

## LANGUAGE AND PEACE EDUCATION

Indrani Ganguly

Provost,

Institute of Engineering & Management, Kolkata

Affiliated to Maulana Abul Kalam University of Technology (MAKAUT)

### **Abstract:**

Peace education is a concept, this is a not to be treated as a subject like Statistics, Mathematics if it has to be successfully incorporated in life. It is a concept beyond border conflicts and heavy jargons of concordats and treaties. This baffles people most of the time. I would like to discuss language and Peace Education from a teacher's perspective. Education is the process which helps an individual to learn to analyze, to understand and then to act. When a class of students are taught peaceful co-existence, conflict resolutions, multicultural education they go out into the world as ambassadors of Peace. The language which they speak is also language of Peace. As a teacher we should be able to create an atmosphere where we teach the language not to divide but to bring all together. The spoken or written communication language is important while learning to address issues or to justify an action. The core areas could be the Conflict resolution, accepting each other, addressing Xenophobia, multicultural education and such other social issues Another reason when we need competency in language is to save another language! The age old blinders can be removed; we can show our respect for the language by speaking a few words, a sentence or so. This entire attitude towards learning is all inclusive in the making of Peace Education. Pro-social approach in class by teachers itself models as a preface to Peace Education. The goal finally is to establish a link between behavior and language that will remain an intrinsic part of the student's focus and also get spread at large. Concept, Border conflicts, Perspective, Multicultural Education, Conflict Resolutions, Xenophobia, and Pro-Social. LANGUAGE AND PEACE EDUCATION

### **Research Paper**

Education is the process which helps an individual to learn to analyze, to understand and then to act. Peace education is more of a concept and the way of life rather than a subject like Mathematics and History. It is a concept beyond border conflicts and heavy jargons of concordats and treaties. The introduction of Peace Education in school as a subject does not bring about any solution in the society .All Peace Projects are related to equity and fairness the cornerstones of democracy. Hence this is the reason I have emphasized the need of teaching to be integrated with equity.

The topic Language and Peace Education will be dealt from a Teachers' perspective and classroom pedagogy. To stand up to the needs of a changing society the time has come to reform educational structure in all parts of the world. But as Julie Andrezejowski points out "Peace is rarely a topic in school even as violence and war permeate our everyday lives, media and world."

As an educationist and more so as a human being I feel it is a dire need of the day that we give our next generation a peaceful land and society to live and grow. The language plays a vital role here; it is not uncommon to undervalue certain languages in a society because of the culture that is prevalent there and it is the result of some countries being a 2 colony of some European countries in the past. This could lead to a colonial and capitalist mindset. The less used languages are treated as obsolete in a dominant cultural set up. This sparks up a conflict! Once the tolerance and acceptance is learnt by the individual he moves forward free from complex, aggression and low self esteem. The society unites for a common goal that is to be global citizens and the individual progresses on in his own fields of studies too....because there is satisfaction within .He does not have to fight within himself and with his surrounding all the time . Importance of the spoken word and the written language to reach peace we have to teach peace. It is not a subject only; its analysis is large and covers a broad spectrum. First of all it is a participatory and holistic process that includes teaching for about democracy and human rights, nonviolence, social and economic justice, gender equity, environmental sustainability, disarmament, international law and above all human security. In order to address these issues you need to talk in a language which is acceptable. Language cannot be the cause for dispute but it should be the tool for peace. The whole approach to this topic is to bring about more positive progress and openness in the educational tradition which is in practice. We need to enhance the approach further of interrelatedness, empathy of all people to this earth, that we are cohabitants and not its controllers. Peace as an interdisciplinary study in the words of Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore, “Don’t limit a child to your own learning for he is born in another time”. Therefore the language in which they will have to address the future has to be different. Tagore had summarized his approach to Peace Education in his work Chandalika in a meaningful way. Tagore actually prepared human kind of his time for the future. Chandalika was published in 1938 and staged in the same year. This play has a deep and strong social message of equality. Tagore brought out the fact of uniform identity not heard of at that time, today we speak in his language and have adopted his belief. In this context Rinku Bhatiya (Asst. Professor) Of Shri P. M. Patel Institute of Bio Science, ANAND, has thrown some light how this could be an interdisciplinary study. In our classroom pedagogy, apart from Language study this is also is a concept study of Peace Education. Different words emerge from discussions like humanity, untouchability, sacrifice, and acceptance which could be taken up as topics of discussions in class later. School is the institution where it has to start. The education starts formally here, teachers become peace builders in their classrooms. The school provides tools and approaches, which help educate students about peaceful co-existence. This is not possible for individual family to part this education to their children in different homes. The learning will be very individualistic and not uniform in that case .So it has to be on school to address this issue. The result will show in students, they learn to apply the lessons of tolerance and conflict resolutions learned in their classrooms to their communities. It is time that we move away from the culture of violence, no acceptance, intolerance and conflict and armament. Earth has to be safe, peaceful, and just, for the future of the next generations. These children will be the flag bearers in the years to come. Unmerciful conditions do not only arise from border disputes in the country. Unacceptability and rejection in the classroom can also be responsible for it amongst different ethnic groups and different language group. They cannot contribute positively to the society as they are fighting for 3 inclusiveness as a result neither individual nor social development takes place. It is a waste of human resource. In the families the true education of

social learning and recognition does not take place as very few even live in extended families. The school is the place where they learn to socialize and at this juncture we might as well introduce them to the culture of the child sitting next to him. The school has to do it as the diversity exists here. In fact he will never suffer from Xenophobia and would have more understanding and be free from a lot of myth which clouds acceptance of the unknown. The objectives are very clear, why the formal education of teaching different subjects should transform and orient towards Peace Education. It is because the objectivity has to be of Peace not the subject so much. The educators have to take this responsibility because metaphorically we can compare a classroom to a unique social world. Classrooms may be a peer society but at the same time differences have to be handled. Peer cooperation learning, so that there is social respect for each other. There should be no superior and inferior concept in a classroom scenario; but that each should be dealt as unique being. Peace attributes Peace has various attributes too like peace values, peace skills and peace attitudes. Peace value helps in a part of our personality development like being able to respect the right of human being, being just to one's self and to others. Peace could be a skill too!! It is the trick of the language basically. If we analyze these attributes we come to one common platform the language in which we need to bring about the change. It has to be through language, spoken language, written language empathetic language and language of understanding that peace could be restored. The Peace Degree. Once the language is mastered, an individual learns to resolve conflict and could show his statesmanship abilities in political fields. Is this any less than a degree in a subject? This is the Peace Degree. The Educators have to understand that firstly Peace Education is a way of education to train the minds and abilities of the students. Secondly, this education will confront young people with responsibilities and help them to find solutions to situations as and when they arise. Teachers should identify best practices and develop strategies to help in certain situations; we have to agree upon one principle that opinions are not indoctrinated but we push them slowly to students to develop insight into certain consequences. This will help them to make a choice later. Teachers have to act as the role of transference. The question is how to perform this task? This is well emphasized in Chapter 5 of Speaking the Language of Peace from where I borrow this idea of Pro-social approach in class by teachers. What is Pro-Social Behavior? It is the behavior of a person which will be of benefit to all members of the society. This would also help in a peaceful co-existence. They model as a preface to Peace Education. Basically in the class room scenario Educators deal with developing effective communication skills, social skills and interpersonal skills which involves teaching and learning of language. This is required in order to carry out positive interactions in their day to day life skill situations as well as in conflict situations. In a different land when a foreign language has to be learnt two approaches work hand in hand for a learner; communicative competence involves knowing the rules of social behavior as well as the rules of learning a language. To learn the social behaviors such as cooperation, brotherhood and acknowledging each other and expressing feelings clearly in ways that do not accuse others through words, is the language of Peace. It has been seen in the past that many teachers themselves had changed their own outlook and helped others to do the same. Two very important aspects emerge from this study. Teachers should be well trained in Multicultural education and cooperative learning techniques specialized in language skills. Language is a tool used to express thoughts, or to mask one's thoughts. Language is often a means of manipulation too. Discussing about language in their book *Language is Power*, Brigit Brock -Utne and Gunnar Garb mentioned that words could have a different connotation

,may be used to conceal a reality, or it could be used to avoid a straightforward manner. The term 'secularism' or 'religion' sounds simple meaning words, but today it may imply some deep communal threat because the connotations and the context has changed as to their usage. Moreover words and expressions can mean so many different things that is where the celebration of language comes. In the same way word Multicultural education conjures up a number of words: equity, colonization, exceptionality etc. There are various reasons why we need Language to go hand in hand with Peace education. In order to save another language we need strong but forceful language, language of understanding and if required language of protest to restore Peace in the long run. Language may appear very benign but when attacked or is at stake can create a situation opposite to Peace. Languages can be very complex as it is the very essence of one's existence and culture. I quote an example why 21st February is declared a Martyr's day. Between 1952 and 1956 East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh) fought for their language 'Bangla' to be their official language. Md. Ali Jinnah wanted to declare Urdu on the other hand as the official language in East Pakistan. (Bangladesh) Languages sparked, voices rose, writing, publishing all happened together. People sacrificed their life for the language. This voice reached the United Nations, so much for language. UNESCO declared 21st February as Mother Language Day in 2000. Conclusion The goal finally is to establish a link between behavior and language that will remain an intrinsic part of the growth of a human being at the early stages. These young children would grow up as adults and be the ambassador for spreading Peace. They would also learn to respect each other's' language and the best is to learn to speak a sentence or a word to show respect to the culture. Often great world leaders when they are on a visit to another country the first thing they do is to learn the local language and custom of greeting. So finally I conclude by saying we need to be good communicators in the peace Language that is the essence of Peace Education. . This entire attitude towards learning is all inclusive in the making of Peace Education.

#### References and citations :

Book, Single Author Cooperative Learning Theory, Research and Practice 1990 . Robert E. Slavin The Cooperative Classroom Empowering Learning 1998 Lynda A. Baloche (West Chester University) Importance of Spoken language 5 Alan Howe Book,

#### Two Authors

Doing Multicultural Education Achievement and Equity (2006) Carl A. Grant and Christine E. Sleeter Language is Power Brigit Brock-Utne and Gunnar Garb Development of Pro-social Behavior through Cooperative learning in classroom Rachael Hertz –Lazarowitz and SWomoSharan Cite as Pp 423to 443 Book,

#### Three or More Authors

Human Diversity in Education (2003) Kenneth Cushner,Averil McClelland(Kent Univ) & Philip Safford (Case Western Reserve University) Teacher's guide to Cooperative Learning Linda Albert,Will Roy & Andy Le page A work (e.g., essay, short story) in an anthology or compilation.

Peace Education and the Task for Peace Education A World Council for Curriculum and Institution Monograph Teranse R Corso (1987) Hendrik D. Gideonse Transforming Education for Peace Edited by Jing Lin (University of Maryland) A Vol. in Peace Education 2008 J.Brantmeier(Colorado State) Article in an Online Database Speaking the Language of Peace Chap.5 Pro- social Classroom: Teacher Social and emotional Competence in relation to student and Classroom Duties. Patricia A. Jennings & Mark T. Greenberg. Article (Web Page) on a Web Site

[www.un.org/en/events/motherlanguageday/](http://www.un.org/en/events/motherlanguageday/)

[publish.illinois.edu/iaslibrary/2015/02/26/international-mother-language-dayan-abbreviated-history/](http://publish.illinois.edu/iaslibrary/2015/02/26/international-mother-language-dayan-abbreviated-history/) [www.kyrashaughnessy.com](http://www.kyrashaughnessy.com)

