INTEGRATING PEACE EDUCATION INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Peace education is a significant aspect of education as it aims to teach individuals to deal with violence and conflicts in a peaceful way. A literature review indicated that peace education can be integrated into English language teaching (ELT) and learned by students while they study English in middle and high schools and at universities, but how peace education can be integrated into ELT in primary schools has not been studied. Therefore, the present study aimed to find out whether peace education is integrated into the new English language teaching program (ELTP) for primary schools in Turkey and, if it is, how it is integrated into the ELTP. This work was designed as a qualitative study. The new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey was used as the data collection tool and data were subjected to content analysis. The findings of the study indicated that peace education is integrated into the new ELTP through the themes and/or language functions of the units in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades. Findings also showed that the units related to peace education can help students study three aspects of peace education, which are inner peace, social peace, and peace with nature. The findings were discussed and suggestions for further studies were made.

Keywords: Peace education, new English language teaching program in Turkey, primary schools, English language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

People in any part of the world may be exposed or may have been exposed to violence and conflicts (Billings Chilcoat, 2017; Borg & Grech, 2014; Buck, 2016; Costa & Ivenicki, 2016; Manojlovic, 2018; Snauwaert, 2019; Verma, 2017). Violence and conflicts result from human-related factors such as gender, religion, and ethnicity (Borg & Grech, 2014; Manojlovic, 2018). People's inner peace, social peace, and peace with nature may deteriorate due to violence and conflicts as Agnihotri (2017), Gebregeorgis (2017), and Renner (1991) emphasized. According to Agnihotri (2017), Bajaj (2015), Borg and Grech (2014), and Verma (2017), such deterioration may create serious physical, political, psychological, economic, and ecological effects in people's lives such as homicide, suicide, oppression, and inequalities. Therefore, the exposure to violence and conflicts and their deteriorating effects on people's lives have made peace a significant part of people's lives. Peace education has accordingly become an important aspect of education, which makes it essential to understand what peace education means.

Theoretical Background of the Study

Peace education is defined as an instructional process in which students learn values, skills, knowledge, and attitudes related to peace to deal with conflicts and violence peacefully (Manojlovic, 2018; Ubogu, 2016; Yusuf, 2011). Due to their effects on individuals, societies, and the environment, learning values, skills, knowledge, and attitudes to handle conflicts and violence peacefully can affect students' inner and social peace as well as their peace with nature (Agnihotri, 2017; Bajaj, 2015; Borg & Grech, 2014; Verma, 2017). Therefore, students should learn and practice the three aspects of peace education: inner peace, social peace, and peace with nature (Agnihotri, 2017; Renner, 1991). According to Agnihotri (2017) and Renner (1991), inner peace teaches students to have peace with themselves regarding their bodies, hearts, and minds, while social peace helps them to promote human rights, justice, and peaceful conflict resolution as well as other people's well-being. Peace with nature

assists students in consciously protecting and sustaining the environment (Agnihotri, 2017; Renner, 1991). According to UNESCO (2001), peace education consequently aims to help people grow up as peaceful individuals who are:

1. critical and positive thinkers,
2. respectful of human dignity,
3. peace builders in their communities,
4. non-violent conflict resolvers,
5. their true selves,
6. in peace with their inner selves,
7. knowledgeable enough to live together,
8. caregivers of the planet, and
9. compassionate, not harmful.

Peace Education and English Language Teaching

Peace education can be given as a separate curriculum subject or can be integrated into other subjects. According to Fountain (1999), it can be integrated into language teaching. English language teaching (ELT) can also contribute to peace education since both conceptual papers (Abid, 2016; Kruger, 2012; Natarajan, 2018; Sun, 2017; Şahin, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017; Yusuf, 2011) and research papers (Arikan, 2009; Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013; Gebregeorgis, 2017; Gutiérrez, Guerrero, & Bohórquez, 2020) in the literature related to peace education and ELT have indicated that students can learn and practice peace education while they learn English. On the one hand, the conceptual papers in the literature have discussed how peace education can be integrated into ELT by English language teachers in general English language courses (Abid, 2016; Kruger, 2012; Natarajan, 2018; Şahin, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017). Regarding the promotion of peace education, Sun (2017) also wrote about how to use graphic novels in a middle school English class, and Yusuf (2011) suggested the use of reading in English in primary schools. On the other hand, research papers have considered the following topics:

1. teaching English grammar to high school students through peace education (Arikan, 2009),
2. using English as a peacemaker with pre-service English language teachers (Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013),
3. peace values in a high school English language coursebook (Gebregeorgis, 2017), and
4. using artifacts as peacemakers with middle school students (Gutiérrez et al., 2020).

However, none of these papers focused on peace education in English language classes in primary schools except for that by Yusuf (2011). He discussed the promotion of peace education through English reading classes in primary schools, but not how peace education can be integrated into an English language teaching program (ELTP) and promoted through the ELTP in primary schools.

Aim of the Study and Research Questions

Due to the gap in the literature, this study aimed to find out whether peace education is integrated into the new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey (the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades) and, if it is integrated, how it is integrated into the new ELTP by answering the following research questions:

Is peace education integrated into the new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey?
If it is, how is it integrated into the new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey?

METHOD

Research Design

The aim of this study requires a complex and detailed understanding of an issue under investigation to explore it. Therefore, it was designed as a qualitative study because, according to Creswell (2007, 2014), qualitative research enables researchers to understand an issue by providing a detailed and full understanding so that they can explore it thoroughly.

Data Collection Tool

The data were collected through part of the English language teaching program (primary and lower secondary school 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades) of the Ministry of National Education (2018) for primary schools.

Data Analysis

The new ELTP of Turkey for primary schools was content-analyzed by following the approach suggested by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013) for content analysis. First, the document was read many times by the researcher to derive codes. The data were categorized into meaningful units, which were conceptualized through the derived codes. Second, the data were organized according to the derived codes and were presented by the researcher without adding any comments to the analysis. Third, the data were interpreted by the researcher without any conflict with the description of the data.

Trustworthiness

To make the present study trustworthy (i.e., reliable and valid), the new ELTP of Turkey for primary schools was also content-analyzed by a colleague of the researcher who has a PhD. degree in ELT and has conducted qualitative research using content analysis. The researcher and his colleague compared their content analyses, talked about the similarities and differences in their analyses, and made changes related to the differences by reaching a consensus.

RESULTS

The results of the present study including the themes, language functions, and learning outcomes are given separately below for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades.

2nd Grade

Inner Peace

The results related to inner peace in the 2nd grade are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Units related to inner peace and what relates them to inner peace

Units	What relates units to inner peace	Theme	Language function
5	Language function		Expressing likes and dislikes
7	Theme and language function	Body parts	Talking about one's possessions
			Making inquiries about them
9	Language function		Expressing likes and dislikes
10	Language function		Expressing likes and dislikes

According to Table 1, the language functions of units 5, 9, and 10 connect with inner peace. They express likes and dislikes. Students can talk about the colors, fruits, and animals they like and dislike in units 5, 9, and 10, respectively. Unit 10 also trains students on how to express abilities as one of its language functions. Respecting this function, students can understand vocabulary related to abilities in oral texts. They can also talk to other people about their abilities.

The theme and language functions of unit 7 link to inner peace. "Body parts" are its theme, and they are used to teach students how to talk about one's possessions and make inquiries as language functions. Students can recognize the names of their body parts in an oral text and tell other people the names of their body parts at the end of the unit.

Social peace

Table 2 presents the units related to social peace and what relates them to social peace in the 2nd grade.

According to Table 2, the themes and language functions of units 2, 3, and 6 relate to social peace. The theme of unit 2 is based on "friends," and its language functions are greeting and meeting people and asking a person's name. Students are expected to recognize greeting and meeting expressions in oral texts and when people introduce themselves. They are also expected to introduce themselves, greet and meet other people, and ask other people questions to learn their names and feelings.

Table 2. Units related to social peace and what relates them to social peace

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
2	Theme and language function	Friends	Greeting and meeting people Asking a person's name
3	Theme and language function	In the classroom	Giving directions, explaining and responding to thanks Asking for clarification Giving and responding to instructions
6	Theme and language function	At the playground	Making inquiries and suggestions

The theme of unit 3 is "in the classroom." It aims to teach students how to (a) give directions, (b) explain and respond to thanks, (c) ask for clarification, and (d) give instructions and respond to them as language functions. Students are supposed to comprehend instructions and follow directions in oral texts. They are also supposed to express and respond to thanks, ask other people for clarification, and tell other people how to do things in the classroom.

The theme of unit 6 is "at the playground," through which students study and learn how to make inquiries and suggestions as language functions. Students can understand suggestions in oral texts. They can also join a conversation by asking questions, answering them, and making suggestions.

Peace with Nature

Table 3 indicates the units related to peace with nature and what relates them to peace with nature in the 2nd grade

Table 3. Units related to peace with nature and what relates them to peace with nature

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
8	Theme and language function	Pets	Making inquiries about pets Talking about the location of animals
9	Theme and language function	Fruit	Telling other people what to do Giving and responding to instructions Explaining likes and dislikes
10	Theme and language function	Animals	Making inquiries about animals Explaining likes and dislikes

Units 8, 9, and 10 are related to peace with nature in terms of their themes and language functions as shown in Table 3. "Pets" are the theme of unit 8 and are used to teach the language functions of making inquiries and talking about the location of animals. Students can recognize certain pets and follow instructions about the locations and names of pets in oral texts. They can also tell other people the names and locations of pets.

The theme of unit 9 is based on "fruit." Telling other people what to do, giving and responding to instructions, and explaining likes and dislikes are taught as language functions. Students are expected to identify the names of fruits in an oral text. They are also expected to talk to other people about the fruits they like and dislike and to tell other people what to do with fruit.

"Animals" are the theme of unit 10 and are used to train students on how to make inquiries and express abilities, likes, and dislikes as language functions. Students can identify the names of certain animals and understand the vocabulary related to abilities in oral texts. They can speak to other people about their and animals' abilities as well as the animals that they like and dislike.

3rd Grade

Inner Peace

The units related to inner peace and what relates them to inner peace in the 3rd grade are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Units related to inner peace and what relates them to inner peace

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
4	Theme and language function	Feelings	Expressing feelings Making suggestions
10	Language function		Explaining likes and dislikes

As Table 4 shows, unit 4 can help students learn inner peace in terms of its theme and language functions. Its theme is "feelings." How to express feelings and how to make suggestions are studied as the language functions. Concerning the theme and language functions, students can listen to and recognize suggestions and the names of feelings. They can express their feelings and make suggestions to other people.

Unit 10 can assist students in learning inner peace because of its language function. Students learn how to express their likes and dislikes as a language function in this unit. Concerning this function, they are expected to talk about the animals they like and dislike.

Social Peace
Table 5 indicates the units related to social peace and what relates them to social peace in the 3rd grade.

Table 5. Units related to social peace and what relates them to social peace

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
1	Theme and language function	Greeting	Introducing oneself Greeting and saluting people
2	Theme and language function	My family	Asking about family members Introducing family members
3	Theme and language function	People I love	Describing people and characters Expressing abilities and inabilities
7	Language function		Apologizing Talking about the locations of people and things
8	Language function		Expressing locations of things Asking and giving information about transportation

According to Table 5, units 1, 2, and 3 can help students learn social peace because of their themes and language functions. "Greeting" is the theme of unit 1, and its target language functions are how to introduce oneself, greet people, and address them. At the end of the unit, students can recognize expressions of greeting and address, the alphabet, and numbers in oral texts. They can also introduce themselves to other people, greet other people, and spell their names.

The theme of unit 2 is based on "my family," through which students learn the language function of how to ask about and introduce family members. Concerning this theme and language function, students can recognize the names of family members in oral texts. They can also ask and talk about the relationships of family members while introducing them.

The theme of unit 3 is "people I love." It aims to teach students how to describe people and characters and express their abilities and inabilities. Accordingly, students can identify the physical qualities of people in oral texts. They can also talk about the physical qualities, abilities, and inabilities of people.

Units 7 and 8 can help students learn social peace due to their language functions. Unit 7 aims to educate students on language functions such as how to apologize and talk about the locations of people and things. Concerning these functions, students can understand the types of buildings and parts of a city and follow instructions about them in oral texts. They can talk to other people about the locations of different places on a city map. They can also express their apologies.

Students study and learn how to express the locations of things and ask for and give information about transportation as the language functions in unit 8. Regarding these functions, they are expected to comprehend the types of vehicles and instructions about transportation in oral texts. They are also expected to talk to other people about the locations and use of vehicles.

Peace with Nature

Table 6 below presents the units related to peace with nature and what relates them to it in the 3rd grade.

Table 6. Units related to peace with nature and what relates them to peace with nature

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
9	Theme and language function	Weather	Describing the weather
10	Theme and language function	Nature	Expressing likes and dislikes Making inquiries Talking about animals and nature

The themes and language functions of units 9 and 10 link to peace with nature as shown in Table 6. In unit 9, "weather" is the theme and students study how to describe the weather as the language function. Students can recognize weather conditions in oral texts and describe weather conditions at the end of the unit.

In unit 10, the theme is based on "nature," through which students learn how to express their likes and dislikes, make inquiries, and talk about animals and nature as language functions. Students are expected to identify nature and animals and follow the instructions about nature and animals in oral texts. They are also expected to talk about nature, animals, and the animals they like and dislike.

4th Grade

Inner Peace

The units related to inner peace and what relates them to it in the 4th grade are indicated in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Units related to inner peace and what relates them to inner peace

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
3	Language function		Expressing abilities and inabilities Talking about possessions
4	Language function		Expressing likes and dislikes
8	Language function		Expressing different weather conditions and basic needs Making requests
10	Language function		Talking about basic needs and feelings

Table 7 shows that the language functions in units 3, 4, 8, and 10 can help students learn inner peace. Students learn how to express their abilities and inabilities and to talk about their possessions as language functions in unit 3. At the end of the unit, they are expected to talk about their abilities, inabilities, and possessions.

In unit 4, students study how to express their likes and dislikes as a language function. With this function, they can talk about their likes and dislikes at the end of the unit.

Unit 8 teaches students how to describe different weather conditions and their basic needs and make requests as language functions. They are supposed to make requests and talk about their basic needs in terms of clothing in different weather conditions by asking and answering questions at the end of the unit.

Unit 10 aims to train students to talk about their basic needs and feelings as a language function. Accordingly, students can listen to and recognize offers about their basic needs and other people's feelings and needs. They can also express their needs and feelings.

Social Peace

The units related to social peace and what relates them to it in the 4th grade are given in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Units related to social peace and what relates them to social peace

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
1	Theme and language function	Classroom rules	Making request Asking for permission Telling other people what to do
2	Theme and language function	Nationality	Identifying countries and nationalities Talking about the locations of cities
3	Language function		Expressing their own and other people's abilities and inabilities Talking about their own and other people's possessions
4	Language function		Expressing likes and dislikes Making inquiries Asking for clarification
7	Language function		Describing people's jobs, Explaining likes Making inquiries
9	Theme and language function	My friends	Describing people Talking about possessions

According to Table 8, units 1, 2, and 9 can help students learn social peace in terms of their themes and language functions. The theme of unit 1 is "classroom rules," in which students learn how to make requests, ask for permission, and tell other people what to do as language functions. Students can comprehend utterances about requests and permission and notice classroom rules in oral texts. They can ask for and give permission and make requests. They can also give and respond to instructions.

"Nationality" is the theme of unit 2, through which identifying countries and nationalities and talking about the locations of cities are covered as language functions. Students can listen to and identify information about other people and their nationalities. They can also talk to other people about nations, nationalities, and the locations of cities.

In unit 9, the theme is "my friends," and its language functions are describing people and talking about possessions. Students are expected to comprehend oral texts about possessions and the descriptions and features of people. They are also expected to describe other people and talk about their possessions and physical appearances by asking and answering questions.

The language functions of units 3, 4, and 7 connect with social peace. Students learn to express other people's abilities and inabilities and to talk about their abilities, inabilities, and possessions as language functions in unit 3. They can also understand the main idea of an oral text about abilities and notice possessions in an oral text.

Unit 4 aims to train students on how to express their likes and dislikes, make inquiries, and ask for clarification as its language functions. Accordingly, students can comprehend an oral text about likes and dislikes. They can participate in a conversation about likes and dislikes and ask other people for clarification.

Unit 7 aims to teach how to describe people's jobs, to explain what they like, and to make inquiries as language functions. Concerning these functions, students can recognize other people's jobs and likes in oral texts and talk to other people about these issues.

Peace with Nature

Table 9 indicates units related to peace with nature and what relates them to it in the 4th grade.

Table 9. Units related to peace with nature and what relates them to peace with nature

Units	What relates units to social peace	Theme	Language function
8	Language function		Expressing different weather conditions and basic needs Making requests Naming seasons
10	Theme and language function	Food and drinks	Making offers Talking about basic needs and feelings

As understood from Table 9, students can learn peace with nature in unit 8 because of its language functions. Students learn how to discuss different weather conditions and their basic needs, make requests, and name seasons. Utilizing these language functions, students can comprehend oral texts about different weather conditions and clothing and notice seasons and clothes in oral texts. They can describe weather conditions and make requests. They can also name the seasons and participate in conversations about weather conditions and clothing by asking and answering questions.

Unit 10 is the other unit related to peace with nature owing to its themes and language functions. "Food and drinks" are its themes, and students learn how to make offers and talk about their basic needs and feelings as language functions in this unit. Accordingly, students can understand vocabulary about food and drinks, offers about their basic needs, and other people's feelings and needs in oral texts. They can also talk about their and other people's needs and feelings.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Peace education is integrated into the new ELTP in Turkey in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades through the themes and/or language functions of the units. The themes of the units are directly connected with peace education in terms of inner peace, social peace, and peace with nature. Inner peace is an aspect of peace education that helps a person to have peace in his/her heart, mind, and body (Agnihotri, 2017; Renner, 1991). For example, "feelings" is the theme of unit 4 in the 3rd grade, and this contributes to the establishment of inner peace because if a person can express his/her feelings, he/she can express himself/herself better. This can contribute to his/her inner peace. Another aspect of peace education is social peace, which helps students consider other people in their actions and relations by promoting human rights, justice, and the well-being of other people (Agnihotri, 2017; Renner, 1991). Social peace also deals with "friendship," which is the theme of unit 2 in the 2nd grade, and it requires considering other people. The last aspect of peace education is peace with nature, which contributes to the conscious protection and sustainment of the environment (Agnihotri, 2017; Renner, 1991). Thus, everything related to nature and the environment is a part of peace with nature. For instance, in the 3rd grade, unit 10 is related to peace with nature as its theme is "nature." In sum, choosing themes related to the three aspects of peace education can create a connection between peace education and ELT to be used for their integration.

In addition to themes, language functions link the new ELTP to peace education. Language functions are closely aligned with themes in several units related to peace education. Thus, language functions can help students learn inner peace, social peace, and peace with nature. To clarify, unit 7 in the 2nd grade contributes to peace education through its theme and language functions. Its theme is "body parts," through which it aims to teach students how to talk about and make inquiries about possessions (i.e., their body parts), and so unit 7 can assist students in learning inner peace as Agnihotri (2017) and Renner (1991) stated. Language functions can also connect units with peace education on their own though the themes of units are not based on any aspect of peace education. For instance, unit 7 in the 3rd grade relates the new ELTP to social peace because apologizing is one of its language functions

and that can be considered as an important aspect of social relations that help to promote social peace among people.

The present study has indicated that the new ELTP for primary schools can help students learn peace education while they learn English by means of the themes and/or language functions of the units in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades as discussed in the relevant literature (Abid, 2016; Kruger, 2012; Natarajan, 2018; Sun, 2017; Şahin, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017; Yusuf, 2011). These studies have also described how ELT teachers can integrate peace education into their English classes (Abid, 2016; Kruger, 2012; Natarajan, 2018; Şahin, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017). In terms of this aspect, this study has shown that the new ELTP for primary schools can also help ELT teachers study peace education with their students in primary schools. Sun (2017) and Yusuf (2011) focused on reading as a way to integrate peace education into ELT. In addition to reading, this study has demonstrated that listening and speaking can also be used for the same purpose because students in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades mainly study and practice listening and speaking skills in the new ELTP. Additionally, the listening and speaking outcomes of the units are closely aligned with the themes and/or language functions of the units. Therefore, when students study and practice listening and speaking, they can learn both English and peace education, like the students who learned English grammar through peace education in Arikan's (2009) study. Research has also indicated that students can learn peace education in English language classes in middle and high schools and at universities (Arikan, 2009; Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013; Gebregeorgis, 2017; Gutiérrez et al., 2020). Similarly, the present study has shown that students can learn peace education in English language classes in primary schools. This study has also indicated that peace values such as friendship are embedded in the new ELTP for primary schools similarly to peace values integrated into an English language teaching coursebook (Gebregeorgis, 2017). Moreover, the results of this study are consistent with the study of Fountain (1999), who stated that peace education can be integrated into language teaching.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that peace education is integrated into the new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey through the themes and/or language functions of several units in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades. According to the results of the study, themes are chosen from among topics connected with peace education, and language functions are determined according to the themes in some units in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades. In other units related to peace education, though the themes of these units are not linked to peace education, the language functions studied in these units are connected with peace education. The results of this study have also demonstrated that the new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey has several units in which themes and/or language functions relate to inner peace, social peace, and peace with nature in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades so that primary school students can learn and practice these aspects of peace education while learning English.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Similar studies following the same methodology can be conducted with different national English language teaching curricula, the curricula or syllabi of English language courses, English language teaching coursebooks, and English language teaching materials in terms of peace education. The results of such studies can assist English language teachers, course designers, curriculum developers, and coursebook writers to discover the strengths and weaknesses of their curricula, syllabi, coursebooks, and teaching materials and improve them.

Limitations of the Study

The present study has four limitations. First, its research focus (i.e., the new ELTP for primary schools in Turkey) creates a limitation. The second limitation is its research design (i.e., qualitative research). Thirdly, not including English language teachers in the present study is another limitation. However, the present study did not intend to investigate the perceptions of English language teachers about the new ELTP in terms of peace education or how English language teachers teach the units in the new ELTP related to peace education in their classes. Not having studied how the units related to peace education in the coursebooks that were prepared according to the new ELTP is the last limitation.

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