

The 1st International Conference on Cultures & Languages (ICCL) "Global (Global & Local) Reinforcement of Religious Tolerance in Post Pandemic Era"

### Religious Tolerance in Indonesian Language Teaching for Foreign Speaker (BIPA)

Siti Isnaniah<sup>1</sup>, Tiya Agustina<sup>2</sup>, Nurul Fadzilatul Husna<sup>3</sup>

sisnaniah7@gmail.com., tiyaagustina87@gmail.com., nurulpark1@gmail.com

UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta

#### Abstract

Indonesian Language Teaching for Foreign Speaker (Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing/BIPA) in Thammasat University Thailand has special uniqueness viewed from point of view of religious tolerance values. BIPA classroom consists of students from various religion such as Buddha, Christianity, and Islam. The background of different believes needs tollerance among religion believers. The objective of this study is to discuss religious tolerance in Indonesian Language Teaching for Foreign Speaker (Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing/BIPA) classroom in Thammasat University Thailand. This research is qualitative descriptive Penelitian ini termasuk using ke dalam jenis techniques of collecting data in form of observation, penelitian interview, and deskriptif kualiatif dengan documentation. The validity of the data uses triangulation. The technique of data analysis uses interactive model. The result of the study shows that Indonesian Language Teaching for Foreign Speaker (Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing/BIPA) teaching in Thammasat University Thailand has internalized religious tolerance values. It could be seen from 1) Planning step, constructed syllabus has integrated religious tolerance, especially in choosing reading material; 2) Action Step, tolerance value has been taught through respecting and appreciating other's believes which differ from their own ones, being tolerant of religious ceremony, worship places, bersikap and other believes, giving chance to moslem students who do required prayers, and introducing to other Indonesian cultures; 3) Evaluation Step, taken from product-and-process-based assessment based on dilakukan melalui students' competence, without seeing their backgrounds of religion, ethnic, race, nd groups. Along the process of BIPA teaching, character building were focused on tolerant manners, such as respecting, not disturbing public orders, respecting joint desicions, and receiving diversity in their environtment, as well as interpreting tolerance manners in the BIPA classroom and also out of the classroom.

Key Words: religious tolerance, teaching, beginner BIPA



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#### Abstrak

Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA) di Universitas Thammasat Thailand memiliki keunikan tersendiri apabila dilihat dari sudut pandang nilai toleransi beragama. Kelas BIPA ini terdiri dari mahasiswa dengan berbagai agama seperti Budha, Kristen, dan Islam. Perbedaan keyakinan inilah yang melatarbelakangi diperlukannya sikap toleransi antarumat beragama. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk membahas toleransi beragama dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA) di Universitas Thammasat Thailand. Penelitian ini termasuk ke dalam jenis penelitian deskriptif kualiatif dengan menggunakan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Keabsahan data menggunakan triangulasi. Teknik analisis data menggunakan model interaktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA) di Universitas Thammasat Thailand telah menginternalisasikan nilainilai toleransi beragama. Hal tersebut ditunjukkan dari 1) tahap perencanaan, silabus yang disusun telah mengintegrasikam nilai-nilai toleransi beragama, khususnya dalam pemilihan bahan bacaan. 2) tahap pelaksanaan, nilai toleransi ditanamkan melalui sikap menghormati dan menghargai kepercayaan lain selain agama yang dianutnya, bersikap toleran terhadap upcara keagamaan, tempat peribadatan dan kepercayaan lain, memberi kesempatan mahasiswa muslim yang hendak melakukan ibadah salat wajib, dan pengenalan berbagai kebudayaan Indonesia lainnya. 3) evaluasi, dilakukan melalui penilaian berbasis produk dan proses dengan didasarkan pada kompetensi mahasiswa, tanpa melihat latar belakang agama, suku, ras, dan golongan. Selama pelaksanaan pembelajaran BIPA, penanaman karakter yang ditekankan pengajar adalah sikap toleransi seperti menghargai, tidak menganggu ketertiban umum, menghormati keputusan bersama dan menerima keberagaman yang ada dilingkungannya serta menginterpretasikan sikap-sikap toleransi baik di dalam proses pembelajaran maupun di luar pembelajaran BIPA.

### Kata Kunci: toleransi beragama, pembelajaran, BIPA Pemula

### Introduction

Religious moderation is a central problem sounded by Ministry of Religion Affairs of Indonesia since 2019 up to now. Religious moderation should be viewed from many ways to balance religious action between one believe (exclusive) and other's believe (inclusive) (RI, 2019a). More specifically, moderation is a set of manners which call for goodness, create social balance in life, and affect interpersonal relationship in wider range.



RI (2019) explained that basic principles of religious moderation are fair and balance based on three aspects, namely humanity value, joint desicion, and public order.

Those three aspects should not be abandoned in order that all differences in religious believes which take roots in society couls run well based on nationality values. However, diversity in culture, religion, ethnique, and race will cause destructive effects when each indivudual does not have tolerance. Tolerance values are manifested as a manner of respecting other's feeling and religious believes that embraced by majority as well as minority. Open behaviour and willing of appreciating the difference of ethnic, skin tone, language, customs, cultures, and also religion, are the beginings of the root of individualmtolerance values (Awal, 2020).

Tolerance means that in running social life, each individual has duty to get along when people of other religion are worshipping, respecting one's religion choice, not provocating hostility by insulting other religion, and having good manner without seeing one's social status and religion. Respecting eachbother should be priority when different opinions rise. Because, it has been sunnatullah for each thinking creature that differences come from diversity (Zainuddin, 2014).

Tolerance is a natural thing in a multicultural life, it even becomes the sunatullah and pattern for humans who live in this universe. Tolerant of differences in skin color, body shape, even to the field of worship. Tolerance in Islamic teachings is to allow people to have contact with people of other religions. More precisely, inter-religious tolerance is within the limits of muamalah. As for aqidah and worship, it expressly prohibits tolerance (Damanik, 2019). The background of the community consisting of different religions requires tolerance, so that harmony and harmony can be well established (Setyorini & Yani, 2020). Embedding a culture of tolerance will give birth to an attitude of mutual respect and help between fellow believers (Suharyanto, 2014). In addition, Aslan, (2018) also explains that the attitude of helping each other in social life is also an indicator of tolerance.

Tillman (in Supriyanto, 2017) explains the points of tolerance which include 1) creating peace, 2) being open and accepting of differences in religion, 3) respecting and



appreciating all differences in each individual, 4) fear and indifference are the seeds of of intolerance, 5) love is the seed of tolerance which is manifested in the form of caring and attention, 6) knowing how to recognize and respect the goodness in others, 7) the ability to adapt to difficult situations, 8) tolerating life's inconveniences and letting others move forward.

In a multi-religious society, it is inevitable that there will be conflicts between adherents of different religions (Zulyadain, 2018). This is emphasized by Sabara's statement (2020) that from the condition of a pluralistic society, religion often breeds conflict and violence as a result of the radicalization of religious thought and practice. The emergence of various kinds of events and dynamics of renewable Islam has produced many diverse analyzes to find solutions to the problem of terrorism, radicalism and issues of violence, injustice, which always act in the name of Islam (Yunus, 2017). Ironically, some of the intolerant actors and radical actions that exist actually come from educated circles (madrasah) (Arif et al, 2017). On the other hand, Annur (2015) also explains that the emergence of various horizontal conflicts with religious nuances is a reflection of the blurry portrait of religion in Indonesia.

Seeing this situation, there is no doubt that the cultivation of religious moderation that will form a tolerant attitude needs to be taken seriously. The goal is that radicalism, terrorism, and other violent behavior rooted in the understanding of intolerance can be handled early on. Included in learning Indonesian for foreign speakers or commonly known as BIPA. In BIPA learning, the plurality of the Indonesian nation starting from habits, lifestyles, traditions and beliefs is the material that must be taught to foreign students. Because learning the language means also learning the culture of the country. Thus, BIPA learning must also integrate the values of religious tolerance in its implementation.

Currently, the number of foreign speakers who want to learn Indonesian language and culture is increasing from year to year. The interest of foreign speakers in Indonesia cannot be separated from the charm of Indonesia which attracts foreign nationals. Therefore, BIPA exists as an institution that provides facilities for foreign speakers to learn



Indonesian language and culture. The large number of foreign speakers who want to learn Indonesian has also encouraged the establishment of several BIPA institutions abroad. However, there are challenges in its implementation, namely the different backgrounds of students from various countries. These conditions affect the selection of models, methods, learning strategies that will be carried out. Especially in heterogeneous classes, where the speakers have different religious beliefs. Therefore, the values of religious moderation need to be integrated in learning.

Sholeh (2021) explained that there are at least four components that teachers can use in internalizing the values of religious moderation that can foster tolerance in students, namely through lesson plans, learning materials, learning processes, and learning evaluations. In the field of education, the values of moderation will often be applied to the formation of the personality (character) of students. The application is carried out through teaching and learning processes and learning materials that are integrated with character education (Habibie, 2021). As the results of Riyanto's research (2020) that the integration of religious tolerance in learning is done by providing a stimulus to students to behave tolerantly, starting and ending learning by praying. The noble values that are instilled are believing in God, being humble, being a good example, loving others, being gentle, and taking a firm stand.

Based on the explanation above, this research will discuss about religious tolerance in beginner level BIPA learning at Thammasat University Thailand. Teaching BIPA in Thammasat is in great demand and attended by many students from various regions in Thailand. Although the majority of Thai people embrace Buddhism, in the BIPA class at Thammasat University there are also students who are Muslim and Christian. It is this background of different beliefs held by BIPA students that underlies the need to cultivate an attitude of tolerance between religious communities. This is intended so that they are able to respect and appreciate the diversity that exists.

Many studies related to the study of religious tolerance in learning have been carried out, however, which link it to the BIPA context have not been found. Several



relevant studies on religious tolerance have been conducted by Usman & Widyanto, (2019) which discussed the internalization of tolerance values in Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) learning. The results of Usman & Widyanto's research showed that there were seven values of tolerance that were applied in PAI learning, ranging from respect to caring for others. The next research was conducted by Djuniasih & Kosasih (2019) which resulted in the finding that the Cigugur people who have diversity in embracing religion can live side by side peacefully. Then, Yunus's research (2017) which discusseed the implementation of religious tolerance values in PAI learning at SMP 1 Amparita, Widhayat & Jatiningsih (2018) examinesd religious tolerance in student organization activist in public universities. The research related to the preparation of the BIPA book based on religious moderation has been carried out by Faznur et al (2021). The results of this study indicated that BIPA students needed digital books which also included Islamic moderation values.

The difference from several relevant studies that have been described lies in the object of study. Most of the previous research discussed religious tolerance in learning at the domestic school, madrasah and public universities (PTU) levels. This is different from this research which was conducted on learning Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) at Thammasat University, Thailand. The absence of research that discusses religious tolerance in BIPA learning makes researchers interested in exploring this topic. In addition, it is also based on field facts that at Thammasat University Thailand, students studying BIPA consist of various beliefs ranging from Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

### **Research Method**

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. Qualitative descriptive research is a method that is very suitable for understanding phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc., holistically and with descriptions in words and language, on certain topics by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2017). Therefore, this study described in detail the application of religious tolerance in BIPA learning. This research was conducted at Thammasat



University Thailand in the Beginner Level BIPA class (A2). Data collection was done through observation (observation), interviews, and documentation. The main data sources in this study were words and actions, the rest were additional data in the form of supporting documents. The data validity technique uses triangulation. The data analysis technique uses an interactive model belonging to Miles & Huberman (1994).

### **Result and Discussion**

The researcher presented the findings of the data obtained from the observations made at BIPA Thammasat University Thailand. This institution has its own uniqueness from the point of view of the value of religious tolerance. Teaching Indonesian to foreign speakers (BIPA) abroad has different challenges and uniqueness from teaching BIPA at home. Teaching BIPA in Thammasat is in great demand and attended by many students from various regions in Thailand, seeing the country of Thailand with the majority of its people as Buddhists.

This BIPA class consists of students with various religions, such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. However, in the learning process, they can still implement an attitude of tolerance by respecting and respecting each other. This can be seen based on events that occur in the BIPA learning process in Thammasat which consists of planning, learning processes, learning evaluations.

## 1. Teaching-plan Stage

At the learning planning stage, of course, the teacher prepares things that need to be considered in the learning process to achieve certain goals. Planning also means that the teacher thinks about learning activities before they are carried out to make it easier to convey information to students. Designing learning is influenced by many factors that are considered and must be prepared so that the learning process can be effective and efficient. Such as Tanjung's research (2022) which explains that the steps that teachers/teachers can



take in integrating moderating values at the planning stage are to develop and modify an accommodative lesson plan

In practice, BIPA teaching planning was done by compiling a syllabus in accordance with the applicable curriculum. In this case, BIPA teaching used references from the ministry of education. BIPA learning in Thammasat used a syllabus. The materials contained in the BIPA teaching syllabus were adjusted to the needs. Likewise with the methods and learning media used. It was intended that the learning objectives were achieved clearly.

Although there is no textual material for religious moderation in the BIPA teaching syllabus, material related to religious moderation can be conveyed indirectly through cultural materials. This activity aims to provide an indirect description of how tolerance values apply.

For example in the 6th week syllabus material which discusses cultural material: cultural tourism, the 7th week of Speaking: Cultural tourist destination Thailand-Indonesia, and the 9th week about Indonesian arts and culture.

สัปดาห์ที่ (Week)	รายละเอียด (Topic/ Content)	ຈຳນວນชั่วโมง (No. of hours)		กิจกรรมการเรียน การสอน สื่อที่ใช้/	ผู้สอน/หมาย เหตุ
		ทฤษฎี	ปฏิบัติ	หนังสืออ้างอิง	(Lecturer/ remark)
7	Speaking : Cultural tourist destination Thailand-Indonesia Grammar : Affix peN- & Conjunction (2) Writing : compose sentences with conjunction	2	1	lecture & practice	
8	Mid Examination	1	2	theory & practice	
9	Reading : Seni dan Budaya Indonesia (Arts & Culture in Indonesia ) Speaking : Ramayana performance in Indonesia - Thailand	2	1	lecture & practice	

Table 1. Syllabus of BIPA at Thammasat University Thailand



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In the socio-cultural and religious context, tolerance is an attitude and action that prohibits discrimination against different parties in a society. Tolerance is a form of mutual respect for each other and not forcing one's will (Fitriani, 2020).

Religious humans as social beings cannot be denied that they must live in society not only with their own group, but also with groups of different religions. Religious people must strive to create tolerance in order to maintain social stability by accepting factually these differences. Tolerance between religious communities is by allowing or allowing and maintaining a conducive, safe, and peaceful atmosphere for people of other religions to carry out their worship and religious teachings without being hindered by anyone.

The cultural materials that have been described in the syllabus can be conveyed explicitly about the tolerance of religious diversity and places of worship in Indonesia which are still closely related to cultural and tourism materials.

BIPA teaching in providing material to students is certainly not carried out rigidly, but through a cultural approach with a fun process so that students are able to clearly understand the meaning to be conveyed by the teacher, both the scope of the material that is in accordance with BIPA learning objectives and the values of tolerance that is in it.

### 2. Learning-teaching Process

Learning is a process of teaching and learning activities that also play a role in determining the success of student learning. From this process there will be a reciprocal activity between teachers and students to achieve learning objectives. Efforts made by teachers and students in processing information in order to provide knowledge on the basis of sustainable learning and the creation of an effective and efficient teaching and learning process.

In the learning process there are two inputs, namely, instrumental input which includes the material to be taught, the method used, the learning media used, students, and teachers. In the environmental input, it is how the environment influences the learning



process. In this case the student environment is Thailand which is a Buddhist majority country.

The BIPA class at Thammasat University is located in the Thai capital, Bangkok. As a big city, it is a meeting point for students from various provinces in Thailand who study Indonesian at Thammasat. Students with different backgrounds both socially and religiously created heterogeneous classes. The BIPA teaching process in Thammasat was quite complex because the classes were conducted online, thus adding to the level of challenge and uniqueness in the classroom. The religious diversity in the BIPA class also influenced the learning process. Although the BIPA learning process was centered in the city of Bangkok, Thailand, the majority of which were Buddhists, other students of religions other than Buddhism such as Islam and Christianity continued to follow each other well and are tolerant of each other in the ongoing BIPA learning.

The BIPA learning process at Thammasat University Thailand is carried out online. In this study, it can be described as follows.

a. Cultural Materials: Cultural Tourism Places

When learning BIPA material in class A2 which discussed material about cultural tourism and natural tourism, the teacher provided material in the form of text with illustrated images containing various cultural and natural tourist attractions in Indonesia. This material was delivered using lecture and question and answer methods so as to get feedback from BIPA students. This material was the material for the sixth week of cultural tourism in the syllabus.

This material coverer cultural tourism places in the form of temples. The teacher said that besides being known as a tourism destination, it is also a place of worship for religious people in Indonesia. By using video media containing an overview of Borobudur temple, Prambanan and others via YouTube, it was easier for teachers to convey material to students.



The material discussed about the cultural attractions of the Borobudur temple which is one of the largest Buddhist temples in Indonesia as well as a place of worship for Buddhists and celebrations of major days in Buddhism. Likewise with Prambanan temple which is a Hindu temple as a place of worship for Hindus.

This learning with the theme of cultural tourism and natural tourism also introduced BIPA students in Thammasat about places of worship for Buddhism and Hinduism in Indonesia. In addition, BIPA students also indirectly knew that places of worship could also be used as tourism objects without disturbing and disturbing a particular religious community. This showed the harmony between religious communities on how to address existing differences by mutual agreement. Indirectly, BIPA students also understood how to respect public order as a form of tolerance.

In addition to learning BIPA with material that was cultural tourism and nature tourism that has been described above. The teacher also provided material with regional themes in Indonesia. In this lesson, the teacher gave an overview of the islands in Indonesia, namely Java and Bali. The teacher commented that Java Island was the island with the highest population density in Indonesia with the majority of the people being Muslim, although it also included people with other religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Confucianism.

In addition to discussing the island of Java, the teacher informs BIPA students that the island of Bali is dominated by people who are Hindus, which is the reason why on the island of Bali there are so many temples (places of worship for Hindus), and certain places that are given "sesajen" or offerings as (homage to ancestors). This material was delivered orally by watching videos about the island of Bali on Youtube and then discussing them together. Regardless of how well-known Bali Island is as a national tourist destination, BIPA students could know and understood that tolerance creates a harmonious environment.

Although in the syllabus this material is material with cultural content, it also indirectly informed the diversity of religions wrapped in culture in Indonesia, while at the



same time teaching BIPA students an attitude of tolerance. The purpose of this learning was not only to introduce cultural tourism in Indonesia, but also to discuss by providing opportunities for students to introduce cultural tourism in their respective provinces where they live as a form of practicing speaking skills.

### b. Cultural Materials: Introduction to Tedak Siten Culture

This material is contained in the ninth week syllabus on Indonesian arts and culture. The introduction to "tedak siten" culture to BIPA students in Thailand not only introduced the procedure for the tedak sinten ceremony as a memorial ceremony for the birth of a baby aimed at the safety of the baby. This material also conveyed the existence of a gratitude/"selametan" event as a form of gratitude to God Almighty for the safety of the baby, regardless of how the ceremony was carried out, students were also informed about the form of the "selametan" event which contained good prayers held led by religious leaders, coincidentally this ceremony is usually carried out by the Javanese community, who are predominantly Muslim, so that the salvation event is carried out according to Islamic teachings.

The delivery of this material uses the question and answer method, in order to get feedback from BIPA students. The learning media used in teaching this material is a video containing the procedures for implementing tedak siten. Feedback from BIPA students is, sequentially conveying similar activities that contain religious activities that have been considered as culture in Thailand in each province. There are similarities or differences in similar ceremonies between Indonesia and Thailand and religious activities in them.

In the end, another goal of this learning process is for BIPA students not only to know about the existence of other beliefs besides their religion but also to understand and be tolerant of religious ceremonies, places of worship and other beliefs by respecting them.

In addition to the attitudes of tolerance that exist in the learning process, there are also attitudes outside of learning such as tolerance for Muslim students to worship. The



existence of freedom in choosing religion for each individual creates tolerance in carrying out religious rituals in that religion.

The attitude of tolerance towards Muslim students to carry out worship in the middle of class hours was a very tolerant attitude in the midst of the majority of Buddhist students. Although in the lesson plan it was not stated textually about how the rules governing the procedures for worshiping BIPA students in Thammasat were carried out, but the implementation of tolerance among diverse people continued to run well without causing envy or misunderstanding between students.

For example, when learning BIPA in class which took place from 17.00 to 19.20 Bangkok time, there were BIPA students who were Muslim. At that time it clashed with the time for the Maghrib prayer. Therefore, the teacher gave time to perform the Maghrib prayer for Muslim BIPA students.

This opportunity was certainly given with the consideration that at that time the teacher also gave time for other students to read texts or take quizzes to wait for Muslim students to finish praying. This activity was included in the attitude of respecting the procedures of religious worship that are different from one another. The absence of objections or misunderstandings from other students regarding this matter showed that BIPA students had indirectly implemented an attitude of tolerance for mutual agreement as a form of religious moderation.

Another form of tolerance is when the songkrant holiday is celebrated. Thailand is a country with a majority of its people who are Buddhist, therefore, every year the Thai people celebrate Thailand's big day, namely Song Krant Day for approximately one week of celebration. Therefore, all educational institutions closed learning activities to celebrate the big day.

This attitude showed how students obeyed public order and were happy to welcome this Songkrant celebration. Regardless of their religious identity. Tolerance leads to an open



attitude and willing to acknowledge the existence of various kinds of differences, both in terms of ethnicity, skin color, language, customs, culture and religion.

3. Learning Activity Results

After going through the planning stage and the learning process, the output of the next activity is how the assessment is given to BIPA students in Thammasat as a final assignment. The activity of collecting and processing information as a tool to measure the achievement of student learning outcomes is not only focused on one point of learning outcomes but also on the learning process.

Assessment also means the process of submitting quantity in the form of numbers or letters to the results of the assessment by comparing it with a certain standard instrument. The results of this assessment are then used as evaluation material. The assessment in this final project is carried out by paying attention to language and non-linguistic aspects.

The final evaluation is an assignment. Students were asked to make a video containing themselves presenting interesting locations to visit from each province of origin of the student. Introducing historical and cultural tourist destinations in each area of the student. After seeing the description above, the assessment was also carried out objectively regardless of the diversity in the class.

By representing an attitude of tolerance such as respect, not disturbing public order, respecting joint decisions, is part of the attitude of religious moderation during the BIPA learning process. Students were still able to follow the BIPA learning process and complete tasks that were in accordance with the learning objectives well. Students were also able to respect each other, respect, and accept the diversity that exists in their environment and interpret tolerant attitudes both in the learning process and outside BIPA learning. This finding is in line with research by Anwar et al (2021) which explains that building an attitude of religious moderation is an effort for students to respect religious diversity.



# Conclusion

BIPA learning at Thammasat University Thailand consisted of students from various religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. However, in the learning process, they could still implement an attitude of tolerance by respecting and respecting each other. This is shown from 1) the planning stage, the syllabus that has been compiled has integrated the values of religious tolerance, especially in the selection of reading materials. 2) the implementation stage has implemented the value of tolerance in the form of inculcating an attitude of respect and respect for beliefs other than the religion they adhere to, being tolerant of religious ceremonies, places of worship and other beliefs, providing opportunities for Muslim students who want to perform obligatory prayers, and introducing various other Indonesian cultures. . 3) evaluation, carried out through process and productbased assessments according to student competence, regardless of religious, ethnic, racial, and class backgrounds. During the implementation of BIPA learning, the inculcation of character that is emphasized by the teacher is an attitude of tolerance such as respect, not disturbing public order, respecting joint decisions and accepting the diversity that exists in their environment and interpreting tolerant attitudes both in the learning process and outside BIPA learning.

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