal domain, they do not concern the most important issues in the practical field as the teachers see it.

While difference is located within the classroom in the perceived curricula, it is more distant in time and space in the formal. That can explain why there are not many examples of tolerant practices in the formal curriculum: The main locus of tolerance is beyond the school. At the ideological domain difference is addressed in primarily the form of religious difference. But religious difference is by far not the only difference experienced by the teachers, and neither the most important.

Similarities in the three images of practice of tolerance in the schools are hard to find. All three are focusing on cultural differences and tolerance, but the conceptualization of culture and the concreteness of the description of cultural experiences vary a lot. A comparison of the conception of practices of tolerance between the three curricula domains has therefore to conclude that the conceptions differ, much due to thin descriptions of practice in the formal and ideological domains.

This conclusion is hardly surprising. The teachers are practicing everyday in the schools, the bureaucrats and politicians have a political and national perspective on education and the academics are concerned with theories of tolerance. The two last domains are by definition at some distance from educational practice.

Still, it represents two problems, a communicative and a theoretical. Firstly, it means that the domains have different images of the current challenges of tolerance. There is no shared understanding of what a tolerant action or practice would be in schools. When talking about tolerance in education, they mean different sets of practices, and as a consequence they are not talking about the same phenomenon. It also means that when tolerance is addressed at the ideological and formal domains, it would be in relation to situations and examples that are somewhat foreign to the perceived domain. In order to understand, one would have to translate the principles of the discussion from one foreign context to an experienced one. That does not promote communication.

The theoretical problem is that in not being context-sensitive, that is, aware of the experiences and practices of the sphere in question, one is left with principles only. The context cannot give resources to the discussion because the image of the context is simply too simplified or outdated. The context can only be used as a field of implementation. But then one is also cut off from theoretical renewal stemming from actual experience. One is left with reason or logic alone.
7.1.2 Conceptualizations of tolerance

Which differences and similarities can then be found in the more precise conceptualization of tolerance in the three curricula domains?

In the more detailed analysis of the teachers’ conceptualization of tolerance, I found that the term is used in both a thin and a thick sense, in both negative and positive and both with a double and single construction. Still there is a clear tendency towards a totally wider conceptualization, that is, towards a thick, positive, single conditioned concept. Compared to how tolerance was conceived historically (for instance by Locke) this means a conceptual expansion of tolerance. The interpretation I offered is that the sphere of moral and epistemic difference is expanded in a situation of (post)modern plurality, and this is the sphere of tolerance. This leads not only to conceptual expansion of tolerance in the form of quantity. Tolerance is not only a central term in more situations and areas. It is also an expansion in importance: Tolerance is seen as one of the most important values in education, if not the most important.

Still, tolerance is used in different senses, also as a thin, negative double conditioned concept. This means that tolerance is a plastic term. The different conceptualization does not primarily seem to be a result of confusion or lack of conceptual clarity. They are understandable in view of the context. Tolerance means different things, depending for instance on the relation in issue. The understanding of tolerance is constructed in order to make sense in different kinds of practices and situations.

Tolerance is a complex concept (Engeström 2001, Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström 2003) - a concept that is hard to give an exact, fixed meaning. The meaning of complex concepts is constantly changing in light of different experiences and in the dialogue between theory and practice. This way the concept is formed not only in dialectics between theory and practice (vertically), but also in different experiences and reflections in practices (horizontally).

In the perceived domain tolerance is widely conceived as accepting difference and a plastic, wide and ambiguous concept with great potential.

At the formal curricula domain it is harder to get a more precise understanding of the conceptualization of tolerance because the term and related terms are not used frequently and tolerance is often more referred to than discussed. That is, in many cases the understanding of tolerance is taken for granted, and tolerance is just referred to as an ideal.

I use the terms wide and narrow as general conceptual characteristics, indicating a general trend. Wide indicates a tendency towards a thick, positive and one-conditioned conceptualization. Narrow indicates a tendency towards a thin, negative and double-conditioned conceptualization.
There is no explicit description or discussion of tolerance in the C97. The one place where the issue of tolerance is focused (L97:20) the focus is what tolerance is not, not on a positive identification of what tolerance is. Tolerance is somewhat static in the formal domain. It is not verbally put in motion, but a given point of reference.

Also in C97 tolerance is used in both a thin and thick, positive negative and with double and single condition. The tendency is, however, the opposite of the perceived domain: The conceptualization leans towards a narrow understanding. Since the word tolerance is not frequently used, the empirical foundation for finding systematic differences and similarities is too weak. Besides the conceptualization of tolerance varies between the different parts of the C97 (the general part and the different subject curricula).

At the ideological curricula domain there is a clear tendency towards a narrow conceptualization of tolerance. The focus is on true and false conceptions of tolerance. The true conceptualizations of tolerance are those that are in line with historically, philosophically understandings. Particularly is the double condition emphasized, but there is also a clear tendency towards a thin and negative conceptualization.

This means that the sphere of tolerance is rather restricted. Tolerance is an important ideal; it is maintained, but mainly in the sense of last resort. There are other ideals like human rights, respect and love that are more ambitious and have more potential. This means that tolerance is conceptualized narrowly both in quantity and quality, in sphere and importance.

The main differences and similarities can be summarized quite simply like this: In the perceived curriculum tolerance is conceptualized wide, flexible and with great potential. In the ideological domain tolerance is conceptualized narrow, fixed and with limited potential. In between stands the conceptualization in the formal curriculum domain which is hard to identify, is somewhat mixed, but seems to lean towards the understanding in the ideological domain.

This raises the same critical communicative question as the differences in understanding of the practice of tolerance. In short: In communication on tolerance the actors do not share the same understanding of the concept tolerance.

7.1.3 Theories of tolerance
Which practical-theoretical understandings characterize the different domains?
The perceived domain: Continuums

In the perceived curricula domain I interpreted tolerance along three continuums: Justice versus care, solidarity versus recognition and modernity versus postmodernity. The teachers understand tolerance both as equal treatment and personal care, as rules for everybody and empathy for the particular. These understandings are negotiated in light of the particular situation and relation of tolerance. The perspective of tolerance as care needs to be emphasized. This is an approach that is for a main part overlooked in theory of tolerance. The theory of tolerance has been dominated by liberal political philosophy, and only the last decades challenged by critical, communitarian and postmodern theory. In theory of tolerance the perspective of care is therefore largely undeveloped. In theories of care, like for instance Gillian (1982/1993), Noddings (1984) and Blum (1994) the concept of tolerance is not central either.

The perspective of tolerance as care does, however, give meaning to the teachers, to such a degree that care is one of the foremost characteristics of tolerance in their minds. If one considers this to be a conceptual and practical-theoretical expansion, it represents a great challenge to theory to interpret tolerance more precisely in such a framework.

The second continuum goes from solidarity to recognition. This perspective includes critical and communitarian insights into the theory of tolerance (like for instance Habermas and Walzer). A critical approach emphasizes tolerance as a result of unity. Some kind of unity has to be established in order to secure discourse and eventually consensus. Tolerance is needed to establish discourse, and is a result of communication. The communitarian conception of recognition is not concerned with a minimum of unity or consensus between groups, but with tolerance as a response to more radical difference. Group-identity is seen as a way to reassociate dissociated individuals, and tolerance as a politics of recognition of different groups is therefore a vital aspect of tolerance.

The third continuum goes from modern to postmodern tolerance. Modern tolerance is characterized by tolerance of difference versus unity, postmodern tolerance is concerned with difference versus difference. The modern tolerator is conceived as a delimited, autonomous individual, the postmodern as an inter- and intrarelational self. On a modern account there is an ideal of moral unity, and tolerance is conceived as a way to handle the reality of plurality. On a postmodern account the ideal of unity is dissolved as a utopia, and the context of tolerance is moral ambiguity. This means that there is a conceptual expansion in the postmodern understanding of tolerance compared to a modern one. Tolerance in a modern perspective is liberal in the sense of procedural, common, universal conception. On
postmodern accounts tolerate is inescapable substantial and theory-laden and contextual. This means that a modern view on tolerance is looking for a single, “true” conception of tolerance, while tolerance is a plastic conception in a postmodern scheme.

**Formal: National and modern**

At the formal curricula domain tolerance is conceived in relation to identity. That is, in order to tolerate the other, I have to be conscious of me. In knowing what characterizes me I will know the other as different to me.

The idea of a common cultural identity, a social glue in a context of pluralism and fragmentation, is central in the C97. This common cultural identity is not universally understood. Unity is not primarily derived from ideas like the human being as a global citizen or the bearer of universal rights. It is a less comprehensive unity, less procedural and more substantial. The common identity is understood in the light of national identity. This can be interpreted in light of theories of national identity and tolerance, as for instance in Miller (1995a, 1995b).

National identity is creating both the resources for and limits of tolerance. A common cultural identity gives security to tolerate the other as different. At the same time it gives directions for the intolerable – the limits for difference in a society of a common identity.

The conception of tolerance in light of a common national identity can be read as a combination of communitarian and social critical political ideas. It is communitarian in the priority of particular substantial identities to universal procedural ones. At the same time it is socialistic in the priority of the national state to smaller groups or tribes in order to try to secure just distribution within a nation-state on one hand and establish a political democratic buffer to global marked-economy on the other. Tolerance is therefore understood within the ideas of equality and democracy.

The flip-side of this political theory is the pressure on the other to move in direction towards us, that is, the pressure of majority culture understood as common culture towards minority cultures. As long as this is a movement of one direction only, it can be called assimilation. When the movement goes in both directions, from them to us and us to them, it

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314 It is important to distinguish between at least three communitarian positions in the discussion of nation-state versus tribes. (The concept tribe is used in the sense of group, understood as groups, embedded in certain traditions and conceptions.) While MacIntyre (1999: 142-154) gives absolute priority to the tribe and has a very procedural image of the state, Walzer (1997:111-112) and Taylor (1994b:51-73) is balancing between the state with some substantial ideas of the good on one hand and particular groups on the other. Miller (1988:243-248) gives priority to the nation-state with substantial ideas of the good, and requires tribes and groups to position themselves within such commonality.
is integration. Tolerance on the first account can lead to intolerance towards difference –
rather parallel to the liberal intolerance to the illiberal (Mendus 1989:144, Skjervheim
1992:190-201). It seems that attempts to construct a general ideal of tolerance on some sort of
commonality or unity, is in risk of resulting in intolerance towards radical difference. The
insistence in C97 on cultural identity and unity as a condition of tolerance makes it vulnerable
for such a criticism.

At this domain tolerance is also understood in light of modernity as a project.
Tolerance is mainly constructed as dependent on a conception of a unified and secure identity.
Tolerance is understood in the context of the idea of the autonomous self: The self-conscious,
choosing and rational self. In order to establish such a self, it has to be distanced from the
other. Distance, security and unity characterize the tolerant self on a modernist account.
Proximity, uncertainty and ambiguity characterize the tolerant self on a postmodern account.

I ideo  l i a l:  U niv er s a l a n d m o d e r n
These ideas of modern tolerance are also characteristic of the theoretical conception of
tolerance in the ideological curricula domain. The ideas of modern tolerance are, however, not
only or even primarily connected to ideas of national identity, but to universal rights.
Difference is understood primarily as difference between individuals, not groups or within
individuals. Tolerance is conceived in the context of the autonomous individual. Tolerance is,
with some exceptions, described as a universal, transcultural and –religious ideal. Tolerance is
primarily conceived as a protection of the rights of the individual to believe or behave as she
wishes. This is a conception of tolerance influenced by classic liberal theory, where tolerance,
autonomy and liberty are closely connected.

Tolerance as a right is the language of the public sphere, the common sphere of equal
citizens. Tolerance is also in operation in a second sphere, the private. Here, however,
tolerance is particular and a virtue. Tolerance as a virtue is not extensively addressed, it is
though too particular to be of common interest. This also limits its potential as an ideal.

T he e xpans ion a t t he  p er ce ived d oma in
There are some similarities in the theoretical conception of tolerance in the curricula domains,
but most of them are similarities between two and not three. I have already pointed out that
tolerance is conceived as a modern ideal in the formal and ideological domains. In the
perceived domain, however, tolerance is conceived both on a modern and a postmodern
account. Tolerance and identity is a common theme in both the perceived and formal
domains, but in the language of universal rights in the ideological domain the perspective of
identity is not central. Liberal ideas of tolerance are apparent particularly in the ideological
domain, and partly at the perceived domain. At the formal domain I have argued that
tolerance is better understood in the light of national or republican communitarianism than
liberalism.

The main difference between the three curricula domains is however between the
perceived domain on one hand and the formal and ideological on the other. The conception of
tolerance as educational virtue of excellence, of care and professionalism is the image of the
perceived domain – an image one does not find in any detail elsewhere. Tolerance is primarily
a virtue of the good teacher, good school, good student and other educational actors.
Tolerance does not mean to allow everything, but to be emphatic and just. The theoretical
conception of tolerance in the perceived curricula domain transcends the idea of tolerance as
justice and right to tolerance as care and virtue. It puts tolerance at the center of how to deal
with educational difference.

The idea of tolerance as care is particularly distinctive at the perceived domain. This
language opens up for the idea of tolerance as a positive educational practice in contexts of
difference. In imaging the possibility of otherness, the teacher has resources to recognize
difference. This is an understanding of tolerance which coheres with a conception of the
paternal teacher. It is however important to notice that tolerance as care is balanced with
tolerance as justice on the account of the professional teacher. These perspectives are not
discussed in the formal and ideological curricula domains.

The balancing of theories of tolerance can be understood as practical-theoretical
expansion. When existing conceptions of tolerance do not offer meaningful understandings of
experiences, alternative theories evolves. One such theory is the understanding of tolerance as
recognition of cultural groups. This is also a positive and active understanding of tolerance
where the identity of the student and others are understood in the context of their cultural
groups, and where tolerance means actively to recognize and value these groups in education.

Another theoretical expansion is the relationship between modern and postmodern
accounts of tolerance. The modern idea of the secure identity and uniform truth as a condition
for tolerance is challenged by the sense of ambiguity and uncertainty in complex educational
practice in situations of difference. In the perceived domain a modern conception of tolerance
is expanded and balanced by a postmodern one. Both the formal and ideological conceptions
of tolerance is however distinct modern. Tolerance is seen as a core value of modernity, while
pre-modern or traditional cultures are seen as pre- or intolerant. Postmodern tolerance is, when discussed at all, rejected as radical relativism and indifference.

This results in a situation where the formal and ideological domains at large address tolerance on modernist assumptions alone, while at the perceived domain tolerance is discussed and understood in broader cultural perspectives.

All this mean that the theories of tolerance in the perceived domain tend to be better maps than the theories of the formal and ideological domain. According to Taylor (1985:92-94) the better theory enables to cope more effectively with the world. Social theories make the self-understanding, constitution and norms of practices explicit. But more than so: They extend, criticize and challenge the understanding of these practices. Simply put: A theory is better as far as it enables us to understand our practices better. The accounts of tolerant practices from teachers, theoretically interpreted, seem to be better maps of educational tolerant practices. These understandings implicitly extend, criticize and challenge the theories of tolerance in the formal and ideological domains.

There are however differences also between the formal and the ideological curricula domains. The most important is the idea of tolerance as a universal right at the ideological domain and tolerance in the context of a particular national identity on the formal domain. The common idea is tolerance on the basis of unity, but unity is constructed differently as respectively universal human dignity and Norwegian cultural identity.

In sum the theoretical conceptions of tolerance are quite different between the three curricula domains. In spite of some similarities tolerance is understood differently as practice, concept and theory. That means that when teachers talk about tolerance, they refer to different practices, understand the word differently and conceive it from different theoretical perspectives than the academics writing within the ideological domain and the politicians and bureaucrats within the formal domain.

7.2 Explicit references
Before drawing conclusions from this, the second indicator must be investigated. That is, are there any explicit references to other curricula domains within each domain?

The ideological domain does not have many explicit references to the other two. Gule (1997:19-21) discusses tolerance and education as nation-building, but is here referring to the
minister of education, not C97\textsuperscript{315}. None of the articles on tolerance analyze tolerance in the formal curriculum explicitly. When discussing teachers and tolerance, that is the perceived tolerance, it is mostly in form of prescription (Thorbjørnsen 1990:23). This is quite naturally since the empirical material on teachers’ conception of tolerance has so far not existed.

The formal curricula domain does not refer to tolerance at the ideological or perceived domains at all. There are some quite general descriptions of the respecting teachers, but these are prescriptions, wishes and guesses and not based on empirical material.

What then about the perceived domain? Nobody of the teachers refer explicit to the ideological domain. Do the teachers however refer to tolerance at the formal domain? In the cases where tolerance in the national curriculum was mentioned during the interviews, it is striking that they have an image of an existence of tolerance in the curriculum, but not very much more. That is, they think they know the curriculum mention tolerance, but have no detailed idea of what the C97 says on tolerance.

Some of the teachers are concerned with the problem that Norwegian compulsory education on one hand has Christian-Humanistic values as a foundation or purpose and on the other is increasingly multicultural. Alfred is arguing that the fact that the Norwegian Lutheran Church – the state church – is dominating the purpose of compulsory education by the explicit mentioning of Christian and Humanistic values. Other groups not mentioned in the value-foundation may feel excluded from the outset.

A: It is very clear in the preamble there. Among else on humanist values and – and the whole explanation there. But I think that to achieve equality in a society as multicultural as – as Norway then – that has gradually become so – so – so should that with...with the...the leadership that the state church has in the preamble would not have been there.

G: Does this mean that you could accept the same content if it had instead read “Christian and humanist values,” or does it mean that you would like to have changed, what shall we say, values that are specified, for example, in the preamble to L-97?

A: Yes, now, I don’t remember how it was, tolerance and respect and...are surely also there.

A: Det står jo mye bra i den formålsparagrafen der. Blant annet om humanistiske verdier og og hele den der greiene der. Men jeg mener at for å få en likeverdighet i et så flerkulturelt samfunn som som Norge da da etter hvert har blitt... så - så - så burde det med... med den... den føringer som statskirken har i den formålsparagrafen ikke vært der.

G: Betyr det at du kunne tenkt deg samme innsat den bare det ikke hadde stått kristne og humanistiske verdier, eller betyr det at du ville ha forandret, hva skal vi si de, verdier som står oppført for eksempel i innledningen til L-97?

A: Ja, nå husker jeg ikke hvordan det var, toleranse og respekt og...står vel også der.

Alfred is the principal of Kjernsund School, and has a particular responsibility for the relationship between formal and perceived curriculum. Still, he is quite uncertain regarding the particular ideals in the Education Act and in the general part of the C97. In part one of The

\textsuperscript{315} Although the R97 was made effective in 1997, and not could be analyzed earlier, the general part was made effective September 1993. The articles do neither analyze tolerance in the previous national curriculum, M87.
1969 Education Act for primary and lower secondary education. Humanistic values or ideals are not mentioned. It says that: “The object of primary and lower secondary education shall be, in agreement and cooperation with the home, to help give pupils a Christian and moral upbringing …”\(^\text{316}\) And it continues: “The schools shall further intellectual freedom and tolerance…”\(^\text{317}\) It is the general part of C97 that introduces the phrase “Christian and humanistic values”.

The point in this connection is that while in ideological and formal curricula domains, the debate on whether the Education Act and the national curriculum should include the formulation Christian or Christian and Humanistic is of great importance, a principal at a large school does not know which values the Act and the national curriculum actually establishes as the foundation of national education. He does not remember, he says. And he is not alone. None of the teachers refer in detail to what these official and political documents say on values and tolerance in particular. They have a more or less vague idea of Christian and humanistic values and tolerance – but nowhere do they explicitly get the content of these ideals from the C97. That is, they have an idea of the central concepts that is and has been used in education, but understand these concepts and ideals from their personal point of view. It seems that the formal curricula domain has very little influence in how the ideals are understood at the perceived domain.

There may of course be indirect ways of communication that are not traceable by just examining the formal and perceived domains. It may be that for instance textbooks and other instructional material is such an indirect communicator. Still, the fact remains that the conception of tolerance is different at the domains in question. An indirect communication has therefore not been successful in establishing a shared conceptualization.

7.3 Conclusion
There are several possible interpretations of the lack of explicit reference and communication between the different domains. One answer may be that the teachers have not read or read carefully enough, the C97. This is however not likely as a general answer. There are many examples where they refer to the curriculum. They also tell about working rather extensively with the C97 together as colleagues. The second possibility, that they simply have read and forgotten, is therefore neither likely. At the time of the interviews, spring 1998, the C97 was

\(^{316}\) “Grunnskolen skal i forståing og samarbeid med heimen hjelpe til med å gje elevane ei kristen og moralsk oppseding …”

\(^{317}\) “Skolen skal fremje åndsfridom og toleranse …”
implemented to the schools and a lot of debate took place on different perspectives of the national curriculum. The third interpretation is shifting focus from the teachers to the C97. Maybe the texts on tolerance in the national curriculum do not communicate very well with the readers? These issues will be discussed in the next chapter.

The teachers do not remember what the C97 says about tolerance. The formal curricula domain has little direct effect on the conception of tolerance in the perceived domain. But the opposite is also the case: The formal curriculum has no explicit image of how tolerance is conceived in the perceived domain. The ideological domain does almost without exception not refer to the two others. There is very little explicit communication on the understanding of tolerance between the three curricula domains.

This is coherent with the analysis of conceptions of tolerance at the three domains. In spite of some similarities, the domains have different images of practice of, conceptualizations of and theories of tolerance. In sum: The analysis of conceptualizations of tolerance in the perceived, formal and ideological domains shows different conceptions at each domain and very little communication between them on the issue of tolerance.
8. Communicating tolerance between curricula domains

So far this study has shown that tolerance is understood differently in different curriculum domains, and that there seems to be very little communication between teachers, national curriculum and the academic debate on the issue of tolerance. How is this to be understood? This is the critical question of this final chapter.

Some critical questions needs discussion: How can the results of this study be understood in the perspective of curriculum theory? And how can the results contribute to theoretical reflection?

This chapter will therefore turn the attention back to chapter two and the curricular theoretical framework that was constructed. The results of the analysis of the conception of tolerance in Norwegian compulsory education will be discussed within this framework.

In order to understand the results of this study in a broader context, some results of the official evaluation of the 1997-reform are used. Then two alternative understandings of the difference in curricular conception of a central value as tolerance, are discussed: An implementation-model versus a communication-model.

8.1 Values and the C97 reform

In 2003 the results of a four year evaluation program of the C97 reform were presented. One of the 26 projects in the program was evaluating how the formal curriculum is transmitted into the schools. The report from the project is called: “How is the Curriculum communicated? A comparative assessment of curriculum-based policy instruments – their shaping, consistence and meaning for teachers’ practice” (Bachmann 2004). As the title indicates, the focus is on curriculum-based policy instruments, as textbooks, evaluations and competence activities.

The project is based on surveys among teachers, school managers, persons involved in competence and evaluative work and textbook authors, editors and consultants. The main data are from 2001 and 2002.

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318 The project manager was Professor Stefan Hopman, and the project was located at the Department of Education, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim.
8.1.1 Limited help from formal curriculum

The results from the projects underscore one of the results of this study: The general part of the formal curriculum is of very limited help for the teachers. In planning and teaching 19% of the teachers use the Core curriculum often, and 15% use the Principles and guidelines for compulsory education often. 70% and 72% say they use the same parts of the general curriculum rarely. This does not mean they do not make use of planning documents in their work: 90% tell they use the local annual- or semester-plan often. They also use the subject-plans more frequently than the general part. (Bachmann 2004:103) The text of the formal curriculum in itself has limited effect on educational practice. The project therefore focuses on the different activities following an educational reform, like production of textbooks and implementation-activities.

Few teachers use the general part of the formal curriculum. What the numbers do not tell is how the very few who read the text, understand it, and how, if at all, they communicate it to colleagues, students, parents and others.

One could assume textbooks to be a vital communicator of values and attitudes between formal curriculum and teachers. The results from the evaluation-report do, however, not suggest so. The teachers who report a high or very high degree of change in their practice are asked which of the following factors that have had greatest effect: The C97, textbooks, courses or evaluation. It is striking that text-books have had minimal effect on the teachers’ attitudes. Only 6% explain their change in “attitude to school and teaching” from influence from textbooks. The equivalent number when it comes to significant change in “the understanding of the primary goals of education” is 5%. (Bachmann 2004:183-187)

This is consistent with the authors of the textbooks claiming that they expect their books to change teaching (39%) more than primary aims (23%) and attitudes to school and teaching (26%) (Bachmann 2004:175-177).

Textbooks are widely read and used. This does however not mean that teachers (and students) adopt conceptions and practices from the textbooks. Teachers interpret and use this material within their preconceptions and established practices. It is not given that preconceptions and established practices are changed and not the intention of the textbooks. Textbooks have a stabilizing effect on educational practice, more than contributing to change and curriculum implementation (Bachmann 2004:201, Svingby 1982:202). It seems that textbooks have limited communicative effect on the issue of values between the different curricula domains.
It is interesting to note that evaluative work together with activities for competence increase do have a larger effect on the teachers’ educational change on issues of values and attitudes. It is hard to draw any further conclusions from the material in the evaluation-project because the questions in the surveys are wide, and a number of reservations have to be made concerning the teachers’ answers. Generally the report does however conclude:

Involvement, commitment, and responsibility for implementing the curriculum seem to have the greatest meaning for changing of teachers’ educational practices. For that reason, we call into question the value of central evaluations and skills improvement versus regional and especially school-based initiatives wherein teachers are empowered and given responsibility for the development and organization of both skills improvement and evaluation processes. (Bachmann 2004:201)

This does not address the issue of values in particular, but there are no obvious reasons why the conclusion should not be valid for values as well as knowledge. It seems that where local action and reflection is put to attention, change occurs.

The report concludes with an emphasis on the fact that curricular decisions are made everywhere in the curricular field. There is no one domain of decision and others for implementation. The field of curriculum consists of complex relations:

“Possibilities for understanding cannot be decided politically or administratively, every reader must understand the curriculum based on a self-referencing horizon of possibility. For that reason, it is somewhat inappropriate to talk about a decision level that is the sole province of school management or school administration. Decisions are made at all levels, by everyone involved, as this party sees it. This obviously complicates political management of the system, but decisions must be made anew where they have an impact.

Based on that line of argument, it becomes clear that major changes cannot be expected to take place as a consequence of a reform and a new curriculum, at least not immediately.” (Bachmann 2004:213)

Here the concept of understanding is underlined. A formal curriculum is a text that needs interpretation, and these interpretations are personal and dependent on the readers’ experiences, or “self-referring horizon of possibilities”. Vital experiences in the teachers’ reading of the texts are their experiences from educational practice. According to Arfwedsson (1985:30-33) these experiences can best be formulated as codes, more or less visible and conscious. When these codes or embedded experiences are positively involved in curricular-activities, the chances for curriculum implementation or curriculum communication are good. The curriculum text and the political intentions and will alone do not create extensive
curriculum change. The other domains and agents of curriculum have to be involved in a much more active way.

### 8.1.2 The roles of the domains

This conclusion is not very controversial. The crucial question is however: What is the status of the other domains? Does the formal domain have a sort of primacy, or does the curricular field consist of equal actors? Put differently: Does upgrading the other domains to active participants in curricular implementation imply change in authority? And if so, what kind of authority?

All these questions have to be answered with two perspectives in mind: A normative and descriptive. The issue of (normative) curricular legitimacy is somewhat different from asking how (descriptively) curriculum authority works in schools today. A distinction is necessary, but at the same time I will argue that the perspectives should be hold together. Discussing legitimacy de-contextualized may be theoretically interesting, but is of limited value to the context. Describing practice as “is”, also imply practice as “ought”, that is, an image of good practice (Afdal 2004). Whether this coheres with the official “ought” is another question.

Pinar (1995:703)\(^{319}\) operates with three models of implementation:

1. The fidelity approach
2. The mutual adaptation approach
3. Curriculum enactment

In the fidelity approach the curriculum is developed outside of the classroom. Change is though as a linear process – from the experts who develop curriculum to the teachers who implement. Evaluation is conceived as a way to check if planned aims have been reached. The mutual adaptation approach implies a somewhat more relational perspective. Curriculum change is a cooperative effort between curriculum developers and teachers. This is a continuously process – not an event – and characterized by negotiation and flexibility. Conceiving curriculum change as curriculum enactment means that formal or external curricula are seen as tools for students and teachers, with which they can organize and construct learning experiences in the schools.

\(^{319}\) Pinar refers again to an unpublished paper by Cynthia Paris.
There is a gradually change in roles of the curricular agents in the three models. The fidelity approach implies a primacy of the formal domain, while the mutual adaptation approach opens for a somewhat more equal authority. In the perspective of curriculum enactment the teachers and students have a perceptual primacy, in the sense that the relationship between the formal curriculum and the others are primarily seen through the perspectives of the classroom. Curricular authority is gradually changing focus from the formal domain in model 1 to the perceived, operational and experienced domains in model 3.

The concept implementation implies a focus on an event, in most instances a particular curriculum reform. The concept change draws the attention to a wider horizon of time and space than one event. Using the conception curriculum change means seeing curriculum as an ever-changing sphere, where reforms come and go and where schools have a trans-reformal life. This does not mean that reforms do not have an affect on schools, but that they work in complex ways, and not always as intended.320

Allowing for higher degree of autonomy of the different curricula domains, means that the only way to curriculum cooperative change, is through communication. The approach of curriculum communicative change implies both a descriptive assumption and a normative position. The descriptive assumption is that curriculum change cannot meaningfully be described as a top-down process. Each domain has a high degree of autonomy. The normative position is that cooperation and negation between domains is valuable. Therefore communication between domains should be sought for.

In the following I will operate with two stereotyped models of understanding curriculum implementation or change:

1. Curriculum implementation
2. Curriculum communication

Curriculum implementation resembles the fidelity approach and partly the mutual adaptation approach and is characterized by primacy of the formal curriculum. Although the other curricula domains may be thought to have an active part in implementation, the formal curriculum is setting the standards, objectives and boundaries. Curriculum communication

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320 In an interesting study of teachers’ practices in American classroom from 1890 until 1990 Cuban (1993) concludes that teacher centered instruction has been quite dominating during the whole period, independent of the many school reforms. He concludes with emphasising that school reforms should not be conceived in mechanical terms, but as unpredictable events: “School reforms unfold unevenly, unmechanically, in identifiable
focuses on the complex relations between different domains and their autonomy. The formal domain cannot realistically be understood as having primacy. Each domain has its autonomous life, but all have communicative potential.

In the case of tolerance the question is: Are the differences between the conceptions of tolerance at the various domains in this study due to lack of implementation or lack of communication? I do not aim at reaching a final answer, but at discussing some critical issues.

8.2 Implementation model

The implementation model is of course heterogeneous, and allows for different conceptions of the domains and their relations. The research that is used in analyzing this understanding of curriculum is therefore diverse. The model must not be understood as a general characteristic of the authors quoted below, but as a theoretical construct, used in an attempt to understand the curricular process of tolerance, as described in this study.

Focusing on the relationship between the formal and perceived curriculum, it is possible to try to explain the lack of shared conceptions of tolerance in either the teachers or in the official curriculum text.

8.2.1 Teachers’ understanding of curriculum

Firstly: Can the phenomenon be understood as primarily an issue for the teachers? More bluntly put: Can the reason for the differences be traced to the teachers?

A. Törnvall (1982) and M.L. Törnvall (1982) have studied the relation between the teachers’ basic philosophy and their understanding and practice of curriculum. According to A. Törnvall two factors prevent implementation: A partial basic philosophy and teacher codes. Teachers’ general basic philosophy and their basic educational philosophy are closely connected to their ideology. The more comprehensive or complete ideology a teacher has, the lesser teacher codes are decisive in their individual educational reflection and action. Teacher codes often live their own life, independent of formal curricula. This way A. Törnvall (1982:188) sees teacher codes as the teachers’ way of survival, preventing change that formal curricula prescribe.
On this account it seems that the ideological gets priority to the practical. The right or good, the ideals, are found within the sphere of the ideological, and within the ideal and ideological are the resources for change. When the teacher is ideologically conscious, and when there is a positive correlation between the ideological expression in the formal curriculum and of the teacher, chances are good for successful implementation.

This means that there is a pressure towards unity, both at the individual level in the form of an ideal of a comprehensive and uniform personal ideology, and at the level of formal curriculum. And not at least, this perspective can easily result in a pressure towards the individual teachers towards the nationally prescribed ideology, as formulated in the formal curriculum.

The solution for improving implementation is therefore according to A. Törnvall, increasing the consciousness and comprehensiveness of the teachers’ basic philosophy.

The same trust in the ideological curricula is found in M. L. Törnvall’s study on the effect of teachers’ basic philosophy on their perception and teaching of internationalization. She found that the teachers’ basic philosophy, their socialization as teachers and the local situation are more decisive factors on teacher’s reflection and practice than the formal curriculum. (M. L. Törnvall 1982:207) Interestingly, she also observes:

The data show formal but not genuine agreement with the norm among most teachers in the study. The more precisely the norm is defined, the more strongly it is repudiated; the result is a return to professional behavior based on tradition or fundamental outlook (M. L. Törnvall 1982:208).

Applied on tolerance, this means that the teachers subscribe to tolerance as a formal value, but resist the material understanding and practice. The teachers would agree on more general aims of tolerance, but not apply those aims to educational content and methods.

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321 The priority of the ideological is expressed for instance like this: “But teachers are not always consistent when it comes to applying their general philosophy to educational issues, as other controlling factors may become manifest, primarily the professional code. Naturally, components of the teacher’s educational philosophy may be incorporated in the professional code, that is, it may have ideological elements. These elements may also be taken from ideologies other than that which determines the teacher’s general philosophy. The general philosophy often expresses ideals that one would like to apply. When these ideals are interfered with, the professional code may come into the picture.” (A. Törnvall 1982:189)

322 This A. Törnvall (1982:192) recognizes: “For that reason, the authors of the curriculum and others will still be faced with the problem of how to write a curriculum that has an impact on and is practiced by teachers. Because as soon as goals and concepts that entail value judgments are incorporated in a curriculum, one consequence is that it touches upon the teachers’ philosophy and that leads to positive or negative reactions by them. Those who write the curriculum must also ask themselves how much can be demanded from a government agency when it comes to insisting that people change their ideological philosophy and outlook on life and therewith an element of their integrity. For when their basic philosophies are affected, the core of the matter is the teachers’ integrity.”
In a concluding discussion M. L. Törnvall raises the question of why formal curricula texts seem to have such limited effect. Her discussion is particularly relevant for this project because her focus is also values and curriculum.

Firstly, she discusses whether making curricula a more locally based process would help implementation. The teachers tend to be conservative in terms of content and method, and she doubts that increased teacher-involvement in itself will improve the situation. Leaving more curricula decisions to local elites, will neither make implementation easier. The danger would be totalitarian interpretations of the intentions of the national curriculum. Implementation is therefore neither resolved by local curricula, nor less concrete national curriculum texts.

One factor that may have an effect, is a political declaration and sanctioning of the issue. That is, a soil for recognition of the importance of these questions has to be prepared within the broader society. Particularly politicians have a responsibility in this declaration and sanctioning – which again should result in increased resources for the causes in question.

In the long run, one other factor is however important: Giving the teachers resources. These resources should not consist of ready-made teaching material, but in contributing to ideological reflection in order to clarify the teachers’ educational basic philosophy. Only teachers that can treat international issue as a spectre of different problems, and not a fixed content, can succeed in implementing the intentions of the formal curricula, M. L. Törnvall argues.

The teachers’ fault?
How does this apply to this study and the conceptions of tolerance? Is the problem of difference on the conception of tolerance due to teachers’ lack of comprehensive and conscious basic philosophies?\(^{323}\)

One of the problems with this understanding is that the conception of tolerance is fixed, and that the formal curriculum is the authority in fixation. In M. L. Törnvall (1982) internationalization as conceptualized and conceived in the formal curriculum is the normative standard. The more the teachers’ conception concur, implementation is thought successful. This study does however show that terms like tolerance are not easily

\(^{323}\) The answer depends for instance on the conception of educational basic philosophy. In A. and M.L. Törnvall it is conceptualized with emphasis on an ideological perspective. A somewhat equivalent concept used in this study is teachers’ practice-theory. This is also a reflective account of education, but closer connected to experience and practice.
conceptualized and conceived. There are a number of possible understandings of the concept and the value – both conceptually and theoretically. If the understanding of tolerance was to be decided primarily by C97, many of the teachers’ conceptions would have to be rejected as misinterpretations.

There are however conceptual and theoretical resources in teachers’ understanding of tolerance. The teachers’ understand tolerance as excellence, and the tolerant teacher as the virtuous teacher. A distinction between tolerance as virtue and rule make it possible to operate with the conception of a tolerant teacher acting intolerant when necessary. Through the teachers’ accounts tolerance appear as a plastic and not at least, relational concept. It is possible to talk about a conceptual expansion in the way the teachers understand tolerance. This way tolerance is changed from a value of last resort to a central value in situations of plurality.

Through the interviews with the teachers aspects of tolerance as care and recognition in ambivalent situations was emphasized. Educational tolerance cannot be reduced to a negative or passive conception of tolerance. Tolerance in schools is not constructed as merely non-interference, but as trying actively to understand the other and recognizing the other as other. At the same time it is to accept the possibility of oneself to be other and admit to the ambivalence the classroom contains.

These are just a few of the practical, conceptual and theoretical resources of tolerance, theoretically reconstructed from the teachers’ accounts. These understandings have common features with the understanding in the formal curriculum, but goes beyond it.

This means that the problem is not the teachers’ lack of ideological convergence with the formal curriculum. In the reflected everyday practice of the teachers, there are ideological resources beyond the formal curriculum. The problem does neither seem to be the teachers’ partial basic philosophy. As important as theoretically resources, is the ability to read educational practice, codes and situations. The tolerant teacher is the emphatic teacher, the respondents say. In the established practice in handling those and in the continuous reflection on these practices, are resources for practicing and understanding tolerance.

On this account the problem cannot be localized to the lack of comprehensive ideological understanding. The problem is rather a lack of theoretical interpretation of practices. The resources are located in accounts of practice meeting theory.

School codes, situational factors and local practices change status from obstructing implementation to curricular resources. Arfwedson (1985:64-65) conceives school codes as inescapable necessities:
This also means that teacher socialization (and thus a part of the professionalism of teachers) is strongly context dependent. Furthermore, it means that reform and planned change in schools may face very special difficulties, both in terms of local variation and because of the general structure and functions of school codes …

Schools have rapid throughput of people. This means that there is limited cumulative effect of the teachers’ work. The knowledge and competence that is built, is embodied in the students, and the students disappear every year. “That is what schools and other educational institutions are for, but in virtually no other kinds of organizations does anything like this happen.” This creates an ever-changing work-situation, with a continuous demand of adapting. In such a destabilized situation school codes are a source of stability. Stability, however, restricts change, and school codes therefore necessarily have a flip-side: “The school code and its stabilizing principles of solidarity in central school matters, thus, at the same time both promotes control of the overall work situation and impedes planned change in the system.” (Arfwedson 1985:69)

On this account school codes are simply inescapable. They are also valuable in creating agreement on central issues and therefore reducing conflicts in very horizontal working-places. Another positive feature of school codes is that they decrease difference in opinion among teachers towards the same students.

This perspective of school codes provides a more balanced account. School codes contain traditional practice in different cultural contexts. Treating school code as a resource does not mean that it always is right and good. It means that it is a source of right and good, and that it needs to be evaluated as right or good – in a circular, hermeneutical process.

In the interviews of the teachers their understandings of tolerance were expressed in forms of narratives and reflections. The narratives expressed different kinds of experiences, and space for reflections was created by different perspectives, as for instance ideological, school codes, theoretical and so on. The form was created by the interview as a genre. Still, it is quite possible that the form of narrative and reflection is able to hold the two elements together: The theoretical and ideological on one side and experience and the practical on the other. In the reflective narrative neither element is primary; it is in the interplay between the two curricular resources are constructed.

The teacher as a reflective practitioner is therefore vital in the curricular process of tolerance. The language of reflective practice and narrative does however not give primacy to
ideology or theory, but understands the relationship between practice and theory as a dialectical, hermeneutical one.

8.2.2 Writing the curriculum text

The other possibility is that the problem of lack of shared conception of tolerance is due to the writing of the formal curriculum.

Svingby (1978) is discussing visible and invisible education or pedagogy. With reference to Bernstein’s terminology, she argues that there are reasons to believe that there is no harmony in the expectations to the school among the different agents or domains. There is a conflict of interest between the different curricular agents.

These conflicts are neglected when the formal curriculum is characterized by blurring of subjects and lack of specific requirements for methods. This results in an invisible pedagogy, invisible for the students and parents – and for the teachers as well.

Lgr 69 thus means a step towards a curriculum constraining in a less visible way. Teachers will have great difficulty in deducing the present curriculum guide compared to what was the case earlier. (Svingby 1978:231)

The result is an impression of education in and of harmony – repressing the social conflicts that education is in the midst of.

The solution according to this account, is more visible formal curricula combined with local space for decision and action. Svingby (1978) (and in Lundgren, Svingby and Wallin 1983) develops this idea as a frame-model. The central authorities establish frames, wherein there is local freedom. These frames and additional guidelines must however be interpreted. The teachers’ perceived space of action is therefore both dependent on central frames and the local interpretations.

On this account it is possible to think that the problems of difference in conceptions of tolerance in Norwegian compulsory education are results of invisible curricular frames. That is, the formal curriculum maybe too vague, which results in lack of central influence and increased local decision.

This is coherent with the conclusion that C97 is not very explicit on the conception of tolerance. Still, there are elements that make this understanding problematic regarding tolerance and curriculum. There are reasons to believe that the teachers do not understand tolerance primarily in general principles, which in turn are deduced into educational practice. Their language is one of reflective accounts of practice. A national curriculum that draws
boundaries or frames regarding the understanding of tolerance and other values tends to be written in the language of principles. The critical question is whether this language communicates very well with the teachers’ accounts. The respondents characterize the general part of C97 as abstract and general. It is a text that does not give much response, if any at all. This may be because it is a hidden text, but it may also be because it is formulated at such an abstract level that it is quite unclear what it means to educational practice. The text does not move the teachers – in either direction.

If so, what is needed is not more visible principles, but texts that can communicate with reflective practice. Texts that primarily draw borders may not be communicative with the practice within the borders.

Engelsen (1988:240) suggests the combination of practical language and a frame-model. It seems, however, that when the language is becoming more particular or contextual, it loses its function as a general, de-contextualized expression, defining a border for all persons and situation.

The second problem with this account is the theoretical model of frames as educational political boundaries, leaving an autonomous space for local schools and teachers. The analysis of the conception of tolerance in different curricular domains shows that the teachers’ conceptions of tolerance are expanding theoretical and political conceptions. The teachers’ conceptions are boundary-crossing (Engeström 2001, Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström 2003). Valuable learning and development is also done in the horizontal field of practice. And this learning or conceptual expansion also means crossing frames or boundaries. The conception that the formal curriculum is giving the perceived domain boundaries, defining an autonomous space, is problematic. On a communicative account curriculum change does not occur top-down on a deductive model, but in a complex pattern of horizontal and vertical movements.

*Discursive curriculum*

In her study on literature and curriculum, Engelsen (1988) is addressing the issue of abstract language in the formal curriculum on one hand and the reality of classroom on the other.

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324 Another problem is the autonomous space itself. There are reasons to claim that the space must be understood as both autonomous and heterogeneous. Almost all educational decisions are affected by and affect others. When the boundaries should be understood as continuously changing and the space as not solely autonomous, the model has somewhat limited value.
There is a long distance from the genre of curriculum poetics to everyday educational practice in the part of the national curriculum she analyzed, the didactics of Norwegian literature:

There seems to be no basis in educational practice and in the contextual conditions of the classroom. The didactic literature view presented is primarily described on the idea level. The prerequisites and restrictions for implementation – such as pupil circumstances, material and temporal conditions – are not discussed. (Engelsen 1988:225)

She continues:

The curriculum’s presentation of emphasis on didactic literature precludes discussion. The readers/teachers are not invited to participate in a discussion of didactic literature. Nor are they invited to test the ideas in the curriculum in their own teaching of literature. The attitude towards the curriculum conveyed, is succession. (Engelsen 1988:226)

She suggests a discursive curriculum as an alternative. A discursive curriculum would be more explicit on the practical language of education, operating with models that are closer to the reality of students, teachers and classrooms. Formal curricula must recognize the complexity of classrooms. Otherwise the distance from general curriculum texts to educational reality gets too far.

Referring to Harris (1983), Engelsen (1988:247-252) operates with three modes of guidelines for teachers: Persuasive discourses, descriptive discourses and theoretical discourses. Persuasive discourses can be either intellectual or emotional ones – trying to move the teacher in wanted direction. Descriptive discourses is aiming at describing in the sense of laying out elements of educational content and organization. Descriptive discourses are always constructions, and as such also imply a theoretical position. Such discourses have a conditioned value, Engelsen argues, but need to be accompanied by other texts. Theoretical discourses can be of different kinds: They can be explanations, doctrines, applied theories or practice-theories. Practice-theories are formulated in close proximity to the field of practice. According to Harris they are rare, but have a lot of potential.

Practice-theories are focused on the language of practice. Such theories can bridge the gap between theory in general, abstract language and practical educational language. Discursive curricula have to be formulated in such a way that they communicate ideas and guidelines to teachers, and they have to be founded in the context of the classroom, Engelsen argues.

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The curricula she analyzed were the *Mønsterplanen 1987* (Curriculum guidelines for compulsory education in Norway) and the curriculum-draft from 1985.
The problem with a discursive curriculum is the possible disregard of political authority. An alternative solution is a less comprehensive official curriculum which is politically binding, and supplementary curriculum material characterized by openness on and discussion of curricular conflicts.

The idea of a discursive curriculum is helpful in understanding tolerance and curriculum. The C97, particularly the general part, is neither discursive, nor practical on issues of tolerance and other values. This may be a part of the problem of lack of communication: The writing of tolerance in the formal curriculum is both too vague and too fixed to put the reader in motion.

*Communicating a given content?*

Still, writing discursive curricula is not enough. The vital question is which resources one is using in writing the texts. As pointed out several times, the resources for conceiving tolerance is found in the dialectics between the field of practice and theory. The point is: Writing discursive curricula is not only a question of communication in the sense of communicating a given content. On such an account, using the language of practice has a one-way communicative purpose: To adjust the form of the given content to the language of teachers. This implies a two-way communication in terms of form, but not in content. Content is separated from context (form) in the same way as Beavens’ (1992:30-102) translation model. The core or the content of the message is primary to the shape or context. The content is given and the same, but can take different shapes.

On this account the content, or core, of tolerance is constant, but must be formed according to context. The analysis of conceptions of tolerance above, shows however that the conceptions of tolerance differ critically. It is not just a matter of different versions of the same idea – it is constructing and conceiving tolerance along quite different horizons of meaning.

One solution to this plurality of conceptions of tolerance, could of course be to establish a national standard, which would be the norm of correct conception and use. Admitting that the plurality of conceptions of tolerance in the field of practice is a resource, rather than a result of misconceptions, calls for a different understanding and solution. This alternative model can be called *communicative curriculum*. 
8.3 Communicative curriculum

8.3.1 Content and context

To start with Beavens models of contextual theology, a communicative curriculum is equivalent to his synthetic model. This model implies a dialectic relationship between core and husk, content and context. Neither text, nor context is primary. Text and context are in constant interplay, but can be analytically distinguished in terms of perspectives. These perspectives are never pure, but allow focus on for instance contextual conditions.

This means that it is possible to find resemblances of tolerance across different contextual conceptions. But it also means that it is impossible to construct tolerance as a pure, theoretical ideal, independent of its context. Tolerance has to be understood in the particular practices or situations it appears.

On this account of content and context, values cannot be formulated in total abstraction from context. Values are embedded in time and place. Talking about educational tolerance, tolerance must be understood in light of the educational practices in question. This means that tolerance as a value never can be described or prescribed in a curriculum as a context-free ideal. An understanding of the educational contexts and practices is necessary in order to understand tolerance.

This view on text and context has implications for curriculum theory. It means that curriculum theory is in need of empirical research in order to understand the conceptualization of values in different educational practices. This is necessary not only to know the receiver in order to give a fixed message an appropriate form, but to be able to reconceptualize values and knowledge.

On a communicative curriculum account the relative isolation of the conception of tolerance at different curricula domains is due to the idea of vertical transfer: The underlying assumption of the actors in the curriculum field is a view of transfer – the ability to use knowledge to solve new problems or to learn fast in new situations (Tumoi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young 2003:1) - as vertical. That is, researchers of tolerance, curriculum writers and teachers think of transfer of knowledge and values between domains as a “top-down”, vertical process between theory and practice. This may be the reason why the academic debate on tolerance does not seem to care about everyday conceptions of tolerance, or if so, think these are misunderstandings of the “correct” theoretical conception. This may also be the reason why the formal curriculum is not concerned with educational practices of tolerance. On this account the teachers in this study do not care about conceptions of tolerance in the academic
debate and the national curriculum because the conceptions do not connect with their own experience. These conceptions have not been in touch with the, more or less conscious, conceptual expansion in educational practice.

8.3.2 A model of curriculum and values

On this understanding of the results of this study, an alternative model (figure 8.1) for curriculum and values can be drawn. This model includes interplay between the fields of theory and practice – an interplay where no instance is primary and is the declared beholder of valid concepts. Secondly, the model includes the possibility of horizontal conceptual expansion. This means that concepts and values are not only expanded in a vertical interplay between practice and theory, but between different systems or contexts of practice (and theory). The rest of the chapter will be a discussion of how this model can be understood.

Figure 8.1: An alternative model for curriculum and values.

The model starts with the conceptualization of the curriculum field presented and discussed in chapter two. That theoretical framework was based on Goodlad’s curriculum theory, but
modified with respect to relations and contextuality. The present model is limited to the three curriculum domains analyzed in this study, and with particular focus on values. Whether the model can be useful in issues of knowledge, is therefore an open question.

The model is normative in several aspects, for instance in its emphasis on circular relations and equality between the different domains. This means that the model can be a starting point of discussions how values in curricula can be conceived. At the same time the model is based on the empirical study of tolerance in various curricula domains. It is therefore a model constructed on the understanding of the results of the study. The purpose of the model is twofold: It is both a construction of conceptual relations that can help explain the results of this study – and a contribution to a discussion on value and curriculum change.

One of the crucial issues of the model is the status of the teachers’ everyday language in curriculum change. So far I have argued that an implementation model is not able to interpret the empirical results of this study satisfactory. This is to a large extent related to the status of the perceived domain – and how the relations between the domains are understood.

8.3.3 Tolerance as a concept

I will start this discussion with the issue of concepts.

Tolerance is both a word and a concept. Although the word tolerance may be the same, it may change conceptual meaning. That is, distinguishing between words and concepts is important. For instance Utaker (1991:54-55) points out that the word genius had another meaning in the 19th century (describing a creative person) than today - when it is less frequently used to explain achievements. “Concepts refer to ways we use words and understand phenomena.” (Utaker 1991:46) That is, a concept is a certain way to interpret a word, and thereby to understand phenomena.

Different conceptions of tolerance mean different ways to classify and interpret the phenomena of tolerance. A conception therefore implies a certain way of conceiving, Utaker compares conceptions to human eyes. A conception implies a certain way of looking at the phenomenon. A conception must also be distinguished from the phenomenon. It is not the phenomenon itself that decides the conception: it is a cooperative work of the perceiving subject and his or her culture. We can always interpret a phenomenon in a number of ways, that is, conceptualize it differently. This conceptualizing is cultural and historical. Concepts change with time, and they are conditioned by culture.
Conceiving tolerance is therefore historically and culturally conditioned, in two ways: It is dependent on cultural situations and change, and on how these situations and changes are understood.

Concepts are usually distinguished in two kinds, theoretical and everyday concepts. Everyday concepts are used in everyday communication in a culture. Theoretical concepts have a more precise definition and have analytical functions. That is, theoretical concepts can be related in different ways to create analytical models that are used to understand different social or natural phenomena.

Although theoretical concepts can be distinguished in this way from everyday language, it can be argued that they are interconnected and interdependent. (Vygotsky 1987:193, 219) As far as science is a cultural enterprise, it is culturally and conceptually dependent. Theoretical concepts influence everyday language, and vice versa. Theoretical concepts are not independent of how cultural phenomena are conceived by everyday people. Scientists are participants in everyday culture and language. One can and should distinguish between theoretical and everyday concepts, but they cannot be perceived as separate entities.

Therefore, theoretical concepts develop and change in interaction with cultural change.

By immigration and globalization Norway has changed significantly culturally the last decades. One of the main changes is increased cultural difference, and also an increased awareness of plurality. The school is one of the institutions that have experienced this rapid change. In one decade, rather lingual, ethnic and religious homogeneous classroom have changed to places of difference.

The issue of difference is at the heart of tolerance, as I have argued. Tolerance is a way to conceive and live peacefully with difference. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the rapid cultural change in Norwegian schools the last decades have challenged the conception of difference and tolerance. Difference has been radicalized, and tolerance has been challenged more radically than before. This challenge has been substantial as well as formal: The teachers and schools have had to develop new practices in order to meet new difference. The interviews in this study give insight into how some of these teachers conceive this difference and how practical tolerance is understood.

The result is what I have called a conceptual expansion of tolerance. The teachers’ understanding crosses in many respects the boundaries of traditional concepts of tolerance. Not in the sense that a totally new concept is replacing an old as in a paradigm shift, but in changing the boundaries, core and status of the concept.
The crucial issue is however: Can this change also be found in the formal curriculum and in theory on tolerance and education? On the basis of the analyses in this study, I am inclined to say no. It seems that the theory of tolerance and education I have analyzed to a large extent discuss tolerance on the premises of philosophers that lived in the 18th and 19th century and in a very different situation of cultural difference than today. As the analysis of the Norwegian academic debate on tolerance shows, there is a striking lack of empirical knowledge on issues of difference and tolerance in different social practices, for instance education.

This account can explain the lack of shared conception of tolerance between theory and practice in this study. The conceptual expansion has occurred in the field of practice, of everyday language, not in the field of theory.

Everyday concepts must however not primarily be understood by our description of the concepts, but of our use of them. This means that it is in the intersection of theoretical concepts and the teachers’ everyday concepts in use that conceptual development can occur. Theoretical concepts are used to interpret the teachers’ narratives of their practice and reflection. When the narratives expand the theoretical boundaries, new theory has to be constructed in order to include these new experiences and reflections (phenomena).

This is the first point of figure 8.1. In order to make communication possible, and not at least in order to expand concepts, empirical-theoretical dialogue and analysis between the ideological and the perceived domains is essential. If not, one risks that theory is operating with contexts that are foreign to the existing practices.

I have several times argued that the field of practice – in this study the perceived curriculum domain – is a resource for theory on tolerance. How can this be more exactly understood? Here activity theory can help.

8.3.4 Activity theory of tolerance
As mentioned in chapter two, activity theory is based on the conception of activity systems, that is, communities of practice or institutions, as the analytical prime unit. In the interaction between action systems conceptual expansion occurs. This implies a view of learning different from more traditional theories:

Standard theories of learning are focused on processes where a subject (traditionally an individual, more recently possibly also an organization) acquires some identifiable knowledge or skill in such a way that a corresponding, relatively lasting change in the behaviour of the subject may be observed. It is a self-evident presupposition that the knowledge or skill to be
acquired is itself stable and reasonably defined. There is a competent “teacher” who knows what is to be learned.

The problem is that much of the most intriguing kinds of learning in work organizations violates this presupposition. People and organizations are all the time learning something that is not stable, not even defined or understood ahead of time. In important transformations of our personal lives and organizational practices, we must learn new forms of activity which are not yet there. They are literally learned as they are being created. There is no competent teacher. Standard learning theories have little to offer if one wants to understand these processes. (Engeström 2001:137-138)

On this theoretical account concepts and knowledge are not ready-made packages; both concepts and knowledge have a contextual character. Conceiving something is understood as a collective activity based in an activity system or a contextual system. And the actors in conceiving are understood within systems. Conceiving and concepts must therefore be understood in the perspective of what – the substance that – is conceived.

Seeing the ideological, formal and perceived domains as three different activity systems, conceptions must be understood in the light of the particular systems history, rules, subjects an so on. The conception of the object tolerance is therefore conditioned by the specific character of each system. The conception of tolerance is not constructed structurally or formally with general validity, but substantially, depending on the particular content and context.

Learning is here conceived as twofold. Firstly, it is a development from novice to expert within the system, as pointed out in situated learning theory (Wenger 1998 and Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1990). In this respect learning and transfer is happening in a vertical relation, from a lower to a higher stage. Activity theory is however not restricting the individual learner to one context. The learner of today is typically shifting between different activity systems or contexts, each with different practices, rules, tasks and history. The individual is therefore not only going a vertical path from novice to expert. She is constantly crossing boundaries, changing roles, horizontally; participating in different relational practices with different conceptions.

This contributes to interactions and dialogue between activity systems on a horizontal level. A community of teachers is learning as much from experiences and conceptions from different contexts as from theory “above”. Border crossing prepares the soil for conceptual expansion or transfer horizontally.

In the school and classroom different activity systems are represented and present, for instance different cultural activity systems (Weber 2003). All students are for instance moving between the activity system of culture and the school. Teachers move between systems
constantly, and in this interaction conceptual expansion occur. So understood, the teachers’ conceptions of tolerance is a result of interaction between different activity systems. The main movement of change has not been vertical – from the theory of tolerance in the ideological or formal domains – but horizontal.

This is a conceptual expansion of everyday concepts. This does of course not exclude relations with theoretical concepts. In a study of activity systems within Finnish children’s health care, Engeström concludes with this model of conceptual expansion at theoretical and everyday conceptual level:

![Conceptual expansion model](image)

**Figure 8.2: Conceptual expansion along horizontal lines (Engeström 2001:154).**

As the model shows there was a dialogue between theoretical and everyday conceptions in his material, but this results in horizontally conceptual renewal, not vertical synthesis.

On this account conceptual expansion of tolerance occurs in the horizontal direction at the perceived curriculum domain, as well at the other domains. This study gives reasons to believe that the expansion of the conception of tolerance is greater at the perceived level than at the ideological and formal. A communication between different curricula domains must therefore take the shape of interaction between the action systems of ideological, formal and perceived curriculum domain. The solution is not primarily simplified theory and better implementation. Curriculum development happens through interactions and dialogue between different domains with equal value.

**8.3.5 Forms of interaction**

Which forms can such interaction between the different domains, or action systems, take?
In the ideological domain more extensive interpretive, empirical research on educational values is an initiation to interaction. This research has to focus both on school practice and educational political practice, and it has to be with awareness of horizontal expansions. The research has to engage in the field of practice in order to achieve the interaction which is a condition for border crossing and conceptual expansion.

One of the problems with the formal domain is that it lacks visibility (Svingby 1978); practically, conceptually and theoretically it is unclear. This may be due to the structure of the traditional Norwegian curricula – with first a general part and then plans for the specific subjects. In C97 the Principles and guidelines for compulsory education is supposed to function as a link or bridge between the two sections, but is on issues of value not very much specific than the Core curriculum.

If one analytically distinguishes between knowledge and values as two categories, the general part includes principles for both knowledge and values. The subject curricula are however addressing knowledge most specifically. Values are described in more general terms. It is quite clear what and how students should learn in the history of Christianity in second grade. It is however not at all clear what and how students should learn about tolerance and other central values in Norwegian education the same year. Subject curricula address values quantitative and qualitative, in the form of being concrete significantly less than they do knowledge.

To put it simple: The subject curricula are the ones that are most specific, closest to practice and most frequently used by teachers. These do however not treat values as explicitly as they treat knowledge. This in turn means that the prime curricular text on values is the general part. This part is however so abstract and general that it communicates quite badly with teachers. There is a missing link between the general part of the curriculum and the field of practice: A text on educational practice and values.\footnote{This would be an answer to the challenge that is identified in the evaluation of compulsory education in Sweden 1998 (Skolvärket 1999:74): “It is problematic for teachers (as for other professional groups) to express themselves in areas where one lacks a professional language. What does specifically, and in educational terms, progress or not progress imply in the civil or moral sphere? The curriculum gives little guidance in behavioural}
At the *perceived domain* this characterization has to be recognized and lived. Conceptual expansion does not happen automatically, but in interplay and interaction between activity systems. This interaction has the form of confrontation and dialogue. This means that time must be spent on questioning, analyzing and solving the contradictions within the activity system or between systems.

The many contradictions and ambivalences of tolerance that is described in this study have to be questioned, analyzed in historical and actual-empirical perspectives (Engeström 2001:152) and attempted solved in form of expanded conception. This way of doing theory is described by Taylor (1994a:31):

> We cannot just legislate the goods people are actually seeking and finding as goods out of court. What could the highest good be if it did? On what basis could we establish a highest good which had this property? So you have to start for your theory of justice from the kind of goods and the kind of common practices organized around these goods that people actually have in a given society. Ethical theory has to comprehend given practice; it cannot just abstract from it.

This process is very different from the discussions on educational or value platform, vision or basic philosophy that many Norwegian schools have put time and effort in. The process suggested here does not try to solve contradictions by establishing context-free principles. It takes as its point of departure a specific contradiction and one or several particular contexts or activity systems. The activity systems or the schools are situated within a specific history, a cultural pattern, norms and values. This cultural history has to be recognized in order to understand the new challenges and needs for conceptual expansion.

### 8.4 Conclusion

This last chapter has tried to give two possible understandings of the lack of communication on tolerance between curricula domains in Norwegian compulsory education. One possibility is that the process of *implementation* has been made difficult because of failures within particularly the formal or perceived domains. On closer examination this explanation does not seem to hold. An alternative understanding focuses the cyclic and relational perspective of curriculum change and on communicative curricula. In such a model the multicultural classroom is not only a place for teaching tolerance, but for finding out what tolerance is all about.

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*terms and it is hard to evaluate whether the goals have been achived from students’ behavior. That is why one is reluctant to say anything.”*
Literature


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## Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Intervjuspørsmål</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Can you tell me about the most tolerant colleague or teacher you have met? Following-up questions.</td>
<td>1. Kan du fortelle meg om den mest tolerante kollegen eller læreren du har møtt? Oppfølgingsspørsmål.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are the most important challenges of tolerance at your school? Do the teachers at the school agree/different points of view? Has this been debated among the teachers? Cultural, moral conflicts at the school? How do you think the teachers meet the challenges of tolerance in practice? How do you think the school as a whole meets the challenges of tolerance in practice?</td>
<td>4. Hva er de viktigste toleranse-utfordringen på din skole? Er lærerne på skolen enige/ulike syn? Har det vært debatter om dette blant lærerne? Kulturelle, moralske konflikter på skolen? Hvordan synes du de enkelte lærerne takler toleranseutfordringen i praksis? Hvordan synes du skolen skolen som helhet takler toleranseutfordringen i praksis?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a) How can you as a teacher practice tolerance at school?</td>
<td>5a) Hvordan kan du som lærer praktisere toleranse på skolen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) How can the school practice tolerance.</td>
<td>b) Hvordan kan skolen praktisere toleranse?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is a tolerant school?</td>
<td>Hva er en tolerant skole?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) How do students learn tolerance?</td>
<td>c) Hvordan lærer elevene toleranse?</td>
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</table>
7. Is it important to keep the unitary school, or should it be easier for faith-communities and others to start their own schools? Could private schools have solved conflicts in your local community? Would that have been a way to practice tolerance?

8. Which of these attitudes do you particularly try to teach your students: Social equality, the students’ personal liberty or love of one’s neighbor? Which is the most important? Why? Any other attitudes?

7. Er det viktig å bevare enhetsskolen, eller bør det være lettere for trossamfunn og andre å starte sine egne skoler? Kunne privatskoler løst konflikter i ditt lokalmiljø? Hadde det vært en måte å praktisere toleranse på?