RESEARCH PAPER

Integrating Peace Literacy in 'English Instructional Plan' and examining its impact upon ESL Proficiency

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the integration of peace literacy skills into English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching practices at secondary level. The objective was to develop and implement instructional plans incorporating peace education and assess its impact on students' language proficiency. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection for a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. An experimental research design, including a pre-test-post-test experimental and control group was used. The participants included 60 randomly selected students from one public high school. The experimental group received the peace-integrated curriculum, while the control group followed traditional ESL instruction. Quantitative data was analyzed using t-tests and ANOVA, revealing significant improvements in the experimental groups' language proficiency, particularly in reading, writing and vocabulary. The experimental group also demonstrated more positive attitudes toward peace and conflict resolution. Qualitative data from teacher questionnaires highlighted challenges such as lack of resources and training, but also opportunities for fostering critical thinking, empathy and conflict resolution skills. The findings concluded that integrating peace education into the ESL curriculum enhances both language proficiency and students' social-emotional development. It was recommended that curriculum developers should prioritize the creation of peace-integrated materials in English (PIME) that align with existing language learning objectives.

Introduction

Every society in the world struggles with violence. This issue has been present throughout history. The duty to handle issues of violence and conflict is on the educational system and educators. Giving students these abilities through education programs is urgently needed in order to accomplish the goals of peace literacy skills. The concept of peace literacy draws from the broader field of peace education, which UNESCO defines as a process that promotes the knowledge, skills and values needed to bring about behavioral changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence and resolve conflicts peacefully. According to Boulding (2021), peace literacy is essential for building the foundations of peaceful societies, as it equips individuals with the tools to approach disputes constructively, respect diversity and engage in dialogue rather than violence. Adolescence, being a critical developmental stage, is a pivotal period for inculcating these values, as students are forming their identities and worldviews. Incorporating peace literacy at the secondary level ensures

that students learn to manage conflicts both in school and in their communities, reducing the likelihood of violent behavior.

The integration of peace literacy into secondary education is informed by several key theories in psychology and education. Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism highlights the importance of social interaction in learning, positing that students learn best through collaborative activities that encourage dialogue and cooperation. In the context of peace literacy, this theoretical framework suggests that students can best learn nonviolent communication and conflict resolution through guided, interactive experiences that involve role-playing, group discussions and problem-solving exercises. By integrating peace literacy into the curriculum, educators create opportunities for students to observe, practice and internalize peaceful behaviors, thus fostering a culture of nonviolence in schools. Peace education works best when it can be used in accordance with the social and cultural demands of the community. Changes in society's behaviors are brought about through peace education. It teaches the skills necessary for responding positively to confrontations. By properly implementing of peace literacy skills and practices, conflict risks are reduced. People in the society feel at ease when peace education is being practiced and they view conflict concerns favorably (UNESCO, 2009).

English is a language that is spoken in every region of the universe. It is used for communication between countries as a global language. According to Kruger (2012) in a globalized society, social contact occurs not only inside local networks, but increasingly throughout non-local networks as communication technology improves. Language becomes a practical difficulty when it comes to communicating efficiently within non-local networks. English has the power to transmit ideas, knowledge and good action campaigns. It has the potential to bridge the gap between language and society. There are no limitations since language has jumbled it and made it simpler to understand by individuals of different languages and cultures. .. In terms of harmony and peace, English has brought people from all over the world together. Spreading the word of peace to other people throughout the world would be simple. Every language reflects one of the numerous conceivable human wisdoms. According to Marti (1996) Languages are simultaneously mythological and symbolic structures, settings for a reasonable existence, manifestations of collective identities and domains for discourse and communication. The most amazing creations of human inventiveness are languages. As such, they have to be seen as a shared human treasure. Every language is both the collective memory of the group that uses it for expression and the collective memory of all humankind. Instruction and education understanding grammar rules, reading, writing and listening are only the parts of learning English; it also involves developing social awareness. It is the duty of educators to promote social contributions to their communities. Raising pupils' critical knowledge of their surroundings According to UNESCO (1995), the fundamental aims of a value-oriented area of peace education are to cultivate peace-related understanding, talents and values among students in order to create a peaceful environment while UNICEF (1999), defines peace education as the process of equipping people with peace-related information, morality and skills, resulting in changes in people's behaviors for resolving issues and averting conflicts.

By incorporating English into peace education, kids will be exposed to fresh, insightful material. Pupils will gain authentic context to enhance their aptitude and proficiency. As a social species, humans bear the task of keeping the planet in peace and harmony. In human existence, diversity is a unique phrase. There are a thousand different ways to live a calm existence. One of them is language instruction.

Literature Review

Peace literacy is a multifaceted concept that goes beyond the traditional notion of peace as simply the absence of conflict. It includes a variety of skills, knowledge and attitudes that help individuals to understand navigate and transform conflicts positively. Key competencies within peace literacy include empathy, critical thinking, emotional regulation, nonviolent communication and ethical decision-making (Jenkins, 2019).Peace literacy is founded on a profound and comprehensive awareness of the meaning of being human. Furthermore, it provides people with the means to improve the peace in their communities, businesses, friendships and families. Understanding and resolving hostility, mastering the three pillars of universal respect—listening intently, setting an example and speaking to people's potential—and sustaining empathy in the face of seeming difficulty are some of the skills taught in Peace Literacy training. This creative method identifies common ground across religious and political affiliations to promote peace in a non-polarizing fashion that does not alienate people. Writing and reading are important abilities, but so is peace literacy. It is the mastery of several abilities associated with fostering peace, including the ability to resolve conflicts, treat others with respect and look for alternatives to bullying and other types of hostility. The focus of literacy is on youth and adolescent involvement. We think that by encouraging Peace Literacy education, we can improve and make the world a safer place.

The next phase in the advancement of our global civilization is peace literacy, as it is essential in a globalized world in which each country's future is dependent upon the health of the earth. Living in peace with the threat of nuclear weapons, conflict and environmental catastrophe makes being preliterate extremely dangerous for both people and the world. In a time when technology has the potential to wipe out humanity, peace literacy equates to survival literacy. Jenkins (2019) defines peace literacy as the competencies necessary to build and sustain peaceful relationships at personal, community and global levels. These competencies include:
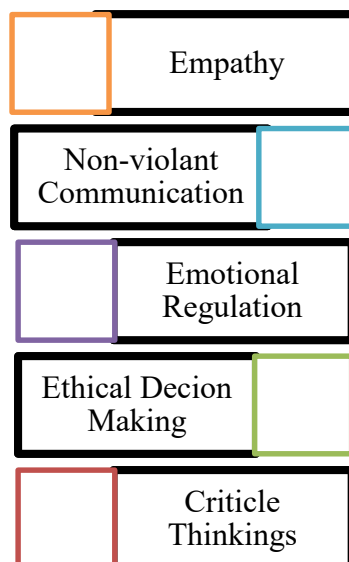

Figure 1. Peace literacy components

Peace literacy is also viewed as an interdisciplinary field that integrates concepts from psychology, sociology, education and conflict resolution.
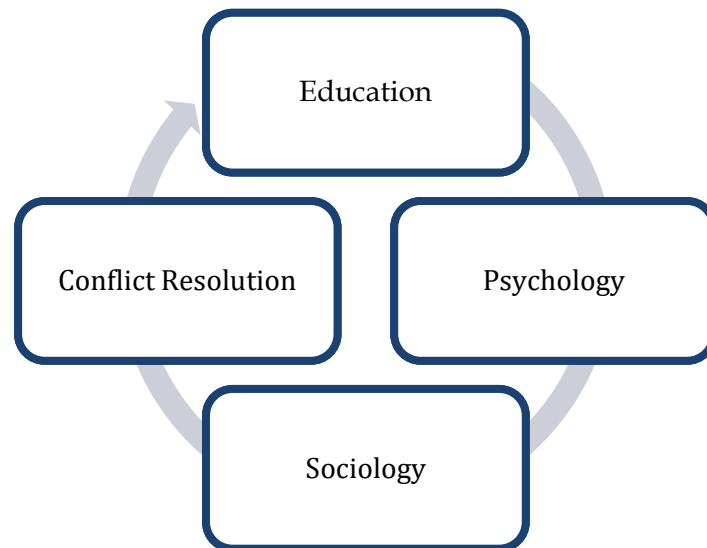
Figure 2. Peace literacy integration

This approach allows for a holistic understanding of peace and equips individuals with diverse tools to address various forms of conflict. Peace literacy promotes a proactive approach to peace building by fostering skills that help prevent conflicts before they arise (Harris & Morrison, 2013). Theories of peace literacy integrate diverse interdisciplinary frameworks aimed at providing individuals with the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for promoting peaceful coexistence and non-violent conflict resolution. Drawing from education, psychology, sociology and peace studies, these theories highlight the significance of empathy, critical thinking and effective communication. They assert that peace involves more than just the absence of conflict, encompassing justice, equity and understanding. By incorporating elements such as emotional intelligence, intercultural competence and nonviolent communication, peace literacy theories offer a holistic approach to fostering a culture of peace at both individual and societal levels (Galtung, 1996; Rosenberg, 2003).

The term "silm," from which the name Islam is derived, means peace. Islam teaches Muslims to live in peace and forbids them from engaging in war with non-combatants (those who choose not to fight).Nonetheless, Islam permits Muslims to battle for the defense of their religion (Munir, 2011). Millions of individuals follow the Islamic faith. The most important evidence regarding the peaceful character of this ideology is found in the name of this religion (Islam). It seems pretty strange that a religion that claims to promote peace may end up inciting conflict and bloodshed among the people. According to the commandments of Allah who is the creator of this religion, nobody is permitted to cross the limits of gentle and pious behavior and always be peaceful and kind for all others. In Islam, wars are allowed only for defending and maintaining peace.

Peace Integrated Instructional Plans

Peace literacy education comprises a diverse set of cognitive, emotional and social skills crucial for promoting peaceful interactions and resolving conflicts effectively. This educational model focuses on nurturing empathy, critical thinking, emotional intelligence and proficient communication. It also includes aspects like intercultural competence, ethical reasoning and nonviolent conflict resolution techniques. By combining these skills, peace literacy education aims to empower individuals to create

and maintain a culture of peace across various personal, social and global environments (Reardon, 2013; Rosenberg, 2003).
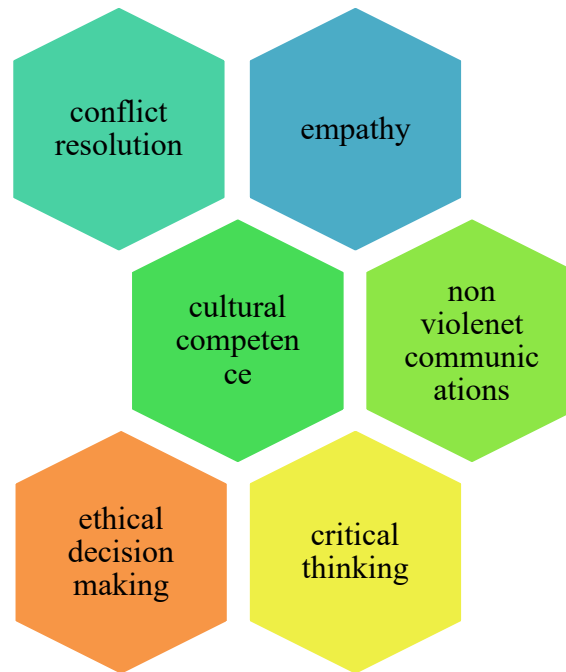

Figure 3. Peace integrated instructional plan

Conflict Resolution

According to Ahmed (2007), a conflict arises when there are differences between two or more groups of individuals that lead to disagreements among them. When people don't get what they want in terms of rewards, conflict arises. Conflict resolution is a fundamental component of peace literacy, focusing on equipping individuals with the skills to manage and resolve disputes constructively. This includes understanding the nature of conflict, identifying underlying needs and interests and employing strategies such as negotiation, mediation and problem-solving to reach mutually acceptable solutions. Teaching conflict resolution in educational settings helps students learn how to handle disagreements peacefully and fosters a cooperative learning environment (Deutsch, 2000).

Empathy

Empathy is the capacity to comprehend and experience another person's ideas, feelings and experiences; it is the capacity to interact intimately with another person's emotional states, surpassing mere compassion. It is making a deliberate effort to put oneself in another person's position, seeing the world from their viewpoint and reacting with consideration and empathy. Three primary categories of empathy are commonly recognized: cognitive, emotional and compassionate empathy. Cognitive empathy is the ability to grasp another person's point of view or mental condition, which enables people to imagine what other people could be experiencing. This kind aids with anticipating the emotional impact of words and actions, which is crucial for good communication and conflict resolution. Conversely, emotional empathy is the capacity to experience emotions as another person does. This type of empathy is essential for developing strong bonds because it allows people to feel the same emotions as others, which results in shared experiences. Lastly, compassionate empathy, often referred to as empathetic care, entails helping those in need in addition to understanding and sharing feelings. Empathy

creates deeper and more meaningful connections by allowing people to relate to the emotions of others, which builds a foundation of mutual respect and trust. Empathy is a transforming tool in conflict situations because it enables people to understand things from the viewpoint of the other party, which improves negotiating and problem-solving skills.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence refers to the capacity to comprehend, honor and communicate with others from a variety of cultural origins. It entails becoming conscious of one's own prejudices, learning about many cultures and honing intercultural communication and collaboration abilities. In today's worldwide society, where different contacts are prevalent in a variety of situations, this skill is essential. Cultural competency encompasses several elements, including knowledge, attitudes, abilities and understanding of other cultures. These elements all work together to promote inclusive and courteous interactions. In multicultural cultures, it is essential for lowering prejudices, averting misunderstandings and advancing fairness and social justice. Building understanding, respect and inclusion in different societies depends on the continual learning and adaption that goes into developing cultural competency (Sue, 2001).

Nonviolent Communication

Nonviolent Communication (NVC), developed by Marshall Rosenberg, is a communication process that encourages individuals to express themselves honestly and empathetically. NVC involves four key components: observations, feelings, needs and requests. By teaching students to use NVC, educators can promote more effective and compassionate communication, reducing misunderstandings and fostering a more supportive classroom environment (Rosenberg, 2003). Peace is more than just the absence of bloodshed; it is a notion that stimulates and inspires creativity. It suggests cooperation, observance of human rights and life and the dignity of every individual without bias or discrimination (Bajaj, 2008; Aspeslagh & Burns, 2014).

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze information, evaluate evidence and construct well-reasoned arguments. In peace literacy, critical thinking helps students question assumptions, recognize biases and consider multiple perspectives. This skill is vital for informed decision-making and effective problem-solving, enabling students to address conflicts and social issues thoughtfully and creatively (Ennis, 1996). Within the context of peace education, critical thinking is seen as being crucial. Ijtihad, or critical thinking, is regarded in Islam as a fundamental component of problem-solving techniques (Syed & Kramar, 2009).

Peace integrated pedagogy in Pakistan

One of the key reasons peace education is highly relevant to contemporary Pakistani education is its potential to address Social and Political Issues. By fostering critical thinking, empathy and conflict resolution skills, peace education helps students develop a more nuanced understanding of social and political issues, reducing their susceptibility to extremist ideologies (Rizvi, 2014). Pakistan's diverse cultural, ethnic and religious landscape requires educational approaches that promote social cohesion and respect for diversity. Peace education encourages students to appreciate and celebrate

differences, fostering a sense of national unity and reducing sectarian and ethnic tensions. This approach is crucial for building a more inclusive and harmonious society (Naseem, 2010). Peace education addresses issues of school violence and bullying by teaching students nonviolent communication and conflict resolution skills. By creating a safer and more supportive school environment, peace education contributes to improved academic outcomes and the overall well-being of students (Baig, 2011).

In Pakistan, there has been a notable increase in the number of English medium schools over the past few decades. These schools aim to provide students with a strong foundation in English from an early age, recognizing the language's significance in global communication and career opportunities. Parents often prefer English medium education to ensure their children have better access to higher education and job markets (Rahman, 2005).

ESL instruction in Pakistani secondary schools is a key element of the national education framework, designed to improve students' English language skills for academic and professional purposes. The curriculum emphasizes the development of competencies in reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar which are crucial for higher education and career advancement. However, the effectiveness of ESL programs is often limited by challenges such as outdated instructional methods, insufficient resources and rigid curriculum.

ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction in Pakistani secondary schools has its roots in the colonial period when English was introduced as the medium of instruction in many schools. Over the years, English language instruction has become an integral part of the Pakistani education system, reflecting its status as a global lingua franca and a key to socioeconomic advancement (Rahman, 2002).

According to Bar-Tal and Rosen (2009), the goals of peace education can be met by preparing the educational system for significant changes, such as establishing new course objectives and goals, updating instructional materials and textbooks and providing teachers with the training they need to create the kind of environment that is required for peace education. Students gain proficiency in language and become more adept at navigating social and emotional environments when peace literacy concepts — like empathy, critical thinking and effective communication — are included into language classes. Reading materials and having conversations on peace improves reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and speaking and listening abilities while encouraging more in-depth thought about social issues. In addition to enhancing language acquisition, this dual approach helps students develop a sense of global citizenship and responsibility, which equips them to act more compassionately and thoughtfully in a variety of situations. This combination develops a broad range of skills, readying, writing, vocabulary and grammar in children for success in the classroom as well as proactive, compassionate community involvement. Integrating peace literacy themes into language learning materials, such as literature and media, helps students improve their language skills while deepening their understanding of global issues.

Material and Methods

A research design is a detailed description of the study. It provides detailed information that how a study was conducted, which instrument was used for research, how the data were collected and how the data were analyzed (Mugenda, 2008). It is a descriptive study in nature. The researcher in this research study applied the mixed methods approach because one of type of quantitative research or qualitative research is

not enough to achieve the objectives of the research. Both qualitative and quantitative data are gathered simultaneously in the concurrent triangulation design of the mixed techniques and the outcomes of the two types of data are then compared to determine the similarities and difference.

- A control group was included in the pre-test-post-test experimental design used in the study.

- To guarantee comparability, individuals were assigned at random to the experimental and control groups.

The participants were the students of public secondary schools, and random assignment was employed to divide two homogenous groups i.e. the experimental or control group. The experimental group was given a curriculum that seamlessly integrates peace education into English language instruction, while the control group followed a traditional English language curriculum. The independent variable was the integration of peace education and dependent variables include writing skill, reading skill, grammar and vocabulary for English language proficiency and attitudes towards peace and conflict resolution. This approach provided an organized and thorough analysis of the possible advantages of including peace education into the English language curriculum, offering insightful information about the relationship between language learning and initiatives to promote world peace. The population for study was high school students and teachers of public schools of district Bahawalpur, Punjab. The intended groups of students show significant changes in language proficiency. Population framework comprised female students of secondary level in district Bahawalpur. Selecting a group of people for a research is known as sampling. The people who were chosen had to be representative of the group from which they were chosen. The process of choosing a sample is regarded as crucial to the success of any research project. The researcher used a random sampling approach to choose the 60 students (30 for experimental group /30 for controlled group) from one public female school of tehsil Ahmad pur east, district Bahawalpur for collection of quantitative and qualitative data.

3.3 Instrumentation

Research instruments are tools, which are used to collect the data regarding the subject of research study (Creswell, 2009). Research instruments for this study were developed with great care. In the study of literature review, few models of peace education were included in the present study for developing a new model of peace education. These models provided the guidelines to the researcher. These were proved as helpful in developing the research instruments (Pre-Post Tests). The following tools pre- post tests for peace literacy skills and pre- post tests for language proficiency prepared by the researcher were employed in this study. A sample model of curriculum for integrating Peace Literacy Skills in ESL Instructional Plan was developed by researcher with the guidance of supervisor. This model consists of 5 units and 10 lesson plans.
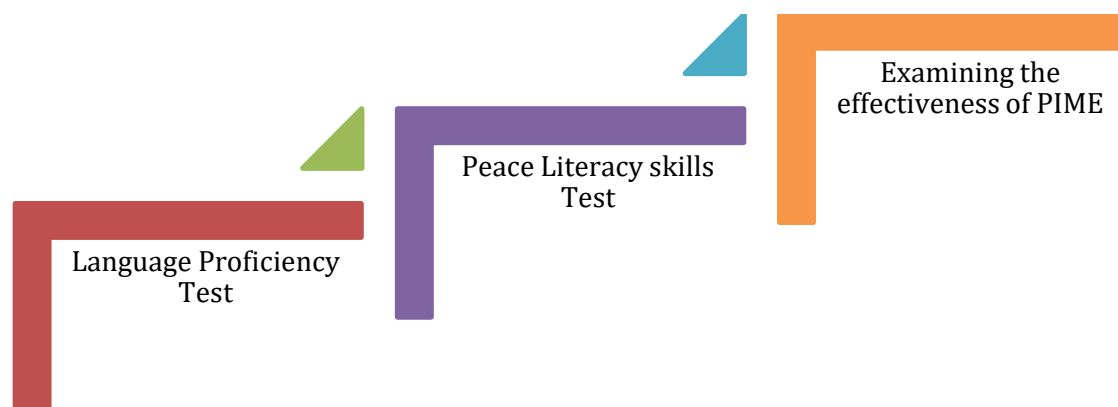
Framework of Analysis

Figure 4. Framework of Analysis

Results and Discussion

Analysis includes descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, and correlational analyses, to assess the impact and relationships among the variables. The analyses aim to inform the effectiveness of integrating peace literacy into ESL education, contributing to the broader discourse on educational strategies that promote peace and social cohesion in diverse learning environments.

Experimental and Control Group Data Analysis

Table 1
Independent sample t-test results for peace literacy skills pre-test and post-test

Group	Test Type	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental Group	Pre-Test	30	15.80	3.10			
	Post-Test	30	24.50	4.50	3.456	58	0.001
Control Group	Pre-Test	30	14.20	2.80			
	Post-Test	30	16.30	3.00			

The independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the effectiveness of peace literacy skills training in the experimental and control groups, analyzing both pre-test and post-test scores. The experimental group had a mean score of 15.80 (SD = 3.10), while the control group scored a mean of 14.20 (SD = 2.80). The t-value of 3.456 (df = 68) resulted in a significant difference with a p-value of 0.001, indicating that the experimental group had a significantly higher level of peace literacy skills prior to the intervention. After the intervention, the experimental group's mean score increased significantly to 24.50 (SD = 4.50), while the control group's mean score rose to 16.30 (SD = 3.00). The significant difference between the post-test scores of the two groups demonstrates the effectiveness of the peace literacy skills training provided to the experimental group. The independent samples t-test revealed that the training program had a statistically significant impact on the peace literacy skills of students in the experimental group compared to the control group. This suggests that integrating peace literacy into the ESL instructional plans significantly enhances students' awareness, skills and practices related to peace literacy.

Table 2
Independent sample t-test results for language proficiency pre-test and post-test

Group	Test Type	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental Group	Pre-Test	30	18.71	4.10			
	Post-Test	30	26.50	4.50	4.156	58	0.000
Control Group	Pre-Test	30	13.17	1.80			
	Post-Test	30	19.30	2.00			

The results of the independent sample t-test for language proficiency pre-test and post-test scores are summarized in Table 4.21. The analysis compared the mean scores of the experimental and control groups, allowing for an assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention implemented with the experimental group. In the experimental group, the pre-test mean score was 18.71 with a standard deviation (SD) of 4.10. Following the intervention, the post-test mean score significantly increased to 26.50 with an SD of 4.50. The t-value for this comparison was calculated as 4.156, with degrees of freedom (df) at 58. The significance level (p-value) was found to be 0.000, indicating a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group. This result suggests that the intervention had a substantial positive impact on the language proficiency of participants in the experimental group. The control group had a pre-test mean score of 13.17 with an SD of 1.80 which increased to a post-test mean score of 19.30 with an SD of 2.00. However, the analysis did not include t-test results for the control group which limits the ability to make a direct statistical comparison with the experimental group. Nonetheless, the increase in mean scores for the control group indicates some improvement, albeit less pronounced than that observed in the experimental group. The structured intervention significantly enhanced language proficiency among participants in the experimental group, as indicated by their increased post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores. The findings highlight the effectiveness of targeted educational strategies in improving language skills, underscoring the need for similar approaches in language proficiency programs.

The first research question focused on determining the instructional plans needed to develop peace-integrated materials in English (PIME). This question was justified by the necessity of providing educators with concrete strategies and resources to effectively teach peace literacy alongside language skills. A lack of structured instructional plans often hindered teachers' ability to integrate interdisciplinary themes like peace education. The research sought to propose practical, actionable plans that ESL educators could adopt to foster a more holistic learning environment. These plans would not only address the linguistic needs of learners but also encourage the development of essential life skills such as critical thinking and conflict resolution, which are integral to peace literacy.

The second research question assessed the impact of PIME on developing reading and writing skills among English language learners. To evaluate the effectiveness of integrating peace literacy into language instruction and its potential benefits for learners. Prior studies indicated that when educational materials resonate with students' experiences and values, engagement and motivation significantly increase, leading to enhanced reading and writing skills. The relationship between PIME and language development, the research aimed to provide empirical evidence supporting the integration of peace education into ESL curricula. This impact would not only validate the importance of peace literacy in language learning but also encourage broader adoption of such practices across educational settings.

The third research question assessed the impact of PIME on developing vocabulary and grammar among English language learners. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative assessments of vocabulary and

grammar skills with qualitative feedback from students. The results indicated a positive correlation between the implementation of peace-integrated materials and language development. Students who engaged with PIME demonstrated improved proficiency in vocabulary and grammar skills. They also reported heightened engagement and motivation in their language learning, attributed to the relevance of the content to their lives and the opportunities for meaningful discussion.

Conclusion

The need for instructional plans that facilitate the development of peace-integrated materials in English (PIME) emerged as a crucial finding of the research. The study proposed that instructional plans should be comprehensive and contextually relevant, encompassing thematic units that address real-world issues related to peace and conflict. For instance, units could focus on topics such as cultural understanding, empathy-building exercises and collaborative problem-solving activities. The research emphasized the importance of aligning PIME with existing language learning objectives. Instructional materials should not only enhance language proficiency but also engage learners in critical thinking and discussions surrounding peace-related topics. By incorporating authentic texts that address themes of peace and social justice, educators can create a more engaging and meaningful learning experience for students.

The impact of peace-integrated material on developing language proficiency among English language learners yielded promising results. The implementation of PIME was associated with noticeable improvements in students' language skills, particularly in areas such as vocabulary acquisition, speaking and listening. The integration of peace literacy not only motivated students to engage with the language but also fostered a sense of connection to the material being taught. Participants in the study reported increased enthusiasm for language learning when peace education themes were included in the curriculum. This aligns with previous research that has shown a positive correlation between culturally relevant teaching practices and student engagement. A learning environment that valued peace and understanding, educators were able to facilitate a deeper connection to the language and enhance overall proficiency. The findings suggested that the benefits of PIME extended beyond linguistic development. Students demonstrated improved social-emotional skills, including empathy and conflict resolution abilities, which are essential in today's diverse and interconnected world. This holistic approach to language teaching emphasizes the importance of integrating peace literacy into ESL instruction, ultimately contributing to the development of well-rounded individuals capable of navigating complex social dynamics.

The study highlighted the importance of revising existing curricula, developing instructional plans that promote peace literacy alongside language proficiency in reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar skills. By embracing these recommendations, educators can foster a more holistic and meaningful learning experience that empowers students to engage with language in ways that promote understanding, empathy and social responsibility.

Recommendations

In light of the study findings, recommendations for future research and practice emerged. First, further research should explore the long-term effects of peace literacy integration on both language proficiency and socio-emotional development among

students. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into how peace education influences learners' attitudes and behaviors over time.

- Curriculum developers and educational policymakers should prioritize the creation of peace-integrated materials that are accessible and relevant to diverse learners. Engaging teachers in the development process can ensure that resources meet the needs of educators and resonate with students' experiences.
- Schools should cultivate a culture of peace and social responsibility, promoting values that align with peace literacy within the broader educational framework. By integrating peace education into various subjects and fostering a supportive school environment, educators can contribute to the development of students who are not only proficient in English but also equipped with the skills necessary to be active and compassionate members of society.
- Curriculum developers and educational policymakers should prioritize the creation of peace-integrated materials that are accessible and relevant to diverse learners. Engaging teachers in the development process can ensure that resources meet the needs of educators and resonate with students' experiences.
- Schools should cultivate a culture of peace and social responsibility, promoting values that align with peace literacy within the broader educational framework. By integrating peace education into various subjects and fostering a supportive school environment, educators can contribute to the development of students who are not only proficient in English but also equipped with the skills necessary to be active and compassionate members of society.

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