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Evaluation of Turkey's New English Language Teaching Program of Lower Secondary School In Terms Of Peace Education

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Abstract

Different types of violence are being experienced in different parts of the world. This situation leads to serious problems such as violating human rights in different aspects of human life and nature. Violence and its effects make peace education significant to overcome violence and its effects in a peaceful way. Accordingly, the present study aimed to investigate whether peace education is integrated with the new English language teaching program (ELTP) of lower secondary education of Turkey by evaluating it in terms of peace education. It was designed as a qualitative study. The new ELTP of lower secondary school was used as the source document to collect the data. Document analysis was generated within the collected data. The findings indicated that the new ELTP of lower secondary school is integrated with peace education through different units in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. They also showed that those units are related to peace education in terms of their themes and/or target language functions. The findings were discussed, the implications and limitations of the study were specified, and suggestions for further studies were made.

Keywords: Peace education, English language teaching program, curriculum evaluation, Turkey

Introduction

Different types of violence such as warfare, ecocide, racism, genocide, sexual abuse, ethnic hatred and domestic violence (Harris, 2004) lead to serious physical, political, ecological, economical and psychological influences (Ghaith & Shaaban, 1994) on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, national and international levels of people's lives (Fountain, 1999; Ghaith & Shaaban, 1994). Considering the types of violence and their effects, dealing with violence has become significant. According to Harris (2004), peace education can contribute to the struggle against the types of violence and their influences on people's lives.

Consequently, understanding what peace education is and how it can be used to deal with different types of violence becomes especially important.

Peace education aims at changing behaviors of children, youth and adults through the required skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to avoid violence and conflict, resolve these issues in a peaceful way and to create necessary conditions for a peaceful environment at different levels of people's lives concerning intrapersonal, interpersonal, national and international aspects (Fountain, 1999). As denoted, it is based on the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that promote the peaceful resolution and avoidance of conflicts and violence by changing behaviors that cause conflicts and violence through education. As a result of this education, what is aimed is to help children, youth and adults to become peaceful human beings (UNESCO, 2001) by transforming their conflict- and violence-provoking behaviors into peace-provoking behaviors. According to UNESCO (2001), a peaceful person has the following features:

1. Being a peacebuilder in his/her community,
2. Being a critical thinker,
3. Showing respect to human dignity,
4. Having inner peace,
5. Thinking positively,
6. Caring the world in terms of the environment and non-human beings,
7. Being able to resolve conflicts peacefully,
8. Finding his/her own true self,
9. Learning and knowing to live together, and
10. Not causing harm and being compassionate.

Corresponding to these features of a peaceful person, peace education can be categorized as personal peace, peace with the human family, and peace with nature as Gebregeorgis (2017), Renner (1991) and Yusuf (2011) stated. According to Renner (1991), personal peace is defined as a person's peace with his/her mind, body and heart. Peace with the human family is related to showing respect to human rights, promoting human rights and justice, resolving and preventing conflicts in a peaceful way, and taking other people's economical and political wellbeing into consideration (Renner, 1991). Renner (2011) related peace with nature to the promotion of environmental sustainability, consciousness and security.

Considering the types and aims of peace education, its significance for every individual and society on the earth is evident, so it should not be included as a separate subject in the curricula, but other subjects such as language teaching can be integrated with peace education (Fountain, 1999). With regard to this notion, language teaching including

English language teaching can promote peace education because languages are also considered as one of the sources of conflicts and violence; therefore, language teaching can contribute to developing a mutual understanding between the speakers of different languages and to resolving conflicts peacefully through this mutual understanding (Fountain, 1999).

When the literature related to peace education and English language teaching is reviewed, it is seen that there are two types of research: conceptual papers and research papers. Abid (2016), Finch (2004), Kruger (2012), Renner (1991), Sun (2017), Şahin (2011), Takkaç Tulgar (2017), Vandrick (1996) and Yusuf (2011) focused on how peace education could be integrated with English language teaching in their conceptual papers. Use of authentic materials to promote critical thinking (Sun, 2017; Vandrick, 1996), integrating peace education with reading (Yusuf, 2011) and how English language teachers can promote peace education in their English classes (Abid, 2016; Kruger, 2012; Şahin, 2011; Yusuf, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017) were presented as the ways of associating peace education with English language teaching. In their research papers, Arikan (2009), Carmel and Yochanna (2018), Chowdbury (2013), Gebregeorgis (2017) and Gutiérrez, Guerrero and Bohórquez (2020) studied distinct aspects of the integration of peace education with English language teaching. The use of English as a tool to encourage peace-making with prospective English language teachers (Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013), promoting peace education through memory artifacts (Gutiérrez et al., 2020), contextualizing and teaching English grammar through peace education (Arikan, 2009) and the evaluation of an English language teaching course book through a peace education perspective (Gebregeorgis, 2017) were studied in these research papers. However, how peace education and English language teaching can be consolidated with each other in a curriculum or program were not studied in the related literature. Thus, the present study aimed to find out whether the new English language teaching program (ELTP) of lower secondary education is integrated with peace education and if it is, how it is integrated with peace education by evaluating the new ELTP in terms of peace education. The answers to the following research questions were investigated:

1. Does the new ELTP of lower secondary education allocate any course content for peace education?
2. Which language function(s) related to peace education is/are studied in the new ELTP of lower secondary education?
3. How is/are language function(s) related to peace education integrated with learning objectives in the new ELTP of lower secondary education?

Methodology

Research design

Researchers can explore an issue through qualitative research because it provides a complex and detailed understanding of the issue researched (Creswell, 2007). In accordance with this, the qualitative research design was employed in the present study since the present study aimed to discover whether the new ELTP of lower secondary school was integrated with peace education by evaluating the program in terms of peace education. Thus, qualitative research could provide a detailed and complex understanding of this issue.

Research context

Students study and learn English as a foreign language in primary, lower secondary and high schools in Turkey. There are four grades at primary schools (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades), lower secondary schools (i.e. 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades) and high schools (i.e. 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades). Students start to learn English in the second grade in primary schools and go on learning English until the twelfth grade at high schools. English language education is designed and implemented according to the English language teaching programs (ELTP) prepared by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in both public and private primary, lower secondary and high schools. English language teaching course books are also designed, prepared and developed according to the ELTPs of the MoNE.

Data collection tool

The part of the *English Language Teaching Program (Primary and Lower Secondary School 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Grades)* (MoNE, 2018) of lower secondary school was used to collect the data.

Data analysis

Document analysis was used to analyze the collected data. Document analysis was generated through the four-stage framework of Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013). In the first stage, the new ELTP of lower secondary education was downloaded from the official website of the MoNE. In the second stage, the document originality was provided. In the third stage, the content and organization of the new ELTP of lower secondary school were ensured to be comprehensible because the researcher has been using and working with such documents prepared by the MoNE for more than three years. For the fourth stage, a protocol to perform

the document analysis of the document was prepared and utilized in the document analysis. To provide the reliability of the document analysis, the document was shared with one of the researcher's colleagues who has a Ph.D. degree in English language teaching field and has conducted qualitative studies in English language teaching. The new ELTP of lower secondary school was document analyzed by the researcher and his colleague. The results from the analyses were compared with each other by focusing on the similarities and differences between them.

Results

The findings of the document analysis were presented separately for the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades according to the research questions in order.

5th Grade

Units related to peace education

There are ten units in the fifth grade. Several units are related to peace education in this grade with regard to the themes and/or target language functions of these units. Units 2 (my hometown) and 6 (movies) are related to peace education due to target language functions, while units 1 (hello), 3 (games and hobbies), 5 (health), 7 (party time), 8 (fitness), 9 (the animal shelter), and 10 (festivals) are also related to it in terms of their themes and target language function.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

In unit 1, students are expected to study meeting and greeting people, expressing their likes/dislikes, and making inquiries. In unit 2, giving and asking for directions simply and explaining the locations of people and things are the target language functions. In unit 3, students are expected to learn how to make a description of what people usually do and express their likes/dislikes and abilities/inabilities. In unit 5, making simple suggestions and talking about needs, illnesses, and feelings are given as target language functions. Unit 6 focuses on expressing personal opinions and likes/dislikes, telling the time, and making the descriptions of people and characters as language functions. The target language functions of unit 7 comprise meeting and greeting people, expressing thanks and obligation, telling the days and dates, and responding to thanks. Unit 8 aims to teach how to make inquiries and suggestions, ask for clarification, accept and refuse suggestions as language functions. Unit 9 aims to help students learn how to ask for permission and describe the actions of animals and people. In unit 10, how to describe repeated actions and general events are the essential language functions.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

According to the learning objectives of unit 1, students can listen and understand personal information. They can talk, introduce themselves, meet other people, and exchange personal information with other people. They can read and understand personal information by means of different materials such as pictures.

Students are expected to listen and understand directions given to go from one place to another as a learning objective in unit 2. They can also talk about the locations of people and things and ask for and give directions in unit 2. They can read and understand information about places in unit 2.

According to the new ELTP of the fifth grade, students can understand oral texts about embracing abilities, hobbies, likes and dislikes in an oral text in unit 3. They can express their abilities, inabilities, likes, dislikes, and hobbies to other people. They can also talk and inform the listener about other people's abilities, inabilities, likes, dislikes, and hobbies.

In unit 5, students can listen, recognize some sickness and identify some suggestions for those sicknesses. They can also listen and understand suggestions made for sicknesses. They can talk about their basic feelings and needs about different sicknesses by naming those sicknesses. They can read and understand texts which comprise information about different sicknesses, feelings and needs.

Students can listen and understand the speech which describes movie characters according to the learning objectives of unit 6. They can express what other people like and dislike in terms of movies and movie characters. They can express their personal opinions on movie characters and movies. They can also tell the time. They can read and understand the information given about movie characters and movies on advertisements and posters.

According to unit 7, students can apprehend requests for permission and responses to them in an oral text. They can tell the dates of an event. They can express obligations and their thanks to people and respond to the thanks specified by other people. They can greet and meet people by using the expressions of greeting and leave-taking. They can also ask for permission and give a response.

Students are supposed to understand oral texts about sports activities and suggestions made for sport activities in those oral texts in unit 8. They can make, accept and refuse suggestions about sports activities. They can also ask for clarification and give personal information. They can understand reading texts about sports activities.

Students can understand the descriptions of the actions of animals and people in oral texts in unit 9. They can express what animals and people are doing at that moment and ask for permission. They can apprehend reading texts about people and animal actions.

Students can comprehend oral texts on distinct festivals around the world. They can make the descriptions of events in a festival. They can recognize numbers from 100 to 1000 hundred in oral texts and articulate them. They can read and understand texts on different festivals around the world.

6th Grade

Units related to peace education

Similar to the 5th grade, there exist ten units in the 6th grade. Units 2 (yummy breakfast), 5 (at the fair) and 6 (occupations) are related to peace education in the 6th grade corresponding to the target language functions. Besides, units 4 (weather and emotions), 9 (saving the planet) and 10 (democracy) are related in terms of their themes and target language functions.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

Unit 2 aims to teach students how to accept and refuse, express their likes and dislikes, and make a description of people's regular actions. In unit 4, students study talking about the weather and weather conditions, making inquiries, and expressing their emotions as language functions. In unit 5, making the description of places and talking about one's feelings, likes and dislikes are studied as language functions. In unit 6, the target language functions are to talk about occupations, ask and answer personal questions, and tell someone the time, days and dates. In unit 9, making and responding to suggestions are the target language functions. In unit 10, explaining past events and the stages of a procedure and generating simple inquiries are focused on as target language functions.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

Students can reflect other people questions about their food preferences and talk about the foods that they like and dislike in unit 2. They can read and understand texts related to food and food preferences.

Students can listen and discover specific information about different weather conditions and emotions in unit 4. They can ask questions about the weather to people and talk about different weather conditions and their feelings. They can read and understand texts in respect to feelings, weather conditions, and the weather.

Students can listen and identify vocabulary utilized to denote the expressions of discrete emotions in unit 5. They can express their opinions and feelings about things and places. They can read and find the main ideas of texts about people's feelings and opinions about things and places.

Students can listen, read and understand the vocabulary related to people's occupations and the time, days, and dates in unit 6. They can talk about occupations, ask other people personal questions and tell them the time, days and dates. They can write about occupations and the dates.

Students can listen and apprehend the attitudes relevant to save energy and protect the environment in unit 9. They can also listen and understand suggestions made to protect nature. They can talk to other people about how to protect the environment and make suggestions on this issue. They can read and identify the texts related to how the environment can and should be protected. They can write about how they and other people can save the environment.

Students can listen to and understand the key features of democracy in unit 10. They can talk about democracy and how a classroom president is selected. They can describe the past and present events. They can read and understand vocabulary related to democracy. They can also write about democracy.

7th Grade

Units related to peace education

Similar to the 5th and 6th grades, there appear ten units in the 7th grade. Themes and target language functions relate units 1 (appearance and personality), 4 (wild animals), 6 (celebrations), 8 (public buildings) and 9 (environment) to peace education. In addition, target language functions relate units 2 (sports), 5 (television) and 7 (dreams) to peace education.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

The purpose of Unit 1 is to teach students how to make descriptions of people and characters through simple inquiries and to compare people by making explanations and giving reasons. Unit 2 aims to teach them how to talk about their own and other people's routines and daily activities and make a description of the regular actions of people by making explanations and giving reasons. The aim of unit 4 is to teach them how to make inquiries and suggestions and talk about the frequency of actions and past events by exerting explanations and reasons. The target language functions in unit 5 are to express preferences and personal opinions, make a description of the regular actions of people and talk about past

events. Making suggestions and arrangements, explaining the sequence of the actions and expressing needs and quantity are the target language functions in unit 6 besides accepting and refusing suggestions. Making predictions about the future and stating reasons and explanations occur as the target language functions in units 7 and 8 in order. Unit 9 aims to teach giving explanations and reasons, making the description of processes and expressing obligations to students.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

Students are expected to listen to and understand oral texts about appearances and personalities in unit 1. They can talk about and report on other people's personalities and appearances. They can read and understand a text related to appearances, personalities, and comparisons of these. They can write a paragraph to compare people with each other.

Students can listen and recognize frequency adverbs in unit 2. They can refer to their daily activities/routines by using frequency adverbs and giving explanations and reasons. They can write about their daily activities/routines through employing frequency adverbs.

Students can listen to, recognize wild animals' names and understand past and present events in unit 4. They can talk to other people about the characteristics of wild animals by asking some questions. They can make suggestions and report on past and present events. They can read, understand past and present events including explanations and reasons and identify the names of wild animals in the texts.

Students can listen to and understand texts about preferences and daily routines in unit 5. They can state their preferences and talk about other people's preferences by asking questions. They can also talk about personal experiences and past events. They can read and understand texts related to past events, daily routine and preferences. They can write about their daily routines and preferences.

In unit 6, students are expected to listen and identify vocabulary related to needs, suggestions and quantity of things. They can state their needs, make suggestions and talk about arrangements and order of events. They can read and understand texts related to celebrations. They can also invite people to a celebration by writing an invitation card.

In unit 7, students are supposed to listen and understand vocabulary with reference to future events and predictions. They can talk about and report on their predictions for the future. They can read and understand texts related to predictions and future events. They can also write about these concerns.

In unit 8, they can identify the names of public places and grasp explanations with their reasons in oral texts. They can make explanations about distinctive topics by expressing reasons and report on different explanations with reasons. They can comprehend texts about explanations given with reasons in reading texts. They can also write about the same subject.

In unit 9, students can understand vocabulary about the environment and follow the description of a process in oral texts. They can talk to other people about obligations and denote a description and instructions for a process. They can read and find specific information in texts about the environment. They can write about the environment and the description of a process.

8th Grade

Units related to peace education

There additionally exist ten units in the 8th grade. Target language functions relate units 3 (in the kitchen), 5 (the internet), 6 (adventures) and 8 (chores) to peace education, while themes and target language functions relate units 1 (friendship), 2 (teen life), 4 (on the phone), 7 (tourism) and 10 (natural forces) to it.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

Students study how to accept and refuse, to apologize, give reasons and explanations, and make inquiries as language functions in unit 1. They learn how to express their likes and dislikes, their preferences, and personal opinions in unit 2. Describing a process, expressing their preferences, and making inquiries are studied in unit 3. Unit 4 aims to train students on how to make and follow phone conversations and express decisions made at the moment of speaking. Unit 5 teaches how to accept, refuse and make excuses to students. In unit 6, students study how to express their preferences by giving reasons and explanations and compare people and/or things. In unit 7, students learn to make the description of places, state their preferences, give explanations and reasons, make comparison and talk about their experiences. How to express obligation, likes/dislikes and responsibilities is studied in unit 8. The target language function in unit 9 is to make predictions about the future by remarking the reasons and results of predictions.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

Students can understand specific information in oral texts related to apologizing, accepting and refusing an invitation/offer, and making inquiries in unit 1. They can take part in conversations on different subjects such as apologizing, accepting and refusing an invitation/offer, and making inquiries. They can make inquiries, make explanation and give

reasons. They can read and understand texts related to friendship and different types of invitations. They can write a letter of apology which specifies their excuse for not attending a party and states reasons for this.

Students can listen and recognize vocabulary related to teenagers' regular activities in unit 2. They can talk about the activities of teenagers, state their preferences, likes and dislikes and describe daily activities. They can read and understand texts about teenagers' regular activities. They can also write about the same subject.

Students can talk to other people about the process of something by asking and answering questions and exchanging information in unit 3. They can describe how something is processed. They can read, understand the texts about and write about the process of something.

In unit 4, students can understand vocabulary related to phone conversations and follow a phone conversation in oral texts. They can make a phone call, ask and respond to questions throughout that call. They can also state the decisions they make whilst the conversation. They can read and understand vocabulary corresponding to making a phone call.

In unit 5, students can understand vocabulary related to the Internet and the main idea of oral texts. They can express their Internet habits and exchange information about the Internet with other people. They can accept and refuse offers in addition to making excuses. They can read and discover the main ideas of and specific information in the texts related to the Internet. They can write about their Internet habits.

In unit 6, students listen to and follow a discussion about adventures. They can take part in conversations and identify their preferences, comparison and reasons. They can compare games and sports. They can read, comprehend the texts about adventures and find out the main points about adventures. They can write about the comparison of two things.

In unit 7, students can listen to and find specific information in oral texts about tourism. They can express their favorite tourist attractions in details and exchange information about tourism with other people. Furthermore, they can reflect their experiences about distinct places. They can read and extract specific information from texts about tourism. They can write and prepare a postcard, a brochure or an advertisement about their favorite tourist attractions.

In unit 8, students can find the main points in oral texts related to people's responsibilities. They can also comprehend likes, dislikes and obligations in oral texts. They

can expound their responsibilities, obligations, likes and dislikes. They can read, understand texts about and write about responsibilities.

In unit 9, students can comprehend the main ideas in TV news concerning natural forces and disasters. They can make predictions about the future of the world, talk about these issues and give reasons for and results of them. They can read and spot specific information in texts about natural disasters and forces. They can write about natural disasters and forces by giving reasons and results.

Discussion

The evaluation of the new ELTP of lower secondary education has showed that peace education has been integrated with the new ELTP in two ways. These ways are (a) themes and target language functions and (b) target language functions.

In the first way, themes have been used to contextualize several units in different grades such as units 5 (health) in the fifth grade, 10 (democracy) in the sixth grade, 1 (appearance and personality) in the seventh grade and 1 (friendship) in the eighth grade as Arikan (2009) did in teaching English grammar. Target language functions are determined according to these themes in those units, and accordingly, the learning objectives of those units are formed. To exemplify, unit 10 in the sixth grade is contextualized through the theme 'democracy' that is directly related to peace education. The target language functions of this unit are explaining past events and the stages of a procedure and making simple inquiries in relation to democracy to which the learning objectives of this unit are related tightly. Students are expected to listen and understand the key features of democracy in addition to talking about democracy and how a classroom president is selected. Besides, they are also supposed to read and understand vocabulary related to democracy as well as write about democracy.

Besides the first way, target language functions relate several units such as unit 6 (movies) in the fifth grade, 6 (occupations) in the sixth grade, 7 (dreams) in the seventh grade and 8 (chores) in the eighth grade to peace education because these target language functions require students' interaction and communication with other people. The learning objectives of such units are related to the target language functions tightly. To illustrate, unit 8 (chores) aims to teach students how to express obligation, likes/dislikes, and responsibilities, which makes students interact and communicate with each other so that students can express them in an appropriate way. Accordingly, all learning objectives in unit 8 are aligned with this language function tightly. Students are expected to find the main points in oral texts related to people's responsibilities and to comprehend likes, dislikes and obligations in oral texts. They are supposed to talk about their responsibilities, obligations, likes and dislikes. They are also

expected to understand reading texts about responsibilities and write about their feelings and responsibilities.

Personal peace, peace with the human family and peace with nature are the three types of peace education (Gebregeorgis, 2017; Renner, 1991; Yusuf, 2011). Considering the themes and target language functions in the new ELTP of lower secondary education, students can learn and study three types of peace education when they learn and study English according to the new ELTP. That is, each grade has units that are related to one or two types of peace education. In the fifth grade, units 1 (hello), 2 (my hometown), 3 (games and hobbies), 5 (health), 6 (movies), 7 (party time), 8 (fitness) and 10 (festivals) are related to personal peace and peace with the human family because of their themes and/or target language functions. Unit 9 (the animal shelter) is related to peace with nature in the fifth grade. In the sixth grade, personal peace and peace with the human family are related to units 2 (yummy breakfast), 5 (at the fair), 6 (occupations) and 10 (democracy), while peace with nature are related to units 4 (weather and emotions) and 9 (saving the planet). In the seventh grade, peace with the human family and personal peace can be taught with units 1 (appearance and personality), 2 (sports), 5 (television), 6 (celebrations), 7 (dreams) and 8 (public buildings). Peace with nature can be taught in units 4 (wild animals) and 9 (environment). In the eighth grade, units 1 (friendship), 2 (teen life), 3 (in the kitchen), 4 (on the phone), 5 (the internet), 6 (adventures), 7 (tourism) and 8 (chores) are related to peace with the human family and personal peace. Unit 10 (natural forces) is related to peace with nature. Unit 5 (health) in the fifth grade can help to understand how units are related to the types of peace education. Students learn how to make simple suggestions and talk about needs, illnesses, and feelings in unit 5. In relation to these language functions, they are expected to recognize some sicknesses and apprehend some suggestions for those sicknesses in oral texts. They are also expected to talk about their basic feelings and needs about different sicknesses by naming those sicknesses in addition to understanding reading texts which reflect information about different sicknesses, feelings and needs. Considering the theme, target language functions, and learning objectives of unit 5, students can learn and talk about their illnesses, needs and feelings when they learn English, so this can contribute to their personal peace as they can learn to pay attention to their health as Renner (1991) stated. Students can also pay attention to the wellbeing of other people since they can also make simple suggestions to people about their illnesses. Therefore, unit 5 can be related to peace with the human family this concern requires considering the wellbeing of other people (Renner, 1991). Unit 9 (saving the planet) in the sixth grade is related to peace with nature. In

unit 9, students learn how to make and respond to suggestions about the protection of nature. In accordance with this target language function, they are expected to explore the attitudes relevant to save energy and protect the environment and to understand suggestions made to protect nature in oral texts. They are also supposed to talk to other people about how to protect the environment and make suggestions for this. Besides, they are expected to grasp the texts related to how the environment can and should be protected in reading texts and to write about how they and other people can save the environment. Therefore, unit 9 can help students to promote environmental sustainability, consciousness and security as Renner (1991) specified.

The new ELTP of lower secondary school is integrated with peace education through several units in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades as Fountain (1999) emphasized that peace education should not be considered as a separate subject in the curriculum, but it can be integrated with other subjects. Therefore, it can contribute to peace education in English language classes as designated in the conceptual papers (Abid, 2016; Finch, 2004; Kruger, 2012; Renner, 1991; Sun, 2017; Şahin, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017; Vandrick, 1996; Yusuf, 2011) and in the research papers (Arikan, 2009; Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013; Gebregeorgis, 2017; Gutiérrez et al., 2020). Thus, it can help students to become peaceful people, which is the goal of peace education (UNESCO, 2001).

Conclusion

The findings of the present study indicate that the new ELTP of lower secondary school has several units related to peace education in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. According to the findings, the units are related to peace education with regard to their themes and/or target language functions. Besides, the learning objectives of each unit in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades are tightly aligned with the themes and/or target language functions related to peace education. Therefore, the new ELTP of lower secondary school of Turkey can be used to encourage students to grow up as individuals who have personal peace, peace with the human family and peace with nature.

Implications of the present study

The present study shows how peace education can be integrated with an English language teaching program or curriculum at the national level. Curriculum designers and developers and course book writers can integrate peace education with English language teaching by basing the contextualization of units on themes such as human rights and/or target language functions such as expressing opinions, all of which are related to peace education. Then, they can prepare learning objectives by aligning them with themes and/or

target language functions. As a result, they can assist students to become peaceful people by enabling them to learn and study peace education while they study and learn English.

The present study can also enable English language teachers to integrate their English lessons with peace education by following the same procedure. It can also help teachers to assess their syllabi or curricula critically in terms of peace education and to explore their strengths and weaknesses. It can also enable them to overcome the weaknesses of their syllabi and curriculum by showing them how peace education can be integrated with an English language teaching curriculum.

Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

This research has some limitations. The first limitation is the research context as the present study was implemented in Turkey. The second limitation is the scope of the research as the study evaluated only the new ELTP of the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades (lower secondary school). The third limitation is that the study did not evaluate the English language teaching courses prepared according to the new ELTP to check how themes, target language functions and learning objectives related to peace education are realized in the course books.

By following the methodology of this study, similar studies can be conducted on the ELTPs of primary schools and high schools in Turkey and on different ELTPs in different countries. The 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade English language courses of Turkey can be investigated to support the findings of this study. Similar curriculum evaluation studies could be integrated with course book evaluation studies. Thus, the findings of such studies can aid English language teachers, course book writers and curriculum developers to evaluate their own curricula or syllabi, discover the strengths and weaknesses of these concerns and improve their weaknesses in order to help their students to become peaceful people.

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