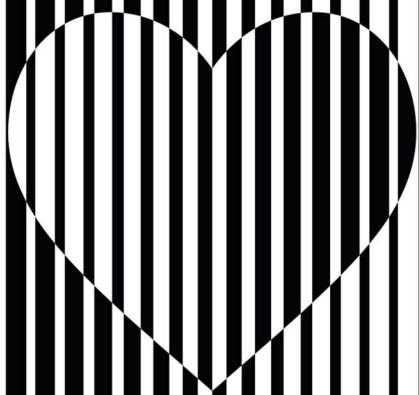


# Creating Classrooms of Peace in English Language Teaching



Edited by Barbara M. Birch

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# CREATING CLASSROOMS OF PEACE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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**Barbara M. Birch** is a professor in the Department of Linguistics at California State University, Fresno, California, USA.

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# CREATING CLASSROOMS OF PEACE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

*Edited by Barbara M. Birch*

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# PREFACE

This volume is about how English language teachers are already contributing to peace locally and globally. It is the product of my boredom and isolation during the early days of the pandemic in 2020. I put out a call for chapters on social media and the result was a nice number of proposals from educators who are already involved in creating classrooms of peace in English language teaching. I meant this to be a companion volume to my earlier more theoretical book *The English Language Teacher in Global Civil Society*, but it stands on its own. In these chapters, I found that English language teachers and learners already play an important role in conflict transformation and reconciliation in deeply divided and diverse societies. English language classrooms are already focal points for change. The central premises of this volume are:

- English language teachers are a global resource for sustainable peace; they are global citizens
- English language teachers understand the local causes of conflict and violence and are willing to find ways to transform it
- Teachers and learners, as global citizens, can imagine a preferred future and work towards it together through peace and social justice education

This book merely taps the surface of everything teachers are trying to do, but it provides examples for others who may be interested in promoting reconciliation and sustainable peace in their own way. This book will help teachers around the world take action toward creating more peaceful societies by

- Advocating for comprehensive committed national and regional policies and professional training in classroom management and techniques designed for transformation

- Showing how teachers can take an activist role to promote social change within their teaching environment and their classrooms
- Providing examples of how teachers are using peace education techniques and materials in their classrooms with the aim of creating spaces for better understanding and reconciliation

I had envisioned a very different structure but the project grew organically and synergistically into a three-way organization based on different levels of application. As such, it is a much better book than I had imagined.

### **Part 1 Policy and Implementation for Peace**

I believe that comprehensive peace and social justice education and committed education for global citizenship have never been implemented before as national policies. This section discusses the educational policies in Colombia and a course in peace education that is part of an MA program in English language teaching.

### **Part 2 Teacher Education for Peace**

At present it seems that professional instruction in peace and social justice education or for global citizenship is piecemeal rather than comprehensive. However, we can learn a lot from teacher training programs or workshops that have already taken place. In particular, these chapters highlight certain personal characteristics that seem true of global citizen teachers and that underlie their commitment to peace and social justice education.

### **Part 3 Content and Lesson Planning for Peace**

This section presents a number of classrooms where global citizen teachers are already attempting to make a difference in their local situations through their choice of course content, methods, and classroom management techniques.

My hope is that this book will be widely used as a resource for English language policy writers, teacher trainers, pre-service teachers, and practicing classroom teachers around the world.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to my husband, Jim, for his constant love, help, and encouragement, and to my family for their positivity and support. I enjoyed some great socially distanced visits with my daughters and their significant others. Thanks are due also to the colleague who has supported me during this project and all my other projects, Eli Hinkel. I acknowledge with thanks each and every educator who wrote chapters for this book. I cannot forget to mention all the English language teachers and students I have met in Spain, Ecuador, the United States, Pakistan, Macedonia, and Mongolia, from whom I have learned so much. I am indebted to Karen Adler for her trust and vision in moving forward with this project.

# 1

## SPECIES IDENTITY AND CREATING CLASSROOMS OF PEACE

*Barbara M. Birch*

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, USA

Boulding's concepts of *species identity* and *civic culture* were the inspiration for my 2009 book *The English Language Teacher in Global Civil Society* and for this book as well. These concepts can be found in the following quote:

Whether based on religious or secular-humanist beliefs, there are people in all countries who feel allegiance to a community that in one sense does not exist—the community of humankind. It is this allegiance that we are calling species identity. The community of humankind is a country without borders, with no capital city and with only one law—to avoid doing harm to any fellow human beings. However, one cannot feel allegiance to an abstraction. That is where the concept of civic culture comes in. It can only become operational through a set of common understandings developed on the basis of interaction in all the ways we have been describing in these chapters: between governments, in the United Nations, and between people across national borders. We have to enter into more social interaction and become more consciously linked across national borders, to give substance to that civic culture.

*(Boulding, 1990, pp. 65–66)*

Boulding (1920–2010) was born in Norway, and although she moved to the United States as a small child, her family felt the effects of the German invasion of Norway. Boulding understood early on that war was both a global concern and a local personal concern. She married, raised five children with her husband, earned a doctorate, and became one of the co-founders of the field of study now known as Peace and Conflict Studies. A prolific writer, she was a big-picture theorist and visionary who saw connections between family, culture,

and spirituality as the foundations for lasting peace. Boulding has been a role model for me for decades, although I am far from being as illustrious or productive as she was. I have been a proponent for peace since childhood but I became an activist in 1988 when my family, living in Islamabad, Pakistan at the time, suffered from the sabotage of a weapons depot in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Although the falling bombs didn't kill anyone in my family, the random danger to everyone made me realize in a visceral way that wars and violence seem to occur at national and global levels but their primary effects victimize women, children, men, families, and neighbors locally, at the home and neighborhood level.

In 1992, Robertson used the term *glocalization*, a blend of globalization and localization that pointed to a new sociopsychological space for innovative dialogue and agency to emerge. War and violence are *glocal*, an adjective that signals the crucial bidirectionality between national/world concerns and local cities, towns, and neighborhoods and crucially the people who inhabit them. My motivation for peacebuilding is to help English language teachers find a place in that creative tension where they take advantage of their social capital and pedagogical agency to extend the cause of peace in their classrooms. A cliché can be a truism: we simply need to learn to get along better to create a more just world. I have asked the authors in this volume to write their stories of how they became interested in teaching peace. Peace must be practical, and reach into the daily lives of all citizens of the planet. Peace must become part of our common identity as a human race.

*The English Language Teacher in Global Civil Society* used the Earth Charter vision of a sustainable world that embraces species identity, civic culture, common interest, and reciprocity to create peaceful societies and nations. The Earth Charter is still a relevant symbolic act today; it legitimizes a 'we' as the unified voice of a species, an imagined community with a common destiny at a transitional time in history. The Preamble to the Earth Charter ends with a humanist prayer: "Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life." Is this too lofty or too challenging a goal? Not if we keep it local so that it can percolate upwards. What is the global but a million local intentions and actions?

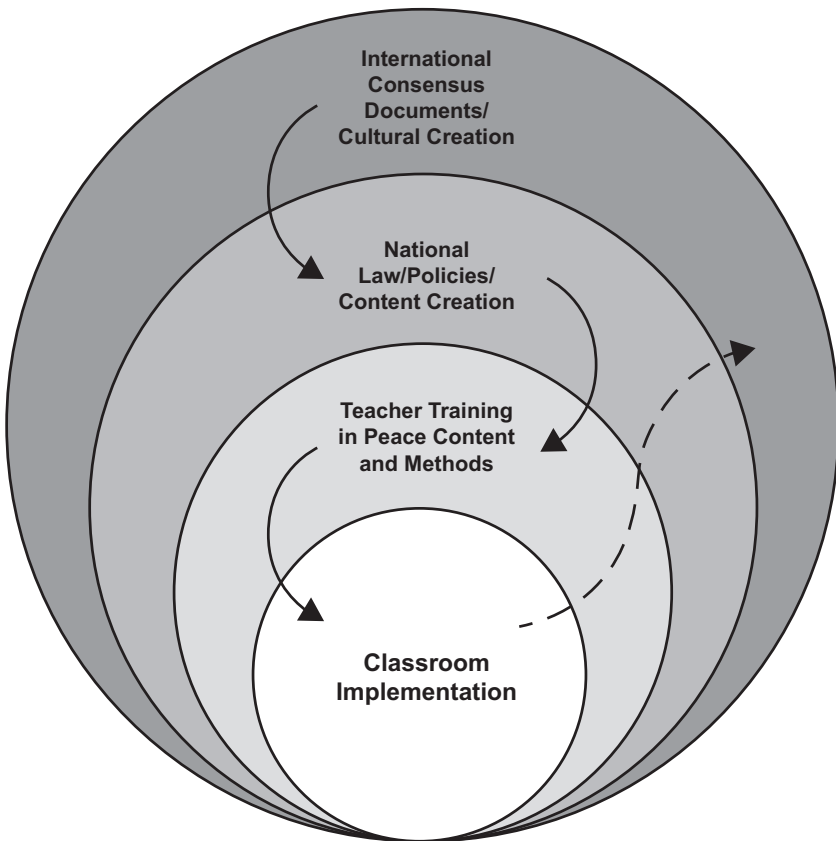
## Committed Comprehensive Investment

Peace education must lead to more sustainable, that is, long-term and sturdy, models of peace. It cannot be subject to the whims of policy makers or administrators. Part 1 of this volume details the policies enacted in one war-torn country, Colombia, in order to change the educational system and curriculum. Chapter 2 (Ferrer Ariza, Forero, and Sánchez Cardona) argues that educational policies and institutions at the national level can play a strategic role in the construction of more harmonious and empathetic local and global societies.

Chapter 3 (Ferrer Ariza, Forero, and Sánchez Cardona) describes how national policies on peace education are implemented in a Masters Program in English Language Teaching in Colombia. Teachers need meaningful systematic training in order to feel comfortable teaching about peace (Part 2) and creating peaceful classrooms where students learn about peace peacefully (Part 3). For peace education to be sustainable and comprehensive in extended areas of the world, significant large-scale commitment, funding, planning, and implementation are necessary at the national (and even possibly international) level, as shown in Figure 1.1.

### The Goals of Peace Education in ELT

Species identity names a felt sense of affiliation with other people, strangers; it is a glocal (vertical) and collective (horizontal) experience of identity with humanity. Species identity is the basis for the expressions of human reciprocity



**FIGURE 1.1** Sustainable comprehensive investment in peace education

in all religions and philosophies in one form or other: “do unto others as they would have you do unto them.” This ethic underpins the core values that guide moral behavior, encourage cooperation, and, crucially, moderate self-interest. The empathic ability to assume another’s perspective is a step forward towards peace, but taking another perspective is not enough to break down the stubborn self-interest of humans in positions of power and control. Often they see another perspective but dismiss it or ignore it for their own gain. Species identity must be the overarching goal for education in the 21st century.

### ***Reciprocity and Other-Interest***

One important challenge for teachers in social justice and peace education is superficiality. Peace education sometimes focuses on ideas/concepts, myths/stereotypes, and even laws/policies, but it leaves aside the deeply seated self-interest that motivates them. We naively think that if people understand the issues, they will make necessary changes. However, that rarely happens. As peace educators, we must confront individual and group self-interest in order to lessen or even eradicate the social injustices that lead to conflict and war. Making significant sociopolitical change inevitably means that some people must relinquish some of their selfish investment and join in the ethic of species identity, common interest, and reciprocity. Peace education must radically transform, morally and even spiritually, every individual participating in the learning experience.

### ***Anti-racism***

Kendi, in his 2019 book, *How to Be an Anti-Racist*, develops a thesis about racism and anti-racism that 1) individuals/groups in power have self-interested investment in power, money, control, and privileges that they want to keep, so 2) they create unfair laws and policies to keep themselves and their investment in power. In order to justify unfair laws and policies, 3) they create ideas and concepts that legitimize and magnify differences based on social categories like class, race, gender, language, and so on. Clear examples are the anti-miscegenation laws enacted in the early history of the United States when it was clear that many white women were marrying men of other races. Laws against race-mixing perpetuated white men in power over white women and people of color. This did not prevent white men from illicit intercourse with enslaved women, which is the source of the genetic diversity among black and indigenous people of color, while at the same time most white Americans are predominantly of European ancestry. Many racial myths and stereotypes saturated the culture to justify those laws, contributing to the pervasive genetic color divide in the States. Other laws and policies enacting slavery, discrimination, and segregation have similar origins. So, self-interests > laws/policies > ideas/concepts > myths/stereotypes. It is not enough to focus on the latter and ignore the former.

## ***Metacultural Awareness***

Metacultural awareness is the ability to transcend the local culture in order to perceive a larger perspective. People's way of thinking can radically change, according to Kumaravadivelu, if they develop *global cultural consciousness*, a critical and reflective approach to evaluating their own and other cultures to select the best features, allowing people to stay rooted in a home culture but adopting aspects of other cultures.

What lies behind my lived experience, and that of a multitude of others, is a complex process of creating critical cultural consciousness through constant and continual self-reflection. What guides us in such critical self-reflection is our inherited culture derived from the time-tested traditions of the cultural community into which each of us is born. Our learned knowledge and lived experiences of other cultural discourse domains not only expand our cultural horizon but also clarify and solidify our individual inherited cultural heritage. This critical self-reflection helps us to identify and understand what is good and bad about our own culture, and what is good and bad about other cultures. In other words, in understanding other cultures, we understand our own culture better; in understanding our own, we understand other cultures better. This is the hallmark of an individual's complex cultural growth.

*(Kumaravadivelu, 2008, pp. 5–6)*

The goal of culture learning is cultural transition because it requires participants to question personal identity, collective identities, society and culture, and stereotypes. Kumaravadivelu notes that “difficult and sometimes disturbing dialogues can bring about a change of basic attitudes toward one's own culture and toward others” (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p. 181). It is through global cultural consciousness that people become aware of and begin to address their own contribution to social injustice and inequity. We can see this happening in the US and elsewhere around the area of Black Lives Matter. Several chapters in this volume suggest that even virtual intercultural exchanges offer learning spaces for students to explore their cultural identities and build metalinguistic and multicultural awareness. For instance, in Chapter 5 in Part 2, Gage examines the characteristics of global citizenship supported in a travel-study or Student Mobility Experience (SME). Not everyone can travel overseas, however, so Gage offers an alternative in Collaborative Online Intercultural Learning (COIL) experiences designed for students to build metalinguistic and metacultural awareness, which are the hallmark of intercultural growth. In the same vein, Guamguami and R'boul's Chapter 12 in Part 3 showcases how ELT practitioners could exploit their classroom pedagogies in virtual settings to approach issues of identity, empathy, transition, peace, and global citizenship.



Metacultural awareness involves critical consciousness and critical loyalty (Staub, 1989, 2003). *Critical consciousness* is the capacity to evaluate information independently rather than simply adopting group or authority opinions. *Critical loyalty* is a commitment to finding a fairer balance between personal/group welfare and other/universal welfare. Critical loyalty means that people balance their good with the good of others, lessening the allure of self-interest. In these days of rampant conspiracy theories and Big Lies, cultural consciousness and critical loyalty are even more crucial than ever before.

### ***Metalinguistic Awareness***

Metalinguistic awareness is the ability to think and speak about language as an object in its own right and to control subtle language functions. It is probably not strange to posit awareness of language as a goal in English language teaching but in peace education, metalinguistic awareness goes beyond knowledge of parts of speech and word meanings. Crucially, metalinguistic awareness changes people's experience of the world, that is, their subjectivities, their cognitive abilities, and possibly their identities, in positive ways. Cook (1995, p. 94) coined the term *multicompetence* for "an individual's knowledge of a native language and a second language, that is, L1 linguistic competence plus L2 interlanguage." In recent years, others have extended the term to the superior metalinguistic awareness of multilingual people also. Multicompetent people show evidence of increased metalinguistic awareness, creativity, and cognitive flexibility. For example, Jessner (2008, p. 277) says that:

Metalinguistic awareness developing in individuals living with two or three languages is seen to develop with regard to (a) divergent and creative thinking (e.g. wider variety of associations, original ideas); (b) interactional and/or pragmatic competence (cultural theorems of greeting, thanking); (c) communicative sensitivity and flexibility (language mode); and (d) translation skills that are considered a natural trait in the majority of multilinguals.

### ***A Different Cognitive Style***

It is possible that multicultural and metalinguistic awareness lead to a different cognitive style. Cognition is perception, judgment, reasoning, memory, and imagination. A cognitive style does not affect raw intelligence, but it does affect the way people think and view the world, allowing them to integrate independence with interdependence. Cognitive style is an individual's default way of looking for logical inferences, connections, relationships, and meaning in the world. When people are able to examine their relationship to their own culture or language or to culture and language in general, they gain a cognitive

advantage over monocultural and monolingual people. As they acquire the capacity to integrate various worldviews, their cognition restructures their sense of identity.

Bekerman, Zvi and Schlam Salman, Julia (2011, p. 65) described the experience of Jewish Israeli and Palestinian students in the English classroom where English was a space for dialogue and empowerment. Through the discourse in the classroom, students were exposed to ideas, concepts, and ideologies beyond what is culturally embedded in Arabic and Hebrew and beyond what they normally heard in school and home environments. Similarly, some chapters in this volume encourage metacultural and metalinguistic awareness. In Chapter 4, Curtis focuses on peace linguistics as a means to engage in systematic analyses of the language of leaders who have the power to legitimize empathy, other-interest, solidarity with the oppressed, and therefore peace or to encourage self-interest, nationalism, violence, and oppression in our nations and world. Classroom studies of peace linguistics contribute to critical cultural consciousness, critical loyalty and informed patriotism because they ask participant learners to question the effect of different words and expressions on their attitudes and behaviors. A soldier can be described as a terrorist, a freedom fighter, or a mercenary with different outcomes.

Other chapters in this book explore what may be new concepts highly relevant to English language learners, like linguistic human rights, *linguicism* (language-based prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping), and *translanguaging* (moving fluidly between two or more languages). It seems productive for students to problematize laws and policies that impact them directly or indirectly. Azzi, in Chapter 9, presents the idea that *translanguaging*, a linguistic space where speakers employ two languages, allows both language teachers and learners to approach language with fewer restrictions. In Chapter 15, Norova suggests that introducing the idea of World Englishes to English language classrooms promotes social and linguistic justice and tolerance, fosters respect towards diverse varieties of Englishes, and contributes to peace among different language communities. Chapter 8, by Schvarcz and Khawaja, introduces the concept of *language landscape* as a way for teachers to show common experiences people share even in deeply divided societies.

## Global and Local Civil Society

In *The English Language Teacher in Global Civil Society* (Birch, 2009) I made the case for a new force in the world, global civil society, with a global civic culture emerging from latency into actuality along with it. I proposed that teachers are part of global civil society and strategically placed to understand injustice and violence in order to interfere with it through education at the local level. Although some of the ideas suggested in 2009 seem outdated in this (post-)Trumpian era, it is still true that we cannot rely on political structures

like nation-states, ideologies, military might, or politicians to create a peaceful world. Instead, we must build it ourselves through our interconnections with others when we invest ourselves in local and global synergy within educational institutions and systems. For instance, Church, in Chapter 10, discusses how she practices intentional peace education in the classroom including equitable classroom management, fair grading policies, and critical reflection while meeting the requirements and objectives of the curriculum. Substantive, transformative learning impacts everyone and creates connections that last longer than the class period.

### ***Global Civic Culture***

Global civil society refers to the international network of civil organizations like Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International. *Global civic culture* refers to a pro-human and prosocial fusion of the good parts of many human cultures, the parts having to do with the rights and responsibilities of civilians towards each other in interdependent sociopolitical relationships. Global civic culture is not native to any existing human culture but rather is true of an imagined interdependent community of *global civilians* who hold the values of the Earth Charter and who work in global agencies. In 2009, it seemed to me that another imagined community was emerging too, one I called global citizens. *Global citizens* have a special mindset that commits them to the rights and responsibilities of species identity and world citizenship, in addition to their other affiliations. Their cognitive style gives them a sense of reciprocity and common interest that mitigates self/group/national interests. The two global imagined communities are not exclusive of each other. Global civilians may or may not be global citizens. Global citizens may or may not be global civilians.

Pennycook (1994, p. 71) introduced the word *worldliness* as

a term intended to refer to the material existence of English in the world, its spread around the world, its worldly character as a result of being so widely used in the world, and its position not only as reflective but also as constitutive of worldly affairs.

To be constitutive means that language is a way for people, including English language teachers, to exercise their agency through borrowing, appropriating, and creating new concepts. A new word or idea lends legitimacy, so language and culture are social action. Language and culture provide means for people to imagine and therefore transition to preferred futures. Furthermore, the worldliness of language and culture is linked to the dialogue for sustainable peacebuilding. The peacemaking circles and the restorative justice processes discussed by McNair and Pentón Herrera in Chapter 13 originated in indigenous Tagish and Tlingit First Nations people from Canada and were introduced

to the Western criminal justice system in the 1970s as victim/offender reconciliation. Their chapter proposes peacemaking circles as a way to transform conflict by engaging in prosocial communication and dialogue among English learners.

### **Local Civic Culture**

In the spirit of ‘think globally, act locally,’ I suggest that pedagogy in the classroom is local agency because teachers are powerful agents of change if they so choose because of their strategic positions in sociocultural networks. I envision a preferred future when local societies have synergy, the outpouring of positive energy when people combine their agencies, imagination, and morality in other-interested endeavors like anti-racism. Gómez, Arrieta, and Rosado’s Chapter 11 outlines their research project while assisting a teacher’s project-based learning module whose aim was to empower eighth grade students and legitimize local and global citizenship values like self-control, gratitude, respect, and responsibility through the English language in Colombia. The aim of the project was nothing short of personal and social transformation in the students and in the teacher, leading to critical local and global consciousness to promote a more humanized society and social justice.

### **Pedagogies for Transition**

Educational systems are ways for social and political systems to create and perpetuate the language, myths, rituals, and ideologies that legitimize the status quo, but they are also sites where initially ‘illegitimate’ language and ideas, like civil rights, anti-racism, and anti-war movements surface. As transformative movements achieve legitimacy in their own right, their validation by peers or by accepted authorities appropriates emergent language, values, norms, beliefs, practices, and procedures so that they are available in the culture. Once there are alternative legitimacies, there is pressure on the original system to change and motivation for transition to a preferred future, and possibly a new mindset of reciprocity. However, like the recent backlash against *critical race theory*,<sup>1</sup> those who remain invested in self-interest will protest and attempt to silence the transformative movement. English language teachers have the power to legitimize or to delegitimize aspects of society and culture through their choice of methods, language, and themes.

Among the pedagogies of transition are prosocial communication, conflict transformation, tolerance, remembering the past to let go of it, the possibility for reconciliation in divided societies, and finally, forgiveness. These pedagogies are meant to increase resilience, emotional capacity, and relationship-building. In Chapter 6, Imperiale presents an on-line teacher training course with pre-service English teachers in the Gaza Strip (Palestine). A number of

pre-service English teachers learned how to adopt creative and critical language methodologies in their lesson plans. Imperiale presents a lesson about expressing emotions, in which the participants shared vulnerabilities, difficult knowledge, and emotions, and learned how to support each other in order to develop resilience in confronting difficult situations.

Naturally, pedagogies for transition can be prescriptive or elicitive. *Prescriptive* suggestions are top-down and outside-in in the sense that they are additive norms of nonviolent communication meant to transform communication patterns to facilitate relationship-building. Chapter 7 by Nasser and El-Bilawi describes a professional development program in which teachers in schools serving Muslim communities learned about action research methods and a form of value-based instruction called social and emotional education (SEE). In particular, teachers learned how to model and teach forgiveness, empathy, and community-mindedness. The methods they learned highlighted dialogue, interactive teaching and learning, and a focus on the relevance of values to everyday lives. *Elicitive* suggestions are intended to help teachers create or discover, from the discourse genres of local cultures, additional norms of nonviolent communication that could percolate from the bottom-up and the inside-out to global civic culture so that they become resources for us all. McNair and Pentón Herrera's peacemaking circles are the result of elicitation.

### ***Prosocial Communication***

In peace education, teachers establish normative guidelines for discussion. These guidelines are usually created by the learners for the learners, with some prompting and input from teachers. They are culturally appropriate and best generated through cooperation and by consensus. They are not about what ideas, attitudes, or opinions are right or wrong, but rather about how ideas are expressed and not suppressed in the group. The process may take time but it is important because the norms are formative as well. Norms are specific, like "Communication will be respectful. For example, no yelling, no bullying, no teasing." They legitimize a new concept, like "If you hear what you think is a *microaggression*,<sup>2</sup> say stop immediately so that we can discuss it." They are open to revision, like "We will stop and renegotiate the guidelines at any time if two people ask to do so."

### ***Conflict Transformation***

Conflict is a given in any society, so *conflict resolution* is a post-conflict bottom-up process of restoring a relationship between the *conflict partners*, the people involved in the conflict, through ongoing dialogue. Significant learning takes place as a result of confronting conflict and finding ways through it and beyond it within a relationship, as people to learn about empathy, morality, reciprocity,

and critical consciousness in action. Taking interpersonal and intergroup conflict as givens, teachers draw on whatever resources there are to create a space in the classroom for dialogue. *Dialogue* is human connection through voice, attention, and, ideally, acknowledgment. Through dialogue, relationships can be repaired in order to transition to sustainable peace, which emerges from latency into actuality when people work through conflict, prejudice, and pain to reconciliation. *Voice* is offering, articulating, and becoming vulnerable. It legitimizes itself and asks for attention and acknowledgment. *Attention* is listening, accepting, understanding, and giving legitimacy and acknowledgment to voice and to what is voiced. *Acknowledgment* is recognition of what another sees as a truth, and, perhaps, an increase in empathy, reciprocity, and common interest. *Conflict transformation* is a way of life for a divided society. Ultimately, it aims to restore relationships through interpersonal interactions where power imbalances are neutralized to the extent possible. When people can enter into a dialogue as equals, conflict transformation can occur at both the personal and the social level. Quite a few of the chapters offer ways to get at a more nuanced approach to conflict, suggesting that perceiving conflict in terms of ‘sides’ or ‘roles’ closes the door to transformation. Instead, these chapters find that there is value in feeling discomfort and sharing vulnerabilities in order to find compassion.

### ***Tolerance***

People absorb prejudice and privilege from their families, cultures, and schooling. They can therefore unlearn prejudice. One way to reduce prejudice is through direct uncoerced contact between people who are different in the classroom, in the schoolyard, or on sports teams so they feel less hostility and anxiety, and maybe, less self-interest and more common interest and reciprocity. To reduce prejudice, the cooperative contact must have support from the school administration, social institutions, and society. If cooperative learning is to lead to meaningful relationships, learners must enjoy equal status in order to voice their realities. What must be voiced is the universal ‘facts’ of prejudice and the attitudes people assume in relation to prejudice, including Kendi’s insights into its fundamental link to self-interest. The chapters in this volume offer examples of how collective experiences together encourage students to build relationships with one another so that they embrace their shared humanity as they go through their English course together. One way for English language teachers to create a safe place to learn about prejudice and tolerance is to separate the universal from the particular. The universal creates a context for the particular; the global informs the local and the local informs the universal. A critical examination of a local norm or standard, for instance, might spark discussions about how a group’s self-interest motivates the policies and procedures in place to support the norm or standard and keep it unquestioned.

### ***Remembrance***

Indigenous ways of healing such as spirit work, exorcisms, sweat-lodges, ancestor worship, and peace circles are ways of remembering and healing. Critical learning extends to reworking ideas of community, identity, language, and relationship. In effect, reworking requires us to contemplate a revised notion of the political beyond conventional questions of power—questions, for example, of who gets to decide for whom what privileges, opportunities, and resources will be made available and withheld within any given community. Remembrance is a process in which people begin to resolve their difficult emotions, where they begin to understand the past, and where they gain some perspective on their responsibilities and regrets.

### ***Reconciliation***

Reconciliation must involve the reconciliation partners, those whose relationship is broken but who wish to envision a different future together. Reconciliation is a dialogic place where people meet in species identity to address their concerns about the past, the present, and the future. People acknowledge the past and let it go. They tell their stories, talk about the facts of the conflict, the systemic nature of it, and how it impacts their lives in the present. They try to envision a different future and brainstorm how they can work for that. Reconciliation is a place of paradoxes. People confront the past to free themselves for a new future. They become vulnerable in order to be stronger. They expose wounds so that they can disappear. They work through wrongs in order to put them aside. They take responsibility in order to be free of guilt. They legitimize a relationship with another in order to build and repair it.

### ***Forgiveness***

Forgiveness is not the same as forgetting, condoning, or excusing an offense; it is a decision to let go of feelings like blame, anger, resentment, and revenge toward someone (or some people) who has committed a perceived offense (Birch & Nasser, 2017). The range of offenses goes from neighborly and local to the national and global. Sometimes nations and ethnic groups decide to forgive and reconcile in institutionalized Truth and Reconciliation processes. The process are not perfect but they create a space for a judicial dialogue in which victims voice what happened to them, and receive attention and acknowledgment. Perpetrators of violence also (are supposed to) acknowledge what happened and request amnesty from prosecution.

Different cultures and religions attach values, factors, and conditions to the idea of forgiveness. Abu-Nimer (2003) asserts that forgiveness is a component

of reconciliation along with acknowledgment, confession, repentance, and restitution, and that forgiveness may vary depending on the social, cultural, and religious contexts in which it takes place. It is important to understand the cultural accessories that accompany forgiveness because of how important they are to peace and reconciliation processes, whether they are on the individual or community level. Indeed, forgiveness and reconciliations succeed or fail based on how satisfied the participants are with the dialogue that takes place within the process, and that satisfaction depends on how the expectations of the participants are met. For example, voters rejected a referendum on the peace process with the FARC rebels in Colombia because, pundits think, many ordinary Colombians felt that the rebels were not punished sufficiently for their offenses. Despite the referendum results, the Colombian government later ratified the treaty.

Local forgiveness stories, rituals, and accessories provide rich resources for English language teachers who wish to help their students envision a better, more just, and more peaceful future, especially in deeply divided societies. The use of English instead of local languages can create a neutral space for exploration for new options and alternatives. What seems certain is that if we teachers limit our pedagogical goals to correct pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, if we restrict our attention to sanitized speech functions, facile interactions, and simplistic intercultural communication, we fail to imagine realistic alternatives to the status quo. We waste our strategic positions and power to educate for a peaceful and more sustainable world.

## Fruits of the Pandemic

This volume is the result of the sudden isolation I experienced as we went into lockdown at the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic. I had the germ of an idea and put it out on social media. A number of my colleagues responded to my call for papers with their own ideas for how they are teaching peace education in their classrooms. The authors present their own work within the creative tension of glocalization. The chapters resolved themselves into an organization that goes from the global or national (Part 1) to the local (Parts 2 and 3).

Part 1 describes how Colombia is a country trying to hardwire peace education into the curriculum of the public schools throughout the country for committed comprehensive economic and psychic investment, as shown in Figure 1.1, at the beginning of the chapter. Peace education must be a comprehensive commitment; it seems unfair to indict peace education as 'ineffective' when it has never been tried before. Part 2 presents a number of very positive teacher training modules to help teachers present peace education in their own classrooms. In their own unique ways, peace teachers are committed to species identity and global civic culture, and that



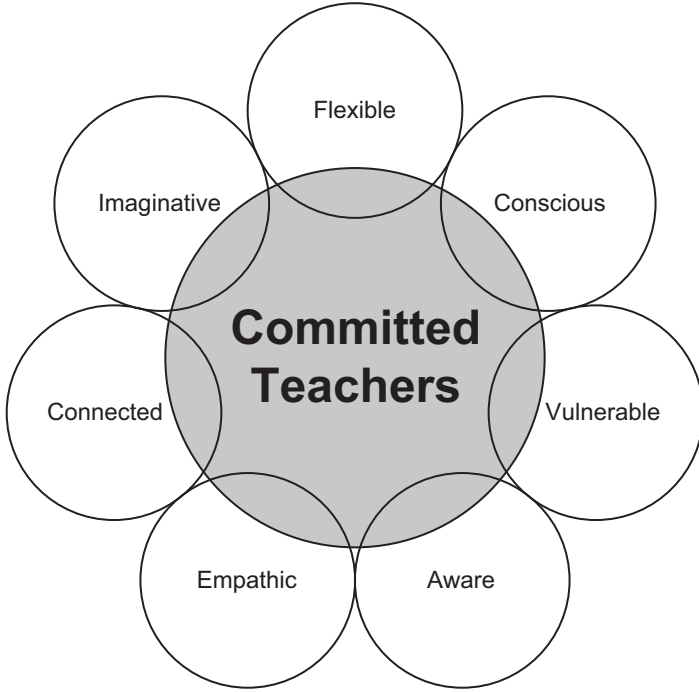


FIGURE 1.2 Some of the characteristics of teachers committed to peace education

commitment comes from a combination of the characteristics in Figure 1.2. This list is not exhaustive; I expect other characteristics to emerge if and when peace education becomes more central to national and regional education systems.

Part 3 shows how some peace teachers already integrate peace education within their lesson plans and materials. Classrooms committed to peace and justice are as varied as are the teachers committed to peace and justice, but the classrooms described here share some characteristics associated with global civic culture and species identity, as shown in Figure 1.3. Teachers are facilitators and culture creators who want to create a safe and brave place for vulnerability, for the sharing of many stories and opinions. They introduce and demand prosocial communication based on empathy and respect. Their classroom management and grading policies are consistent with the goals of peace and justice. They organize their class work around social empowerment and justice projects that provide ample opportunities for critical reading, writing, and reflection. They legitimize pro-peace sociocultural and linguistic resources in that region, like concepts, rituals, myths, or objects in everyday life, and recognize local *affordances*, or opportunities that build

<p><b>Active Engaged Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metacultural awareness</li> <li>• Metalinguistic awareness</li> <li>• Pedagogies of transition</li> </ul>
<p><b>Safety and Courage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Vulnerability</li> <li>• Trust-building</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prosocial Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Other-interest</li> <li>• Voice, listening, acknowledgment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Classroom Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice</li> <li>• Equity</li> <li>• Cooperation and collaboration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Themes and Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical reading/reflection/thinking</li> <li>• Symbolic acts of activism</li> <li>• Local resources for peace</li> </ul>

**FIGURE 1.3** Some of the characteristics of classrooms and lessons associated with species identity and global civic culture

capacity, for peace and justice. They encourage students to make public statements and other symbolic acts that are important forms of social activism. In classrooms committed to peace, students are active language learners, open to metalinguistic and metacultural growth; they are willing to problematize even their own experiences and obstacles to gain empathy for others. That is, peaceful classrooms are synergistic; they create conditions or opportunities for something positive to happen through the social and linguistic interaction of participants.

I know that Elise Boulding was familiar with this quote from John Woolman, an early Quaker abolitionist, and I believe that species identity and global civic culture were her attempt to translate Woolman's 'principle' into secular-humanist terms and to operationalize it for the present day.

There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages hath had different names. It is, however, pure and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren in the best sense of the expression.

*Woolman (1840, p. 238)*

It doesn't matter whether teachers believe in a divine origin for a species identity, a sociocultural origin, or an origin in educational methods and systems that transform the cognitive style of individuals. The important thing is comprehensive and sustainable peace education in global and local societies that leads humanity away from self-interests and towards common interests. That is how teachers create classrooms of peace in English language teaching.

## Notes

1. Critical race theory holds that 'races' are not biologically or genetically determined, but rather are socially and culturally constructed (often through group or self-interest) in order to oppress and exploit some and benefit others. As such, social institutions are inherently racist because they create and reinforce social, economic, and political inequalities. To be anti-racist is to change the structures so that they are just and fair.
2. A comment, word, action, or situation that can be seen as indirect discrimination or prejudice against a person or people based on race, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics. Microaggressions can be intentional or unintentional. The 'aggression' is perceived from the point of view of the person or people associated with the characteristic.

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## **PART 1**

# Policy and Implementation for Peace



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# PROLOGUE

## Committed Comprehensive Investment

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Globalization refers to the expanding interdependence or interconnectedness among people, institutions, and organizations across the globe and the repercussions of that interdependence. Globalization is a loose and unorganized but effective system connecting individuals in a top-down and a bottom-up fashion around the world in social, business, economic, political, and technological networks. As an abstraction, globalization is amoral, neither good nor bad. However, we can critically evaluate the actions humans perform and the effects of their actions on others as positive or negative, moral or immoral. Globalization has already had a profound effect on our idea of peace, rule of law, and human rights because of international documents and statements like the top-down UN Declaration of Human Rights and the bottom-up Earth Charter. I optimistically call these *International Consensus Documents* although they are far from being a consensus everywhere.

The concept of globalization also includes the idea of world peace as a globalized pro-human and prosocial network of people in relationships that support sustainable peacebuilding, economic development, and ecological responsibility. I call these globalized processes *International Content Production*. For instance, in addition to declarations and charters, concepts that emerge at the global level can be highly influential, such as Hillary Clinton's speech at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, where the phrase "women's rights are human rights" emerged. Greta Thunberg leveraged social media to make a platform to raise awareness about climate change. Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi started a movement called Black Lives Matter in 2013 to amplify the voices in opposition to police violence against people of color.



The term *glocalization* has an interesting history as an example of international content production. It traces its origin to the Japanese business term *doch-akuka* ‘global localization’ referring to the adaptation of farming techniques to local conditions. In 1997, sociologist Roland Robertson used the term to refer to the simultaneous appearance or presence of both top-down (universal) and bottom-up (particular) trends. This use elevated the term from the particular (business in Japan) to the international because the definition now includes local adaptations of global forces. In this book, the term refers both to processes or trends that operate simultaneously at the international, the national, and the local levels at the same time, and as the particular local adaptations of universal global trends. Thus English teachers operate glocally as a community of people who work for a preferred local future within the framework of peace education.

Global charters, treaties, and mandates towards peace, rule of law, and human rights trickle down to nations and regions and become operationalized as constitutions, laws, and policies which effect the content creation in various areas of the world. Crucially, many of these laws and policies must be funded so they become long-term. Among the many policies enacted in nations and regions are educational policies effecting teacher development and curriculum. These in turn have a direct impact locally as they are instantiated as methods, materials, and techniques used in classrooms and schools. These local processes trickle upwards from the classroom as they impact the public, that is, the people, culture, and society of the region. This is the idea of a truly comprehensive and committed peace education system, as shown in Figure 1.1 from the previous chapter.

In this unit, Chapter 2 (Ferrer Ariza, Forero, and Sánchez Cardona) discusses this process as a commitment to and investment in comprehensive peace education in their country, Colombia, from the national level to the classroom. The chapter begins with a brief history of the foundation for peace education in the international setting, followed by a discussion of the frameworks for peace education in Colombia as a whole. The authors present an overview of peace education in the Colombian Caribbean region. In Chapter 3, Ferrer Ariza, Forero, and Sánchez Cardona continue their analysis with an examination of a peace education course in an MA program in the English Language Teaching (ELT) program at the Universidad del Norte in Colombia.

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# 2

## NAVIGATING THE PATH TOWARD A CULTURE OF PEACE IN COLOMBIA

*Erica Ferrer Ariza, Juan Forero, and  
Mariela Sánchez Cardona*

BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA; BOGOTA, COLOMBIA; AND BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

Educational institutions play a strategic role in the construction of more harmonious and empathetic local and global societies through cultural creation. As De Zubiria (2017, p. 1), a Colombian economist and academic, put it: “We have signed some agreements, but we will build true peace by transforming our culture, which can only happen when we all change hatred for reconciliation. Education is the path to peace! You and I have always known it.” We have been inspired by this idea. We are three Colombian teacher-researchers who share a profound respect for life and a motivation to work in education as an invaluable strategic area for building peace. We strongly believe in the role of teachers as agents of social change and in the great potential of peace education in transforming sociocultural realities. We are motivated by our own personal life experiences, because we, like many others, have been impacted by violence, injustice, and war.

*Erica:* As a young girl, and for many years in my life, I understood violence as something normal and inevitable. In Colombia, massacres in urban and rural areas, assassination of presidential candidates, attacks with explosive devices in public spaces, kidnapping as a way to finance war, and internal displacement were some of the acts of violence that could affect anybody’s life at any time as I was growing up. As a young adult, I decided to study language teaching and that was when my understanding of the world started changing. Languages opened doors to other worlds for me. Particularly, traveling to the United Kingdom for my master’s studies allowed me to see that violence, the way I understood it, was not the same in other places and for other people. I realized the great transformational power of education. It was this realization and a true desire to contribute to peace through education that many years later motivated me to invite Dr. Barbara M. Birch to the university where I coordinated the

general undergraduate English as a Foreign Language program at the time. Since then, I have developed a deeper interest and have worked intentionally on instilling peace education in the language classroom.

*Juan:* I remember that close to the end of my high school life, I discovered a need I had to understand the context that surrounded me. I started to consciously see myself as an individual member of a society and realized the importance of history and the destiny of my country. The combination of these discoveries led me to participate in community development work and led me to choose education as my profession. In education, I found multiple paths and tools that have broadened my vision, my knowledge, and my practice. Thus, one of the approaches that I have adopted (as a teacher) in my practice has been generating scenarios of collective peacebuilding in school contexts through methodologies that revolve around overcoming individualism and advancing towards the awareness of collective actions.

*Mariela:* I have been interested in studying the origins of violent behavior in different areas of life since I was pursuing my undergraduate degree in psychology. This interest has grown continuously throughout my life and has encouraged me to research ways to help society build peaceful relationships. I have very closely felt the pain and suffering of many people in my country due to lack of knowledge and awareness of the infinite potential ways human beings have to manage conflict peacefully. From this perspective, I have always wanted to develop approaches to pedagogies of peace in different educational contexts in Colombia as a way to empower youth, so they see the relevant role they play in exalting harmonic life in society.

In this chapter, we look at one country, Colombia, and draw generalizations for global applications. We start by discussing the frameworks Colombia has taken to introduce peace education in ways that ultimately impact the classroom. The first part presents a brief history of the legal aspects of peace education in the international setting. The second is a review of the main historical and legal frameworks for peace education in Colombia as educational strategies inside and outside of schools. The third explores initiatives in peace education in the Colombian Caribbean region, particularly through research produced in English Language Teaching programs. Finally, in the last section, we draw some conclusions.

### Three Pillars of Peace Education

After the horrific events that impacted humanity in the 20th century like World War I and World War II, questions and reflections emerged concerning the role of education in the construction of culture and the importance of harmonious relationships among people, groups, and nations. Out of this context the idea of education for peace was born as an attempt at educational and cultural renewal that could drive major transformations (Jares, 1999). Peace

education was envisioned as a way to promote the desire to live and respect life, to develop peacebuilding skills through peaceful conscience, to approach conflicts through nonviolence, and to encourage peaceful relationships among all members of society. These ideas of renewal and transformation are based on the ideals and reflections of thinkers who claimed that education is an alternative to develop peaceful social practices.

Among these thinkers is Juan Comenio, who argued in favor of education for humanity on the basis of harmony, truth, and the search for common good. Jean-Jacques Rousseau developed an idea of education that fosters autonomy, freedom, and social transformation from the acknowledgment of the peaceful nature of human beings. Along the same lines, Maria Montessori considered that peace and education could be strongly connected, placing children and the development of their full potential at the center of social transformational processes. Mahatma Gandhi stood for confronting violence with nonviolent means by acknowledging others and encouraging human relationships based on dialogue, understanding, and respect.

Based on these views of peace and education, the International Education Office, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as well as other institutions jointly combined their efforts to explore and work on concepts, concerns, proposals, and projections which would result in an education for peace. Their aim was “the integral participation of all actors in a permanent learning process throughout life, which teaches attitudes and habits of tolerance and which, as a consequence, becomes an instrument to build a more just, egalitarian, empathetic, and peaceful society” (Tuvilla, 2013, p. 86). Peace education is intended to be a dynamic, permanent process going beyond school activities based on three pillars defined by Tuvilla (2004).

The first pillar consists of international efforts to try to establish basic consensual principles and normative instruments that structure the legal bases in each nation with respect to the human right to peace and education. Some normative instruments are, for example, the Declaration and Programme on Action on a Culture of Peace, the Earth Charter, the plan of action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, and the plan of action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy. The second pillar includes the set of constitutional and legal dispositions that recognize the human right to peace and education. This pillar takes the normative statements from Pillar 1 and translates them into laws to provide a legal basis for peace education. The third pillar refers to the intellectual and pedagogical contributions and actions, both individual and collective, that put into practice what is set forth by the normative instruments and contained within the legal frameworks. Consequently, this pillar revolves around norms and laws that need to become part of culture. The combination of these three main pillars allows education for peace, among other things, to promote universal values and types of behaviors

that are the basis for peacefully living together and for a culture of peace and to develop the ability to recognize and accept a pluricultural world through communication, cooperation, convergence, and living together (Jares, 1999; Tuvilla, 2004).

## **National Peace Education in Colombia**

In 2016, after several attempts of peace negotiation, the Agreement for the End of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Long-lasting Peace was signed between the Colombian Government and the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC-EP). The signing of this agreement marked a turning point in the history of Colombia as it tried to end the violence generated by this armed conflict in the country and the social, political, economic, and cultural consequences stemming from it. According to Paul, Clarke, and Serena (2014), Colombians have experienced different forms of direct and indirect violence that have affected social relations, and the construction of peace in the country requires the transformation of sociopolitical and economic practices, institutions, and people.

The quest for peace, both before and after the signing and implementation of the peace agreement, has been difficult given the strong opposition the agreement has faced from certain members of Colombian society. Nevertheless, Colombia continues to try to find ways to build peace through the acknowledgment of the conflict and its victims, understanding acknowledgment as “recognition of what another sees as a truth,” and “reconciliation can take place only if there is some degree of acknowledgement” (Birch, 2009, p. 133). Laws and academic projects are all well and good, but Colombia needs peace education for people to achieve true reconciliation. Education is undoubtedly a key area in transforming our society, and all attempts to understand our past, to instill new ways of facing conflict, and to build a more peaceful identity as people in Colombia should be welcomed and encouraged. Education is a strategy worth considering for supporting peacebuilding attempts, especially in areas of the country that have suffered the consequences of violence heavily.

### ***Laws and Frameworks***

The main legal bases supporting education for peace are normally described in the political constitutions of nations, and they are usually: 1) the basis of relations in society and 2) the overarching vision for education. The Colombian political constitution defines “peace as a right and a mandatory duty to be fulfilled” and “education as having its basis in respect for human rights, peace, and democracy” (Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991, Articles 22 and 67). This right and duty to educate for peace becomes visible through the creation of legal frameworks centered on an education that fosters a respect for life, human

rights, peace, democratic principles of justice, empathy, and equity and that also generates spaces for co-existence and a respect for human dignity. These educational spaces are meant to encourage solidarity and the exercising of ethical and citizenship values through the continuous commitment of the educational communities, joined together in a collective effort in the search for peace.

Figure 2.1 lists the wide selection of legal bases aimed at regulating each of the educational practices and policies that should be taken into consideration to implement peace education in different Colombian educational contexts. However, the actual implementation of all these laws and regulations is still far from being accomplished. Some of the reasons for this situation are the high level of abstraction of the law, the partial or total lack of familiarization with the legal framework for peace education of some institutions and teachers, the scarce professional development around peace education in higher education programs, the instrumentalization of peace education, and the lack of academic spaces to share experiences around the area, among others.

In addition to this, the Colombian Government has passed laws with pedagogical and reparative measures to put an end to the internal armed conflict and to move forward in the construction of peace. These measures aim to guarantee the quality and pertinence of education, especially for vulnerable segments of the population most affected by violence. It is hoped that they will support the process of peacebuilding in the country from a differentiated, regional, and restorative rights' perspective. In summary, this demonstrates that education is a fundamental foundation of the reconstruction of the Colombian society.

Law/Norm	Objective
Art. 22 Political Constitution	Peace is a right and a mandatory duty.
Art. 67 Political Constitution	To educate Colombians to have respect for human rights, peace, and democracy
Art. 13 Law 115 of 1994	Education for justice, peace, democracy, solidarity, and respect for the human rights of others
Ten-Year Education Plan 1996–2005	Education as the axis of human, social, political, economic, and cultural development
Ten-Year Education Plan 2006–2016	Education in and for peace, living together, and citizenship in Colombia
Ten-Year Education Plan 2015–2026	Building a peaceful, inclusive, and a respectful society
Law 1732 of 2014/Decree 1038 of 2015	Include peace education in all educational institutions in the country

**FIGURE 2.1** Colombian laws and policies for Comprehensive Peace Education in Colombia

### ***Intellectual and Pedagogical Contributions***

Complementing the legal bases of education for peace in Colombia, we can add a large repertoire of intellectual and pedagogical contributions on this matter. These contributions add to the construction of a culture of peace in society from the different possibilities each human being has to create peace in their daily life (Sánchez Cardona, 2016b); the acceptance of conflict as something innate to human nature, something dynamic and creative (Hernández, 2016); and the creation and consolidation of learning scenarios for reflection and dialogue about the culture of peace and social progress (Chaux & Velázquez, 2014). These contributions conceive the construction of peace as something that occurs on a daily basis within both theoretical and practical spaces inside or outside the classroom and that encourages the creation of bonds between human beings, communities, and cultures. The next section presents some intellectual and pedagogical contributions to education and peace in the Colombian Caribbean region.

### **Peace Education in the Colombian Caribbean Region**

Colombia consists of six regions mainly categorized based on their topography, proximity to the sea, and rainfall. These regions are the Andes Mountain Range, the Grassland Plains, the Islands, the Amazon Rainforest, the Pacific Region, and the Caribbean Region. The latter, the Colombian Caribbean region, is located on the northern coast of Colombia. It consists of eight (8) departments, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Córdoba, La Guajira, Magdalena, Sucre, and the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina. This region extends over 132.270,5 km<sup>2</sup>, equivalent to 11,6% of the national territory, and in 2014, it had an estimated population of 10,301,982 inhabitants (Observatorio del Caribe Colombiano, 2020).

As the rest of the country, the Colombian Caribbean region suffered the consequences of the armed conflict, which mainly occurred in rural areas. Currently, over four years have passed after the signing of the Colombian Peace Agreement, and this region of the country is still experiencing violence. As Trejos, Badillo, and Irreño (2019) point out, this region faces two opposing, conflicting scenarios. It needs to carry out the necessary actions for the implementation of the peace agreement while, simultaneously, facing the persistence of the armed violence that has not ended but transformed itself. Therefore, there is significant work to do at all social levels, and the role of the educational institutions and educators as agents of social change in the search for peacebuilding is of paramount importance.

Education is a key area in creating and making visible peacebuilding initiatives, and educators and institutions should support, collaborate, and learn from each other in this endeavor. Nationwide, there have been studies and

interventions dealing with building peace through peace education or peace culture in educational institutions and communities (Diazgranados et al., 2014; Sánchez Cardona, 2010, 2016a, 2016b; UniAndes, 2015). Even so, access to recent *systematic documented* initiatives concerning peace education in the Colombian Caribbean region, particularly in the area of language teaching, has ample space for growth and further exploration. Thus, this section takes a look at initiatives such as individual and group research projects, creation of research groups or centers at higher education institutions, and academic events, which draw attention to and promote the sharing of information or experiences in peace education in the Colombian Caribbean region.

### **Research Projects**

One of the initiatives on social pedagogy was the work led by Del Pozo, Martínez, Manzanares, and Zolá (2015) through the research project “Peace Education in Vulnerable Educational Institutions and Communities on the Colombian Caribbean Region.” Through this project, a team of researchers worked with teachers and leaders of 13 institutions in vulnerable areas of the region for over four years, focusing on four phases: diagnosis, training, assisted work, and final evaluation (Del Pozo, Martínez, Manzanares, & Zolá, 2017). The researchers worked together with the target communities, identifying the main problematic areas that connected school conflicts with the conflicts experienced in the school’s immediate context and carrying out an intervention. This research concluded, among other things, that doing action–research projects in vulnerable areas can generate spaces for the collective work between schools, families, and communities, and within these spaces, these projects can also empower people from these territories to take charge of their own peace-building process (Del Pozo, 2019).

Another initiative worth mentioning includes the extensive work done by Trejos et al. (2019) through the research group Center for Thought UNCaribe (Centro de Pensamiento UNCaribe, 2020) at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla. However, this massive project, ascribed to the school of Law, Political Science, and International Relations, has covered social and political aspects of the armed conflict, but it has not yet included work on education. Some of the areas it has researched are participating agents and characterization of the conflict, application of international law in Colombia, electoral processes during violence, and the transformation of the conflict, among others.

### **Action-Based Projects**

At the higher educational level, the School of Social Sciences and Education from the Universidad de Cartagena has the Center for Displacement, Conflict, and Peace Building, which has conducted projects on youth empowerment