Liberating language, teaching peace:
Freirean foreign language pedagogy and localized peacebuilding in Cyprus

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List of Abbreviations

AHDR ……..…………………………………..… Association for Historical Dialogue and Research
EFL ……………………………………………………...…… English as a foreign language
EU …………………………………………………………….. European Union
H4C …………………………………………………………...…… Home 4 Cooperation
KTÖS ……………………………………………………….. Cyprus Turkish Teachers Trade Union
RoC ……………………………………………………………...… Republic of Cyprus
TRNC …...……………………………………………… Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
UN ………………………………………………………………………… United Nations
UNFICYP ……………………………………….. United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Abstract

Intractable conflicts, often characterized by a profound depth of social divisions, resist traditional methods of peacebuilding. Resolution to such conflicts is often sought through alternative diplomacy and social intervention; education is a crucial aspect. Peace education seeks to promote reconciliation by encouraging learners' development of 'peace values' such as respect, empathy, and tolerance. In contexts of ethno-nationalist conflict, within which a linguistic difference separates disputant communities, a common foreign language is often necessary in both formal and informal intercommunal communication. As this research argues, liberatory approaches to pedagogy in foreign language education may support localized peacebuilding goals; Freirean pedagogy, with its emphasis on critical dialogue, localization, and humanization, has particular promise. Peace education initiatives are not unchallenged, however, and are often constrained or otherwise dependent on the broader political dynamics surrounding reconciliation in conflict-affected societies. For this reason, attention to the 'conditions of possibility' for implementing a peace pedagogy is crucial. This research seeks to illuminate these conditions through a heuristic description of peace- and foreign language education in Cyprus, and the place of English amid intercommunal interactions between Greek- and Turkish Cypriots. Qualitative data collected through document analysis and semi-structured interviews with scholars and practitioners in these educational environments are used to illustrate the relationship between foreign language pedagogy and peacebuilding. Findings show that EFL classrooms represent a uniquely promising curricular space in which peace pedagogy can be introduced, and that significant transformative potential exists in Freirean approaches to EFL education. These findings illustrate the obstacles and opportunities for integrating peace pedagogy in a foreign language classroom, providing insight into the nuance of "neutral" language use in peacebuilding.

Résumé

Les conflits insolubles, souvent caractérisés par une profonde division sociale, résistent aux méthodes traditionnelles de consolidation de la paix. La résolution de tels conflits est souvent recherchée à travers la diplomatie alternative et l'intervention sociale ; l'éducation est un aspect crucial. L'éducation à la paix cherche à promouvoir la réconciliation en encourageant le développement, chez les apprenants, de "valeurs de paix" telles que le respect, l'empathie et la tolérance. Dans les contextes de conflits ethno-nationalistes, où une différence linguistique sépare les communautés en conflit, une langue étrangère commune est souvent nécessaire dans la communication intercommunautaire formelle et informelle. Comme le soutient cette recherche, les approches libératoires de la pédagogie dans l'éducation en langue étrangère peuvent soutenir les objectifs de consolidation de la paix localisée ; la pédagogie freirienne, avec son accent sur le dialogue critique, la localisation et l'humanisation, présente des promesses particulières. Cependant, les initiatives d'éducation à la paix ne sont pas sans défis et sont souvent contraintes ou dépendent des dynamiques politiques plus larges entourant la réconciliation dans les sociétés affectées par le conflit. Pour cette raison, une attention particulière aux "conditions de possibilité" de la mise en œuvre d'une pédagogie de la paix est cruciale. Cette recherche cherche à éclairer ces conditions à travers une description heuristique de l'éducation à la paix et de la langue étrangère à Chypre, ainsi que du rôle de l'anglais dans les interactions intercommunales entre les Chypriotes grecs et turcs. Les données qualitatives collectées à travers l'analyse de documents et des entretiens semi-structurés avec des universitaires et des praticiens dans ces environnements éducatifs sont utilisées pour illustrer la relation entre la pédagogie en langue étrangère et la consolidation de la paix. Les résultats montrent que les salles de classe d'anglais en tant que langue étrangère représentent un espace curriculaire particulièrement prometteur pour l'introduction de la pédagogie de la paix, et qu'un potentiel transformateur significatif existe dans les approches freiriennes de l'éducation en langue étrangère. Ces résultats illustrent les obstacles et les opportunités pour intégrer la pédagogie de la paix dans une salle de classe de langue étrangère, offrant ainsi un aperçu de la nuance de l'utilisation d'une langue "neutre" dans la consolidation de la paix.

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For the opportunity to pursue this passion, I thank my parents. From both David and Barbara, I learned to seek out new experiences and connections, to find joy in the learning process, and above all, to embrace my lineage of teachers and healers. I hope to share the legacy of their love with the world through my work; this thesis is just the start.

To all, thank you.

Introduction

Cyprus, third largest island of the Mediterranean, is captivating. No wonder that the island is fabled to be the birthplace of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty; its natural splendor is rivaled only by the warmth and generosity of the Cypriot people. With a history of habitation surpassing 10,000 years, the diversity of civilizations hosted on the island has created a rich cultural heritage displayed in architecture, cuisine, and traditions. Modern Cyprus is a familiar destination for many Eurasian tourists, but its strife is relatively unknown to outsiders. Even when recognized, however, it is not readily understood; the ethnonationalist conflict between Greek- and Turkish Cypriots has confounded decades of the world's leading negotiators, earning the island the grim moniker of "the diplomat's graveyard."[1]

The Cyprus Conflict represents a complex interplay of historical grievances, geopolitical interests, and identity struggles spanning local communities and international actors. Its protraction is both a result of, and a contributing factor to, resistance to resolution. The influence of the conflict extends beyond Cypriot borders, affecting the region and its relations with world powers and making its outcome a critical concern for actors across all political, economic, and social sectors. Its ramifications on international peace and security underscore the interconnectedness of local conflicts with broader global stability; amid the evolving nature of conflicts worldwide, the persistent failure of traditional diplomacy mandates the call for alternative approaches to conflict resolution.

In the contemporary peacebuilding landscape, the study of peace education within the context of Cyprus emerges as a timely endeavor. Understanding its role in conflict resolution is not simply a theoretical undertaking but a pursuit of actionable knowledge. The potential for

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[1] Ker-Lindsay, James. *The Cyprus problem: What everyone needs to know.* Oxford University Press, 2011.

peace education to foster intercommunal reconciliation adds weight to its exploration; assessment of its limitations, too, adds nuance to arguments surrounding its implementation. The present research seeks to illustrate an aspect of the complexity of peace education within protracted conflicts through a lens focused on foreign language education. By investigating dynamics of English use and education in Cyprus, this research seeks insight into the relationship between foreign language acquisition and dialogue, the political and social influences on and of education, and the complex linkages between language use, identity, and intercommunal reconciliation. By incorporating pedagogical theory into this exploration, this research also evaluates the role of liberatory pedagogy in contributing to peace-oriented educational outcomes. Particular focus on criticality, localization, and dialogue highlights opportunities for convergence between peace education and foreign language education, from which recommendations for best practices can be drawn and applied to education in diverse conflict contexts. Primarily, this research aims to contribute to the broader field of peace and conflict studies by offering a case study analysis of the transformative potential of hybrid peace- and foreign language education in protracted conflict contexts.

The following thesis is presented in six parts. Following this introduction of the topic, the second section provides detailed context for the case study by establishing the relationship between peacebuilding and foreign language education in Cyprus. Brief reviews of the historical influences of colonial rule provide context for contemporary diplomatic engagements and highlight the political and social basis for conflict protraction. Analysis of the Cypriot educational systems and prior peacebuilding initiatives offer definition to the contours of modern peace education environments, establishing the need for new approaches in promoting intercommunal dialogue. The third section reviews and syntheses literature from the disciplines

of political science and education, focusing on the characteristics of protracted conflicts, associated requirements for peacebuilding, and ultimately establishing the necessity of peace education. In analyzing the roles of liberatory pedagogy and foreign language education in peacebuilding, the foundation is laid for the theoretical framework of this research. The fourth section details this study's methodology, providing a clear overview of the research design, data collection, and analytical processes. Appropriateness of the use of a single-case study approach for the research question is established, and a detailed description of data collection procedures contributes to its credibility. Processes of data analysis and their limitations are reported, establishing the bounds of findings and strengthening their validity.

Results are presented in the fifth section. Insights into the relationship between foreign language education and peacebuilding, including issues related to intercultural dialogue, English in bicommunal spaces, and the need for attention to this relationship are foremost; analysis of the current political and social environments of peace- and foreign language education provide context for speculation as to their integration. An assessment of current educational needs grounds calls for policies on language use and education and lend sincerity to expressions of support for a curriculum which integrates peace pedagogy into the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL). In the sixth section, the potential for developing and applying a 'Freirean EFL' is presented in dialogue with the perspectives of stakeholders in the Cypriot peacebuilding and educational communities. The discussion considers the place of criticality, localization, and dialogue in EFL curricula, and evaluates sources of both support and reservation in establishing that a window of opportunity exists for policymaking. In synthesizing theoretical concepts, stakeholder perspectives, and practical considerations, the discussion addresses the feasibility and desirability of a Freirean-inspired approach to English language

education as a means of contributing to peacebuilding. The seventh and final section concludes by summarizing key findings, situating them in the literature, and broadening discussion of their consequences to the theory, practice, and future research on peace education in other conflict contexts.

Context: Cyprus

The Cyprus conflict represents one of many protracted ethnonationalist conflicts ongoing throughout the world.[2] This condition is the result of numerous influences; any attempt to summarize the historical, political, social, and psychological factors contributing to contemporary conflict dynamics is guaranteed to understate its complexity.[3] Additionally noting the inherently political nature of presenting any version of history, the following is an attempt to offer only the background most relevant to analyzing the interaction of English foreign language education and peacebuilding in this protracted conflict setting.

Colonial Legacies

While acknowledging the numerous periods of colonial occupation in Cypriot history, it is reasonable to assert that the linguistic landscape of modern Cyprus has been shaped most significantly by the periods Byzantine, Ottoman, and British rule. The traditionally Hellenistic characterization of the island can be attributed to the Greek Orthodox Christian legacy left by the Byzantine era; this culture endured "limited impact" under Ottoman rule, during which the millet system afforded the community a significant degree of religious and cultural autonomy. Turkish speakers began to arrive during this time, providing the basis for the contemporary demography

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[2]Adamides, Constantinos. "Cyprus: A textbook case of an intractable conflict." In *Securitization and Desecuritization Processes in Protracted Conflicts*, pp. 25-55. Palgrave Pivot, Cham, 2020.
[3]Hadjipavlou, Maria. "The Cyprus conflict: Root causes and implications for peacebuilding." *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 3 (2007): 349-365.

of the island.[4] At the 1878 Congress of Berlin, the island was leased to the British Empire on the condition that the military bases to be established would aid in defense against Russian aggression. At the outbreak of World War I, however, and in response to the Ottomans' alliance with the Central Powers, Britain unilaterally annexed Cyprus; the island was recognized as British territory by the government of the newly formed Republic of Turkey with the 1932 Treaty of Lousanne.[5]

As in many colonial contexts, British rule fomented animosity between local communities by administering governance and education along ethnic lines. Amid the global rise of anti-colonial sentiments in the mid-20th century, Greek Cypriot calls for self-determination took the form of *enosis,* or political union with mainland Greece. As the British administration signaled their intent to depart the island, Turkish Cypriots responded by advocating for territorial division, or *taksim*. Rival paramilitary groups were formed by extremists within each community to further these irreconcilable aims through violence. Recognizing their incapacity to address the heightening ethnic tensions, the British resolved to establish an independent, bi-communal Cypriot state.[6] The Republic of Cyprus (RoC) was established through the 1959 London-Zürich Agreements, negotiated between representatives of the British colonial administration, the mainland Greek and Turkish governments, and the two Cypriot communities.

The 'reluctant republic' frustrated the aims of *enosis* and *taksim* alike, and lasted only three years (1960-1963) before succumbing to constitutional deadlock caused by the rigid delineation of ethnic quotas in governance.[7]The intercommunal hostilities which grew during the

[4]Yilmaz, Muzaffer Ercan. "The Cyprus conflict and the Annan plan: Why one more failure?." *Ege Academic Review* 5, no. 1 (2005): 29-39.

[5]Ker-Lindsay, James, and Hubert Faustmann, eds. *The government and politics of Cyprus*. Peter Lang, 2009.

[6]Sözen, Ahmet. "A Model of Power-Sharing in Cyprus: From the 1959 London-Zurich Agreements to the Annan Plan." *Turkish Studies* 5, no. 1 (2004): 61-77.

[7]Xydis, Stephen G. *Cyprus: reluctant republic*. Vol. 11. Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2017.

constitutional crisis led many Turkish Cypriots to relocate into enclaves, severing ties that once existed between communities and creating enduring economic and social inequalities.[8] In 1964, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was deployed in an effort to prevent a recurrence of hostilities and to reestablish law and order; its mandate was expanded after the defining events of 1974.[9]

The military junta in Athens pressured RoC president Makarios to pursue *enosis,* and when met with resistance, orchestrated a coup d'état by the Greek Cypriot National Guard. The Republic of Turkey, invoking its powers of guarantee as outlined by the London-Zürich Agreements, intervened militarily. When international efforts to "re-establish the state of affairs" failed, the Turkish military expanded its operation to cover the northern third of the island, effectively achieving *taksim.*[10] Roughly 6,000 Greek Cypriots and 1,500 Turkish Cypriots were killed during the operation, and over 180,000 citizens in total were forced to relocate across the UNFICYP buffer zone, leaving legacies of trauma and resentment in their wake. The 'Green Line' buffer zone now delineates the borders of Greek- and Turkish Cypriot administration, and has contributed to the physical, political, and social entrenchment of division between the two communities.[11]

Contemporary Diplomacy

Entrenchment and stalemate are the defining features of current Cypriot diplomacy. In 1975, after failed UN-mediated negotiations, the territory occupied by the Turkish military

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[8]Hadjipavlou, "Root causes and implications for peacebuilding," 351.
[9]Theodorides, John. "The United Nations Peace Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)." *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1982): 765-783.
[10]Byrne, Sean J. "The roles of external ethnoguarantors and primary mediators in Cyprus and Northern Ireland." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (2006): 149-172.
[11]Kliot, Nurit, and Yoel Mansfield. "The political landscape of partition: The case of Cyprus." *Political geography* 16, no. 6 (1997): 495-521.

proclaimed itself the "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus," followed by a unilateral declaration of independence in 1983 as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).[12] The legitimacy of this territory is recognized only by Turkey, a condition that remains a key variable in ongoing peace negotiations.[13] Traditional diplomacy has tended to follow structures similar to those of the London-Zürich agreements: elite-led, driven by pressure from outside forces, and focused on reunification of the separate administrative areas into a single political structure.[14] Negotiations with these characteristics have produced countless high-level agreements and steps towards reconciliation, but crucially lack buy-in from many in Cypriot society. A pertinent example of this model and its results can be found in the development – and failure – of the Annan Plan.

Negotiations for a comprehensive peace settlement, led by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, reflected historical patterns of external influence on Cypriot affairs. Annan acted as a communicator, 'partial' mediator and later, policy formulator.[15] While this process brought the Cypriot leaders towards closer agreement, the resultant plan overprivileged international concerns and critically undervalued the "local" aspects of the conflict.[16] Key political issues such as property restitution,[17] settler and immigrants' rights,[18] and social factors such as the enduring legacies of trauma and residual mistrust were insufficiently addressed, leading to the plan's

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[12]Richmond, Oliver. "Peacekeeping and Peacemaking in Cyprus 1974-1994." *The Cyprus Review* 6, no. 2 (1994): 7.
[13]Ker-Lindsay, James. "Great powers, counter secession, and non-recognition: Britain and the 1983 unilateral declaration of independence of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus"." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 28, no. 3 (2017): 431-453.
[14]Pericleous, Chrysostomou. "Resolving the Cyprus Conflict: Negotiating History." *Cyprus Review* 22, no. 2 (2010): 309-311.
[15]Ker-Lindsay, James. "The emergence of 'Meditration' in international peacemaking." Ethnopolitics 8, no. 2 (2009): 223-233.
[16]Bucik, Marko. "The Cyprus Problem: The Assessment of the 1997-2004 United Nations Mediation and the Rejection of the Annan Plan." (2012).
[17]Loizides, Neophytos G., and Marcos A. Antoniades. "Negotiating the right of return." *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 5 (2009): 611-622.
[18]Loizides, Neophytos. "Contested migration and settler politics in Cyprus." *Political Geography* 30, no. 7 (2011): 391-401.

rejection in popular referenda in 2004.[19] Additionally, tied to the plan were conditions for accession to the European Union; [20] given its failure to reunify the two Cypriot communities, the island entered the Union divided, leading to current conditions of suspense of the *acquis communautaire* in the TRNC.[21] Together, the factors of unequal EU membership and failure of the Annan plan have contributed to widespread cynicism among the populace towards elite negotiations and prospects for reunification. To many participants and observers, Cypriot diplomacy missed its "window of opportunity," and the international political dynamics of the conflict are only becoming more entrenched.[22]

In light of this reality, recent conflict resolution efforts have shifted in focus from traditional elite-led negotiations towards more inclusive approaches. Initiatives in Tracks II (inter-organizational cooperation)[23] and III (grassroots intercommunal contact)[24] diplomacy seek to build confidence between the Cypriot communities and inspire good faith dialogue between them. Peacebuilders recognize that any resolution will require addressing the deep-rooted traumas of intercommunal violence and international isolation.[25] Efforts to this end include promoting intercommunal understanding through a combination of contact and education, as

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[19]Drath, Viola. "The Cyprus referendum: An island divided by mutual distrust." *American foreign policy interests* 26, no. 4 (2004): 341-352.

[20]Müftüler-Bac, Meltem, and Aylin Güney. "The European Union and the Cyprus Problem 1961–2003." *Middle Eastern Studies* 41, no. 2 (2005): 281-293.

[21]Skoutaris, Nikos. "The application of the acquis communautaire in the areas not under the effective control of the republic of Cyprus: The Green Line Regulation." *Common Market Law Review* 45, no. 3 (2008).

[22]Sözen, Ahmet. "Heading towards the defining moment in Cyprus: Public opinion vs realities on the ground." (2012).

[23]Direnç Kanol, "Civil Society's Role in Peace-Building: Relevance of the Cypriot Case," Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe 9, no. 1 (2010): 26-45.

[24]Turk, A. Marco. "Cyprus reunification is long overdue: the time is right for Track III diplomacy as the best approach for successful negotiation of this ethnic conflict." *Loy. LA Int'l & Comp. L. Rev.* 28 (2006): 205.

[25]Anastasiou, Harry. "Communication across conflict lines: The case of ethnically divided Cyprus." *Journal of peace research* 39, no. 5 (2002): 581-596.

current approaches to education largely sustain the "ethnic estrangement" between Greek- and Turkish Cypriots.[26]

Ethnocentric Education in Cyprus

The educational systems of the dual Cypriot communities have never been synchronized, yet they pursue similar social aims: providing learners with a "general orientation and cultural identity," instilling "democratic habits of thought," and producing free and critically thinking citizens able to act in wise and creative ways in future social environments.[27] The profession of teaching is well-regarded, but educators and individual school administrators have little influence over the curriculum or materials they are expected to use in their classrooms. In their highly centralized educational systems, Ministries of Education are responsible for the development and implementation of educational legislation, and all curricular modifications occur as direct results of policy decisions.[28] Similarly, both systems promote ethnic nationalisms that stress shared history, descent, language, culture and religion with the 'motherland' states of Greece and Turkey.[29] Through textbooks, the history of Cyprus is presented as an extension of each side's "motherland" history, with references to the island's essential ethnic character which deny the opposing community a rightful place within it. References to settlement patterns on the island selectively choose starting points which establish territorial ownership as either Byzantine or Ottoman, and present narratives of interethnic conflict that sanctify the actions of the communal Self as morally correct while vilifying the other as "barbaric" and unjust.[30] In these ways, both

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[26]Bryant, Rebecca. *Imagining the modern.* 2004: 1-256.

[27]Pashiardis, Petros. "Cyprus." In *The education systems of Europe*, pp. 202-222. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2007.

[28]*Ibid,* 208-210.

[29]Papadakis, Yiannis. "Narrative, memory and history education in divided Cyprus: A comparison of schoolbooks on the "History of Cyprus"." *History & Memory* 20, no. 2 (2008): 128-148.

[30]*Ibid,* 131-137. See appendix for table illustrating divergent national narratives in Cypriot textbooks.

communities have imagined and adapted their identities to respond to divergent realities of international political opportunities, domestic alliances, and communal interests.[31]

Noting, however, the multiple forces influencing identity formation, it is crucial to examine the intra-ethnic differentiations existing within Cypriot communities. Identification with a "Cyprocentric,"[32] syncretic national identity is often presented as a contrast to "motherland nationalism," but recent analysis demonstrates stronger resonance with "ethnic community identification."[33] This is especially visible in the language tuition provided in each community's educational systems. Despite the bidialectalism exhibited within Cypriot communities, "Standard Modern Greek" and "Standard Turkish" are promoted in schools and upheld as the official languages in political rhetoric; the Cypriot-dialect versions of these languages are viewed as "improper" and "rude," and are excluded from formal education.[34]

Evidence from both public discourse and educational policymaking illustrate the explicit link made between such positions and ethnic positioning within the context of wider political and national values. Concern for the purity of Standard languages position the Cypriot dialects as threats to the motherland-national identity, and expressly oppose the use of loanwords from both English and the Other's language, with are common in Cypriot dialects.[35] These disparaging views of dialects have been shown to have negative impacts on speakers' self-esteem, social status, and even employment opportunities; most concerningly, such attitudes have been shown

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[31]Loizides, Neophytos G. "Ethnic nationalism and adaptation in Cyprus." *International Studies Perspectives* 8, no. 2 (2007): 172-189.
[32]Stavrinides, Zenon. *The Cyprus conflict: national identity and statehood*. Z. Stavrinides, 1975.
[33]Loizides, "Ethnic nationalism and adaptation," 174.
[34]Ioannidou, Elena. "On language and ethnic identity among Greek Cypriot students." *Cyprus Review* 16, no. 1 (2004): 29-52.
[35]*Ibid,* 32.

to transcend a particular language use and lead to feelings of inferiority in other areas as well.[36]

However, the attitudes towards communal dialects displayed by in-group speakers, with

associations like 'trustworthiness' and 'friendliness' can overall "be interpreted as a positive

identification with Cypriotness."[37] Attitudes towards the language of the other community,

however, remain broadly negative, and its place in formal education, contentious.

The place of the Other's language in formal educational systems (Turkish in Greek

Cypriot schools, and Greek in Turkish Cypriot schools) is largely dependent on the broader

political climate. In 2003, in conjunction with a large-scale de-securitization process that

included the first opening of border crossings, a joint decision was taken to introduce the Others'

language in the communities' respective secondary education systems – for the first time, in the

case of Turkish in Greek Cypriot schools.[38] Despite the "reconciliatory rhetoric" of political

negotiations, however, Greek Cypriot students reportedly viewed Turkish as 'the language of the

enemy,' and their willingness to participate in these voluntary classes was limited by the stigma

of 'enemy' association.[39] Among Turkish Cypriot students, conversely, reports indicate that

learning Greek led to more positive attitudes towards the language and the culture of its

speakers.[40] Such findings reflect pre-partition patterns of bilingualism; Greek has had a place in

the Turkish Cypriot educational system periodically throughout history, and until recently, many

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[36]Evripidou, Dimitris, and Çişe Çavuşoğlu. "Turkish Cypriots' Language Attitudes: The Case of Cypriot Turkish and Standard Turkish in Cyprus." *Mediterranean Language Review* 22 (2015): 119-138.

[37]Evripidou and Çavuşoğlu, "Turkish Cypriots' Language Attitudes," 133.

[38]Charalambous, Panayiota, Constadina Charalambous, and Ben Rampton. "De-securitizing Turkish: Teaching the language of a former enemy, and intercultural language education." *Applied Linguistics* 38, no. 6 (2017): 800-823.

[39]Charalambous, Constadina. "'Whether You See Them as Friends or Enemies You Need to Know Their Language': Turkish-language Learning in a Greek Cypriot School." In *When Greeks and Turks Meet*, pp. 141-162. Routledge, 2016.

[40]Tum, Danyal Oztas, Naciye Kunt, and Mehmet Kunt. "Language learning in conflictual contexts: a study of Turkish Cypriot adolescents learning Greek in Cyprus." *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 29, no. 2 (2016): 207-224.

Turkish Cypriots have had "communicative competence" in spoken Greek.[41] Current rates of functional bilingualism, however, stand near zero among the youngest generation of Cypriots.[42] Contact between community members in an informal capacity is rare, but for intra-communal professional and political communication, English is the *lingua franca*.[43]

English Language Education and Use in Cyprus

English proficiency, and its status in formal education, is high in Cyprus. Given the reality that the language possesses great symbolic power, the educational systems of both Cypriot communities place high importance on developing students' capabilities in order to navigate the demands of future globalized, multicultural societies.[44] English is unofficially recognized as the *lingua franca* for social and professional exchange, particularly in support of tourism, offshore industry, and diplomacy, and command of the language is recognized as a significant source of social capital. English media production and consumption, too, exhibit strong associations with cosmopolitanism; discourse functions served by English-language use include indexes of exclusivity and identification with specific social domains.[45] In contemporary use, this status is now more closely associated with factors of globalization, but the impact of British colonial practices on English language use and education cannot be understated.[46]

In the first decades of British colonialism the influence of English in Cypriot education was limited; Greek Cypriot students received schooling in Greek, and Turkish Cypriots in

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[41]Özerk, Kamil Z. "Reciprocal bilingualism as a challenge and opportunity: The case of Cyprus." *International Review of Education* 47 (2001): 253-265.
[42]*Ibid,* 261-262.
[43]Hadjioannou, Xenia, Stavroula Tsiplakou, and Matthias Kappler. "Language policy and language planning in Cyprus." *Current Issues in Language Planning* 12, no. 4 (2011): 503-569.
[44]Pashiardis, "Cyprus," 206-207.
[45]Fotiou, Constantina. "English–Greek code-switching in Greek Cypriot magazines and newspapers–an analysis of its textual forms and functions." *Journal of World Languages* 4, no. 1 (2017): 1-27.
[46]McEntee-Atalianis, Lisa J. "The impact of English in postcolonial, postmodern Cyprus." (2004): 77-90.

Turkish. Amid rising anti-colonial sentiments in the early 1930s, however, British authorities aimed to reduce the power of local languages by introducing the teaching of English in late primary school, increasing its teaching hours in later grades, and making it compulsory in secondary education. Furthermore, teachers were obligated to demonstrate fluency in English in order to be hired and to receive promotions.[47] Indirectly, colonial administrators promoted English language use by offering scholarships to British universities, degrees from which were required to attain high positions in civil service. The result of such policies was the firm establishment of association between English proficiency and prestige. At the time of independence, English was "deeply rooted in the major domains of public life," but was abolished from primary schools for a period of four years in an effort to mitigate its perceived threat to the Greek language and to underline the changed political situation. English was reintroduced as a foreign language in 1964 and remains prominent today.[48]

For the majority of Cypriots, acquisition of English is school based; it is introduced in the first year of primary school and is compulsory until mid-secondary levels. Attendance to extracurricular tutoring at private language schools is extremely common. Additionally, many Cypriot universities are English-medium institutions, and study abroad in Anglophone countries is popular for those with the necessary resources.[49] While many associations are made between English and positive ideas of modernity, the language "can also be considered a threat" to Cypriot languages, national identity, local culture, and even religion.[50] Concerns of 'linguistic imperialism' reference the effects of "invasion," including "contamination" by loanwords and

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[47]Buschfeld, Sarah. *English in Cyprus or Cyprus English: An empirical investigation of variety status*. John Benjamins Publishing, 2013.

[48]Fotiou, Constantina. "English in Cyprus." *English Today* (2022): 257-263

[49]*Ibid,* 260.

[50]Karpava, Sviatlana. "Multilingual linguistic landscape of Cyprus." *International Journal of Multilingualism* (2022): 1-39.

the suppression of local languages.[51] Furthermore, prioritization of English over the learning of the Other's language has been identified as an obstacle to intercommunal integration. By positioning Greek-Turkish bilingualism as a "positive social barometer," calls for educational policies promoting the teaching of Turkish in Greek Cypriot schools and Greek in Turkish Cypriot schools posit that reciprocal bilingualism is a fundamental necessity for constructive discussion, cooperation, mutual understanding, and peace.[52] In the contemporary educational environment, however, these goals have been both promoted and impeded by broader social and political factors, which largely determine the implementation and outcome of peace-oriented educational initiatives.

Peace Education in Cyprus

Scholars of Cypriot politics and peace education recognize that the conflict is not a "problem," which could imply the existence of a solution, but rather a "situation that can and needs to be transformed."[53] Education towards such transformation has been supported by international donors, local civil society organizations, and many individual educators, but remains "extremely limited" to the informal level, and largely dependent on the broader political climate.[54] Peace education programs in formal settings are dependent on ministerial sanction; past initiatives have had limited success in securing political support, and were withdrawn soon after implementation. Two particularly illustrative examples include the 2004-2009 textbook reform in Turkish Cypriot history education, and the 2008 Greek Cypriot educational policy to

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[51]Papapavlou, Andreas. "Linguistic imperialism?: The status of English in Cyprus." *Language Problems and Language Planning* 25, no. 2 (2001): 167-176.
[52]Özerk, "Reciprocal bilingualism," 263.
[53]Christodoulou, Eleni. "The politics of peace education in Cyprus." PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2015.
[54]*Ibid,* 20.

"promote peaceful coexistence."[55] Both initiatives were undertaken during the administration of pro-reconciliation parties, but sparked widespread controversy among their broader political communities and were ultimately unsuccessful in effecting meaningful change.

In the case of Turkish Cypriot textbook reform, efforts had been made to address the ethnocentric and ethnically-antagonistic view of history perpetuated through standardized curricular materials.[56] The new textbooks, however, were only in use while the center-left Republican Turkish Party (CTP) held power; they were re-revised by order of the center-right National Unity Party (UBP) in 2009.[57] Regarding the Greek-Cypriot policy initiative, similar political constraints are readily visible. The choice by the Ministry of Education and Culture to define "development of a culture of peaceful coexistence" as a central objective of the 2008-2009 school year was highly criticized by those that believed the 'appropriateness' of such an initiative was suspect when set against the ongoing traumas experienced by the Greek Cypriot community relating to *de facto* partition.[58] Beyond the broader public reaction, teachers themselves resisted the imposition of this initiative, which called upon them to "become acquainted with the cultural expression of the two communities" in order to cultivate in students the capacity to "see the world through [the other's] perspective." While presented in conjunction with other peace education goals such as solidarity and intercultural respect, many teachers reacted negatively to the initiative's political connotations and the lack of institutional support

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[55]Zembylas, Michalinos, Constadina Charalambous, Panayiota Charalambous, and Panayiota Kendeou. "Promoting peaceful coexistence in conflict-ridden Cyprus: Teachers' difficulties and emotions towards a new policy initiative." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 27, no. 2 (2011): 332-341.

[56]Kizilyürek, Niyazi. "National memory and Turkish-Cypriot textbooks." *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 21, no. 4 (1999): 387-395.

[57]Latif, Dilek. "A challenging educational reform: Politics of history textbook revision in North Cyprus." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 49, no. 1 (2019): 30-46.

[58]Zembylas et al, *"Promoting peaceful coexistence,"* 333.

provided to facilitate such aims.[59] The degree of backlash caused by the policy lead many within

the peace education community to critically consider the effective practices of educators in

addition to the political dynamics implicated by controversial social projects.[60]

These examples represent peace education initiatives undertaken separately in the two

Cypriot school systems, but more recent activity on reconciliatory education has been the

purview of the Bicommunal Technical Committee on Education. Established as part of a package

of confidence-building measures in 2015, the Committee opened discursive space for experts

from both communities to examine together to the impact of education on intercommunal

relations.[61] Issues on the table have included curriculum reform and development, production of

educational materials, and teacher training, but given that the Committee was established as a

function of broader inter-governmental reconciliation projects, it remains especially vulnerable to

influence from political dynamics.

A pertinent case here is that of the 'Imagine' Project, which was implemented by the

Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (ADHR) and Home for Cooperation under the

auspices of the Technical committee. The project aimed to increase contact and collaboration

among members of Cypriot educational communities through bi-communal meetings in the

Buffer Zone. Since its launch in 2017, over 6,000 students and 700 teachers participated in peace

education programs, which enjoyed widespread popularity. However, recent shifts in the political

climate of bicommunal relations led the Turkish Cypriot administration to suspend support for

the program, along with participation in the Technical Committee; since July 2021 there have

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[59]Zembylas et al, *"Promoting peaceful coexistence,"* 337.
[60]Zembylas, Michalinos, and Loizos Loukaidis. "Affective practices, difficult histories and peace education: An analysis of teachers' affective dilemmas in ethnically divided Cyprus." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 97 (2021): 103-225.
[61]United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Support facility to the technical committees*. UNDP Cyprus. https://www.undp.org/cyprus/projects/support-facility-technical-committees.

been no substantive meetings between members.[62] A January 2023 report on the mission of good offices in Cyprus referred to this condition as "highly regrettable," and maintained that the implementation of projects "that support the education of teachers and children on both sides of the island in a culture of peace" must remain the highest priority.[63] In the contemporary political climate, educators must search for alternative avenues to teach peace.

Literature Review

To illustrate one possible such alternative, this research draws inspiration from two disciplines: political science and education. Within these fields, literature concerning protracted social conflict and transformative pedagogy contribute to a theoretical framework supporting the analysis of interaction between foreign language education and peacebuilding. Rather than attempting to summarize the vast amounts of knowledge within these separate disciplines, this literature review seeks to highlight areas of congruence and provide both context and grounding for the interpretation of research findings.

Protracted and "Intractable" Conflicts

Protracted conflicts are defined by their longevity, complexity, and resistance to resolution. Conflicts which become protracted are said to "obey their own laws," are costly to manage, and difficult to terminate.[64] Disputes over critical resources, power, and justice combine into intense, seemingly "inescapable" conflicts, the dynamics of which self-replicate through political and economic processes. The widespread social trauma associated with such conflicts contributes to their intransigence, as issues of meaning and identity become inextricably bound

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[62]United Nations, Security Council. *Report of the Secretary-General on His Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus.* New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2023.
[63]*Ibid,* 8.
[64]Bercovitch, Diehl, and Goertz, "The Management and Termination of Protracted Interstate Conflicts," 751.

to the experience and endurance of struggle; these psychosocial characteristics are not easily addressed by contemporary models of conflict resolution.[65]

While no two cases of protracted conflict are identical, many share essential characteristics. Interactions between "important historical, political, cultural, moral, legal, spiritual, and human dimensions" create complex situations in which paradoxical problems are central to disputants' individual and group identity; polarized notions of virtue and evil both justify and demonize the violent behaviors which inflict compounding personal and communal trauma.[66] The social result of such traumas is a self-sustaining system of conflict dynamics, which are perpetuated more by "psychological and cultural features" than substantive issues.[67]

Promoting Tractability

Taking a psychological perspective on conflict analysis, it becomes clear that outbreaks of violence are dependent on the "perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and motivations" of disputants, thus necessitating a greater emphasis on reconciliation than on conflict resolution.[68] Given that recognition and acceptance are universal and non-negotiable human needs, the state-based structure of the international system is often unequipped to address the particular needs of nonstate or unrecognized-state actors; such actors represent a large proportion of disputants in protracted conflicts.[69] Existing strategies of international peacekeeping and peacebuilding may succeed in stabilizing a conflict situation momentarily, but are insufficient to address the "deep-

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[65]Coleman, Peter T. "Characteristics of protracted, intractable conflict: Toward the development of a metaframework." *Peace and Conflict: Journal of peace psychology* 9, no. 1 (2003): 1-37.
[66]*Ibid,* 3-4.
[67]Lederach, John Paul. *The moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace.* Oxford University Press, 2005.
[68]Bar-Tal, Daniel. "From intractable conflict through conflict resolution to reconciliation: Psychological analysis." *Political Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2000): 351-365.
[69]Azar, Edward. "Protracted social conflicts and second track diplomacy." *Second Track/Citizens' Diplomacy: Concepts and Techniques for Conflict Transformation. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield* (2003): 15-30.

grown roots" of protracted conflicts.[70] Such conditions necessitate alternative approaches to

social reconciliation, which must accommodate the nonlinear and idiosyncratic nature of

protracted conflicts and respect its human aspects.[71] Transforming the conflict requires an

explicit addressment of the cognitive biases experienced by participant communities; society

members' view of the conflict and motivation to act in hostile or conciliatory ways is dependent

on the communal *conflict ethos.*[72]

Conflict and Education

The perceived 'justness' of the *conflict ethos* can be affected by changes to political,

social, cultural, and educational processes involving society institutions and channels of

communication.[73] Among the many possible approaches to change within these sectors, those

within the sector of education are particularly salient. Education plays a central role in the

development and communication of group identities and political socialization;[74] rights-based

'state-building' education and identity-based 'national-building' approaches can both impart

peaceful values and foment conflictual attitudes.[75] Educational content, structure, and systems of

delivery may themselves be catalysts of conflict, as every area of the curriculum has the capacity

to communicate both implicit and explicit political messages.[76] Cultural subjects such as

language, literature, and history, in particular, are often drawn into the most significant

[70]Neumann, Hannah, and Martin Emmer. "Peace communication: Building a local culture of peace through communication." In *Forming a Culture of Peace: Reframing Narratives of Intergroup Relations, Equity, and Justice*, pp. 227-254. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012.
[71]Coleman, "Characteristics of protracted, intractable conflict," 4.
[72]Lederach, *The moral imagination,* 352-353.
[73]Bar-Tal, "From intractable conflict through resolution" 357-361.
[74]Smith, Alan, and T. Vaux. "Education and conflict." *Commonwealth Education Partnerships* (2003): 93-97.
[75]Bush, Kenneth David, and Diana Saltarelli. "The two faces of education in ethnic conflict: Towards a peacebuilding education for children." (2000).
[76]Tawil, Sobhi, and Alexandra Harley. "Education and identity-based conflict: Assessing curriculum policy for social and civic reconstruction." *Education, conflict and social cohesion* 9 (2004).

controversy for this potential.[77] The educational process, or lack thereof, can be similarly viewed as both an indicator of violence, and as a distinct form of violence, when a single worldview is privileged over others.[78] Power structures which replicate or reinforce inequality between identity groups risk contributing to social fissures and "represent a dangerous source of conflict."[79] Educational initiatives are therefore a major component of post-conflict reconstruction.[80]

Peace Education

Given that schools are sites of reinforcement and reproduction of broader social structures, belief in the capacity of educational processes to contribute to the development of peace cultures is a key feature of peace education.[81] Many definitions of peace education exist in the literature, but common components include processes that aim to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to support 'positive' peace.[82] Peace education is necessarily transformative, and seeks to go between and beyond traditional academic subjects in order to address the root causes of conflict, promote understanding, and cultivate a culture of peace.[83] Examples include efforts to promote critical thinking, awareness of conflict dynamics, conflict resolution skills, cultural sensitivity, civic agency, and 'peace values' such as empathy and compassion.

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[77]Smith and Vaux, "Education and conflict," 11.
[78]Popkewitz, Thomas, and Sverker Lindblad. "Educational governance and social inclusion and exclusion: Some conceptual difficulties and problematics in policy and research." *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education* 21, no. 1 (2000): 5-44.
[79]UNESCO, 2000. *Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis,* quoted in Tawil and Harley, "Education and identity-based conflict," 3.
[80]Tawil and Harley, "Education and identity-based conflict," 9.
[81]Galtung, Johan. "Schooling and future society." *The School Review* 83, no. 4 (1975): 533-568.
[82]Galtung, Johan. "Violence, peace, and peace research." *Journal of peace research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191.
[83]Galtung, Johan. "On peace education." *Handbook on peace education* (1974): 153-171.

Broadly defined, 'peace education' seeks to expose the roots of violence, teach alternatives, adjust to address different forms of violence, illustrate the variability of peace according to context, and establish the omnipresence of conflict.[84] Differing peace educational frameworks seek to arrive at these goals by emphasizing different components.[85] Global citizenship education, for example, is designed to offer learners the skills necessary to live and act as members of a common human society; emphasis on interconnectedness, interdependence, and individual responsibility to the whole promotes ethical decision-making and personal commitment to collaborative problem-solving.[86] Education for restorative justice focuses on principles of accountability, reparation, and relationship-building within communities to promote healing from conflict.[87] Human rights education, development education, and environmental education are each similarly rooted in the ideals of equality and human capacity. Noble as these goals may appear, however, peace education is not without its critics, and its implementation often faces many challenges.

Challenges to Peace Education

Considering that peace education seeks to alter deeply-held beliefs, it is reasonable that sections of communities operating with these beliefs will react negatively to the perceived threat which peace education poses to these beliefs. In particular, participants in discourses grounding communal identity in the experience of and commitment to conflict will often perceive efforts to promote peace as betrayals to the national cause and collective memory. Additionally, resistance

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[84]Harris, Ian M. "Peace education theory." *Journal of peace education* 1, no. 1 (2004): 5-20.
[85]Reardon, Betty A. *Comprehensive peace education: Educating for global responsibility*. Teachers College Press, New York, NY 10027, 1988.
[86]Goren, Heela, and Miri Yemini. "Global citizenship education redefined–A systematic review of empirical studies on global citizenship education." *International Journal of Educational Research* 82 (2017): 170-183.
[87]Ragland, David. "Betty Reardon's philosophy of peace education and the centrality of justice." *Journal of Peace Education* 12, no. 1 (2015): 37-55.

to peace education can be perpetuated by systemic factors, such as the politicization and securitization of education, or by interests entrenched within the economic dynamics of conflict which benefit a particular sector.

Even from within the field itself, peace education has been challenged by scholars on theoretical grounds. Its philosophy and practice remain guided by educational perspectives informed by western, positivist paradigms.[88] Such foundational issues "risk consolidating the same reality peace education intends to overcome," necessitating closer examination of its assumptions.[89] Arguments positing that integrative theories of peace education "undermine local understandings" of peace concepts, and that it is "wrong to decontextualize peace education,"[90] offer compelling justification for approaches that *re*-contextualize peace education in the specifics of the conflict context. Decolonial and critical theory have provided valuable conceptual resources to do so, with which practitioners and scholars can better understand and address impediments to the advancement of peace education theory.[91]

Making explicit the value structures, normative alignments, and sociopolitical environments which inform the practice and study of education is a central component of critical pedagogy. In educational theory, 'critical' denotes pedagogies which seek to develop learners' capacities for self-reflection, problem-posing, and criticism of unequal power dynamics with the goal of addressing structural violence.[92]

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[88]Gur-Ze-ev, Ilan. "Philosophy of peace education in a postmodern era." *Educational theory* 51, no. 3 (2001): 315.
[89]Zembylas, Michalinos, and Zvi Bekerman. "Peace education in the present: Dismantling and reconstructing some fundamental theoretical premises." *Journal of Peace Education* 10, no. 2 (2013): 197-214.
[90]Gur-Ze'ev, "Philosophy of Peace Education," 330.
[91]Bajaj, Monisha, and Edward J. Brantmeier. "The politics, praxis, and possibilities of critical peace education." *Journal of Peace Education* 8, no. 3 (2011): 221-224.
[92]*Ibid,* 222.

Liberatory Pedagogy

Liberatory pedagogy takes example from social movements and community organizations addressing social and economic hierarchies to inform educational practice; such "pedagogies of resistance" privilege equitable relations between members of the learning community, and seek to inspire engaged participation in both the educational process and broader society.[93] Development of critical literacy, in particular, can heighten learners' awareness of and resistance to the sociopolitical narratives that sustain conflict.[94] A vital facet of resistance to such narratives, including those which dehumanize others, is that of "humanization;" the result of a three-part process of critical reflection, dialogue, and action. These components feature prominently in the theory of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, whose seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* popularized discourse on liberation pedagogy.[95]

Freire's 'liberation pedagogy' challenges traditional models of education and advocates for an approach that empowers learners to become agents for social justice. In addition to those illustrated above, key concepts in Freirean pedagogy include dialogue and localization. The former describes a re-imagining of the learning relationship from hierarchical (and therefore oppressive) stance to one of a more horizontal, equitable, and inclusive nature. Dialogue between learners and "facilitators" create a collaborative learning environment, in which the truth and value of individual perspectives is honored, and mutual respect between participants is earned. This process seeks to cultivate learners' critical consciousness*, or *conscientization*, allowing them to recognize and analyze forms of social, economic, and political oppression; a crucial step

[93]Bajaj, Monisha. "'Pedagogies of resistance' and critical peace education praxis." *Journal of Peace Education* 12, no. 2 (2015): 154-166.
[94]Mór, Walkyria Monte, and Brian Morgan. "Between conformity and critique. Developing 'activism' and active citizenship: dangerous pedagogies?." *Interfaces Brasil/Canadá* 14, no. 2 (2014): 16-35.
[95]Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Continuum, 1970.

towards taking transformative action. Praxis, the combination of critical reflection and action, supports and is supported by solidarity among oppressed groups. The ultimate goal of liberation pedagogy is the transformation of individual learners and the societies in which they live.[96]

Localization, too, seeks to bring learners into closer connection with the realities of their immediate surroundings. By grounding knowledge-making in local experiences and needs, Freirean pedagogy seeks to make education relevant and meaningful to learners, returning a sense of ownership and transforming the learning process from one of control to one of care.[97] In a dialogic pedagogy, meaning emerges from the interaction between the learner and others, "necessitating a perception of self a constant process of becoming" through relationships with others.[98] The act of "speaking from one's *locus of enunciation*" raises and addresses questions as to the position of the learner in relation to rest of the world.[99] The interaction between localization and dialogue, represented by *diatopical hermeneutics*, is a key process in developing *conscientization* and engendering critical praxis.[100] Interpretation and recognition of different *loci* within education through a "horizontal and loving pedagogy" is a foundational condition of co-existence and central tenant of peace education.[101] The overlap between Freirean pedagogy

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[96]Gürsel-Bilgin, Gulistan. "Freirean dialogue: an effective pedagogy for critical peace education." *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama* 16, no. 2 (2020): 139-149.

[97]Mignolo, Walter D. "Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom." *Theory, culture & society* 26, no. 7-8 (2009): 159-181.

[98]Gürsel-Bilgin, "Freirean dialogue: an effective pedagogy," 140.

[99]de Souza, L. M. "Glocal languages, coloniality and globalization from below'." *Glocal languages and critical intercultural awareness: The South answers back* (2019).

[100]de Sousa Santos, Boaventura. "Public sphere and epistemologies of the South." *Africa Development* 37, no. 1 (2012): 43-67.

[101]Kester, Kevin, and Ashley Booth. "Education, peace and Freire: A dialogue." *Development* 53, no. 4 (2010): 498-503.

and peace education has been examined from a number of perspectives across diverse types of literature, but analysis demonstrates convergence on the central theme of humanization.[102]

The space required for such dialogue is not easily established in traditional approaches to subjects such as math or science, which maintain a strict hierarchy of intellectual authority between instructors and students. In language education, however, dialogue is a crucial component of the experiential learning process; outcomes including language proficiency and speaking confidence are improved by participants' investment and engagement in the process. Language education is also a key curriculum facet to consider when examining conflict contexts spanning divergent linguistic communities; instruction of the 'Other' language, or a third, mutual language, can be significantly useful components of peace education and broader peacebuilding projects.

Language Education in Peacebuilding

Like any other form of instruction, language education can both contribute to and dismantle conflictual social attitudes. Domestic language education can perpetuate antagonistic historical narratives by employing cultural mediums like war stories, thereby reinforcing hostile intercommunal attitudes. At the same time, foreign language education can sustain oppressive global structures by taking a nativist approach to proficiency, valorizing models of language use employed by 'metropole' linguistic communities, and discrediting other forms of language use.[103] While proficiency in a foreign language cannot be immediately equated to reconciliatory attitudes, its capacity to open channels of communication between members of divergent linguistic groups has frequently been pursued as a tool for peacebuilding. In Rwanda, for

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[102]Gill, Scherto, and Ulrike Niens. "Education as humanisation: A theoretical review on the role of dialogic pedagogy in peacebuilding education." *Compare: A journal of comparative and international education* 44, no. 1 (2014): 10-31.
[103]de Souza, "Glocal languages, coloniality and globalization," 6.

instance, post-conflict curricular reform increased the provision of English and French in schools in order to better equip members of the national community with an ability to communicate with one another. The goals of facilitating understanding, reducing interethnic barriers, and shaping the development of a syncretic national identity were explicit in this choice.[104]

Similar goals have been pursued in diverse conflict contexts. Commonly, foreign language learning is supplemented by principles of global citizenship education; in enabling students to reflect upon the relationship between self, community, and the world, this multifaceted educational model seeks to increase learners' "international consciousness" through knowledge of other cultures and to create a "global spirit of nonviolence."[105] Turning attention domestically, there is significant potential for this to have positive effects on peacebuilding and post-conflict relations. Given its focus on communication, foreign language education can offer learners unique opportunities to identify and challenge rhetoric that sustains conflict.[106] Positioning language as both the medium and object of study invites learners to critically analyze the assumed neutrality of their everyday language, inspiring scrutiny of "linguistic constructions" such as propaganda, ideology, and discourse. Analysis of multiple meanings and varied interpretations of language can similarly sensitize learners to the value of divergent viewpoints and increase their appreciation for dialogue.[107] Participants in dialogic foreign language pedagogy, particularly, have the freedom to share and relate global issues, alternative viewpoints, personal stories, and emotional expressions, thereby developing empathy in tandem with their linguistic abilities.

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[104]Obura, Anna. "Never again: educational reconstruction in Rwanda." (2003).
[105]Tulgar, Ayşegül Takkaç. "Peace education in foreign language classroom." *Journal of education and practice* 8 (2017): 72-77.
[106]Morgan, Brian, and Stephanie Vandrick. "Imagining a peace curriculum: What second-language education brings to the table." *Peace & Change* 34, no. 4 (2009): 510-532.
[107]Morgan and Vandrick, "Imagining a peace curriculum," 514-515.

Among all languages, English has been identified as a particularly rich site for integrating peace concepts into language education.[108] Given its status as the 'global' language, English as a foreign language (EFL) education is widespread enough to draw participants from diverse national and cultural backgrounds. Through the intercultural exchanges facilitated in EFL classrooms, learners have the opportunity to explore diverse notions of the common good and its implications for conflict, while developing the capacity for communication through a common language.[109] It must be acknowledged, however, that the status of English as a 'common' language is intrinsically tied to British colonialism, which remains embedded in structures of linguistic hegemony reinforced by common practices of EFL. Nativist approaches to English language use can be transmitted through curricular plans, teaching materials, and overemphasis on native-speaker competence; such practices are inherently at odds with the type of genuine dialogue sought by peace educators.[110]

Recognizing the role played by foreign language education in developing learners' linguistic citizenship, recent scholarship has shifted its focus toward advocacy for a liberatory language pedagogy, with critical attention paid to other factors influencing language use and learning amid broader social and political structures.[111] In an EFL classroom setting, analysis of tensions between hegemonic / non-hegemonic aspects of English can compel participants to examine the ways in which imperialism is reproduced through linguistic, cultural, and political

[108]Kruger, Frans. "The role of TESOL in educating for peace." *Journal of Peace Education* 9, no. 1 (2012): 17-30.
[109]Morgan and Vandrick, "Imagining a peace curriculum," 514.
[110]Awayed-Bishara, Muzna. "A critical intercultural stance from the margins: EFL education in a conflict-ridden context." *Language and Intercultural Communication* 21, no. 4 (2021): 515-529.
[111]Guilherme, Manuela. "English as a global language and education for cosmopolitan citizenship." *Language and Intercultural communication* 7, no. 1 (2007): 72-90.

practices; discussion of such tension, too, might "constitute a common ground where different appropriations of the English language and of English-speaking cultures can dialogue."[112]

Given this potential, and the ways in which dialogue has previously been tied to reconciliation processes, this research takes the following as its hypothesis: Freirean approaches to English foreign language education, with emphasis on criticality, localization, and dialogue, can be an effective form of peace education. This potential is specifically acute in protracted conflicts wherein English is used as a medium of communication between disputants.

Theoretical Framework: Freirean EFL for Peace in Cyprus

To distill the foundations of this claim from the literature reviewed, a brief summary: amid the unique psycho-social characteristics of protracted ethnonationalist conflicts, traditional approaches to resolution are often insufficient. Intercommunal reconciliation requires addressing deeply-held beliefs about personal and group identities vis-à-vis the 'Other,' and developing cultural orientations towards peaceful interaction and coexistence. Targeted intervention toward these aims can take the form of peace education; liberation pedagogy, in particular, can provide learners the intellectual capabilities and moral disposition to identify and challenge the systems that perpetuate conflict. Freirean pedagogy emphasizes such critical consciousness, in addition to the value of emancipatory dialogue, localization and humanization. Applied to the education of a common foreign language, such pedagogy can provide learners on either side of an ethnonationalist conflict with the ability to communicate in a manner which supports social reconciliation, while avoiding the social and political stigma of explicitly peace-oriented curricula. As of yet, no literature specifically addresses the intersection of foreign language pedagogy and peacebuilding in the case of Cyprus. This research therefore undertakes the effort

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[112]Guilherme, "English as a global language," 75.

of filling this gap by asking and answering the question: "What is the relationship between English foreign language education and Cypriot peacebuilding?"

Methodology

The present research is a single-case study. Qualitative interviews provide rich descriptive data; their semi-structured format strengthens data through the pursuit of detailed explanation, clarification, and elaboration. Policy- and document analysis substantiates interview data, providing credibility to the case description developed throughout this study.

Research Design

The single case study format provides the opportunity for unique depth of inquiry; study of the particular allows for detailed analysis of the interaction of multiple elements, emphasizing episodes of nuance and sequential relationships between factors within a bounded system.[113] The goal of this single case study is to develop precise understanding from which generalizations can later be drawn. Emphasizing qualitative data analysis allows the study to both observe and objectively report on the workings of the case, and further, to examine their various possible meanings.[114] Interpretation of observations allows the researcher to assert personal inferences; the right to make such assertations on a limited database is taken as a "privilege and responsibility."[115] By generating a thick description of the case, the researcher seeks to preserve and validate the multiple realities experienced by stakeholders within the study environment.

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[113]Smith, Louis, referenced in Stake, Robert E. *The art of case study research*. Sage, 1995
[114]Erickson, Frederick. "Teachers' Practical Ways of Seeing and Making Sense: A Final Report." (1986).
[115]Stake, *The art of case study research*, 12.

Case Selection

The holistic aim of this qualitative study is rooted in an intrinsic interest in the case as a whole, with the belief that understanding the particular issues presented in Cyprus will provide insight into the broader dynamics impacting the relationship between foreign language education and peacebuilding in diverse conflict settings. As the site of a protracted conflict spanning divergent linguistic communities, Cyprus offers a fitting set of social conditions in which to investigate this relationship: peacebuilding, from the highest level of official diplomacy to grassroots intercommunal activities, is facilitated through English. The language occupies a significant place in the 'linguistic landscape' of the island; the bounds of the case can thus be said to encircle the whole of Cyprus, its multiple educational and social environments, and with considerations of the external realities which impact them.[116]

Data Collection

The primary data for this study was sourced from ten semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in the Cypriot peacebuilding and educational environments. Interview questions were developed to prompt exploration of themes regarding the participant's background and expertise, including educational and linguistic training; views on peace education, including the current state of peace education in Cyprus and key challenges related to its implementation; perceptions of English language use and education, including how it can affect the goals of peace education; and views on future directions of peace- and English education, including innovative approaches to foreign language pedagogy and recommendations to scholars, educators, and policymakers. Questions were deliberately constructed as open-ended, allowing participants to

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[116]Yin, Robert K. *Case study research: Design and methods*. Vol. 5. Sage, 2009.

freely explore the concepts and share experiences in their own words.[117] This structure provided

both rich contextual data on key events and processes, and illustrated subjects' personal systems

of information valuing.[118] Interviews varied by the modification or addition of supplementary

questions based on the participant's area of expertise. This choice was made in order to more

thoroughly pursue the full range of participants' insights in service of a more complete

understanding and accurate description of the case. Aligning questions with key themes,

however, preserved comparability between interviews, facilitating the analytical process.

Interviews opened with confirmation of the participant's receipt the Participant Consent Form

and acknowledgment of the terms outlined therein and concluded with expressions of gratitude

and arrangements to disseminate research findings.

Documents analyzed include circulars from governmental organizations, project reports

on peace education programs, and policy papers by peacebuilding NGOs, among others.

Selection criteria were based on the documents' relevance to aspects of language education and

peacebuilding, including values such as multiculturalism and multilingualism. Documents were

collected from the publications of the UNDP Support Facility of the Bicommunal Technical

Committee on Education, the separate Cypriot Ministries of Education, the Cyprus Pedagogical

Institute, and the policy pages of teachers' unions and local schools' websites.

Sampling

Possible interview participants were identified by their affiliation with institutions within

the Cypriot educational environment, authorship of literature with significant relevance to the

research question, and through relationships established by the researcher's prior experience in

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[117]Roberts, Rosanne E. "Qualitative Interview Questions: Guidance for Novice Researchers." *Qualitative Report* 25, no. 9 (2020).

[118]Whiting, Lisa S. "Semi-structured interviews: guidance for novice researchers." *Nursing Standard (through 2013)* 22, no. 23 (2008): 35.

peacebuilding and research activities. Examples of these activities include participation in online roundtables hosted by the United States Institute for Peace, attendance at peace-educator networking events facilitated by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, and participation in the 2019 Buffer Fringe Performing Arts Festival organized by the Home4Cooperation. Contact with the Alumni Relations Office of Eastern Mediterranean University, established during previous research experience, was additionally supportive; its director assisted in outreach to university-alum English teachers and local school administrators in Northern Cyprus.

Several participants were identified by the "Who We Are" informative webpages of the (Republic of) Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR), and local teachers' unions such as the Cyprus Turkish Teachers Trade Union (KTÖS). The information provided by "Contact Us" webpages for local schools was used to address invitations to English teachers from both the public and private sector, at all grade levels. Most rewardingly, however, participants were located by their self-identification on the website Humans of Peace Education, a product of collaboration between the AHDR and the International Institution on Peace Education (IIPE).[119] Each participant's relation to aspects of the research question was determined by analysis of their professional roles and experience in peacebuilding and educational environments.

Significant effort was made to identify and establish contact with diverse stakeholders. Scholars from several universities, practitioners from a variety of peacebuilding organizations, and English teachers at a wide range of grade levels (from primary school through university) were included in the subject pool. The ratio of subject genders was equitable, each were in the

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[119]https://humansofpeaceeducation.org

working-professional category of age and economic status. Notably, the final number of interview participants proportionally represented their linguistic communities: seven Greek-speaking and three Turkish-speaking Cypriots participated in interviews, and English was used as the medium of communication throughout data gathering. This choice reflects the reality of researcher positionality in this case: with only brief work and study experience in Cyprus, limited language faculties in both Greek and Turkish necessitated the use of English for higher-order communication. Albeit limited, this personal experience provided a basis for connection with interviewees, who had the liberty to share more nuanced political and social reflections. Interviews each opened with an establishment of this incomplete familiarity, tempered with acknowledgement of "outsider" researcher positionality.

Data Analysis

Audio recordings of interviews, taken with the participant's consent, were used to generate transcripts. Transcripts were individually corrected against the audio recording by the researcher in order to ensure accuracy and to anonymize data where necessary (i.e., where a participant requested a name omission, or to speak 'off record'). During the correction process, pertinent information within the transcripts was highlighted, and later used to develop preliminary themes. Following completion of the final interview, each of the ten transcripts was re-read in an "open coding" process to both refresh the insights of each conversation and stimulate the development of broad coding categories.[120] These included participants' perspectives on the relationship between foreign language and intercultural communication, pedagogical approaches to both peace- and foreign language education, their current social and political environments, and views on a future English-peace pedagogy.

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[120]Terry, Gareth, Nikki Hayfield, Victoria Clarke, and Virginia Braun. "Thematic analysis." *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology* 2 (2017): 17-37.

A second read-through of transcripts organized emergent ideas within these categories into more specific themes. These included, for example, insights on the use of English in intercommunal spaces, recurrent challenges to peacebuilding practices, relations between indicators of Cypriot dialect and identity, and divergent perspectives on the colonial connotations of English language use. In the fourth category, themes included explicit calls for attention to and policy on English use in the classroom, and recommendations for applications of peace pedagogy to EFL. The third and fourth read-throughs of transcripts inspired refinement and iteration of these ideas, and reflection on theme definitions.[121]

Documents were similarly coded for themes of relevance to both English use and reconciliation, such as references to the necessity of English proficiency in the future and the value and process of establishing a "culture of peace" through education. These codes correspond with and corroborate the attestations of interview participants, where they regard the social and political aspects of the Cypriot peace education environment. Repeated reference to similar instances and concepts, despite the diversity of participant backgrounds, can be considered a limited indication of consistency.

Limitations and Ethical Considerations

Rigorous and methodical procedures of data collection, coding, and thematic analysis are central to this research; transparent communication of these processes contributes to the trustworthiness of its findings.[122] Limitations exist primarily in the quantity of data gathered. Although invitations to participate in research were sent to over thirty individuals and institutions, only half as many responded positively; from that number, five efforts to coordinate

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[121]Terry et al., "Thematic analysis," 23.
[122]Nowell, Lorelli S., Jill M. Norris, Deborah E. White, and Nancy J. Moules. "Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria." *International journal of qualitative methods* 16, no. 1 (2017): 1609406917733847.

an interview were unproductive. Of the ten total interviews conducted, over 400 minutes of conversation were recorded, from which over 120 pages of transcript were generated. The diversity of both document sources and interview participant backgrounds contributed to a wide array of perspectives; more nuanced insights may have been gathered from contact with stakeholders at more diverse levels of organization within educational environments, or from students themselves. Due to restrictions on ethics clearance of this research, however, the latter was not pursued.

All components of this research design were submitted for approval by the McGill Research Ethics Board. Upon expression of interest, participants were given a copy of the Participant Consent Form which provided a detailed explanation of the voluntary nature of participation, how information gathered through the interview would be used in support of this study, participants' rights to privacy, and procedures for withdrawal. The data has been fully anonymized by the erasure of participants' identifying information, including names, official titles, and reference to affiliated organizations. Security has been ensured by maintaining all data on a personal computer and 'field' notebook, which remain under lock in the researcher's home office. This information was shared with participants both in the Consent Form and reiterated at the beginning of each interview; consent to record was verbally registered. Additionally, participants were assured that they would receive a copy of the final research product upon its completion. Given the extensive contribution of interview participants to the case description generated through this methodology, their eventual benefit is of paramount importance.

Results

  Findings from this research reaffirm the necessity of considering broader social and political dynamics when investigating peace education and its scope of impact. Moreover, it is *because of* these dynamics that Cypriot EFL classrooms exist as sites of unique potential for the introduction of peace education through Freirean pedagogy. Findings additionally support calls for both attention to and policy on the place of English in Cypriot education and peacebuilding, and yield insights into the possible impact of peace-oriented EFL.

> "English is going to be *the* language, that's a fact. [...] And also it will help us in Cyprus, because I mean there's no other way. At some point we will have to, as two communities, we will have to find a way to coexist on this island and then, we cannot coexist without talking and you have to talk. And the way to dialogue then, we will need English, obviously."[123]

  This quote, taken from an interview with a primary school English teacher, exemplifies the sentiment held by many participants in this research: English is a facilitator of dialogue between Cypriot communities, making its place in education a crucial component of reconciliation. Respondents' diverse views on the relationship between foreign language learning and peacebuilding support this claim, and additionally illustrate that this relationship is not being given sufficient attention by stakeholders in the peacebuilding process. Other views on the state of peace education, and the status of English in formal educational systems, provide context for more nuanced evaluation of this argument: reflections on future educational needs, calls for attention and policies, and specific recommendations for implementation illustrate the potential that exists for a future English-peace pedagogy.

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[123]Interview with schoolteacher, December 21, 2023.

Foreign Language Education and Dialogue

Analysis of the data shows clear consensus on the belief that all foreign language education can provide support for peace, given the right ideological conditions. Dialogue, and the act of learning about the Other, is crucial to this process. In the words of one peacebuilder:

> "What kept me going to this day is my strong belief in dialogue and also about how we learn about ourselves through the Other […] the Other is part of us, and we are part of the Other. Our biggest challenge as citizens, as children is how to learn to live with Otherness, which entails a series of behaviors, of beliefs, of attitudes and so on."[124]

Such education is well within the purview of foreign language education. More optimistic views correlate the enrichment of linguistic capacity and worldviews, arguing that explicit pedagogical approaches are not strictly necessary to support dialogue, and that learning foreign languages naturally comes with a link to other cultures.

> "I think indirectly it affects you, but not only with the pedagogy or methodology […] I would say because of the nature of learning a new language. I think that's where it affects people […] So once you learn this, that means that you'll be understand more people […] So you talk to other people, you can travel, you can go to other countries, so it gives [you] an incentive. And learning a new language, it's something good because it helps you to contact other people or connect with other people, which is the key to communication and dialogue."[125]

Giving due consideration to the social and political dynamics surrounding foreign language educational is crucial, however. As in the case of efforts to promote Turkish courses in Greek Cypriot schools, whose purpose "was explicitly peacebuilding and mutual understanding," teachers' suppression of discussions regarding Turks or Turkish Cypriots in the classroom precluded engagement with issues of relevance to reconciliation.[126] While experience shows that

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[124]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[125]Interview with schoolteacher, December 21, 2023.
[126]Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.

integrating the Others' languages in education is highly contested, many maintain that learning

Greek or Turkish first would support more genuine intercultural dialogue.

> "It would be ideal, in my opinion, to also promote learning each other's language because you learn very important [things], I mean that language comes with values, with customs, with a lot of different things in order to understand each other better. But at the same time, we can use English as a common ground."[127]

This sentiment is echoed by many in the peacebuilding and educational communities. Very few

Cypriots are functionally trilingual, meaning that communication between the communities

"happens in English."[128] Further, English is often used in professional settings; associated

characteristics include higher education, international study or work experience, and other

cosmopolitan identity markers. These often apply similarly to the participants of intercommunal

activities, reinforcing the perception that peacebuilding is an elite enterprise. In the words of a

practitioner,

> "… one of my issues at the beginning was that much of this peacebuilding work was at the elite level because of language […] the participants, or the people who could attend these processes and also work together, build projects and so on, were the people who knew English."[129]

In contemporary bicommunal events, including arts festivals such Buffer Fringe and peace

education programs such as Imagine, English acts as the medium of communication. Although

proficiency is never a requirement for participation, "most of the students that are attending these

bi-communal events, they are coming from these English medium schools and that […] tells us

something about how English can be the common ground."[130] Many facilitators feel that

confidence in the language helps participants make direct contact with peers across communities,

and later maintain contact through social media. From the experience of one peace educator,

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[127]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.
[128]Interview with arts activist, November 6, 2023.
[129]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[130]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.

"From the classes I observed in the Imagine program, the students who weren't good at English, they couldn't interact. So, you could feel the barrier of the language very strongly in these classes. And that's why I said you need also English for communication, because it's easier to communicate in English with a strong background […] knowing each other's language works on a symbolic-ritual level, but for communication, you need English. And students who were really good at English, you would see them in the breaks, they will start chatting or from what I've heard, they would connect on Facebook and have some chats. And from other research projects, students also sometimes refer to chatting or like playing games and they'll say, "oh I was playing a game and there was someone from the other side and we spoke in English" So it's also the language of the Internet."[131]

In addition to these uses by participants, "English is the only medium of instruction for the project organizers."[132] Materials prepared as part of peace education programs are often developed and made available first in English before being translated into Greek and Turkish. Notable examples of this fact include recent research, policy papers, and supplementary educational materials produced by the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR), a key actor in the field of peace education. Despite its use in these contexts, however, some feel that English has yet to pass "into the production of culture," by which it might contribute to "more sustainable practices" of intercommunal exchange.[133] Moreover, many expressed regret over the fact that this exchange occurs in English rather than in one of the local languages, but concede that English use is so common as to be the default; its place in public life, and in school curricula, is largely unchallenged.

A lack of attention to the place of English was brought up in a majority of interviews, some respondents even expressing surprise at having never considered the issue themselves before. Regarding the general public's awareness of the role of language (education, policy, and use) in reconciliation, sentiments from diverse perspectives converged on the idea that "[In

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[131] Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.
[132] Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[133] Interview with arts activist, November 6, 2023.

Cyprus,] we really don't think about these things like language policies,"[134] or that if they are considered, average people "are not concerned with it."[135] Many respondents specifically complained that policymakers and authorities do not sufficiently appreciate the political implications of language education. In the words of an English pedagogical scholar, "I don't think they paid any attention to this […] Language has always been a strong tool, but I don't think they've used it properly politically."[136]

Peace educators, however, are keenly aware of issues surrounding multilingualism in education. This is exemplified by the forthcoming publication from the ADHR, "Our Multilingual World: A Teacher's Handbook for Exploring Past and Present Multilingualism in Cyprus."[137] The handbook explicitly seeks to equip educators with the "necessary tools and knowledge to facilitate discussions, promote multilingualism, and foster curiosity and dialogue" among learners. Its stated goals, ultimately "transforming classrooms and fostering a society that values linguistic diversity, inclusivity, and intercultural understanding," align with the goals of peace education, but contrast with the current approaches to language education in Cypriot schools.

Peace Education Environment

The current state of peace education in Cyprus is characterized by the duality of political obstacles and societal disengagement, on the one hand, and the determination of peace educators on the other. When asked to describe the atmosphere of peace projects, one respondent shared:

> "Well, it's in a very dark place, I would say. Everything seems to be frozen […] even the Imagine project, which was so successful and endorsed by both communities, was frozen. So officially it's very [dark], it's gone a lot of steps backward. But I would say that civil

[134]Interview with peace educator, October 26, 2023.
[135]Interview with arts activist, November 6, 2023.
[136]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[137]ADHR, forthcoming. "Our Multilingual World: A Teacher's Handbook for Exploring Past and Present Multilingualism in Cyprus." Nicosia.

society is trying again, like in all times of crisis, to find alternative ways to promote peace education."[138]

Changes in the political agenda, including the recent (2021-) breakdown of communication between authorities, "means there's barely any progress or willingness to cooperate on issues regarding education."[139] Given its relationship to broader reconciliation projects, which are themselves associated with leftist administrations, many Cypriots perceive peace education as preaching a political agenda. At the most extreme, others "feel that it's a threat to their identity or their history" or "a way of indoctrinating the new generations into kind of an attitude that forgets about what the land that was lost, forgets the occupied territory."[140] Such views, amid the absence of support from educational authorities, have lead many peace educators to fear the social repercussions or even legal consequences of continuing their work.

Sentiments concerning the desire to keep projects discrete, and to avoid attracting too much attention, are shared broadly among practitioners. Pessimism about the "hostile political environment" further leads many to fear that these conditions "will create a new generation of people [who] don't want to talk, so will reject [peace education initiatives] again."[141] Many educators also expressed that students' apathy is already an obstacle to reconciliation, as "they grew up with this situation, young people, they kind of got used to it. They don't have a personal interest to change it."[142] Some students view peace education initiatives as a form of counter-culture, "as something revolutionary or as a kind of knowledge that they had to pursue themselves outside [normal] schooling," but generally, "people in Cyprus are tired of this kind of

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[138]Interview with peace educator, November 8, 2023.
[139]Interview with peace educator, October 26, 2023.
[140]Interview with educational theorist, November 13, 2023.
[141]Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.
[142]*Ibid,* Nov. 3, 2023.

thing."[143] Regardless, the work of scholars and practitioners continues, and enjoys support from select sectors of society.

The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, teachers' unions, NGOs, and individual educators relate to peace education in different ways amid the social and political dynamics of their sectors. The Pedagogical Institute, in its recent work on developing and implementing anti-racist codes, has given Greek Cypriot peace educators useful tools and language. Similarly, "in the North, the language of peace education is more widespread because of the work of the Association [for Historical Dialogue and Research] in the past and the trade unions, which have been implementing peace education projects."[144] Reference to the supportive role of trade unions, in particular the Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Trade Union (KTÖS) was made across a number of interviews, and is corroborated by the policy positions advertised by the union itself. Among members of the educational community, the union is regarded as being politically leftist, and publicly espouses pro-reconciliation messages. According to its website, "KTÖS is one of the few teacher trade unions worldwide actively working for education for a culture of peace," and seeks to promote its educational policy through hosting inter-organizational conferences on peace education and supporting teacher training.[145]

High attention to teacher training emphasizes the fact that much of the actual implementation of peace education initiatives is dependent on the will of individual instructors. In formal educational systems, "it's always up to teachers who are interested in implementing more."[146] School leadership can determine teachers' liberty to enact peace education practices, as

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[143]Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.
[144]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.
[145]*Peace culture education*. Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Trade Union. (n.d.-b). https://ktoseducation.info/peace-culture-education/
[146]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.

school policies "differ depending on the positionality of the head teacher,"[147] but "it comes [down] to the individual teacher more than anything […] to teach in a peace education manner."[148] Despite the fact that textbook development and directions for use are heavily centralized, "there are always opportunities for a teacher if they're motivated and proactive to find spaces to, for example, teach about human rights or basic conflict resolution skills and basic peace education skills."[149]

Within the boundaries of standardized curricula, the choice of what and how to teach is crucial to introducing peace education concepts and messages. In areas such as history, social geography, and literature, "many of the teachers on both sides, while working on peace building and on connecting, [have been] rewriting a lot of this exclusion of the Other;"[150] highlighting the fact that "there are always small pockets of resistance"[151] to ethnocentric approaches to education. The current political climate between authorities "doesn't prevent individual actors from enacting on their own agency and promoting peace education within their own small spaces of educational opportunity,"[152] which are particularly accessible in English classrooms.

> "If you're willing, you can work on the program. You use the same material, and you can teach prepositions as much as you like, and you can use any materials […] English is a very flexible class where teachers can easily take initiative."[153]

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[147]Interview with peace educator, November 8, 2023.
[148]Interview with peace educator, October 24, 2023.
[149]*Ibid,* Nov. 8, 2023.
[150]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[151]Interview with peace educator, November 8, 2023.
[152]Interview with peace educator, November 8, 2023.
[153]Interview with schoolteacher, December 21, 2023.

Language Education Environment

This unique condition of opportunity in English foreign language classrooms is the result of a confluence of factors, including the place of English in standardized curricula, the status of English-medium institutions, and common pedagogical approaches.

> "It has always had this prestigious place amongst the languages. If you know English, you are cultured […] probably because of the system, the education system itself, that the English schools have always been sort of elitist, that they pick and choose their students for example, that's that tells you something […] and I see this because of, you know, politicizing the language to Turkify the North, they sort of made English - pushed English into a very elitist position rather than embracing it in the system."[154]

Views on elitist connotations of English language education are connected to the exclusivity of English-medium schools, but contrast with its prevalence in other educational systems. In both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot schools, "English is credited as a thing, right, a value," and there exists "an ideological weight to support English as the language of teaching, the language of learning. It's validated in all sorts of ways by the system."[155] This ideology maintains "that everyone needs to know English. It's the language of the future, of finding a good job, social status, so everyone is obsessed with the children learning English."[156] The language is presented to learners is as "a medium of economic [mobility], to get advantages and study abroad, so a very instrumentalized kind of perception."[157] These utilitarian approaches often supersede its communicative function and political connotations, at least in the average EFL classroom. This contradicts the pedagogical approaches employed by and promoted in teacher training institutes, which emphasize immersion, authentic contextualization, and communicative language teaching; the fact that English-teaching students 'revert' to more

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[154]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[155]Interview with arts activist, November 6, 2023.
[156]Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.
[157]Interview with educational theory scholar, November 13, 2023.

traditional approaches upon entering the workforce as teachers themselves is a cause of concern in university-level English language education.

> "The way that it is taught in schools […] is very exam oriented. And the social side of it, the way that we learn at university, and we teach our students that the language is for communication. […] But then when you see the students and teachers in schools, they're all talking about exams. They're talking about the international exams and the university entrance [exams]. And so, it becomes an object of study rather than means of communication. And that changes the whole thing, because then you're not interested in what you say in a situation, but how you find the answer to a question on paper."[158]

This focus is heightened by actions taken by educational authorities to respond to perceived deficits in proficiency by increasing the number of exams, which may correlate to widespread nativist attitudes to English language use. As previously explored in the context of Cypriot dialects, indexes of Cypriot identity in vocabulary and accent are targets of disparagement; in English, 'standard' British or American use and pronunciation is promoted through both educational practices and content. A telling example was given regarding a reading passage for an English exam which promoted immersion with the insinuation that "you have to go to the UK to learn English the best, otherwise you are not – you know, you won't be able to be competent enough."[159] Such nativist attitudes are "quite strong both within the community and especially with the teachers."[160] There exists a pervasive sentiment surrounding Cypriot language use, in particular, that implies and promotes a version of "internalized colonialism about Cyprus, like Cypriots are dumb or Cypriots are not up to the European standards, which […] comes from a specific place and [goal], like degrading our identity."[161] Despite the evident origin of these ideas and of English use the colonial experience, consideration of such

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[158]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[159]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[160]*Ibid,* Nov. 30, 2023.
[161]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.

connotations in modern English use is highly varied among users; it seems to "depend on how much they know of cultural theories and social theories."[162]

Many respondents regard the language as an obvious legacy of British rule in Cyprus, going so far as to directly state that the need to use English "is a result of violence."[163] Others, however, view its history as secondary to its importance as the current *lingua franca* of globalized society. When asked about the colonial connotations of English education, one educator expressed that "it's just coincidental […] I don't think it's colonial, tied to colonialism. I think it's just – English is the international language."[164] Ambivalence can be considered a result of the fact that the communities in Cyprus, while under British rule, "were still a bit flexible and […] had autonomy on educational matters."[165] Many within the educational community do not feel that English was imposed, but do acknowledge how the structures of political and economic advantage associated with proficiency incentivized learning and how the language was used to gain access to privilege within the colonial social order. Discussion of the effects of this experience on modern English use is limited, however, and speaking it is "much more normalized" than in other post-colonial societies.[166]

> "It's fascinating that English becomes this neutral language. Which, when you speak to the older generation, they will tell you that everything started because the British […] but it's interesting, that is never applied to the language in our context. English is always this neutral, pure […] thing, something that brings the two communities together rather than the political view of the British people who divide and conquer."[167]

English is seen as a necessary facilitator, given that "we didn't have much choice, because we don't speak each other's language […] so there has to be a kind of a medium that is common and

[162]Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.
[163]Interview with arts activist, November 6, 2023.
[164]Interview with peace educator, October 24, 2023.
[165]Interview with schoolteacher, December 21, 2023.
[166]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.
[167]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.

the obvious one for the case of Cyprus, a former British colony, is English language."[168]

However necessary, its use still carries controversy and sensitivity.

Current Educational Needs

This sensitivity is particularly acute in light of recent changes to the demography of Cypriot student bodies. In the past several years, Cyprus has seen an influx of immigration from all areas of the world, leading to a large number of new enrollments at all school levels who cannot speak either Greek or Turkish. English has become the "common denominator" in many classrooms.[169] In the words of one educator,

> "We have an increasing number of foreign students in our state schools right now. We have so many different languages, ethnicities, which is something that hasn't happened before […] right now we have Nigerians, we have Russians, we have Iranians. So, it's quite multi-ethnic and it happened in the last, let's say, six to seven years, very rapidly. And the teachers are now - they don't know what to do with their classrooms."[170]

This condition has created no small amount of controversy, with some educators believing that English is a necessary medium of communication, and others believing that the priority for schools should be to teach students from different linguistic backgrounds the local language as quickly as possible to promote integration. Some teachers have responded negatively to the heightened demand represented by these students by adopting a narrative which frames them as 'the problem,' but others challenge this view by arguing that "it's not them who's the problem, it's just the government and educational authorities that fail to respond to these challenges."[171]

In past political climates, initiatives were implemented to promote "multiculturalism and multilingualism [as] an objective in curriculums," but "right now, things have been changing within our leadership," leaving many educators without the guidance of official policy on

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[168]Interview with educational theory scholar, November 13, 2023.
[169]Interview with schoolteacher, December 21, 2023.
[170]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[171]Interview with peace educator, October 26, 2023.

language use in the classroom.[172] Calls for attention and direction from educational authorities

include requests for policies on language teaching and on the languages themselves,

encompassing issues of community dialects and on the special status of English. Educators have

asked of their Ministries,

> "What is our policy towards English? If it is so highly thought of, what is it? Is it going to
> be an additional language? Is it a foreign language? Why is it different from French and
> German, for example? […] We need a state policy, not just the government policy, but the
> state policy about where all these languages lie in the linguistic landscape of this country,
> both South and North […] we need the decision. That's what's missing.[173]

Members of the peacebuilding community view this future policy arena as a site of significant

potential for multicultural and peace education, and for cooperation between the Greek- and

Turkish Cypriot educational systems. In the teaching of English, it is proposed, "we can

introduce a shared curriculum and pluralistic education system in both communities."[174] Because

of its unique flexibility within standardized curricula, ample opportunity exists to integrate peace

education content with English; educators view "trying to use language to promote peace

education [as] a very normal thing."[175] Due to the fact that it is "often the only language that we

have in common, [and] it's sometimes seen as neutral," English language classrooms also enjoy a

greater degree of liberty in the discussion of sensitive or controversial issues.[176] Educators are

afforded the opportunity to "bring in these sort of bi-communal or peacebuilding [topics] or

anything that might sound troubled about Cyprus, [which] can be dealt within the neutrality of

the English language classroom" while avoiding the emotional and political hazards of "doing it

in Greek or Turkish."[177] Integrating such topics, however, is only part of the potential.

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[172]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.
[173]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[174]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[175]Interview with peace educator, October 24, 2023.
[176]Interview with peace educator, November 8, 2023.
[177]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.

Recent policy positions adopted by educational organizations strongly emphasize the role of pedagogy in promoting sustainable peace. In a recently published policy paper, the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research offered a "comprehensive framework to promote sustainable peace in Cyprus through an education founded in human rights and democracy, intercultural solidarity, social justice and compassion, non-violence, anti-racism, gender equality and sustainable development."[178] Crucially, the Association's principles for education include the promotion of critical and democratic mindsets, active citizenship and civic courage, and inclusive and participatory approaches to dialogue.[179] These goals are reiterated by the policy positions shared by KTÖS in its aims to contribute to "a society where individuals respect all ideas, beliefs and values; who are critical thinkers; and who are culturally and environmentally aware and responsible with high self-esteem."[180] Evidently, the current needs and values of the Cypriot educational community align in such a way as to support the development of a hybrid curriculum for English-peace education.

Discussion

Taking 'Freirean' as an identifier to describe pedagogy which is critical, localized, dialogic, and humanizing, the idea of a 'Freirean EFL' was posed to members of the peacebuilding and educational communities for discussion. The diverse opinions and insights generated by this prompt are integrated into the following discussion as way of presenting the results of this research and their analysis as an inherently dialogic endeavor. Reflected in this

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[178]Association for Historical Dialogue and Research, "Education for Sustainable Peace in Cyprus." Policy paper, Nicosia, 2023. 1-32.
[179]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[180]*Our Educational Policy*. Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Trade Union. (n.d.-b). https://ktoseducation.info/our-educational-policy/

choice are the priority owed to stakeholders' perspectives, an acknowledgement of their

diversity, and a deep appreciation of their central role in disseminating the conclusions of this

work in future scholarship and practice. The idea of "building up a curriculum […] based on

Freire's work or many other pedagogic figures that we know have [intervened] in difficult

situations"[181] was met with measured enthusiasm; while supported by specific recommendations,

speculation on its transformative potential was tempered by recognition of its limitations in the

current political environment. However, as argued here, it is specifically because of these

conditions that the possibility exists for the development of a Freirean approach to English

language learning.

The first element to consider in this approach is criticality. Critical pedagogy, in the views

of educators, has the potential to affect peacebuilding by heightening learners' sensitivity to

broader cultural issues. In bringing attention to the 'living' nature of languages, critical foreign

language pedagogy "allows students to reflect their own languages and the languages that they

hear in their everyday life" in an exercise of critical self-reflection.[182] Attention to issues of local

language use, especially as it pertains to dialects,

> "…brings the focus on the diversity that already exists in our own community, not only
> the relationship to the other community across the divide. And the studying also of the
> history of the languages reveals the fact that this place has always been a place of
> coexistence […] it gives you the opportunity to start exploring and going out of the
> binary of Greek Cypriots Turkish Cypriots, North and South, good [and] evil..."[183]

Affording students the opportunity to "learn about the period not only of conflict and

discorded Cyprus, but also of the moments of coexistence [which are] often undervalued and

erased" in common discourse, can have a significant effect on their learning of history, social

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[181]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[182]Interview with peace educator, October 26, 2023.
[183]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.

geography, and other subjects which otherwise act as vectors of ethnocentric views and values.[184] In pursuit of these goals, the interaction of individual teachers' motivations and the structural and material constraints on curricular content is crucial. Current models of foreign language education prioritize the importation of textbooks (and language ideal-types) from linguistic poles; the values communicated by the use of material from these sources reinforces nativism and colonial subjugation of Cypriot language use and identity. Responding to this condition is necessary to "build a new generation for reconciliation and coexistence, [but] will be very difficult, unless we convince our Ministry of Education to write English teaching curriculum locally."[185] In the succinct words of one educator, "localizing English would work better for peace, in terms of peace education and bringing people together."[186]

'Localization,' used in this way, describes integrating locally sourced educational materials into EFL and encouraging the development and application of linguistic skills through activities grounded in local contexts. Given that "not everyone has the same need and not everyone needs to learn in the same way," English learning should be linked to local realities.[187] Bringing EFL "closer to home," making it relevant to students beyond "just learning basic grammar, on its own and with random sentences"[188] might mean "using local texts, translated, which provide more sources or ideas and examples of bicommunal cooperation, or representing authors from across the divide."[189] Paying particular attention to materials "like poetry and other things that are meant to promote peace education, the peacebuilding narrative" while

[184]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[185]*Ibid,* Oct. 23, 2023.
[186]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[187]Interview with schoolteacher, December 21, 2023.
[188]Interview with peace educator, October 26, 2023.
[189]Interview with peace educator, October 31, 2023.

demonstrating an application of value to "the local context and local content, might erase this kind of colonial [approach]"[190] to English and against the significance of Cypriot perspectives.

Building on the need to elevate local experiences, one peacebuilder recommended an activity aimed at collecting and sharing oral histories from members of the generation preceding division. It was suggested that students "can also have an exercise there to interview people in their respective neighborhoods, communities who lived with each other, and [ask] what memories do they have? And write short essays, short paragraphs in English, so they learn the language" and can share it among other speakers.[191] Sharing perspectives in this dialogic way was referenced as an opportunity for improving both English language skills and intercommunal relationships by several respondents. In an immersive English language environment, particularly, dialogue is viewed as a way to 'embody' new knowledge. Understanding that "embodied knowledge is knowledge that lasts,"[192] language educators should seek to encourage dialogue wherever possible, allowing learners to practice, experiment, and discover for themselves ways of employing their new linguistic skills.

Toward these goals, EFL classrooms should be structured as immersive linguistic environments, in the way that sites of teacher training are.[193] Additionally, allowing participants in this type of environment to steer the direction of dialogue would significantly enhance their investment in the educational process and its outcomes; students "want something more relevant, like what the issues of concern right now? […] If they collectively decide on issues, that they want to take action" with an appropriate amount of guidance from educators, such education can instill a personal interest in Cypriot issues and cultivate peace values "in more authentic ways

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[190]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.
[191]*Ibid,* Oct. 23, 2023.
[192]Interview with arts activist, November 6, 2023.
[193]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.

that are more meaningful for young people."[194] Authentic and self-driven dialogue, in Freirean theory, humanizes participants; the implications for future projects towards reconciliation and coexistence are profound if yet distant.

Recalling the political, social, and psychological sources of resistance to peace education in formal settings, it is reasonable to assume that 'peace-English' initiatives would be met with pushback from the broader Cypriot community if presented as such. Some may rightly question the appropriateness of 'distracting' from English learning with peace education goals, or express negative views on the 'intrusion' of politics in a foreign language classroom. Opinions holding peace education as a form of social 'indoctrination' may be especially salient in the context of a former colonial language; it is therefore "critical to find strategic ways of introducing those ideas, of anticipating some of the resistances, of having strategies or tactics for how to deal with some of the challenges […] how to calm some of the skepticism."[195]

Given these reservations, it may be more palatable to present the tenets of Freirean theory in relation to their effect on learners' language acquisition, making the case that there are practical benefits to English proficiency to be gained through critical, localized, and dialogic pedagogy. Addressing first the possible accusation of indoctrination and colonial connotations, it should be argued that critical pedagogy has strong ties to decolonial theory, and that one need not focus explicitly on the peace-related outcomes of critical pedagogy to appreciate the benefits of decolonizing EFL. A decolonial English curriculum might involve special attention to its colonial origins, its unique place in the Cypriot linguistic landscape, its local uses, and their validity among the global community of English language varieties. Such a curriculum can empower learners to exercise their capabilities and improve confidence in their use; benefits of ownership

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[194]Interview with sociolinguist, November 3, 2023.
[195]Interview with educational theorist, November 13, 2023.

should be emphasized. Similarly, taking into consideration the obvious place of conversation in a foreign language classroom, it should be argued that dialogic pedagogy is an ideal means of promoting English language proficiency, and that allowing learners to self-direct further reinforces their investment in education and improves linguistic outcomes.

The accusation of political intrusion is more challenging to address. While a politically neutral education may appear to be ideal, in reality, education is always a political endeavor. Taking for example the tenet of 'localization,' it might be argued that selecting material from Cypriot creators is a choice in favor of peace politics over 'proper' or more legitimate sources of English educational materials. To this claim, it should be strongly contended that such nativist views are the source of much resentment towards learning English, a detriment to learners' overall acquisition, and that valuing local perspectives even in EFL should be considered part of a broader national project aimed at elevating Cypriot identity. It would be difficult to challenge such a claim in public discourse, no matter one's political orientation.

As indicated by the literature on peace pedagogy, an approach to English language education with these reaffirmed values can have meaningful implications for learners' ownership of the educational process and its outcomes, confidence in English language use, and awareness of its communicative function. Such education can have a "ripple effect, really, if we see the results of this new thinking"[196] on issues relevant to peacebuilding. Support for such an initiative can be found in calls for national language policy from educators, and in the modern needs of Cypriot student bodies. Similarly, efforts from the peace education community to bring greater attention to the role of language education in intercommunal relations highlight the saliency of the issue in current discourse. These factors lend credibility to the claim that even among the

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[196]Interview with peacebuilder, October 23, 2023.

"hopelessness" of current peace processes, "English is something that we can do about the process that can change some things." In the particularly encouraging words of one participant,

> "I think it might be the time for you, once you complete this thesis, because as I said, everybody's pushing for this […] So if you have some sort of suggestion, maybe they might be open. This might be the time where they may listen to you."[197]

The findings of this research indicate a moment of opportunity for language educational policy, which, if developed with reference to ongoing work on multilingual and multicultural education, could take the form of a peace-oriented English curriculum. Where previous scholarship on peacebuilding through foreign language education in Cyprus has largely focused on the effects of learning the 'Other' language,[198] this research extends the discussion to English and its pedagogy. Future study in this direction should prioritize direct observation within sites of English foreign language education, teacher training, pedagogical and curricular development, and policymaking, in addition to direct observation of the ongoing work of peace educators and their organizations. Physical distance from the site of research and positional difference of the researcher from participants were crucial limitations to data access and analysis; continuation by an embedded member of the Cypriot educational community would certainly provide more nuanced and reliable insights.

Despite these limitations, the data provided by remote interviews correspond with the outcomes suggested by the framework constructed from peacebuilding and pedagogical theory. Findings contribute to clarifying the reciprocal relationship between the two fields in illustrating the political effects of, and constraints on, foreign language pedagogy. Practical implications include support to calls for attention on language policy in education and actionable

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[197]Interview with English pedagogical scholar, November 30, 2023.
[198]Charalambous, Constadina, Panayiota Charalambous, and Ben Rampton. "International relations, sociolinguistics and the 'everyday': A linguistic ethnography of peace-building through language education." *Peacebuilding* 9, no. 4 (2021): 387-408.

recommendations for future peace-oriented English education. Although such a curriculum and its effects are yet hypothetical, findings suggest a window of opportunity for their development and implementation through policymaking. This outcome was unanticipated, but welcome; the goal of this research has always been to support Cypriot peacebuilding by any possible means.

Conclusion

In summary, this research underscores the critical role of innovative educational approaches in fostering reconciliation in protracted ethnonationalist conflicts. Through an in-depth analysis of the socio-political landscape of peace- and foreign language education in Cyprus, this research identified a pivotal opportunity for policymaking within English language curricula. A peace-oriented pedagogy grounded in the principles of criticality, localization, and dialogue as advocated by Freirean theory, emerges as a powerful tool to advance the objectives of peace education. Free from the challenges faced by traditional peace education initiatives, a liberatory approach to English as a foreign language (EFL) can subtly equip learners with the tools and values necessary to challenge conflict narratives through proficiency-promoting classroom practices.

The critical orientation of this approach finds resonance in its rejection of nativist approaches proficiency paradigms, drawing support from anti-colonial sentiments. Simultaneously, the use of locally developed materials can foster a syncretic Cypriot identity while navigating political nation-building pressures. By prioritizing dialogue in the classroom, learners not only enhance their language acquisition but also develop sensitivity to diverse perspectives. This fusion of Freirean ideals, aimed at 'humanization,' represents a diametric opposite to the dehumanization prevalent in protracted ethnonationalist conflicts, creating a

dynamic and promising intellectual engagement between 'liberated' learners and conflict-sustaining narratives. The implications of these pedagogical practices extend beyond conflict resolution, towards the possibility of a positive and sustainable post-conflict peace in Cyprus.

The conclusions drawn from this case are particular to its unique social and political context, yet they offer valuable insights into the complex relationship between foreign language education and peacebuilding more generally. The prevalence of English language learning worldwide, coupled with its status as a *lingua franca* in many conflict-affected societies, underscores the significance of exploring the potential of EFL classrooms as spaces for peace education. By integrating liberatory pedagogical approaches into English language teaching, educators have the opportunity to not only enhance common-language proficiency but also foster critical thinking, empathy, and intercultural understanding among learners. This potent hybridity holds immense promise for promoting reconciliation and building sustainable peace in diverse conflict contexts. Therefore, further research and initiatives on integrating liberatory pedagogy in foreign language education is warranted.

While the analysis of the peacebuilding potential of Freirean EFL might suggest a normative inclination towards specific political outcomes, the true spirit of this research lies in its dedication to liberating learners from oppressive educational structures through Freirean liberatory pedagogy. It seeks to empower participants to reclaim ownership of the educational process and to equip them with the skills and values needed to navigate their local linguistic and political realities. As peace and peace education are inherently multifaceted, the direction and ownership of these processes should rest in the hands of stakeholders themselves. To the young people of Cyprus, and those that guide their education with truth, compassion, and justice, this research offers is sincere dedication.

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Appendix 1

<u>Basic Interview Protocol</u>

Introduction:
Purpose: *The purpose of this interview is to explore the real or possible role of English language education in Cypriot peacebuilding.*
Informed Consent: *To reaffirm the information in the Participant Consent Form: your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any point. Your responses will be anonymous, and data will be handled in accordance with the regulations of the McGill Ethics Review Board.*
Do I have your permission to record this interview for the purposes of later transcript analysis?

Section 1: Background and Expertise
- Could you please briefly describe your professional background and your experience with [peacebuilding/peace education/ESL education]?
- What motivated you to engage in [this type of work] in Cyprus?

Section 2: Peace Education
- How do you view the current state of peace education in Cyprus?
- What are some of the key challenges related to implementing peace education initiatives in Cyprus?

Section 3: English Language Education
- How do you believe English language education can affect the goals of peace education?
- Are there any innovative approaches or practices in English language education that you believe hold promise for supporting peace in Cyprus?

Section 4: Recommendations
- Based on your expertise, what best practices would you suggest for optimizing the role of English language education in supporting peace in Cyprus?

Closing:
Appreciation: Thank you for sharing your valuable insights and expertise! Your participation in this interview contributes to a better understanding of the relationship between foreign language education and peacebuilding.