

Building Peace through Communication in an English Language Classroom at a Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT: As the interaction and exchange of cultural diversity through globalization increase in our modern world so does the need for strategies to reduce the risk of cross-cultural conflicts. This qualitative action research study aimed to explore the intersection of language learning and peace education in a multicultural university setting. Specifically, this study focused on the researcher's role as an English professor to encourage intercultural exchanges that promote peaceful communication and explore pedagogical tools to incorporate in class to help students manage, resolve, and transform conflict. Using a two-cycle exploratory action research approach, data were collected through student surveys, individual interviews, focus group discussions, student feedback forms, and reflection journals. The first cycle involved fifteen participants in a course on conflict resolution skills taught by the researcher, and the second cycle involved nine students in a low-intermediate English class where the content was incorporated into the language course. Thematic analysis was conducted on the interviews and focus groups. The findings from the student feedback and reflection journals helped to create a curriculum to be implemented in the English-medium classroom. The findings confirmed the importance of implementing conflict resolution skills in the English as an Additional Language (EAL) classroom at a multicultural university. The implications for social change from this research include the development of valuable tools to be used in the classroom to guide students to utilize appropriate language to bring about peaceful communication so that they can graduate with the necessary skills to become competent cross-cultural communicators.

KEYWORDS: Conflict resolution, English as an additional language (EAL), peace language, English-medium instruction (EMI), intercultural dialogue, higher education

Introduction

As the interaction and exchange of cultural diversity through globalization increase in our modern world so does the need for strategies to reduce the risk of cross-cultural conflicts. An inclusive and diverse society requires tolerance and intercultural understanding. The purpose of this qualitative action research study was to explore the intersection of language learning and peace education in a multicultural university setting. Specifically, this study focused on the following research questions: a) How can I use my role as an English professor to encourage intercultural exchanges that promote peaceful communication? and b) What are some pedagogical tools that I can incorporate in my class to help students manage, resolve, and transform conflict? For the purpose of the study, the theoretical framework for this research drew from the theories of critical pedagogy and intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989). A review of selected literature was conducted in the fields of peace education and language education as a transformative learning experience, with a focus on incorporating intercultural dialogue and multi-dimensional peace (Oxford 2013) into an English-medium classroom.

In order to become global communicators living in a more peaceful world, students must understand how to resolve conflicts and use the appropriate language in communicating across cultures. This area of study is significant in that it sought to add to the current research on best practices for incorporating peace education principles into an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as an Additional Language (EAL) setting (Curtis 2018; Friedrich 2007; Lirola 2016; Oxford 2013). In particular, the study addressed a research gap regarding

the implementation of intercultural dialogue and how it can serve as a platform for instilling empathy, openness, acceptance, understanding, and respect for others from different backgrounds and cultures. In addition, this study contributed to the research being done in regards to peacebuilding in language education (Olivero 2017; Oxford 2017; Oxford et al. 2018; Olivero & Oxford 2019; Oxford et al. 2021) through utilizing the classroom as a platform to promote peaceful communication.

Using a two-cycle exploratory action research approach, data were collected through student surveys, individual interviews, focus group discussions, student feedback forms, and reflection journals. The first cycle involved fifteen participants in a course on conflict resolution skills taught by the researcher, and the second cycle involved nine students in a low-intermediate English class where the content was incorporated into the language course. Thematic analysis was conducted on the interviews, focus groups, and journals while content analysis was used for the survey and feedback forms. The findings from the student feedback and reflection journals helped to create a peace module to be implemented in the English-medium classroom. These findings confirmed the importance of implementing conflict resolution skills in the English as an Additional Language (EAL) classroom at a multicultural university. The implications for social change from this research include the development of valuable tools to be used in the classroom to guide students to utilize appropriate language to bring about peaceful communication so that they can graduate with the necessary skills to become competent cross-cultural communicators. By preparing the students with the competencies required, a contribution was made to the university's mission of creating agents of social change with a deeper understanding of intercultural peace and civil dialogue.

Methodology

An action research design was chosen to explore one teacher's role in encouraging peaceful dialogue in the classroom while providing tools to help students transform conflict.

A. Sampling

1) Target population and research context

The participants of this study were undergraduate students attending the same university in rural Costa Rica. The university is self-contained, with all of the students living on campus in dormitories. The classroom setting for this research was conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic that affected the campus beginning in March 2020 and was still present for the duration of the research, which commenced in September 2020 and continued until May 2021. Therefore, for the first cycle, Microsoft Teams was used for HUM405 "Conflict Resolution Communication Skills", a thirteen-week class, which met once a week for three hours. The syllabus described the course as an introduction to conflict resolution for students who have plans to be global communicators.

In the second cycle, a section of the course, ING402 "English: Independent User (Threshold: B1d)", was chosen. ING402 represents the last course for the university students taking English as an additional language. Successful completion indicates an Intermediate level of English. This section was chosen to participate in an intercultural dialogue project with a university in Hawai'i. The premise for the project was to offer an online cultural exchange with students from a different institution in order to develop cultural exchange relationships, become more aware of the globalized world, and practice English language skills. The class was taught from January to May 2021, utilizing the Zoom platform for the meetings and Moodle and Google Drive for content information. This class met three hours a week, with one-hour segments over the course of fifteen weeks.

2) Sampling Procedures

In order to obtain the participants in the study for the first cycle, two introductory webinars were given in June 2020 regarding the purpose of the study. The goal was to introduce the new class that would be offered in September called “Conflict Resolution Communication Skills” as well as inform students about the study. Although students could enroll in the class without enrolling in the study, all students who enrolled agreed to be participants in the HUM405 course “Conflict Resolution Communication Skills.” Once the students were selected and an overview of the project was given, individual interviews were conducted in order to facilitate the formation of focus groups based on their individual answers. The focus groups in the first cycle served to give voice to the students who worked together with the innovations set forth in the class.

A “Call for Participation” email was sent out to invite the fifty-two students taking ING402: English: Independent User (Threshold: B1d), referred therein as ING402, to participate in the second cycle starting in January 2021. Unfortunately, no one replied to the email; therefore, it was decided to choose one of the four groups taught and asked them as a group to be part of the research within the class. This group was also chosen to be a part of the intercultural dialogue project based on the availability of the students participating from outside the university. There were eleven students enrolled in this section of ING402, and nine chose to participate in the research. Their participation in the study was strictly voluntary, and they were permitted to leave at any point without explanation or prejudice. For each participant, a signed informed consent form was received and participant information was collected.

3) Participant profile

The participants in both cycles were in their last year as undergraduates at the same university. Their age range was between 21 and 28. They came from different countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa. The first cycle consisted of 15 participants, with 31% from Latin America and 69% from Africa. Thirty-one percent were male. In the second cycle, there were nine participants with 100% coming from Latin America and the Caribbean, with 33% female.

B. Data Collection

The purpose of this study was to research how I, as a language educator, can facilitate to improve the communication skills among students from different cultures who may approach interpersonal conflict differently. Providing valuable conflict resolution tools to students was the ultimate goal and purpose. The action research plan implemented provided the organization of the project including action steps/activities, timeline, methods and tools used for gathering the data.

1) Data Collection Methods

A school wide survey was implemented through an online questionnaire using Google Forms and administered through the university’s internal email server to assess the extent of intercultural conflict on campus. Creating a research questionnaire requires the ability to write appropriate questions and organize them in a logical meaningful manner. It also involves understanding which types of questions to ask to yield optimal results. In addition, the questions that are written needed to be done so in a way that invites the respondent to answer them honestly (Dilman, Smyth, & Christian 2014). Moreover, using purposeful sampling (Creswell & Poth 2018) targeting the entire current university student population on campus gave the broadest view of the extent that conflict exists on campus.

Interviews are the most common method used in qualitative research. For this study, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants from both action research cycles, with one hour being the average length of each interview. The protocol used consisted of a series of open-ended questions designed to allow the person being interviewed to open up and provide their story in a natural way (Creswell & Poth 2018). This semi-formal,

semi-structured format helped give insight to the nature of intercultural conflict on campus. The questions created centered on the particular theme of conflict on campus, but they were designed to allow the participant to elaborate their story and served more as a guideline than predetermined questions typical in a more formal, structured interview. The students participating in the interviews were students who already consented to participate and had chosen to talk. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted through a virtual setting at a mutually convenient time. For the first cycle, the Microsoft Teams platform was used due to the ability to record with accurate transcriptions. In the second cycle, Zoom was utilized because the participants were more comfortable with this platform after using it in their other classes for the previous ten months.

In action research, using processes that involve groups is common and can complement the other methods employed. Focus groups were chosen in order to generate a collective view on intercultural conflict on campus. Since the members of the focus groups were also of an intercultural dynamic, care was taken to ensure successful discussions. Having an awareness of cross-cultural sensitivity in a culturally diverse student body shapes how I approached my teaching and dictated how I would conduct the focus groups. Moreover, it was very important to conduct culturally responsive focus groups as this best aligns with my identity as a professor.

For the first cycle, the participants were divided into focus groups based on the answers to the individual interviews with the reasoning that if the group was comprised of people with similar views, they would be more likely to share deeply on the topic. From the answers given in the interviews, a shared experience relative to the interview topic was identified. Three groups were created: one group who thought intercultural conflict on campus was a very serious issue, one group who perceived it as a moderate issue, and the other group who did not have strong feelings about the issue or thought it was not a serious issue. Group size was between 4-5 participants. Focus group was structured around 10 questions written from general to specific and designed to elicit open-ended answers. Time for each focus group discussion was between 30-60 minutes and was held virtually using Microsoft Teams during a convenient time for the participants. After each focus group, a debriefing questionnaire was administered in order to receive feedback and allow the participants to provide any additional information that they were not able to share during the discussion.

During the second action research cycle, the participants were divided based on the groups made in the beginning of the term with the intercultural dialogue project previously explained. There were three groups formed with four participants in two groups, with only one student who agreed to be a participant in the third group. The focus group format was designed around five open-ended questions regarding the activities imparted in class as well as working in groups in general. The average length of each focus group was twenty-four minutes. They were conducted virtually using the Zoom videoconferencing platform. In lieu of a debriefing questionnaire directly related to the focus group, a feedback questionnaire was given to provide the participants a chance to elaborate on what was discussed in the focus group while providing feedback on the activities conducted in class.

Observing participants in action is a common way of collecting data in an action research study (Creswell & Poth 2018). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the observations were executed slightly differently than first anticipated. All classes and lessons were delivered through a virtual platform, either through Zoom or Microsoft Teams. This came with several drawbacks. In the first class, Microsoft Teams was utilized. At the time of observation, in order to simulate group work, channels were utilized and one member of each group was assigned the task of recording their channel when a group activity was assigned. I then was able to watch and/or listen to their discussion. In the second class, the Zoom platform was used, which utilizes breakout rooms for group work. Unfortunately, there was no way to record each breakout room, so I needed to enter each room to listen and observe, much like

circulating around the classroom without the ability to eavesdrop simultaneously on other groups.

When role-plays were executed, students were given options to present them through pre-recording a video or presenting during online class. Most chose to record their role-play videos using the online platform of Flipgrid. These were saved on their site and only those with the class code could view the videos. This method had the added advantage of allowing students to comment on the videos through writing comments or adding a personal video. The same technique was used for final presentations. Those who created videos shared them through Flipgrid or created a private YouTube link. The success of the lesson was measured through participant feedback using Google Forms. Lastly, a reflective journal was kept to record observations and thoughts related to the lesson plans and the activities presented.

Results and Discussions

Summary of Findings

The results identified in the exploratory stage confirmed a need for incorporating peacebuilding skills in the classroom at the university where the investigation took place. Of those who experienced an interpersonal conflict on campus, 84% percent of the respondents to the school-wide questionnaire felt the conflict situation had at least some cultural element. Of those who experienced intercultural conflict, 42% indicated that it was not resolved amicably. Eighty-four percent felt that intercultural conflict was a problem on campus, and 98% were interested in learning communication skills to help manage and transform conflict.

Conducting the first cycle of research revealed sources of intercultural conflicts as well as reasons for the breakdown in communication. Sources included differences in language, culture, and expectations in classroom behavior. The results of the role-plays and reflections indicated the reasons for the breakdowns were connected to poor communication skills, no empathy, and lack of active listening. The findings of the first cycle guided the creation of pedagogical tools to be utilized in the second cycle. These tools, which included intercultural dialogues, role-plays, and reflection, were favorable in helping students address conflict situations more constructively.

Interpretation of the Findings

Answer to RQ1: Using my role as an English professor to encourage intercultural exchanges that promote peaceful communication

The research conducted helped to answer the first research question of how I could use my role as an English professor to encourage intercultural exchanges that promote peaceful communication. The research was influenced following an on-campus email exchange between two students with differing languages, cultures, and sexual orientations. This incident prompted the investigation of my teaching practice and how students can become peaceful communicators. What I found was the importance of teaching with an intersectional pedagogy and with empathy. Moreover, this required respect for student differences as well as offering safe spaces for communication.

1. Teaching with an Intersectional Lens

Conducting this research in the classroom guided me to understand the importance of teaching with an intersectional lens. The term “intersectionality” was first used by Crenshaw (1989) to highlight the oppression of black women within society. It has come to be understood as the overlapping of identities and its place in society. Over the years, intersectionality framework has been adopted into different disciplines, one being education (Case 2017). What makes intersectionality appealing as an educator is that it encompasses elements of critical race theory, feminist pedagogy, and culturally responsive teaching while acknowledging the various social

identities of an individual. Being cognizant of these identities and offering students in the classroom an opportunity to learn about themselves as well as their classmates can lead to powerful discussions.

Through this research, the value of establishing trust and open dialogue through storytelling activities was learned. Key elements like fostering dialogues, embracing diversity, and listening to students are all integral components of classroom teaching practices. I was interested in discovering how these elements play a part in the English language classroom at a multicultural university. This research has confirmed the value of incorporating an intersectional lens for building peace through communication in a classroom setting.

2. Teaching with empathy

Teaching with empathy provides students in the classroom with the perspective that approaching conflict situations with an empathic attitude can help transform conflict. When the participants conducted their role-plays, they were able to see that one reason for conflicts not to resolve is the lack of empathy the participants have towards each other. The role of a teacher is to support the students as they go through the process of self-reflection and strengthen their ability of empathy by actively communicating with them while they become better communicators (Galtung & Webel 2007).

One recommendation that came out of the focus groups was to offer these focus groups regularly in the form of discussions in order “to build tolerance and empathy among the students.” This insight confirms the need to bring people together to talk openly about conflict and ways to be better communicators. When students are able to dialogue, linguistic understanding (Comins Mingol & París Albert 2009) and cooperation are evident when they are learning from each other and building trust (Stearns 2018). This was seen as an aspect of the course that was most useful and valuable. Furthermore, empathy was cited as a skill to possess when approaching conflict situations. Empathy also played a pivotal role in the intercultural dialogue project conducted in the second cycle. The participants felt that this experience helped them to have more empathy.

In essence, what was found regarding teaching empathy and teaching with empathy supports the literature that states empathy promotes peaceful communication through genuine intercultural exchanges resulting in more positive outcomes when involved in conflict situations (Abarca Obregón 2014; Lirola 2016). Moreover, it is the responsibility of the teacher to teach with empathy. Keeping a reflective journal throughout this research and cataloging feelings and emotions while also writing down reactions to classroom situations indicated that I had the ability to teach with empathy. Moreover, the participants indicated through course feedback the appreciation they had to my positive attitude while teaching during this pandemic. One participant wrote, “she never gave up on us, although it was not easy; I appreciated that.” Having a positive attitude throughout my teaching has helped in creating an environment that is conducive to learning.

Teaching empathy and teaching with empathy contribute to a safe environment important for learning and acquiring communication skills. Although teaching virtually compounded the difficulties in creating an open and safe teaching and learning environment, several lessons were learned that can carry over when classes return to the classroom. The first lesson involved the importance of listening actively. Active listening is a key component in transforming conflict through communication. As learned through the literature, adopting a problem-posing approach in the classroom involves the incorporation of listening, dialogue, and action (Wallerstein 1983; Freire 2000; Auerbach & Wallerstein 2004a, 2004b; Wong 2011) which strengthens the relationship among the teacher and the students. The participants were able to see that when active listening is not present, communication tends to break down, as shown in their reflections from their role-play assignments. Furthermore, those in the first cycle who completed their final projects submitted positive feedback regarding active

listening. Interviews revealed that they felt possessing active listening skills improved their chances of communication across cultures.

Another lesson learned pertains to the importance of cooperation and group work. The necessity to meet with the students online instead of in the classroom proved challenging to foster group collaboration. Despite this setback, the participants were motivated to meet outside of designated class time whenever possible to collaborate on their assignments. This dedication supports the learning by doing approach (Freire 2000; Wong 2011) that is cultivated over the course of their university experience. It also gave the students agency over the learning process. Under typical class conditions, there would be time in class to circulate physically to offer support and guidance. While this approach resumes upon returning to the classroom, this research showed that learning in community can be transformative when the participants are given the opportunity to learn outside the class period. A driving force behind conducting this project was to create safe spaces for dialogue and reflection with the prospect of being intentionally inclusive to those who have historically been excluded and marginalized. The findings supported this while also highlighting the importance of accepting cultural differences.

3. Acceptance of cultural differences

Conducting this research has confirmed the need to teach towards an acceptance of cultural differences. When students are in a multicultural environment, they have brought with them their own values and beliefs as well as stereotypes and biases. They bring these into the classroom, which can affect how and what they learn. What this research has shown is the importance of being responsive to the cultural diversity existing in classrooms. In addition, as the literature on intersectionality corroborates, many different facets of culture intersect. Drawing out the different cultures and identities within the classroom can help address the inequities that those from marginalized cultures experience on campus.

Recalling the incident that catapulted this study, there were several intersecting identities in play (race, religion, sexual orientation, and language). Therefore, while exploring the answer to the first research question, the participants were offered the opportunity to explore the different identities and discover how these identities shape how conflict is transformed. Using a culturally responsive approach (Ladson-Billings 1994; Gay 2000; Nieto 2004) allowed me to connect with the participants while building relationships and fostering an open dialogue. This was important to confront the inequities that occur and, consequently, may be a contributing factor to intercultural conflict. A driving force behind conducting this project was to create safe spaces for dialogue and reflection with the prospect of being intentionally inclusive to those who have historically been excluded and marginalized. This was seen through the activities we engaged in both cycles. Getting to know each other, sharing stories and exploring our identities while learning different communication styles set the stage for incorporating pedagogical tools in class to manage, resolve, and transform conflict.

Answer to RQ2: Pedagogical tools to incorporate in the class to help students manage, resolve, and transform conflict

The second research question sought to answer what pedagogical tools could be incorporated to help students manage, resolve, and transform conflict. Throughout this investigation, several pedagogical tools were used in the classroom to help students utilize skills for peaceful communication. In both classes, role-plays were a proven way to illustrate positive ways to approach conflict situations. The first cycle confirmed the use of role-plays which focus on interpersonal experiences and social elements using empathy supporting Mercer's work (2016) on empathy in language learning and teaching. Another tool that was utilized in both classes was the reflective journal. Role-plays and reflective journals can have the added benefit of allowing the participants to practice their language skills and peacebuilding skills (Burns 2009; Jakar &

Milofsky 2016). Therefore, these tools were continued in the second cycle. One modification made for the second cycle was to incorporate a video aspect so that those involved in the intercultural exchange could weigh in on the different topics discussed in class.

Two other pedagogical tools that were incorporated were the use of counterstories and the potential of intercultural exchanges to help students manage, resolve, and transform conflict. The findings on intercultural exchanges added to the research (Council of Europe 2008; Malescu & Pareschiv 2016) on exploring how students view other cultures and how learning a language while also learning about other cultures can improve overall communication and lead to better management of conflict situations. Another powerful tool incorporated in the second cycle was the use of counterstories (Solórzano & Yosso 2002; Yosso 2006). This method was new to me, but as the findings showed it was a very transformative experience for the students and something to continue to use in class. Drawing from existing literature and studies conducted by Olivero & Oxford (2019) on peacebuilding activities in the language classroom in teacher education programs, students developed skills to acquire empathy, acceptance of cultural differences, and intercultural understanding that will help them with communication in a global world. What was found supports the use of experiential learning using the content of intercultural conflict within the context of language education. Furthermore, using the experiential learning model for fostering peace in the language classroom is something that has been proposed as part of the “peacebuilding triad” brought forth by Olivero & Oxford (2019) in their research consisting of contemplative, holistic, and experiential learning modes. The tools used encouraged active participation as well as cooperative learning. Furthermore, the university’s model of “learning by doing” complements the strategies employed in the classroom.

Implications

The findings of this study highlight several implications for practicing educators in the fields of peacebuilding and language education as well as provide insights into future implementations of peace-related activities within the EAL classroom. Given that this was a qualitative action research study with a small number of participants, however, care should be taken in the application of these implications of practice. The outcomes of this study support the feasibility of approaching the language classroom with an intersectional lens. It can be a meaningful experience for the students, as the feedback from both cycles illustrated. An increased confidence in expressing themselves along with opportunities for intercultural exchanges can lead to awareness that can bring more peaceful dialogues. A logical and advantageous place for teaching these skills is in the English language classroom, either as part of an EAL course or as a CLIL course. The research conducted illustrates the importance of incorporating peacebuilding activities to help equip students with the necessary skills to be better communicators. It validates what Olivero (2017) and Olivero & Oxford (2019) discovered in their study of pre-service language teachers: incorporating peacebuilding activities in the language classroom is integral for creating a more peaceful society. The research addressed a gap with the intersections of language and peace education while supporting the need to incorporate peacebuilding and CRS in a multicultural university.

Limitations

The researcher intentionally chose to utilize her classes to generate the data. The instruments incorporated like the individual interviews, focus groups and reflective journals, aligned with tools used in qualitative research. When conducting qualitative research, there is an assumption that the participants involved answer the questions truthfully. The two main limitations that affected this study were the pandemic and the time constraints and the boundaries set forth by the university administration. Despite these limitations, I felt satisfied that my research questions were adequately answered.

Recommendations for future research

The results of this project highlighted a few topics on which further research would be beneficial. Teachers who are interested in utilizing a peace education approach in their language classes can benefit from the various pedagogical tools implemented in the classroom. Role-plays and journals are not new tools for implementation in language classrooms. Therefore, teachers can enrich this experience more deeply through incorporating themes that would promote peaceful communication. By doing this, they would be contributing to what is currently being done in the field to foster peace in the language classroom. Allowing students to choose topics that are meaningful to them and working on ways to resolve these issues can work towards building a culture of peace needed in society. Furthermore, these tools could improve critical thinking and conflict resolution skills, which can develop a more empathic and safe learning environment. Teachers looking to address the many facets of discrimination in their classroom may be interested in introducing the counternarrative as a pedagogical tool. Storytelling is a common tool in language classrooms where students practice narration, verb tenses, and chronological vocabulary. Counterstories, or counternarratives, take storytelling one step further by allowing the participants to voice inequities.

The intersections of peacebuilding and language education are burgeoning fields with a variety of opportunities to explore in depth the value this would have on contributing to a more peaceful society. While research has been done in teacher education programs (Olivero 2017), more research in the classroom by current language educators can help strengthen the validity of the field and highlight the importance of incorporating peacebuilding activities in the classroom to help students manage, resolve, and transform conflict situations. Further research could plan to use larger sample sizes to strengthen significant findings. The use of a longitudinal study could deepen the insight gained by following a select group throughout their university studies. The pedagogical tools could be measured to evaluate their effectiveness in achieving peaceful communication. While this is being done, more empirical evidence is needed to validate the pedagogical interventions in language education courses intended to foster peace. The findings of this type of study could indicate valuable information on teaching practices regarding teaching students to be more open minded, empathic, and accepting of diversity. Conducting this type of research in different settings would also contribute to the field. Moreover, conducting this research in a more homogenous setting, like the participants in the second cycle, may provide the field with comparative results that could contribute to the impact of developing tools within the classroom.

Conclusion

The hope is that this research illuminated the importance of incorporating peace activities within an EAL classroom through an intersectional lens. An additional hope is that the research supports the fields of peace education and language education that are already utilizing valuable peacebuilding activities in language classrooms. Overall, this study was able to address the problem of how I, the researcher/practitioner, approached intercultural conflict in the classroom to help students become peaceful communicators. I recognized the importance of acknowledging the existence of intercultural conflict on a higher education campus while understanding that the classroom can serve the void of transforming these conflict situations while equipping the students with the skills necessary to be better global communicators. For me, this study has provided a glimpse into the complex nature of intersecting two scholarly fields. One goal of this study was to understand the extent of intercultural conflict on a higher education campus. In doing so, it aimed to contribute to the literature regarding building peace through communication in an English-medium classroom. Through the invaluable help of the participants in my study, I was able to gain a better understanding of how the intersection of language education and peace education can bring about better global communicators with more empathy, acceptance of cultural

differences, and intercultural understanding that will bring about a more peaceful world. Thus, my hope and belief for a more peaceful world were immensely deepened. I also hope that others will join in the journey to contribute to the consciousness of peace in the world. Together, we can work towards building a more just, equitable, and peaceful world.

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