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Bridging the Divide:
A Critical Analysis of Intercultural Dialogue through Videoconference as a Peace Education Practice

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Declaration

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Summary

"Building Bridges: A Critical Examination of the Use of Videoconference as a Peace Education Practice" focuses on whether intercultural dialogue though videoconference is a viable means of supporting processes of conscientization, thereby, defining videoconference as a peace education practice. In order to effectively assess videoconference as a peace education practice a critical understanding of the field of peace education required the construction of a model, which is based upon an extensive literature review of peace education. The model, subsequently, defines the researcher's understanding of the field and the means in which to design and assess subsequent practices. The Three Sphered Model of Peace Education argues that peace education is defined by a human agency informed by critical pedagogy, a constructivist epistemology, and a cosmopolitan normative approach. This understanding enables a critical examination of videoconference and a more thorough appreciation of what defines dialogue within a peace education practice.

Videoconference based activities have been utilized by schools worldwide through a variety of different mediums. However, such practices have had little assessment, and while the potential of videoconference to overcome geographical boundaries and facilitate intercultural dialogue presents powerful potential, it has not been determined whether such initiatives can support students and teachers to adopt a consciousness of peace or the support the continuation of bias, stereotypes, and isolation. In order to effectively address this dilemma this study collaborated with Global Nomads Group and Bridges of Understanding to examine their Youth Talk Program. Youth Talk connects students from the United States and the MENA over the course of a school year through virtual exchanges. By conducting virtual and on-site focus groups, interviews, and observations, key distinctions were found in the power dynamics, purpose, and outcomes between partnered schools. Through the application of the Three Sphered Model of Peace Education, this thesis answers the questions about the suitability of videoconference as a peace education practice and the conditions that must be addressed prior to and during its potential adoption.

Through examining how students, educators, and organizations utilize videoconference within an educational setting, this study adds to the existing debate of how peace education frameworks should be designed, implemented, and assessed, while also avoiding notions of cultural reproduction and powerblindness. Further, it considers how

peace education defines dialogue and begins a discussion on whether intercultural dialogue through videoconference serves as an initial encounter within a dialogical process.

Key features include:

- An examination of peace education practice and theory, which supports the construction of the Three Sphered Model of Peace Education to both design and assess peace education practices.

- Virtual and on-site field research that included schools in Tunisia, Jordan, Bahrain, and the United States, consisting of focus groups, interviews, and videoconference observations.

- A critical analysis of the themes that emerged from virtual and on-site fieldwork, in correlation with the Three Sphered Model, as well as the distinction between dialogue and encounter.

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Isla, my daughter, who was born during the last year of this thesis, has become the final inspiration for my journey into this field. I view peace education not as a means of protecting her against the ills of the world, but as the best way to teach her how to change it.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

MENA	Middle East and North Africa
QUAL-quan-	Qualitative dominate with supporting quantitative data
CRQ-	Central Research Question
RP-	Research Purpose
TQs-	Theory Questions
IQs-	Interview Questions
GNG-	Global Nomads Group
BoU-	Bridges of Understanding
EFP-	Education for Peace Curriculum
IVC-	Interactive Video Conferencing
VC-	Videoconference
LEE-	Lycee El-Esteklal School (Tunisia)
BAL-	Urban Assembly Bronx Academy of Letters (Bronx, USA)
APG-	Arabian Pearl Gulf School (Bahrain)
BS-	Berkshire School (Massachusetts, USA)
AMIDEAST-	American Mideast Educational and Training Services
JEI-	Jordan Education Initiative
HQA-	Houston Quran Academy
CIPE-	Community-Based Institutes on Peace Education

List of Key Terms

Consciousness of Peace- An individual's freedom to foster inward transformation that can lead to outward, critical social change.

Conscientization- Represents the blending of critical reflection and action as two separate but joined processes in individual and collective emancipation. Freire's conscientization recognizes that human autonomy and knowledge creation are not manifested from standardized processes, but through interactive learning and dialogical processes (Morrow & Torres, 2002).

Shared Humanity- Cosmopolitan philosophy that argues that all human beings are a part of a universal moral community. Within this community lies an understanding that each individual is equal in dignity and value, thus requiring individuals to support and act in defense of this humanity.

Hospitality- Dictates an equal right of all persons to the society of others and the resources of the Earth that we inhabit together (Dowdeswell, 2011).

Dialogue- A humanizing process, where participants reflect upon their own experiences and act upon their reality in cooperation with another to embrace notions of a shared humanity.

Cultural Reproduction- Process where "class-divided societies sustain their identities through processes of domination that facilitate the reproduction of power relations from one generation to another" (Allen Morrow &Alberto Torres, 2002, 67).

Powerblindness- "Refers to our reluctance and avoidance of race, social class, language, gender, asexuality, and other politicized aspects of identity that are linked to power and the distribution of resources" (Castagno, 2013, 108).

Encounter- A prerequisite for dialogue, by providing the basis of the ethical commitment in a future exchange

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Chapter 1: Introduction

INTRODUCTION

1.1   RATIONALE

The practice of peace education aims to create a consciousness of peace, rather than the mere absence of conflict. A consciousness of peace is an individual's freedom to foster inward transformation that can lead to outward, critical social change.   This concept will be further examined in order to understand the philosophy and purpose of peace education.

The field of peace education requires the continuous development of the tools needed to maintain and spread positive peace, which is a process directed towards actively addressing the cultural/structural beliefs, practices, and structures that legitimize, sustain and create violence.

This study will examine one of those tools, the practice of intercultural dialogue through videoconference. The goal of the study is to determine whether videoconference is a viable means for developing a consciousness of peace in high school students by overcoming the geographical, political, and economic boundaries impeding face-to-face contact for students in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) and the United States.

Ellis and Warshel (2010) claim that direct face-to-face contact presents the best means for enabling understanding and reconciliation. Peace education initiatives call on all parties involved to engage in dialogue. The design and application of positive dialogue requires equity and humility amongst participants and an optimistic view of the power of humanity to cause positive change both individually and globally to create the necessary conditions for personal and cultural transformation. How can such initiatives be implemented in a classroom where students are physically unable to interact? Multimedia-based interactions between teachers and students, across cultural, political, and national boundaries could present a way to encourage empathy through cooperation and the equity needed to sustain peace education initiatives. Although virtual practices are already in place between schools worldwide, evaluations of their effectiveness have not been conducted and little is known about the role of videoconferencing in building successful peace education initiatives. The examination of a dialogue-based, high school peace education program through videoconferencing between students in the MENA region and United States will examine whether greater critical thinking, understanding, and positive action is manifested by such a program, and therefore whether this practice provides greater opportunities for peace building.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This thesis seeks to examine whether intercultural dialogue through videoconference can be defined as a peace education practice, and if so, how. Bolden and Molotech (1994) suggest that

humans crave a "compulsion for proximity", or a need to engage in direct contact. Based on that argument Donald Ellis and Yael Warshel (2010) claim that direct face-to-face contact present the best means for enabling understanding and reconciliation. However, as peace education programs continue to be implemented around the globe, addressing various situations promoting a myriad of goals through various means, including dialogue, evaluative studies continue to be limited regarding their long-term effectiveness. For instance, a review of 300 peace education programs by Baruch Nevo and Iris Brem (2002) from 1981-2000, found that only one-third included elements of effectiveness evaluation. They further concluded, "It is quite clear that hundreds of peace education programs are initiated and operated around the globe at any particular period, without being subjected to any act of empirical validation."

Programs that currently use videoconference as a means of dialogue to facilitate cooperation, empathy, and peace building are no different. The needs to both validate the basic tenets of dialogue in addition to the effectiveness of videoconference, as a means of facilitating the adoption of a consciousness of peace is needed. Furthermore, considerable evaluation is needed in addressing not only the immediate effects videoconference based interactions have on students inside and outside of the classroom but also on the long-term effects on the development of the attitudes and actions of students, teachers, and communities following a program's completion.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In Nevo and Brem's (2002) study they argue that the reason behind the lack of effectiveness evaluation in peace education programs is due to the low level of awareness regarding the importance and usefulness of this phase of program development. In addressing the need to evaluate the effects of student led dialogue through videoconference, program credibility can be determined, in addition to the adoption of a peace education framework that that can evaluate

peace education practices. The Three Sphered Model of Peace education, which will be addressed in Chapter 3, provides the means of understanding the philosophy of peace education and, subsequently, designing, implementing, and assessing peace education practice. Through the Three Sphered Model, videoconference can be assessed, through substantial research and effectiveness evaluation, as to whether it presents a viable means towards developing a consciousness of peace for secondary students around globe.

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Peace education practices require students and educators to works towards the development of a consciousness of peace. Videoconference can provide peace education with another tool to compel awareness, understanding, and sustained global interaction, which can support such a development for individuals and communities. The obvious geographical obstacles that prevent face-to-face contact necessitate the adoption of other means in which to support dialogical practices in peace education. In the short-term, videoconference enables awareness, introspection, and examination of one's narrative and subsequent biases. In the long-term, through implementing videoconference within a shared peace education curriculum, contact, and subsequent intercultural awareness can compel the personal and communal change peace education advocates for.

1.5 AIMS & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As peace education attempts to achieve a societal change, it addresses the specific norms, structures, institutions, and experiences within a given community. Differences in student perspectives regarding such characteristics dictate dialogical practices. Paulo Freire (1995), argued that dialogue is perhaps the most important method or process in the educational process (Freire and Macedo, 379). Freire (1970) further notes, "Dialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create, recreate, faith in their vocation

to be more fully human" (Freire, 1970). Effective peace education pedagogy aims to enable the dialogue that Freire calls for in cooperative learning environments, where students and teachers are committed to reflection, free expression, and future planning for action. The hypothesis for this research project is that, in the short-term, videoconference will enable awareness, introspection, and the examination of one's narrative and subsequent biases, while in the long-term, intercultural awareness, enabled by videoconference, will compel the personal and communal change peace education advocates for. Moreover, such a change, compelled videoconference can enable the levels of dialogue Freire called for in 1970. However, such impacts will only become a reality when videoconference is implemented within a shared peace education curriculum.

This research projects aims to address these hypotheses, and in the process, determine what critical components are needed to design, implement, and sustain peace education practices. The literature review and theoretical framework of this thesis provide the lens in which to understand peace education as a theory and practice and, thereby, assess intercultural videoconference as a peace education practice.

Research questions address four areas of inquiry:
1. What are the critical components in creating and implementing peace education pedagogy with dialogue as its driving force?
2. How can videoconference, within a peace education framework, be best implemented?
3. What has been the short-term impact for students, teachers, and communities engaging in videoconference based dialogue and collaboration?
4. What has been the post program impact for students, teachers, and communities engaging in videoconference based dialogue and collaboration?

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

The combination of a conflict view of society and a subjective view of reality creates a critical constructivist paradigm. This form of educational research adopts a holistic approach to studying a social phenomenon, such as video-conferenced based dialogue, where attention is given to

recognizing that 'outside forces' play an important role in constructing a culture and changing a societal, economic, or power-based dynamic. A critical ontology requires the researcher to address how students and teachers view themselves, in correlation with addressing how videoconference based dialogue enables individuals to engage in their own self-reflection. This ontological approach addresses individual narratives as opposed to solely collective ones. Coupled with a constructivist epistemology, a critical constructivist paradigm will be used to understand the perspectives of the school community and justify the subsequent methodology deployed. This methodology is defined by the role of a teacher-researcher who seeks to examine "how a socially constructed reality shapes the existence and or change in student consciousness" (Kincheloe, 2003, 51-58).

This paradigm also supports the construction and adoption of the Three Sphered Model of Peace Education, explained in Chapter Three. The Three Sphered Model is shaped by a critical constructivist paradigm, which informs an understanding of peace education philosophy. In addition to defining the field of peace education, the Three Sphered Model outlines that the field and its practices are composed of a 1) human agency element, 2) epistemological element, and 3) normative element. An understanding of these elements informs the construction of a peace education framework in Chapter Four and all subsequent assessments of the Youth Talk Program and intercultural dialogue as a whole.

The critical constructivist paradigm also enables the adoption of a quantitatively informed qualitative approach in this study, which is a pragmatic approach of combining quantitative and qualitative methods that seeks to adequately address the research question, through direct engagement with the school community as well as extracted data analysis. In order to better understand and address the processes and effects that a videoconference based inter-cultural dialogue program may have, this study makes use of a qualitative dominant approach. This approach is referred to as the QUAL-quan research approach, where a dominant qualitative

priority is predetermined and planned in correlation with quantitative methods supporting the research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). A QUAL-quan approach enables the creation of a sequential pacing of qualitative and quantitative research strands, where qualitative data is given initial importance. Case studies will be conducted in six schools in the MENA region and United States, and two additional onsite school visits, requiring a combination of virtual and on-site fieldwork. Methods will include: descriptive-observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. Quantitative methods involve the analysis and synthesis of data through extraction. The weighing, timing, and mixing of data strands are guided by the theoretical framework, research paradigm and purpose.

1.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS THESIS

The struggle to effectively assess peace education programs stems from a lack of clarity in the philosophy and practice of peace education. This thesis directly addresses this reality through the creation of a Three Sphered Model of Peace Education, which explicitly identifies a human agency directed by critical pedagogy, an epistemology directed by constructivism, and a normative underpinning directed by cosmopolitanism as defining elements of peace education philosophy and all of its practices. The Three Sphered Model provides a clear understanding of the field to practitioners and supports students and teachers in the design, implementation, and assessment of all practices. A review of 300 peace education programs by Baruch Nevo and Iris Brem (2002) from 1981-2000, found that only one-third included elements of effectiveness evaluation. They further concluded, "It is quite clear that hundreds of peace education programs are initiated and operated around the globe at any particular period, without being subjected to any act of empirical validation." The need to critically examine peace education initiatives in order to validate it tenets is essential, and thereby, supports the creation of the Three Sphered Model.

In relation to this specific research project, the field of educational technology continues to grow in relation to practice and subsequent research, but the use of technology as a means of peacebuilding lacks the same assessment as the broader field of peace education. Journell and Dressman (2011) note that while recent scholarship advocates for the use of videoconference in the classroom there is little evidence to suggest its incorporation. This research project fills a gap in assessing whether videoconference based dialogue is a form of legitimate, sustainable dialogue for secondary students. Equity based videoconference initiatives within a peace education framework could provide the humanization technology needs in order to transform communities. The transformation of our global relationships through technology can be used to advance peace education through the creation of integrated global classrooms. Elise Boulding (2000) noted, 'the very ability to imagine something different and better than what currently exists is critical for the possibility of social change'. This research project will explore whether videoconference can enable such positive social change through addressing the immediate effects videoconference based interactions have on students inside and outside of the classroom and also the post program effects on the development of the attitudes and actions of students, teachers, and communities. Technology could help eliminate permanent and psychological boundaries to contact and dialogue that have not been addressed. However, in order to ascertain whether intercultural dialogue can be effective through videoconference, an understanding of what dialogue entails is critical.

This research project will also argue that dialogue is a process more than a singular action. Notions of power, language, and access must be assessed, specifically within a virtual setting, and while dialogue may not be present, initial encounters can prove vital to establishing the trust and understanding necessary for further dialogical exchanges to occur.

1.7 THESIS OVERVIEW

In order to tackle the Central Research Questions this thesis includes, a literature review on peace education (Chapter 2) and a subsequent theoretical construct of the researcher's understanding behind the philosophy and practice of the field. This framework (Chapter 3), the Three-Sphered Model, is informed by the work of peace education practitioners and theorists. This thesis argues that all peace education practices must be driven by a cosmopolitan normative approach, a critical pedagogy human agency, and a constructivist epistemology. Chapter 5 addresses the creation of a Three Sphered Model framework in which to assess critical pedagogical design, student-centered learning, curricular scope and sequence, program benchmarks, learning objectives, educational standards, and units of study. In Chapter 6, blended learning and videoconference are explored in correlation with a case study background on the Youth Talk Program. Following an overview of the Youth Talk Program, Global Nomads Group, and Bridges of Understanding, an explanation of each school pairing, including an overview of their national and state educational policies, relationship with blended learning, and geopolitical relationship with their partnered school country of origin are conducted.

Chapter 7 consists of a thorough examination of field research. Fieldwork was both virtual (Pre and Mid Program focus groups and IVC observations) and on-site visits to the schools participating. Semi-structured interview questions were posed to students and faculty and were, "designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful and theorized way"(Wengraf, 2001, 5). In addition, individual and group interviews were are based on Wengraf's (2011) methods of analysis. A top down progression beginning with the Research Purposes (RP) will lead "to the formulation of a Central Research Question (CRQ) to a number of derived Theory-Questions (TQs) that spelled out the CRQ, and then from each TQ to a number of Interview-Questions (IQs)" (Wengraf, 224).

Coding categories were established prior to virtual fieldwork and based on Joseph A. Maxwell's (2013) Qualitative Research Design. Organizational, substantive, and theoretical categories provide a "conceptual distinction" in which to sort data. Organizational addresses broad areas or issues and functions primarily as bins for sorting the data for further analysis. Substantive explicitly addresses the content of the individual's statement or action, making it descriptive in nature. Finally, theoretical places data in a more abstract framework, typically representing the researcher's concepts. Quantitative data is not evaluated until the qualitative data is coded and evaluated.

Combining literature with qualitative data collection from virtual and on-site field work, analysis is divided into two separate chapters: Chapter 8 addressed the data through the Three Sphered Model and Chapter 9 addressed the data by focusing on the Central Research Questions (CRQs). Chapter 9 also consists of the Qual-quan integration where the quantitative data is evaluated in regards to already analyzed qualitative data. The culmination of the sequential sequence occurs in Chapter 9 where an a further examination of the CR Three-Sphered Model provides a further examination of the CRQs, where reflective questioning, student-centered design, and access, the identified components that must be addressed for intercultural dialogue/encounter to be considered an effective peace education practice, all correlate with a specific sphere in the Three Sphered Model. This additional section also provides evidence on the Three Sphered Model's ability to critique and design peace education practices.

Finally, Chapter 9 provides a culminating argument that the Youth Talk Program cannot be considered an intercultural dialogue based practice because of the imbalanced power dynamics that exist in its delivery. However, a new concept of "encounter" is introduced to legitimize the importance of connecting via technology, while also emphasizing the importance of equity in technology, and language delivery.

Chapter 2: Perspectives on Peace Education

2.1 Peace Education

Peace education is both a philosophy, rooted in moral, ethical, and religious foundations, as well as a practice, whereby the skills necessary to enable sustained peace through personal and societal change, such as understanding, problem solving, and cooperation are utilized. The philosophy of peace education embraces nonviolence and empathy, promoting the transformative power it can offer for individuals to enable positive societal change. This transformation must first begin at a personal level where peace education can address both societal and individualized methods of thought that have enabled sustained behaviors. Within this learning process the practice of peace education is utilized. Through empowering individuals with the skills and outlooks necessary to study and subsequently resolve conflict nonviolently under a sustained pedagogical approach, the practice of peace education is manifested.

The practice of peace education, which can pertain to an anti-bullying campaign or an integrated school, is meant to create a consciousness of peace, rather than the mere absence of conflict. A greater understanding of 'what peace is' is therefore necessary to understand in order to create and assess every peace education practice. While peace and peace education is implicitly linked, it is important to note that peace is more than the mere absence of war, but rather points to greater understanding of self, others, cultures, and the environment in harmonious accord (Harris and Morrison, 2013). In order to achieve a state of peace, individuals must develop the tools to identify present and future conflicts and make choices to resolve conflict without violence. Moreover, peace entails positive actions such as respecting the human rights of all individuals and participating in civic life. These actions, whether they entail developing the means to open dialogue or vote in a national election pertain to maintaining a relationship. As Johnson and Johnson (2005) note, "peace is a relationship variable that cannot be maintained by separation or isolation". As interactions between parties develop, consistent and sustained action

is needed to maintain the fragile state that defines peace. This nature of peace requires the continuous development of the tools needed to maintain and spread it, which defines the need for peace education. Within each peace education practice a consistent review of the commitments to understand and ensure the constructive management of conflict is necessary.

2.2 The Practice of Peace

As dynamic as the nature of peace is, so must peace education be in order to meet its diverse needs. Peace education initially emerged out of the greater field of peace studies following WWII, which sought to analyze conflict and study peace as a concept. As peace studies continued to address what defines peace, the natural progression of determining the means in which to create peace emerged to establish the study of peace education. As noted by Ian Harris (2013) peace education is more generic, defined by its efforts to build a consciousness of peace based on society's natural inclinations towards it, while peace studies' narrower focus has more of a 'geo-political' focus. Based on the broad nature of peace education several 'subfields', that all seek to develop an understanding and the subsequent skills needs to enable a consciousness of peace, emerged (Harris and Morrison, 2013). These 'subfields', which include human rights education, environmental sustainability, international education, conflict resolution education, and development education all revolve around a fundamental understanding of the concepts of negative and positive peace.

An early founder of peace education Johan Galtung (1969) categorizes peace into two philosophies-negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace refers to the mere absence of violence brought upon by preventative means yet not addressing the long-term causes of conflict, such as prejudice, misunderstandings, and negative cultural frameworks. Positive peace, in contrast addresses the cultural/structural beliefs and practices associated with violence and requires individuals, communities, and nations to actively address them and cooperate to alter behaviors and enable the adoption and sustainability of positive social justice, government,

economic, human rights, and educational practices. Positive peace adopts a holistic approach brought about through sustained peace education practices that understands that a sustainable peace cannot exist until the whole is well, namely addressing inequities and prejudice in society, rather than just addressing its parts, such as ending war (Wenden, 2002). While achieving an end to a conflict through a cease-fire or treaty in correlation with complementary violence prevention protocols are essential in providing practical means to securing peace they do not create a consciousness of one. In order for peace education to enable the creation of positive peace it must cast away a sentiment that such an understanding of peace is "self evident" (Bekerman and Zembyas, 2012).

2.3 Religious and Historical Perspectives on Peace and Peace Education

Peace has been a fundamental teaching of the world's major religions-Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Within all of these faiths peace is seen not as an optimal condition but a necessity. Yet while all religions differ in the structure of such belief systems, action is required to enable the state of peace they all preach so adamantly in favor of. According to Elise Boulding, within the framework of all of these faiths lie two opposing threads, known as the "Holy War doctrine" and the "doctrine of Holy Peace" (Harris, 40). Within these threads lie core beliefs that both defend war as a necessity, as see in both the Christian Crusades, the Bhagavad Gita in Hinduism and Holy War doctrine promoted by St. Augustine, but also preach peace as the most pivotal of goals, as seen in the Beatitudes preached by Jesus Christ, and a personal jihad in Islam where individuals pursue paths to end violence, greed, and other vices. Within Buddhism, Buddha taught that people must learn to live at peace with themselves whereby true happiness can be achieved with others and violence is understood as a manifestation of personal greed, ego, and ignorance. Finally, in Taoism aggression is prohibited and weapons are seen as "weapons of evil". The core belief of the yin and yang represent a will to join opposing forces in order to create a more positive and peaceful relationship. Yet within the

majority of these religions contain actions and words in violent opposition to their philosophies on peace. In numerous cases they have contributed to genocide, war, and discrimination resulting in a contradictory philosophy of peace. The same regard as peace education emerging from a need to develop a means in which to create a peace consciousness from peace studies so did the early forms of peace education from these world religions.

Comenius, a Czechoslovakian educator, is credited with the birth of European peace education in the seventeenth century. Emerging from the Christian faith, Comenius was a member of the Christian sect known as the Brethren. The Brethren, much like the Christian traditions of the Mennonites and the Quakers were founded with the intention of building the necessary conditions of peace as their spiritual center in response to already growing rift between various Christian churches of the time period. The formation of a consciousness of peace became an essential principal of Comenius' teachings. Within the framework of peace, Comenius was one of the first philosophers and writers to promote the concept of universal education in order to provide the foundations of a peaceful society for present and future generations. Yet in order to achieve a peaceful state Comenius first argued for a greater understanding of religion, politics, and overall cultural differences within a structured educational framework, which would enable society to overcome future hostilities (Harris and Morrison, 2013).

Immanuel Kant further developed Comenius' insights by arguing in his book Perpetual Peace (1795) that peace could be achieved through the formation of democratic states that created legal and judicial systems, which maintained freedom and equality for all members of society. Nevertheless, this peace would be a never-ending struggle by all nations, which required them to all work together under this single cause. A second educator, Pestalozzi, furthered this sense of working together in pursuit of a common goal. A Swiss educator, Pestalozzi emphasized the need for an education that would nurture its students through creating a supportive classroom environment surrounded by love. This love would be represented in teacher to student

relationships and an empirical approach to a child's education. However, it was not until the aftermath of World War I that peace education began to become a part of general school reform across American and Europe.

Arguing that education could be the means towards social progress and thereby counter subsequent bouts of nationalism and militarism that triggered the previous war, educators began to take greater interest in holistic approaches to education. One such educator, Maria Montessori (1992), argued for the education of the "whole child" where an understanding of peace and a student's capacities for peace would be coupled with the consistent development of a student and teacher's spirituality. A heightened spirituality would prepare children to build, live, and sustain a peaceful life for themselves and others. Developing her educational philosophy at the brink of World War II in Fascist Italy, Montessori believed children should be empowered throughout the educational process as the key decision makers, as opposed to adopting an authoritarian system where students are dependent on both families and their teachers. In allowing students to make their own choices, educators are thereby preparing them for independent lives, which results in an avoidance to adopt or follow a repressive system.

Montessori believed that children possess a natural tendency towards compassion and empathy. Fostering a child's independence inside and outside of the classroom through allowing them to be an active participant in all learning activities provides the motivation to adopt and promote peace according to Montessori school model.

The effect World War II had on world psyche resulted in a new consideration for adopting an educational system, much like that of Montessori, which promotes peace under the umbrella of instilling a sense of "world citizenship". Motivating students to adopt nonviolence and remove a sense of blind obedience to authority under the framework of an empowering and independent school environment moved peace education to the forefront of educational practices following World War Two. A focus away from the competition that had plagued the early half of the

century and towards a practice of cooperation inside the classroom defined this new educational pursuit under Montessori.

Her holistic approach to education also involved an emotional, ethical and spiritual consideration apart from a strictly academic philosophy. Within this structure resided Montessori's argument that well-balanced and empowering education was the single greatest means to peace by which students not only come to understand the concept of peace but the ways and means in which to practice and sustain it, both personal and globally (Duckworth, 2006). As Montessori noted,

> Peace is a goal that can only be attained through common accord, and the means to achieve this unity for peace are twofold: first, an immediate effort to resolve conflicts without recourse to violence-in other words, to prevent war-and second, a long term effort to establish a lasting peace among men. Preventing conflicts is the work of politics; establishing peace is the work of education (Montessori, 1972, p. 27).

The work of education, according to Montessori's teachings, also revolved around the concept of the human spirit. While science addressed the physical world, such a study could never fully understand the potential and power of the human spirit according to Montessori. It was the job of an educator to facilitate an understanding and love of this spirit within their students that would enable greater humanity and the formation of a consciousness of peace.

Peaceful coexistence was an objective of both educational practitioners and governments in opposition to the rise of militarism and oppressive governments during the early half of the 20th century. Verdiana Grossi (2000) notes that between 1889 and 1939, 33 universal peace congresses took place, most of which addressed peace education in some form. A focus on the educational needs of a postwar world culminated in 1945 with the creation of The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Established to promote partnerships across the globe in the fields of education, science, and culture, UNESCO has grown to support peace education initiatives in the hope of promoting communication and understanding among communities and nations. Higher education witnessed the growing concentration on

peace by the world community and in 1948 the first peace studies program was established at Manchester College, Indiana.

As the Cold War progressed so did globalization as universities around the world sought a greater understanding of world politics, cultures, and economics in the face of a nuclear threat. In the United States the Vietnam War resulted in increased anti-war movements and Feminist movement of the 1960s and 70s questioned the role of aggression while embracing greater equity across all strands of society. Nonviolent action against structural violence ushered in a new age within peace education.

Danilo Dolci, an important player in the effective use of nonviolent action used education as tool to create awareness for an often-underrepresented population, the poor. Forming a "people's college" in Sicily in to educate primary school children in methods of conflict resolution. These methods eventually developed in organizing peace education programs for adults in order to empower the local population through an understanding of their conditions, their rights, and the collective power of a consciousness of peace which can end a cycle of violence and create real solutions (Harris & Morrison, Peace Education, 52-53).

Within this ideology emerged Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, who took great steps to empower the marginalized and to address the damaging effect of structural violence. In his influential work titled, Pedagogy of the Oppressed", published in 1970, Freire addressed in great deal what he termed "the banking model of education. The banking model of education argues that the traditional model of education, which is the most common according to Freire, is based around the teacher being an active participant, or subject, and students being passive participants, or objects where they only receive the information the teacher determined was important, memorize it, and repeat the process. As Freire notes, the teacher's task "is to fill the students with the contents of his narration-contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engrained them and could give them significance" (Freire, 1970, 71). This form of

mechanical education leads students to rarely question "the answer", simply becoming "collectors" as Freire puts it. Students are thereby viewed as ignorant participants in their own education, when they should simultaneously be both teacher and student within the educational process. The goal of education is to transform the structures which surround students so that they can become independent players striving for an "emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality", resulting in education as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1970, 81).

The effect of structural violence on the maturation of the practice of peace education is undeniable. In addition to the previously noted concepts of positive and negative peace, Johan Galtung is also credited with established the philosophy of structural violence in regards to peace studies and peace education. In 1968 Galtung helped found the International Peace Institute (PRIO) in Oslo, Norway, propagating his concept of structural violence-"where poverty, discrimination, oppression, underdevelopment, and illiteracy are understood to contribute to the violent state of the world" (Harris & Morrison, 2013, 53). In tackling the concept of structural violence, Galtung helped to stimulate thoughts and practices among peace educators attempting to address the cultural, political, and economic causes behind violence helping to establish peace education as a respected discipline (Harris & Morrison, 2013, 54).

Throughout this process Galtung also stressed the importance that peace education be rooted in experiential learning, where students experience the "objectives of peace education, such as tolerance, cooperation, peaceful conflict resolution, multiculturalism, a nonviolent environment, social sensitivity, and a respect for human rights" (Bar-Ta, Rose, & Nets-Zehngut, 2010, 35). Moreover, this experiential learning must incorporate new methods of teaching and learning, abandoning the traditional model of education, or the banking model of education according to Freire.

At the same time one of the earliest female champions of the peace studies movement emerged. Elise Boulding, originally born in Norway, but living the majority of her life in the

United States worked alongside Galtung in establishing the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), which worked to translate peace research into policy (C.M. Stephenson, Journal of Peace Education, 120). Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1990, Boulding was also responsible for directing the movement to begin the United States Peace Institute in 1984, as well as writing 18 books pertaining to peace studies, social processes, and futures studies (Cavin, 2006, 395). In developing an approach to peace and specifically peace education, or as Boulding preferred, peace learning, she stressed the importance of the youth being represented in the workings of all organizations and programs, which address developing a consciousness of peace. At a Council of Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED) meeting in 1979, Boulding introduced a group of seventh graders from Hamilton, NY whom she had interviewed regarding their hopes and fears of the future as follows:

> We have before us a panel of experts on the view of world security from the seventh grade, two young men and two young women. They are experts because they are the only ones here who have the expertise of knowing what it is like to experiences today's world as twelve-year old persons. They are the only ones who know their memories of the past decade, the only ones who know their hopes and fears for the future. In this International Year of the Child there have been many programs about children and youth, and few programs involving them as active collaborators (Stephenson, Alternative methods for International Security, 1982).

Noting the pivotal importance of incorporating student insights into their own education mirrors Freire's argument on encouraging positive dialogue and critical thinking inside and outside of the classroom. Furthermore by incorporating a student led pedagogy within any educational framework, Boulding has effectively attacked "the banking system of education", replacing it with a participatory society. Boulding notes that the first step in any process focused on establishing a consciousness of peace is "to create an environment so that participants can begin to "dialogue to determine the availability and desirability of potential solutions. And to create a space where "a constructive arguer offers her ideas rather than imposing them, and builds upon her interlocutor's ideas rather than tearing them down" (Rhetoric, 399). Dialogue allows the bonds of a community to form and thereby the need of the community to care for its people.

However, before a community built on trust can be established, dialogue must allow and encourage an individual's need to reflect and express their uniqueness. She argues, "Self-understanding" comes by reflection and leads to action"(Peace & Change, 402). Understanding one's social, economic, and political situation can enable the empowerment that is at the heart of peace education, leading individuals to change their status quo.

By the late twentieth century, based in large part by the work of these early practitioners, the creation of a transformative pedagogy became a pivotal area of focus. In 1982 peace educators Betty Reardon, Willard Jacobson and Douglas Sloan, all working for Teachers College Columbia University established the first International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE). Still held annually, the IIPE focused on the creation of this pedagogy. This pedagogical approach to peace education addressed another transition in the field as peace educators began to address levels of cultural violence in society, such as domestic and ethnic violence in the 1990s. The psychological effects of continued violence perpetrated on those both directly and indirectly involved in conflict resulted in a reemphasis on the creation of cultural of consciousness in educational settings resulting in dramatic increased in formal school based conflict resolution programs (Harris & Morrison, 2013, 66).

2.4 Approaches to the Study and Practice of Peace Education

Differing educational programs in every country, consisting of unique cultural, economic, and political circumstances has resulted in considerably differences in the objectives, emphasis, curricula, and practices of peace education. Despite the unifying history that peace education possess the number of theoretical approaches and subfields that have emerged are considerable. Renowned peace education, Ian Harris (2003, 2004), points to five theoretical approaches to peace education beginning in 1912 with the emergence of international education and human rights education, from 1948, development education, from the 1960s, conflict resolution

education, from 1974 with the publication of Maria Montessori's book Education for a new world, and from the 1980s with environmental education.

Yet with the emergence of various fields within peace education following 1912 also came divergent views on the classification of peace education. Betty Reardon (1999), a founding theorist of peace education, argues that there must first be a distinction made within the field regarding education for peace and education about peace. Education for peace concerns the creation of a consciousness of peace and therefore includes international, multicultural, and environmental peace. In contrast, education about peace concerns defining what peace is in various contexts, where human rights education, conflict resolution, and traditional peace education, pertaining to peace processes, reside. However, another noted peace educator, Gavriel Salomon (2002), argues, "the sociopolitical context in which peace education takes place supersedes the rest" (Salomon, 2002, 5). Subsequently, Salomon distinguishes between three contexts where peace education takes place, namely, intractable regions, regions of interethnic tension, and regions of experienced tranquility (Salomon, 2002, 6). From this vantage point the necessary perspectives and programs pertaining to a given conflict be developed in order to maximize results.

Due to the variety of conflicts that exist a subsequent variety of peace education programs have been adopted to address them, emulating the distinct philosophies of their educational leaders. Yet despite the views of several peace education practitioners there lies a common dominator. The goal of peace education is to negate violence and establish a culture or consciousness of peace. While peace education serves several goals, such as human rights and environmental sustainability, it is an educational process addressing "attitudes, beliefs, attributions, skills, and behaviors" (Salomon and Cairns, 2010, 5). Ultimately, the practice of peace education possesses divergent meanings for different individuals in various settings (Salomon, 2002).

Approaches taken under the framework of the practice of peace education will thereby differ in their variety, ranging from ant-bullying campaigns to integrated schools. Therefore a need is required, according to Solomon to categorize peace education practices in order to best evaluate their achievements. Yet a unifying practice in which to evaluate the objectives behind peace education remains elusive. However, within the framework of all peace education initiatives is a call for all parties involved to engage in dialogue. If dialogue is a common denominator within the theoretical and practical application of peace education then a subsequent peace education framework can be created based on dialogue as the fundamental building block of all peace education initiatives. The design and application of positive dialogue requires equity and humility amongst participants, and an optimistic view of the power of the humanity to cause positive change both individually and globally, which can thereby create the necessary conditions for personal and cultural transformation.

2.5 The Importance of Dialogue: A Freirean Approach

As peace education attempts to achieve a societal change, it addresses societal norms, structures, and institutions whereby such ideals differ amongst numerous groups. While achieving greater peace is the obvious goal of all peace education programs, various society's definition of peace differs, requiring dialogue, which according to Freire, is perhaps the most important method or process in the educational process (Freire and Macedo, 1995, 379). As Paulo Freire argues,

"Dialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create, recreate, faith in their vocation to be more fully human. Faith in people is an a priori requirement for dialogue; the "dialogical man" believes in others even before he meets them face to face" (Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 90).

The pedagogy of peace education must aim to enable the dialogue that Freire calls for in cooperative learning environments. Dialogue is the most persistent and pivotal component of any peace education practice. It is through dialogue that we both learn and educate. Yet as Freire (1970) argues dialogue, or the essence of dialogue, requires both true reflection and honest

action. Without both, words become meaningless and action becomes characterless. The third chapter of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed focuses entirely on the importance of dialogue. This chapter frames not only the proper means and methods in which to engage in dialogue but how it is the single greatest driving force in creating a consciousness of peace, a sought after objective of all peace education initiatives. Adopting an open and honest approach that resists domination in any form, through dialogic means, simultaneously embraces a democratic approach to education. In creating an open and honest learning environment, students and teachers are committed to learning from all members of the group and thereby expressing individual ideas, concerns, and goals for the future.

A Freirian dialogical approach cannot be simply adopted when teachers allow for discussion to occur in the classroom. Rather, Freire argues for the educational process to be an "organized and developed re-presentation to individuals of the things which they want more"(93).

Dialogue, much like positive peace, requires equity and a two-fold process to be conducted where one party does not assume superiority, nor allow discrimination or stereotypes to interfere with genuine exchange. Cooperation, rather, is essential for dialogue to be effective. Sustained cooperation by all parties involved in positive dialogue can result in true liberation and eliminate a persistent relationship between the have and have not's, or dependency. Freire (1970) argues that this liberation must also come when both parties engage in consistent acts of humility.

A liberated mind can thereby "come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world" (Freire, 1970, 124.) A liberated mind is also a self-directed mind, willing and able to learn without having to be led. Within this self-directed mindset, Freire wants educators to break free from a rigid and formalized pedagogy and enable students to discover knowledge themselves (Freire, Pedagogy of Hope, 1994). The sequence of knowledge construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction is a lifelong process, where our knowledge

construction requires critical reflection in order to deconstruct the power, bias, and narrative within any knowledge acquisition. A critical reconstruction of knowledge can then enable humility, empowerment, and autonomy. The process of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of knowledge brings to light Habermas' emphasis on discourse as a means of procedural argumentation. Habermas argues that discourse is a means of communication focused on enabling tentative consensus. Consensus is not solely interpreted as agreement. Rather, discourse exposes participants, "to the unforced force of the better argument, in order to provide a tentative consensus about problematic claims" (Morrow & Torres, 2002, p.50). This opportunity provides individuals with a space to challenge their own assumptions. Freire's argument that humility is critical when engaging in dialogical liberations draws parallels with Habermas' (1997) insistence, "on the idealizing context of the inescapable pragmatic presuppositions of a praxis from which only the better argument is supposed to emerge" (p. 148). The inability to see the narrative of another or to be ignorant of its existence is the primary barrier to engaging in preliminary dialogical practices, according to Freire. Without recognizing the dominant narrative, one is limited in fully assessing its validity and, thereby, engaging in a process of deconstruction. Habermas' understanding of discourse is predicated on this consensus which Freire and Habermas emphasized as critical first steps in communicative practices. Subsequently, in creating peace education programs without student led pedagogical components, which can speak to alternative narratives and arguments, an out-group is created, where students struggle to find an identity within the educational process. This "pedagogy of the oppressed" treats students as objects resulting in isolation and "denying people their ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human"(Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 84). A further examination of Habermas' discourse and Freire's dialogue will be examined in chapter 10.3.

2.6 Dialogue via Videoconferencing

How would Freire then address newfound technologies that enable dialogue across concrete and

cultural boundaries? Would multi-media based technologies encourage educators and students to form a new pedagogy based on the empowerment of students through self-guided exchange?

Multimedia based interactions between teachers and students, across cultural, political, and national boundaries could present the greatest means of enabling the levels of dialogue Freire called for in 1970 for the 21st century. Such practices could make profound steps towards achieving empathy through cooperation and the equity needed to sustain peace education initiatives. The creation of a well shared and equity based peace education program, under the umbrella of video-conferencing, will enable greater trust between the parties engaged through incorporating reflection, action, and critical thinking, thereby providing greater opportunities for peace building.

Such projects, nevertheless must seek the democratization of technology avoiding the possibility of videoconference being a tool of the few in order to sustain the banking method of education. As Freire argued, "the answer does not lie in the rejection of the machine but in the humanization of the man?" Equity based videoconference initiatives within a peace education framework could provide the humanization technology needs in order to transform communities. The shrinking of our global relationships through technology can be used to advance peace education through the creation of integrated global classrooms. Harold Innis (1972) argued that developing technologies could create a "global village" of peace. While hypothesizing that technology could ensure world peace is a utopian concept, it could eliminate permanent and psychological boundaries to contact and dialogue.

2.7 Dialogue: A Peace Education Perspective

While the notion of dialogue has been a constant force within the maturation of peace education, it is more pertinent to assess the teachings of three twentieth century peace educators, for whose philosophies regarding dialogue in the context of peace education compliment the philosophical arguments of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed. All three of peace education researchers

have been briefly introduced regarding their contribution to the overall study of peace education and it can be argued that the three educators, in addition to Freire, form the philosophical foundations of the practice of peace education from which many other peace educator's arguments borrow from. The practices and beliefs behind these peace education practitioners, in relation to the guiding philosophy of Paulo Freire, will form the philosophical core of the subsequence critical pedagogical framework for peace education.

Maria Montessori, an Italian educator and innovator of peace education practices still today provides pivotal insight on the relationship between teachers and students. This relationship is rooted providing a sense of independence for students to become an active participant in their education, which would foster confidence and critical thinking.

Johan Galtung, the Norwegian researcher and cofounder of modern day peace studies argue that dialogue and creativity must be partners in conflict work. In order to transform and transcend conflict, as Galtung (2004) terms it, dialogue most allow all parties involved to question the past and future, the descriptive and the normative in order to address the apparent direct violence that is present as well as structural violence can remain silent.

Elise Boulding, an American sociologist and early leader in the peace studies movement believed that developing relationships through an honest dialogue and not persuasion was key in developing a culture of peace. Through encouraging students to have experiences with their peers while maintaining their own autonomy, Boulding argues that a peace culture can be better realized, as students learn to maintain a

> "Creative balance among bonding, community closeness and the need for separate spaces. It can be designed as a mosaic of identities, attitudes, values, beliefs and patterns that leads people to live nurturingly with one another and with the Earth itself without the aid of structured power differentials, to deal creatively with their differences and to share their resources"(Peace Change, 403).

Furthermore, Boulding emphasizes the need for face-to-face interactions across all boundaries and the need for all to understand the Earth as a "complex interdependent living system", and

while she notes that the Internet and communication has the power to divide, it also has the potential to unite in her opinion. Boulding's extensive work on Future Studies will also provide an important insight on the need to imagine a future of possibilities and to enable students to provide solutions for the problems of tomorrow. This belief is at the heart of enabling greater student dialogue through videoconference.

2.7.1 MARIA MONTESSORI

Education is meant to encourage independent inquiry, where students, engaged in a stimulating environment are ruled not by the teacher led instruction but their imagination. This educational philosophy developed by Maria Montessori predates Freire's banking model of education by almost forty years, yet bears a remarkable similarity to it. In order to facilitate student growth, education should enable a student's development into ethically and socially conscious actors, while providing the proper environment in which to create a consciousness of peace. If such a consciousness were avoided in order to focus on traditional educational practices than a restricted climate would result negating the creation of a consciousness of peace within a classroom. Education must first focus on the development of human values in an individual, rather than an educator teaching his students as a single entity. A multiple of perspectives, experiences, and personalities in any given classroom requires such a practice. Arming students with confidence, cultural understanding, and a propensity towards positive action can provide the best defense towards to the proliferation of violence. In 1949, shortly after the end of World War II, and living during Europe's rebuilding Montessori did not see the armed defense as the best means in avoiding a future war, but in an organized and positive educational framework. She argues,

"The crux of the question of peace and war thus no longer lies in the need to give men the material weapons to defend the geographical frontiers separating nation from nation, for the real first line of defense against war is man himself, and where man is socially disorganized and devalued, the universal enemy will enter the breach "(Montessori, 1992, Education and Peace, xiv).

Montessori called on all adults, especially educators, to view children as divine. She viewed the innocence and open-mindedness of a child as capable of regenerating the human race and society' (Montessori, 1972, 14). Allowing children to thereby question would in turn help them to develop critical thinking skills and the independence and confidence to act for social change. Freire championed this mentality arguing that through allowing students to become independent actors in their own education they will 'develop their power to perceive critically that they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves' (Freire, 1993, 83). Dialogue is rooted within the framework of cultivating student imagination and independence. As educators within the framework of a Montessorian educational philosophy allow their students to make independent inquiries pertaining to both their studies and their own personal growth they are developing a sense of humanity which enables reflection and action. Maria Montessori developed her educational framework to achieve a similar Freirian philosophy, where she argues that an educational system, campaign, or organization 'would be required to enable men to understand and structure social phenomenon, to prepare and pursue collective ends, and thus to bring about orderly social progress' (Montessori, 1949, viii).

Maria Montessori believed strongly that an educational philosophy driven by competition stymied the creative spirit of children while simultaneously creating a society focused on personal gain rather that peaceful coexistence. It is the responsibility of the teacher to encourage student inquiry and to seek solutions cooperatively so as to create a nurturing and supportive learning environment than a competitive one based on test scores, student awards, and individualism. A teacher must avoid becoming an authoritarian figure in the classroom and rather be open to learning from their students as well as empower. Under the Montessorian model, teachers are responsible for creating a structured environment to facilitate learning, but it is the responsibility of the students to determine along with the teacher, what is learned and how it is learned creating a truly democratic classroom. Montessori (1912) argued, "The task of the

educator lies in seeing that child does not confound good with immobility and evil with activity"(93). While Montessorian educational models focus on early education her argument in favor of an action orientated educational structure mimic both Freire and Galtung's call for action to always complement understanding in the classroom. A self-directed learner is an empowered one, confident in their own abilities while cognizant of the need to cooperate with those around them. Learning, therefore, within in a Montessorian model is the responsibility of the student. Montessori notes (1995), "The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to able to say, 'The children are now working as if I did not exist'" (p.283). The group learning process enables students and teachers to share the roles of learner, facilitator and instructor (Heden, Timothy, 2005). However, adults, within any learning process, must have faith in their students and seek to cultivate their independence through ending what Montessori has deemed as a, 'secret struggle that has gone on for countless generations', the educated vs. the uneducated or the powerful vs. the weak (Montessori, 1992, Education and Peace, 15). The child student is not a blank slate for which a teacher can impart their own sense of truth, but rather a unique personality capable of creating its own goals. In adopting a view of students as *passive tabula rasa* educators have effectively stymied their natural inclinations, turning them into forgotten citizens, according to Montessori (38). Subsequently, any educational model must seek to encourage independence, which can enhance the value of all individuals and prepare young adults to understand and respond appropriately to the challenges of their time (30).

Critical thinking and dialogue are the two greatest tools to facilitate individual growth that could lead a positive group learning processes under a Montessorian approach. In contrast, an educational system that fosters blind adherence to an authoritarian figure or system, eliminating mutual dialogue or a say in one's educational system will directly result in violence. Montessori believed that in seeking a means to end violence and war, one should first begin with designing a sound educational framework (Harris & Morrison, 187). Jane Roland Martin (1992) believes a

comprehensive education must address the need for students to develop a sense of humanity and

morality. In creating her educational model, she argued the Montessori's framework provides the

means in which achieve positive peace:

When and only when there was a "harmonious interaction" between individual and environment,
she said, would the child develop normally and love flourish. The kind of love Montessori had in
mind was neither the romantic love of poetry and novels nor the self-sacrificing kind that
Western culture attributes to mothers. Permanent and unconnected to either selfishness or a desire
to possess, it was directed to all living creatures, to people, and to objects. This "higher form of
love" was in her view a prerequisite for the "human harmony" and the genuine community of
mankind" that had [we] had to obtain if positive peace was to be achieved.
Students within a Montessori classroom work together through independent dialogue and

cooperation to cultivate the innate tendencies of a child, namely those of understanding and

empathy, as noted by Montessori, and in doing achieve collective success.

2.7.2 JOHAN GALTUNG

Much like both Freire and Montessori Galtung emphasizes the power of self-reflection within

dialogue. Questioning one's situation allows for an exchange of honest ideas where a 'diagnosis'

of your own situation takes place as well as what the individual thinks the other party's diagnosis

is. From this exchange of opinions, regarding how parties involved in a conflict view their own

and their opposition's situation, a dialogue concerning their collective future can proceed

(Galtung, 2004, 167).

Galtung views this reflection and the overall study of peace education much in the same

manner as Freire. Galtung argues that, "studies alone do not halt direct violence, dismantle

violence, nor do they build structural or cultural peace" (1996, 35). Both Freire and Galtung

point to the need to couple reflection with action. Initial communication or a 'diagnosis' of one's

situation, according to Galtung, cannot create a consciousness of peace until consistent action is

initiated and sustained as a result of honest dialogue, the most important tool and step in

fermenting peace.

The 'Transcend Method' developed by Johan Galtung addresses the key steps in promoting positive peace. The first step is 'dialogue with all conflict parties (both direct and indirect) where you come to know those in conflict rather than impart a message unto them. Paolo Freire argues that "one cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by people", (1972, 95). Furthermore, educational leaders should come to understand their communities' objective situation and their awareness of that situation through dialogue rather than imparting knowledge as a means of "salvation" (1972, 95). Both Galtung and Freire note the need to empower those in conflict through engaging in dialogue rather than providing knowledge. Through creating a peace education "practice" without dialogue, between those parties involved, one is doomed to create a situation of negative peace, whereby a consciousness of peace will be difficult to establish.

The most pervasive factor in enabling individuals and groups from adopting a conscious of peace is Galtung's concepts of structural and cultural violence. Influences, such as religion and ideology, language, art, science, law, media, and education, can be root causes to all forms of violence, whereby "human beings are influenced so that their actual somatic and metal realizations are below their potential realization" (Galtung, 1996, p.2). Due to the fact that such levels of violence lack a "concrete actor" it can often be perceived as natural within a society, thereby maintaining the status quo of its social structure. In contrast, direct violence represents a visible change within the status quo and garners greater levels of attention. Direct violence is often the result of structural violence when those who are oppressed by structural violence, in areas such as poverty, disease, and human rights, react to the status quo through violence.

Structural violence is best addressed through initial dialogue where an understanding of how power and resources are distributed among members of society can be determined. If there is an unequal balance of power and resources among society, be it educational opportunities and medical services being easily accessible for only some select groups, then a peace education

program rooted in dialogue must address these societal structures. As Galtung argued, "if people are starving when this is objectively avoidable, then violence is committed, regardless of whether there is a clear subject-action-object relation"(Galtung, 1969, 171). The absence of direct violence or a state of negative peace, "does not necessarily indicate an absence of structural violence; on the contrary, many oppressive and authoritarian societies, families, schools, and classrooms exhibit an uneasy 'peaceful' front, with revolt and rebellion lingering just beneath the surface"(Duzek 22). Structural violence is thereby legitimized by conditions within a given society, allowing those lingering feelings to eventual manifest themselves into acts of prejudice, stereotypes, biases, and ultimately, direct violence. This state is defined by cultural violence, which provides the needed justification for direct and structural violence. As Galtung (1990) notes culture is the 'symbolic sphere of our existence' and while no culture is entirely violent, an aspect of a culture could be. Galtung notes that six cultural domains exist- religion and ideology, language and art, empirical and formal science, speech, posters, language, art or religious symbols, all providing justification for structural and direct violence. The relationship between structural, direct, and cultural violence create a *violence triangle*. The triangle, when direct and structural violence are its feet, point to cultural violence as the legitimizing force. Nevertheless, Galtung argues that as the position of the triangle changes so do the relationships between all three forms of violence creating an intricate and dependent relationship between all forms of violence. All of the relationships are violent cycles. For instance, a culture can encourage a society in seeing political, sexual, or educational repression as normal, which enables a society based on structural violence, to justify the growth and sustainment of a society built on a system of haves and have not's. Ultimately, in order to break free from this state of affairs, direct violence emerges to liberate and also maintain.

It is through honest dialogue that one can identify the six cultural domains of violence within a given culture in order to identify how it can legitimize direct or structural violence and

act accordingly. The violence triangle can then be transformed into a virtuous triangle, where "cultural peace engenders structural peace, with symbiotic, equitable relations among diverse partners, and direct peace with acts of cooperation, friendliness and love. This virtuous triangle would be obtained by working on all three corners at the same time, not assuming that basic change in one will automatically lead to changes in the other two" (Galtung, 1990, 302).

In order to liberate the mind, body, and soul and thereby create the system of authentic education based on mutual dialogue and critical thinking that Freire calls for, an understanding of how culture has maintained a status quo or encouraged violence is essential. The components of the violence triangle are an important component of the banking method of education. If a system of haves and have-nots exists than humility, honesty, and cooperation, all essential components of dialogue cannot, thereby making dialogue ineffective. The creation of a consciousness of peace requires a cultural revolution, because in order to create a sense of unity between alienated and alienating cultures, a cultural synthesis must be initiated which can confront culture itself, as the preserver of the very structures by which it was formed (Freire, 180). The first objective within the framework of a peace education program must be then to establish a level "playing field", where all are engaged in a process of humanization. Vietnamese Monk Thich Nhat Hanh reflects on the impact of cultural and structural violence and the subsequent need to address it in order to engage in humanization,

"We have set up many structures in order to be separated from each other and make each other suffer. That is why it is very important to discover the human being in the other person, and to help the other person discover the human being in us" (Thich Nhat Hanh, Peace Begins Here, 116).

Student led dialogue, which embraces honesty and trust could enable legitimate exchange and thereby empathy, effectively transforming a violence triangle into a virtuous triangle and providing the groundwork for a state of positive peace. According to Freire, dialogue which seeks to break a cycle of oppression "founding itself upon love, humility, and faith, becomes a

horizontal relationships of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence" (Freire, 91).

Honest dialogue under the auspices of student led pedagogy can break the shackles of subordination manifested by cultural and structural violence. Subsequently, in order for inner transformation to be achieved and individual empowerment to occur, students and teachers must take control of their own empowerment through sustained educational opportunities in order to address their own cultural understandings that can thereby end cycles of structural violence. Greater control of one's education adopts a practice of mutual control. Control of one's own education can help to develop a greater sense of community within and outside of a school, aiding in creating the necessary conditions for cooperation, empowerment, belonging, and hope. British philosopher, Mary Warnock writes

"I think that of all the attributes that I would like to see in my children or in my pupils, the attribute of hope would come high, even top, of my list. To lose hope is to lose the capacity to want or desire anything; to lose in fact the wish to live. Hope is akin to energy, to curiosity, to the belief that things are worth doing. An education which leaves a child without hope is an education that has failed"

2.7.3 ELISE BOULDING

Paulo Freire believes that dialogue can only take place in an open environment where participation becomes an all too familiar act (Freire, 1974, 21). Education requires a similar setting based around a critical pedagogical approach in order for students to 'perceive the challenges of their time' and transition into a state of awareness (30). Such educational philosophies require freedom in the classroom, where students can co-develop a pedagogical framework to their learning while also developing the critical thinking skills necessary in embracing a consciousness of peace.

Elise Boulding's argument on the importance of an invitational rhetoric where communication is rooted in collaboration and mutual understanding in times of crisis and times

of celebration is a similar call for freedom in societal and specifically educational design. Empowering students to become a part of the process rather than just the receiver of it encourages differences within a classroom and the greater community to be listened to and embraced. A blending of cultures and experiences helps students to imagine a future where collaboration and cultural understanding can foster relationships building and effective conflict resolution. This collaboration does not negate the need to balance the tension of being human, where a need for bonding and a need for autonomy are omnipresent (Boulding). Peace education is maximized by creating time for collaboration but also individualized spaces of learning. In each setting teachers and students must embrace the differences that exist and foster that individuality in learning. Boulding argues, "self-understanding comes by reflection and leads to action"(Boulding). This action also calls for students to envision a better world in the future; in the same way Freire sought citizens to escape from the banking method of education and imagine a world of their own making, no longer afraid of freedom.

Boulding's work in Future Studies provides an important insight into the development of all peace education programs. Boulding (1996) argues that it is essential to use the 200-year present when working towards peace and justice. The struggle for peace and justice is not a new endeavor and subsequently, any peace practitioner must look both to the past and the future in the development of any program, which seeks to create a better world. The 200-year present then begins in 1913 and spans until 3013. Within this includes our great-grandparents through our great-grandchildren, thus making a community of individuals all participating in the creation of a just and peaceful world (Boulding, 1996, 38). While addressing the past will undoubtedly bring forth our past failures in attempting to build the necessary conditions for a consciousness of peace, it will most surely bring awareness to the movements and individuals who worked tirelessly on behalf of peace and justice. As Boulding (1996) notes, at the beginning of the twentieth century there existed 200 transnational people's associations, which as of 1996 grew to

20,000. Helping educators, both teachers and students, to understand that they are not alone in building a better world through peace education programs enables hope to become a stronger vehicle of change and dialogue as an ever more present means of exchanging ideas, concerns, and hopes for the future.

Bringing peacework to the forefront has been a consistent goal of Boulding's. In a world where violence seems all too common through considerably media attention, society has come to consider social injustice, war, and prejudice as realities, and peace as simply a utopian concept. Boulding's (1996) argument that "we cannot work for what we cannot imagine" calls on educators to view our present and future reality as one of peace, one of our own making. An understanding of our world and subsequent responsibility to improve it is at the heart of peace education practice. For instance, Lennart Vriens (2000) argues that a balanced concept of peace education integrates the perspectives of young people with their future responsibility for peace.

Educators must therefore embrace conflict as a means to understanding. Conflict is a basic fact of human existence because we are each unique (Boulding, 1995, 197). The classroom can be the vessel by which we embrace that conflict and through dialogue manage it in order to embrace our present difference and our future ones. In contrast, if an educational framework chooses to adopt a platform where differences are ignored in order to avoid direct violence then a lasting state of structural and cultural violence will be perpetuated. Boulding explains, "Issue-based conflicts, stemming from disagreement over facts, values, or interests, require that we stay with the confrontation process until the problem is understood, rather than paper over differences" (Ibid).

Creating an environment that fosters this kind of positive dialogue and interaction focuses on how a peace education framework is taught rather that what is taught. American educator, John Dewey, argued that in order to create peaceful and trusting classroom environments, they should be structured in a "problem-solving way" in order for students to discover their own truth

(Harris & Morrison, 2013, 166). Boulding believed that teachers subsequently might want to adopt a non-traditional approach to education where they focus on modeling and mentoring. Providing a positive adult role model for students rather than simply a receptacle of knowledge can provide the needed incentive for students to develop understanding, empathy, and nonviolence. Teachers need to envision the type of student they hope to foster and subsequently provide the necessary environment in which to enable that vision to become reality. Elise Boulding's description of the type of student such an environment should foster is therefore critical to examine:

The child who becomes an altruist, and activist, and a nonviolent shaper of the future is then one who feels autonomous, competent, confident about her own future and the future of society, able to cope with stress, relates warmly to others and feels responsibility for them even when they are not directly dependent on her. She has had many opportunities to solve problems and play out different social roles in the past and her successes have been recognize and rewarded; she has been exposed to a wide variety of events, accumulated a fair amount of knowledge, and has a cognitively complex view of the world. She has been inspired by adult role models, but also nurtured and helped by her own peers. In terms of our own model she has had optimal opportunities to develop each of her capacities, cognitive, emotional and intuitive, during her maturing years; her predispositions for bonding, for altruism, for play, for creating alternatives have more than counter-balanced her predispositions for aggression. Her social spheres have been filled with challenges she could meet, role models which have provided rich sources of complex learning's about possible social behavior, and positive reinforcement for her attempts to make constructive changes around her (Boulding, "The Child and Non-violent Social Change" in Harris and Morrison, ed., *Peace Education: Third Edition,* 2013, p.167).

In Boulding's description a classroom becomes the living embodiment of a democracy, where equality and freedom are paramount. Teachers have a responsibility to not look at their classes a single collectives but rather a collection of individuals, possessing different biases, experiences, goals, and attitudes. In creating a nurturing environment for students, listening and observing become as important as direct-instruction. Peace education cannot function if the classroom does become a center of trust, where teachers are aware of their individual student's needs and personalities, while encouraging dialogue and self-determination. As much as students must be risk-takers in building bonds of trust, compassion, understanding, and empathy, teachers must be as well, while also allowing themselves to be vulnerable in taking those risks. Relinquishing authority in the classroom and allowing themselves to be educated by their

students is an important step in creating the necessary environment to foster a consciousness of peace. Elise Boulding (1989) notes, "The greatest gift our children can give us is the capacity to see the world anew. Parents gain awareness if they allow their children to be their teachers" (Boulding, "One Small Plot of Heaven: Reflections on Family Life by a Quaker Sociologist", 1989, in Harris and Morrison, ed. Peace Education: Third Edition, 2013, p. 183). The same can be said of teachers.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the theoretical underpinnings of peace education. First, a three-sphered model of peace education will be presented referencing the researcher's understanding of these major theoretical underpinnings. This presentation will enable the researcher to fashion a working model of peace education in which to examine and assess the research findings. These theoretical underpinnings and subsequent model are supported by the literature review. Secondly, the three-sphered model will be examined in relation to the perspectives of peace education practitioners, programs, and philosophies. The construction of the three-sphered model of peace education will then explain the development of the holistic nature of peace education in correlation with the effects of inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference. The chapter will conclude by linking the three-sphered model of peace education with the supported methodology and design examined in chapter 4.

3.1 THREE-SPHERED MODEL OF PEACE EDUCATION

The need to address the theoretical constructs of peace education stems from the lack of a defined field in which to develop, assess, and improve practices. As noted in the literature review,

considerable differences in the objectives, emphasis, curricula, and practices of peace education have created an undefined and divided field. Defining peace education is necessary in order to address the role intercultural dialogue through videoconference can play as a peace education practice. A holistic model of peace education will serve to identify the critical components of peace education practices.

The previously noted literature and insights of Maria Montessori, Paulo Freire, Johan Galtung, and Elise Boulding drive the development of a three-sphered model of peace education. This model serves as an explanation of the author's understanding of the practice and philosophy of peace education. The three-sphered model of peace education outlines that the field and its practices are composed of a 1) human agency element, 2) epistemological element, and 3) normative element. These elements drive the development, implementation, and assessment of peace education practices.

Freire's Critical Pedagogy supports the human agency of peace education. Critical pedagogy is concerned with personal and societal change through allowing students to critically reflect and act upon their reality. A constructivist epistemology claims that individuals construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their understanding of their social world. A cosmopolitan normative element provides the last element to the three-sphered model, which supports the values, norms, and principles of a shared humanity.

The following analysis of

Human Agency:
Critical Pedagogy

Peace Education

Epistemological Element:
Constructivism

Normative Element:
Cosmopolitanism

the human agency, epistemological, and normative elements of peace education identifies the underlying interpretations that the researcher has regarding peace education. The spheres will be initially addressed as distinct and separate elements in order to justify their inclusion in the peace education model. The relevance of each sphere to peace education will then be identified. This linear development will enable the researcher to argue that the model supports the holistic perspective of peace education, based on the complementary nature of each sphere. The holistic nature of the model is characterized by its interdependence. These assumptions will define the subsequent research paradigm and adopted methodology.

3.1.1 HUMAN AGENCY: FREIRE'S CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

The term *critical pedagogy* first appeared in Henry Giroux's (1983) book, *Theory and Resistance in Education.* Inspired by Paulo Freire's arguments regarding transformative educational processes, Giroux's seminal work sought to emphasize the role of human agency in the learning process. A human agency is defined by an individual's ability to engage in and with the world. A human agency rooted in critical pedagogy highlights the importance of students and teachers critically reflecting and transforming their reality. Giroux (1983) argued that a critical theory to educational practices was needed in order to articulate the role an individual and culture play in transformative processes.

Giroux's development of critical pedagogy highlighted Freire's critique of the banking model of education. As noted in the literature review, the banking model of education argues that the traditional and most persistent model of education is based on the premise that the teacher is the active participant, or subject, and students are passive participants or objects. Processes of cultural reproduction reflect the banking model of education. Cultural reproduction claims that, "class-divided societies sustain their identities through processes of domination that facilitate the reproduction of power relations from one generation to another"(Allen Morrow &Alberto Torres,

2002, 67). Critical Pedagogy argues that a critically informed educational model can provide a means to critique processes of cultural reproduction that can maintain systems of power and domination. Systems of power and domination can exist on both the societal and institutional levels.

Critical pedagogy addresses two significant questions, in relation to supporting a human agency directed at transforming the banking model of education: "How do we make education meaningful by making it critical and how do we make it critical so as to make it emancipatory"(Giroux, 1983, p.3). In order to answer these questions, both Giroux (1983) and Freire (1979) contend that a critically informed education is enabled through student and teacher empowerment. Giroux argues that providing students and teachers with the freedom to be reflective, socially conscious actors is essential. A reflective, socially conscious actor is an empowered one. Student and teacher empowerment can, thereby, lead to social change as suggested by both Giroux and Freire.

Freire's (1973) notion of "conscientization" provides the reasoning behind the adoption of an educational model, driven by the freedom to challenge perspectives. Conscientization represents the blending of critical reflection and action as two separate but joined processes in individual and collective emancipation. Freire's conscientization recognizes that human autonomy and knowledge creation are not manifested from standardized processes, but through interactive learning and dialogical processes (Morrow & Torres, 2002). Habermas (1975) argues, "Reflexive learning takes place through discourses in which we thematize practical validity claims that become problematic or have been rendered problematic through institutionalized doubt, and redeem or dismiss them on that basis of arguments"(p.15). Both Habermas and Freire argue that encouraging students to engage in reflexive learning strategies can empower them to reflect and transform their reality. Morrow and Torres (2002) argue that Habermas, "invokes a civil community of truth, equality, sincerity, and freedom", which draws parallels with Freire's

insistence on the development of critical pedagogical strategies stemming from a need to adopt a progressive form of education that could adequately and effectively support a reflective and transformative human agency. Freire's approach requires a learning process that enables students and teachers to engage in horizontal dialogue. Horizontal dialogue is based on participatory exchange and interaction as opposed to vertical dialogue, which is defined by knowledge transmission. Horizontal dialogue, according to Freire, provides individuals with a human agency directed towards effectively recognizing and addressing the beliefs and habits that support cultural reproduction.

However, in arguing that individuals should be given the freedom to dialectically address structural and cultural influences, critics of critical pedagogy note that such a process operates at levels of high abstraction (Ellsworth, 1989). The absence of concrete programs in which to implement such transformative practices, thereby limit critical pedagogical to mere attempts by educators to transform power imbalances. Elizabeth Ellsworth (1989) argues that such an educational stance simply replaces one bias with another and implies that transformation is dependent on rationalism, which makes such practices inherently irrational.

Ellsworth's argument concerning the absence of concrete critical pedagogy programs resulting in high levels of abstraction is supported by the literature. A human agency rooted in critical pedagogy understands that students and teachers have the ability to change and reshape their social and political world. Providing students and teachers with the opportunity to critically engage with the world and transform it, signifies the importance of human agency and choice in the learning process. Because critical pedagogy is rooted in change and student choice, such a process would imply a normative underpinning, in the same fashion that Habermas(1971) argues, "knowledge cannot be reduced to formal procedures because it arises from symbolic interaction between societal subjects who reciprocally know and recognize each other as unmistakable individuals (p.137). However, as Ellsworth observes, the lack of a normative element to critical

pedagogy has created an abstract field, stymied by an absence of sustainable and adaptable programs. This lack of a normative dimension to critical pedagogy and, peace education, in general, will be addressed in section 3.3. Nevertheless, Ellsworth's argument lacks the recognition that critical pedagogy transmits knowledge from teacher to student, replacing one bias for another.

Ellsworth fails to recognize or address the difference between schooling and education. As Kanpol (1998) argues, "schooling relies on preparing students for a market economy", fuelled by competition, testing, and national and internationally recognized curricula. In contrast, education "presupposes intrinsic motivation" (ibid). Teaching and learning in education is driven by a desire to attain knowledge. Within a critical pedagogy students are given the freedom to make independent choices. There exists an intrinsic motivation behind critical pedagogy. Schooling eliminates choice from the learning process and serves as an example of the banking model of education. However, as students and teachers pursue an education they inherently create active teaching and learning environments. According to critical pedagogy, the teacher has a responsibility to create these environments that support critical thinking and in the process allow students to freely challenge the structures that surround them. Due to the uniqueness of each student's reality and context, critical pedagogical practices are diverse in nature. Student choice within these practices, however, remains constant. The transmission of bias is recognized and addressed by the student's ability and empowerment to challenge not only the social structures that surround them, but the individuals involved in the processes.

Giroux and Freire's understanding of critical pedagogy is established on the premise that human agency is a source for individual and societal change. Through an understanding of the relationships between knowledge and power students and teachers can begin a process of critical reflection. Reflection is enabled by the freedom critical pedagogy creates for students in the learning environment. Freedom provides students with the knowledge to make choices of how to

see, interact, and transform, "social institutions, ideas, and concepts" (Freire, 1972, 73). Critical pedagogy empowers students and teachers to be critical of their local and global contexts and address the way in which these contexts have shaped their individual views.

3.1.2 EPISTEMOLOGY: CONSTRUCTIVISM

A constructivist epistemology interprets knowledge as a human construction. An individual's relationship with the world is transactional, because knowledge is constructed from experiences in and with the world. As Guba & Lincoln (1985) write, "social reality is a construction based upon the actor's frame of reference within the setting" (p.80). Epistemology stipulates the relationship between what one knows and what one sees. A constructivist epistemology emphasizes the role of the participant in the construction, not of material objects, but of the social world. Larochelle and Bednarz (1998) argue that, "when confronted with the essentially undecidable question of whether we are "discoverers" (in which case, we are looking as through a peephole upon an unfolding universe) or "inventors" (in which case we see ourselves as participants in a conspiracy for which we are continually inventing the customs, rules, and regulations), constructivism opts for the latter position" (p.5). An individual's subjective reality is constructed by their interaction with it.

Epistemological constructivism suggests, "knowledge is always knowledge that a person constructs" (Larochelle and Bednarz, 1998 p.3) This belief is a stark departure from the foundations of realism which argues that reality can be defined as phenomena that are independent of the participants involved. Realism's objective understanding of reality implies that knowledge is a transmitted reflection of the reality. Kantian constructivism bears a similar implication. John Rawls (1980) argues that the Kantian view of constructivism, "sets up a certain procedure of construction which answers to certain reasonable requirements" (516). Procedural requirements to knowledge construction specify a preconceived conception behind what defines

rational within our given reality. John Dewey (1929), however, argues that reality is itself a construction. Therefore, reality cannot serve as a baseline to confirm the validity of knowledge. The actions of the knower in organizing their ideas, interactions, and overall experiences is the most critical component in knowledge construction, because reality is not independent. The role of the student in the construction of their own learning is critical, according to Dewey, requiring teachers to enable a learning process in their students to recognize the experiences and conditions which milder them in order to foster growth. A Deweyan understanding of constructivism will provide the critical lens in which to challenge the contention that knowledge can be transmitted. Viewing knowledge as transmittable labels students as passive recipients within the learning process. In paraphrasing an argument raised by von Glaserfeld, in defense of constructivism, Larochelle and Bednarz write, "knowledge cannot be transmitted; it cannot be neutral either. Instead, it is constructed, negotiated, propelled by a project, and perpetuated as long as it enables its creators to organize their reality in a viable fashion" (p.8). Constructivism promotes the idea that knowledge is best obtained when students are challenged to take responsibility for their learning, as seen in Chapter 2.5's exploration into the sequence of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of knowledge

Constructivism calls for an understanding of how experiences, biases, and relationships form our understanding of reality. Within a constructivist based educational model, dialogue is key in identifying and understanding how these concepts and symbols have shaped student growth. An understanding of the meaning and importance of experiences can enable one to consider and recognize the uniqueness of the nature of reality for others. Larochelle and Bednarz (1998) argue, "it is both in and by the discourse of the Other, in and by interactions and transactions, that his or her understanding of him or herself and others is shaped"(9). While dialogue between teacher and student enables self-growth, it can also foster socialization as a

means of individual and group growth, where an understanding of the Other can occur in accord with a greater understanding of self.

The role of the individual and the social in knowledge construction distinguishes the cognitive development theory of Piaget from the social development theory of Lev Vygotsky. Both theorists argue that individuals come to know the world through actively engaging with it (Schauble, 1997). However, while Piaget believes that this engagement is through the solo mind of the individual, Vygotsky argues that knowledge is constructed through a collaborative process. Through actively acting upon the world, learners are subsequently presented with new social interactions and subsequent ideas and experiences that challenge their current thinking. Cognitive development is, thereby, a lifelong process because of varying social development. Learners engage in a process of restructuring their current thinking with prior knowledge in order to create a new understanding of reality. While Piaget and Vygotsky both agree that the social world plays a prominent role in learning, they disagree as to the extent this subjective reality plays in knowledge construction. Piaget emphasizes the role that cognitive development must precede learning, while Vygotsky argues that cognitive development is a collaborative process, where individuals learn through social interaction from birth until death (Papalia et al, 2011, p.34). In Vygotsky's process the social world works as a stimulus in the construction of knowledge (Liu & Matthews, 2005, 388). Knowledge construction is consequently an intrapersonal process. Leaners engage in a process of socialization with their specific learning environment and create knowledge through their interaction with the immediate learning environment (ibid). The learning process is subsequently a context-specific action. The debate over the primacy of the individual or social in the construction of knowledge has resulted, as noted by Phillips (1995), in the relabeling of epistemological constructivism as epistemological relativism. Epistemological relativism argues that no absolute truth exists and any truth is as pertinent as another (Liu &

Matthews, 2005). Such arguments stem largely from the often-characterized dualistic nature of constructivism.

In polarizing the social and the individual in knowledge construction, one is overlooking the complimentary nature of such factors. The relationship between the social and the individual in the learning process is, "closely interconnected, functionally unified, constantly interacting, and the change and development in one relentlessly influencing the other provides a valid explanation for both and individual change" (Liu & Matthews, 392). Vygotsky's understanding regarding the development of consciousness, while noting the primacy of the social, speaks to an interconnected relationship between the social and individual in a constructivist epistemology.

Consciousness, according to Vygotsky, is an individual's ability to engage in meaningful perception of something. Meaningful perception is abstracted perception, enabling the individual to construct new relationships between concepts and objects (Vygotsky, 1987, p.190). Consciousness can shift when an individual perceives their reality in a different way. This shift begins first through social interactions with the environment and then on the individual level as new relationships are formed (Liu & Matthews, 2005). Consciousness is dependent on social interactions in which to transform it. However, the individual is an active agent in this process. A constructivist epistemology claims that knowledge is constructed and not absorbed by an individual. Consequently, change occurs through the development of consciousness by intrapersonal reflection. Intrapersonal reflection is informed by an individual's engagement in social interactions.

3.1.3 NORMATIVE ELEMENT: COSMOPOLITANISM

Cosmopolitanism originates from the Greek word *kosmopolites*, translated as, "citizen of the world" (Hansen, 2011). Classic cosmopolitanism emerged largely from the Stoics of Ancient Greece developing into Immanuel Kant's philosophical arguments in modern times. Kant's essay,

Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch, argues that humanity has the ability to end the pervasive threat of war through a political federation grounded in universal moral principles (Dowdeswell, 2011). This proposition has come to be known as Kantian Cosmopolitanism. Within Kant's understanding of cosmopolitanism, emerged the notion of a shared humanity. A shared humanity postulates that all human beings are a part of a universal moral community. Within this universal moral community, each person is equal in dignity and value. Cosmopolitan norms govern the relations among individuals in this community, so as to ensure equality and dignity for all. A respect of human rights, not only of a state's citizens but also for the universal global community would establish and maintain this perpetual peace.

Peace, as defined in the literature review and congruent with cosmopolitanism, is more than the mere absence of war, but rather points to a greater understanding of self, others, cultures, and the environment in a harmonious accord (Harris and Morrison, 2013). Peace entails positive actions, such as respecting the human rights of all individuals. As Johnson and Johnson (2005) note, "peace is a relationship variable that cannot be maintained by separation or isolation". Cosmopolitan norms dictate an individual and collective responsibility to ensure every individual's human rights. The pursuit of peace is, thereby, the pursuit of respect and dignity for all human beings. This understanding of cosmopolitan norms harken to Kant's notion of "Weltbuergerrecht", or world civil rights. Weltbuergerrecht and cosmopolitan norms argue, according to Seyla Benhabib (2008), that, "in this global civil society, individuals are rights-bearing not only in virtue of their citizenship within states but in virtue of their humanity" (15). Humanity affords all individuals with the right to have rights. Benhabib (2008) notes, "rights are not simply about strong moral entitlements which accrue to individuals; they are about claims to justice and legitimacy enframing our collective existence as well" (p.37). Our collective existence inspires a respect for individual human dignity that provides a general agreement on our shared humanity. Justice is thereby the object of this general agreement based upon the equal, impartial

and reciprocal nature of cosmopolitanism (Snauwaert, 2015). Because cosmopolitan norms transcend geographic boundaries, endowing individuals with rights and justice, the "value of universal moral inclusion" is enshrined (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2011).

Kant's concept of hospitality encompasses this moral inclusion through a care and concern for the needs of all individuals, as they are welcomed into the greater community (Dowdeswell, 2011). Peace is dependent upon the interaction, cooperation and trust amongst individuals. Interaction is grounded in the reality that living space and resources are limited. Individuals have the right to interact with one another and share in the resources of the Earth. All are dependent on each other and as Kant argues, "Since the (narrower or wider) community of the nations of the Earth has now gone so far that a violation of right on one place of the Earth is felt in all" (8:360). An understanding of hospitality, within the context of cosmopolitan norms, dictates an equal right of all persons to the society of others and the resources of the Earth that we inhabit together (Dowdeswell, 2011). This right to access implies a universal care and concern for the needs of all.

However, the notion that all individuals inhabit the same Earth and are entitled to hospitality does not dictate one's rights based only on our similar nature. Cosmopolitan norms do not deny an individual of its uniqueness in relation to the community, state, or world. For instance, Benhabib (2008) argues, "If I recognize you as being entitled to rights only because you are like me, then I deny your fundamental individuality which entails your being different. If I refuse to recognize you as a being entitled to rights because you are so other to me, then I deny our common humanity"(p.16). Our shared humanity is governed by our equality and our difference. Interaction is rooted in finding commonality amongst diversity. Cosmopolitan norms are grounded in universal human rights that acknowledge and are responsible for one's humanity and individuality (ibid).

Universal cosmopolitan norms have often been criticized as being Western-centric and unjustified, because they do not address the local contexts that shape individual communities. Universalism in cosmopolitan thought emphasizes global citizenship and an individual's responsibility to a shared humanity, shaped by the universality reason and morality (Appiah, 2007, xvii). Embracing the concept of a shared humanity, in this light, reflects the responsibility of individuals to recognize differences. Cosmopolitan norms can heighten a community's understanding of their own freedom and autonomy. Though understanding the plurality of each community's context, cosmopolitan norms rooted in universal human rights can, as Benhabib (2008) writes, "empower democracies by creating new vocabularies for claim-making for citizens in signatory states as well as opening new channels of mobilization for civil society actors who then become part of transnational networks of rights activism and hegemonic resistance". Establishing commonality through universal cosmopolitan norms can still embrace the diversity of human existence. Valentine Moghadam's (2009) article, "*Global Feminism, Citizenship, and the State: Negotiating Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa*", articulates this point in arguing that international conferences and documents imbedded in universal cosmopolitan norms have created tools that women tailor to their own contexts (Moghadam, 2009 & Benhabib, 2008). Cosmopolitan norms directly address an individual's reality and theorize how best to respond to and transform this reality on the personal, local and global scale. The interaction between the universality and plurality of cosmopolitan norms recognizes the humanity and diversity of all individuals.

Nevertheless, the Western-centric argument against the adoption of cosmopolitan norms also refers to the means in which they are adopted and applied. Ulrich Beck (2010) notes that cosmopolitanism, in the philosophical sense, "means something active, a task, a conscious decision, one which is clearly the responsibility of an elite and is implemented from above"(p.129). While such an argument implies the establishment of a legal system to create and

support programs and institutions that embrace cosmopolitan norms, global citizens have a responsibility to participate in their own global choices (Archibugi, 2008). Within a cosmopolitan vision, active participation by individuals in global issues does not imply hegemonic process of cultural assimilation. Archibugi (2008) argues,

> "It is impossible to draw a dividing line between "us" and "them," between "friends" and "enemies". The planet is made up of "overlapping communities of fate," to use the apt phrase coined by David Held, and it is a difficult, and often impossible, task to mark the confines between one and the other"(p.4).

Cosmopolitan norms argue that the interconnectedness of humanity requires that we value not just human life but also particular human lives. However, critics argue that this unrestricted responsibility to humanity is a restraint to exercising legitimate concern for others (Jordaan, 2003).

In coming to know another individual, we are inherently coming to know the community that surrounds them. The presence of a third party thereby limits the self's responsibility toward one other so as to respond to numerous others (ibid). Responsibility for the other, however also involves concern. This dynamic comprises a responsibility and concern not just for individuals but for the world that surrounds them. Levinas (2008) argues that such understanding "drives our aspiration for a more just and humane order"(p. 116). Since self and other occupy the same world, unconditional support for the fulfillment of a just and humane order is in their mutual interests. For instance, universal cosmopolitan norms refer to universal claims to justice and not privileges. In allowing another's rights to be violated we are violating our own. Therefore, legitimate concern for others involves a concern for oneself. Cosmopolitan norms argue for the fundamental right to have rights, based on both our common humanity and individual diversity. A hospitable global community composed of a diverse citizenship defines cosmopolitanism's understanding of a shared humanity.

SUMMARY

The three-sphered model is a collection of reflections about the nature of peace education. Critical pedagogy, constructivism, and cosmopolitanism make up the internal structure of peace education, which serve as reference points in explaining the holistic nature of peace education. Each element addresses the nature of consciousness in peace education philosophy and practice, which will be analyzed more thoroughly in section 3.3. These perspectives reflect the researcher's view of peace education. Finally, the three-sphered model addresses the abstract nature of peace education. The model identifies the purpose of peace education and the subsequent underpinnings that support peace education practices. Through understanding the philosophy and practice of peace education, a more effective evaluation of inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference can be conducted.

3.2 THREE-SPHERED MODEL'S CONNECTION TO PEACE EDUCATION

Betty Reardon's Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility (1988) provides a critical lens in which to define peace education practices. An influential text in the development of peace education programs since its publication in 1988; Reardon's call for a student-centered, comprehensive peace education framework has challenged peace education practitioners in devising emancipatory curricula. Tony Jenkins (2013) argues that few models of peace education have emerged since 1988. This lack of peace education development is due in large part to Reardon's extensive framework. The purpose of *Comprehensive Peace Education* is to enable educators to develop, implement, and assess teacher, student, and community transformation through a comprehensive framework. It has successively influenced the later developments of the National Peace Academy (NPA), The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century: A Vehicle for Peace Education, co-authored by Reardon in 1999, the Education for Peace Programs (EFP) created by the International Education for Peace Institute, and the frameworks of the United Nations University for Peace (UPEACE), as well as other

institutions which have adopted the study of peace education. In identifying the theoretical constructs present in peace education, the critical arguments Reardon (1988) makes regarding peace education as a transformative process can be examined.

Reardon's transformative framework calls for a self-empowering approach to peace education as it challenges each participant to observe, form opinions, and act in relation to the world around them. Reardon (1988) argues, "education for empowerment, responsibility, and action is a form of process learning" (p.67). Process learning encourages students to view informed action as a part of a learning process, which can enable students to become agents of change driven by reflection, action, and empowerment. Such a process is closely related to Paulo Freire's (1973) student-centered, critical pedagogical approach to learning. The commonality amongst peace education practitioners and theorists is in *defining peace education as transformative practice enabled through a student-centered approach to learning*. Process learning outlines such an approach in maintaining that peace education practices must strive to enable students to be risk takers. Reardon (1988) notes, "Students can be helped to learn that risk taking is integral to commitment to values, that if we must pursue changes in order to realize our values, then risk is inevitable"(p. 67). In order to empower students as risk takers engaged in a process of empowerment, a human agency rooted in a critical approach to peace education is a principal step in developing a peace education model.

3.2.1 CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND PEACE EDUCATION

Peace education seeks to instill a sense of understanding in students that can stimulate critical pedagogical practices. A critical approach to peace education requires students and teachers to be critical of the local and global contexts surrounding them and how these contexts have shaped their individual views. More specifically, Beckerman and Zembylas (2013) claim that "if students and teachers are to become critical experts of design, they need to engage in an in-depth

interrogation of two elements- 'context' and practice' (p.207). Critical inquiry pertaining to context, practice, power dynamics, societal norms, and rights are among the many that require dialogue. This process can be a liberating force in education as students and teachers address their own biases in relation to their own cultural development. Inquiry within a critical pedagogical approach is not a critique, but rather a means in which to enable and foster "cultural awareness of one's position in society" (Jenkins, 2013, 182). A critical approach to education directly opposes the banking model of education, as noted in section 3.1.1, and serves as the liberating force Freire calls for in educational practices.

The value of adopting a peace education framework rooted in a critical pedagogical driven human agency is in addressing the ever-prevalent banking method of education. Transformative educational practices can be adopted through enabling a school community to assess the power dynamics of local and global influences. This progression embraces Montessori's argument that peace can only be achieved when education frees a child's mind to seek the peace, honesty, love, and freedom it is so naturally drawn to. Such a direction addresses the roots of violence, in seeking to remove the structural and cultural causes behind it.

H.B. Danesh (2006) offers an approach to peace education that addresses the local and global influences on individuals and communities in order to empower critical reflection. Danesh argues for the adoption of an integrative theory of peace education, which suggests that all human beings are molded by their unique reality. The Education for Peace curriculum (EFP), co-authored by Danesh, applies this argument in creating a structural framework for peace education that addresses peace as a psychological, social, political, ethical, and spiritual state, expressed through intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, international, and global areas of human life (Danesh, 2006, p.55). The EFP curriculum argues that individuals have the potential to transform their reality through the creation of an informed, creative, and responsive human agency. In order to maximize this potential, effective peace education practices, as argued by Danesh, should be

designed and implemented based on an understanding of the power of the human consciousness. Danesh, writes, "Human development takes place on the axis of consciousness, which shapes both our worldview and the manner in which we engage in the task of influencing and changing our environments" (ibid). The EFP is fashioned to enable student self-awareness. An informed self-awareness can influence and change one's environment. This curricular framework, as argued by Danesh, can enable the creation of a unity-based worldview. A unity-based worldview replaces unbalanced power dynamics with cooperation and notions of equality, justice, and human rights. In order to embrace such a worldview, educational processes require a critical lens in which to reflect upon the power dynamics and social structures that exist. The EFP curriculum, while noting the importance of supporting an informed human agency, does not specify how it can assist students in forming a unity worldview. A critical pedagogical approach to the EFP curriculum and peace education in general, provides the rationale for the adoption of practices that enable personal and societal change.

Freire's argument for the development of a critical consciousness in education enables students, teachers, and the greater school community to transform their reality. Freire's notion of conscientization enables peace education philosophy to be put into action and connects directly to the EFP's notion of an informed self-awareness. As Harris and Morrison (2013) argue, "for peace education to be effective, it must seek to transform ways of thinking that have been developed over the millennia of human history. In effective peacelearning there is a seamless transition between learning, reflection, and action" (p.31). This process represents an emancipatory educational practice. Because peace education seeks to empower individuals, "to develop their own capacities to become effective citizens and change agents", a defined human agency is needed to enable such a transformation (Harris and Morrison, 2013, 102). Conscientization represents such a transformative process. Conscientization enables the adoption of a critical

human agency through the blending of critical reflection and action. Effective peace education practices, thereby, transform consciousness through a critical pedagogy.

3.2.2 CONSTRUCTIVISM AND PEACE EDUCATION

The philosophy of peace education argues that through providing students with the freedom to recognize personal and external perspectives they can reconstruct their reality. This argument implies that the principal of knowledge is action, not sensation (Piaget, 1963; Vygotsky, 1978). This constructivist understanding of cognitive development correlates with peace education's emphasis on diversity and critical thinking, which enables personal and societal growth. While social change cannot always be predicted or measured as an educational outcome, a student centered, constructivist approach to learning creates actively engaged learners who have a higher retention of learned material (Silberman, 1996).

Students engage in a learning process with a unique set of perspectives and subsequent biases. However, students are constantly acting towards an ever-changing environment. An active learning environment can better facilitate independent knowledge construction and reconstruction of one's social reality. Constructivist philosopher, Ernst von Glaserfeld (1998), defines this process as self-regulation. Self-regulation is where "children became aware that it is they who are capable of constructing solutions to problems and that they themselves can decide whether something works or does not" (p.28). Maria Montessori first implemented this autonomous process, where she empowered students to engage in active reflective practices. These sentiments have been echoed in peace education philosophy and practices

As peace education practitioners have sought to develop strategies which both teach about and for peace, programs have emerged that embrace a constructivist approach to student learning. Betty Reardon's The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century (1999), argues that students in today's schools should be prepared to take an active role in the development of peace education and their processes. Reardon's understanding of effective peace education

practices is based upon the rationale that an individual can construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their own knowledge. Subsequently, peace education practices based on Reardon's curriculum guide are designed to encourage student involvement, inquiry, and adaptation. A constructivist epistemology of peace education enables teachers to effectively construct learning processes that provide students with opportunities for self-regulation. As argued by Albert Morf (1998), "the major effect of constructivism on teaching has been to open up new possibilities: it has justified the introduction of types of teaching practice and didactics which base the acquisition of knowledge on the elaboration of knowledge by students themselves" (p.32).

Peace education practices are rooted in a similar student-centered approach to learning. However, peace education philosophy and its practices have not explicitly identified an appropriate epistemology in which to support teacher and student learning initiatives. A constructivist epistemology argues for student centered learning processes, but more importantly, as argued by von Glaserfield (1998), constructivism believes that students, "are capable of constructing solutions to problems and that they themselves can decide whether something works or does not. This is the beginning of self-regulation, of a feeling of autonomy"(p.28). This can subsequently begin a critically active learning process that can support the individual and communal change peace education drives for.

A peace education format is therefore best implemented when competition gives way to cooperation between teacher and student. As students seek to understand how the world is constructed they address their own construction and engage in a process of deconstructing and reconstructing their own knowledge. Teachers must go about similar reflective practices. In engaging with students in peace education practices it is necessary for teachers to gain an understanding of each individual student's reality. In viewing students as passive receptors of knowledge, a teacher disregards a student's ability for independent thought and deposits their sense of reality onto them. A constructivist epistemology of peace education enables teachers and

students to be mutually active participants in the learning process. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the teacher to create a self-regulating learning environment. Within a self-regulating environment students are enabled with the freedom to address their own, as well as, societal perspectives. A constructivist epistemology to peace education provides a theory of knowledge for peace education practitioners to create such an emancipatory learning environment.

3.2.3 COSMOPOLITANISM AND PEACE EDUCATION

Ian Harris (2013) argues, "peace educators are guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that provides a statement of values to be pursued in order to achieve economic, social, and political justice"(p.71). Peace education practices, in this context, raise awareness of human rights violations, emphasize the dignity of all humanity, and attempt to change the stereotypes that incite violence based on difference. Johan Galtung (2004) argues that the reflection, which is tantamount in peace education practices, cannot be conducted without subsequent action. Peace education action is rooted in the norms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The capacity to engage in honest action derives from a commitment to social responsibility. As Betty Reardon argues, "acting out of caring" empowers and sustains humane relationships on a global and personal scale (Reardon, 1988, p.77). Such a process demonstrates a responsibility not only to those with whom we have direct contact but also to those whom we have not encountered. Elise Boulding's argument that the world must be viewed as an interconnected living system, composed of both established and unestablished relationships bears an obvious similarity to Reardon's claim (Boulding, Peace & Change, p.403). Maria Montessori further notes that education must empower students to engage in the world as ethically and socially conscious actors (Montessori, 1992). The cosmopolitan norms of equality, justice, and liberty apply directly to the norms guiding peace education practices. Addressing the normative aspects of peace education, with its connection to the educational values espoused by Reardon, Boulding,

Montessori, and Freire can strengthen the construction and application of an effective peace education model.

A cosmopolitan normative element to peace education implies that the philosophy and practice is rooted in embracing a shared humanity. Kant's notion of hospitality can support subsequent peace education practices based on the notions of care and concern for humanity. Adopting peace education practices supported by hospitality can empower individuals to embrace tolerance and openness towards otherness as an ethic of social relations in an interconnected world (Strand, 2010, p. 31). While peace education is defined as a pedagogical effort to build a better world, such pedagogical practices have not been defined in connection with a specific normative underpinning (Harris and Morrison, 2013, p.70). For example, one aspect of peace education is human rights education. Human rights education studies the documents, treaties, institutions, and courts associated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Peace educators are encouraged to teach about the subsequent struggles individuals and communities have undergone to secure their basic human rights. However, human rights education does not necessarily promote an inherent responsibility to address human rights violations, as a member of this global community. Understanding the nature of violence is necessary in order to transform it. Still, if peace education is directed towards such transformation, human rights education must be constructed to honor the basic dignity of all people (Harris and Morrison, 2013). The lack of an explicit normative underpinning to peace education limits the field to being characterized as education about peace, rather than education both, about and for peace. Cosmopolitan norms of justice, equality, and human rights inform peace education practices.

Peace education practices involve providing individuals with the freedom and trust to develop their own consciousness through encounters between the local and the global. Australian Peace Educator, James Page (2004) argues in support of an integrated approach to peace, which

addresses the importance of an individual's freedom to determine their personal commitment to peace. Page notes that virtue ethics can provide a necessary normative foundation to peace education, which is lacking such specificity. The juxtaposition of virtue ethics with cosmopolitanism is seen through Kant's sense of a social community, "in which each individual is regarded as an equal and autonomous agent" (Sherman, Making a necessity of virtue, 286). However, as noted by Page (2004), while virtue ethics serves as a possible philosophical foundation for peace education, the challenge of encouraging individuals and groups to interact harmoniously and creatively with themselves and their environment remains a challenge for the field (p.3). The cosmopolitan notion of hospitality, explores the underdeveloped obligations that correspond to peace education philosophy. Engaging as a hospitable individual comes from the cosmopolitan norms of care, concern, and understanding. This engagement can result in an individual recognizing and respecting the rights and uniqueness of the global community. Peace education serves to augment this understanding with action, in empowering individuals to reject direct and structural violence unto the global community.

Cosmopolitanism provides the rationale for individuals and communities to connect to a greater global community. A peace education practice that cultivates this ever-increasing opportunity for community can give rise to independent thinkers capable of embracing a shared humanity as a means of individual and communal transformation. As argued by Torill Strand (2010), cosmopolitanism can be characterized as "globalization from within", signifying global awareness over forced interdependence. Globalization from within draws parallels with Betty Reardon's earlier argument regarding the inclusive nature of cosmopolitanism. Reardon (2011) defined cosmopolitanism as "the value of universal inclusion grounded in respect for human dignity"(p.4). This perspective defines the normative goals of peace education, where subsequent practices are driven by the values of universal human dignity and moral inclusion (ibid).

3.3 THE HOLISTIC NATURE OF THE THREE-SPHERED MODEL

As noted in 3.1, the three spheres are interdependent. The interdependent nature of the model limits divergent meanings and abstract notions of effective practices to continue to limit the field of peace education. For example, the moral agency of students and teachers to respond to our global community is informed by cosmopolitan norms. In order to develop the capacity to respond, a constructivist epistemology supported by conscientization must be provided to negate a learning process rooted in the banking model of education.

This interdependence of the spheres addresses the lack of understanding on how to effectively design, adopt, implement, and assess peace educations practices, which have limited the adoption of the field by educators. Moreover, a clear definition of peace education and the goals it seeks to realize is absent. In Ian Harris and Mary Lee Morrison's (2013) seminal work on the field, *Peace Education,* they write, "Peace education has as one of its aims to foster the conditions for learning that will enhance the potential for inner transformation. Inner transformation then can point the way to creating the right conditions for building social change"(p.11). Inner transformation, as argued by Harris and Morrison, implies that an individual undertakes a journey in which to adopt a consciousness of peace. A consciousness of peace is, nevertheless, still an abstract concept that lacks an understanding of how to create and implement practices that can support its adoption. The interdependence of the three-sphered model provides peace education with a concrete understanding of the purpose, practices, and underpinnings guiding peace education. An understanding of consciousness will form a pivotal part of this holistic model of the field.

As noted in the literature review, peace education is both a practice and philosophy. The philosophy of peace education is based on assumptions regarding human nature. These assumptions argue that humanity is capable of change. Specifically, this change relates to a transformation of consciousness, rooted in cultural and structural violence to one of positive

peace (Harris and Morrison, 2013). Such a change implies an inward to outward transformation of the individual, based upon new exposures to their social world. One's consciousness can then be open to new perspectives. This understanding of knowledge construction correlates with constructivism. Peace education practices are rooted in the philosophy that students can construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their reality. Due to the fact that students are provided with the initial freedom and autonomy to engage in knowledge construction, teachers create opportunities for students to challenge their consciousness. As Harris and Morrison (2013) note, "a teacher does not ultimately control what a pupil learns. Teachers lay the groundwork for learning, using their skills and knowledge to help their pupils, who may ultimately develop behaviors and attitudes"(p.31). However, while peace education's constructivist epistemology argues that individuals have the ability to transform their consciousness; constructivism does not specify how educational practices can foster outward change through inner transformation. Understanding that peace education practices can enable students to construct their own understanding of consciousness can, nevertheless, provide educators with an epistemological grounding in which to understand them.

Peace education practices are directed at providing students with the freedom to foster inward transformation that can lead to outward social change. Because this change is rooted in a student's independence to act upon their reality, a constructivist epistemology of peace education requires a human agency element. A constructivist epistemology coupled with a critical pedagogy human agency provides students with the ability to act as informed agents.

Critical pedagogy is a transformative educational framework. At the core of this framework is a human agency rooted in an understanding that students have the capacity to critically address the dynamics of their reality and transform them. Critical pedagogical practices, which address the power dynamics that exist within a student's reality, provide the means in which to deconstruct and reconstruct consciousness. This process enables the adoption of Freire's

conscientization. Conscientization is a critical conscious. Peace education practices are directed at enabling a critical understanding of the world. This critical understanding can enable individuals to respond to the oppression and injustice within their reality that they have come to understand. However, such a transformational educational process must be rooted in a normative underpinning, as first addressed in section 3.1.1.

Cosmopolitan norms inform the change that a critical pedagogy and constructivist epistemology provides in the learning environment. Peace education can then be defined as a conscientization of peace. Peace, as noted in section 3.1.3, is more than the mere absence of violence. Peace represents an understanding of self, others, cultures, and the environment. This understanding requires hospitality to ensure the sustainability of peace. This transformative process is informed by cosmopolitan norms that enable students to become diverse, ethically conscious actors. The three-sphered model argues that peace education practices are directed at supporting a change of consciousness at the cognitive, normative, and personal level. These processes can ultimately support social change and growth. Student empowerment, in this sense, implies enabling individuals to develop their own capacities to become critically informed citizens and agents of change (Harris & Morrison, 2013). The interdependence of a cosmopolitan normative, critical human agency, and a constructivist epistemology forms a holistic peace education model, which provides students and practitioners with a means of designing, supporting, and acting upon a critically informed education. to define and redefine our understanding of the local and the global.

3.4 THREE-SPHERED MODEL & INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE

The construction of the three-sphered model of peace education provides the necessary understanding of the field in which to assess intercultural dialogue through videoconference as a viable peace education practice. The components of this intercultural dialogue through

videoconference program, which consist of dialogue, student led engagement, and cooperation are consistent with peace education philosophies, yet the practice as a whole requires greater analysis to determine whether it meets the standards of the three-sphered model. The three-sphered model of peace education informs the development of a conceptual framework in which to observe and assess inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference. This framework will be constructed based on the importance of:

1. Providing an educational environment where students are encouraged to critically address their reality and challenge perspectives,

2. Designing learning activities that are informed by the cosmopolitan norms of equality, justice, and human rights,

3. Providing students with new exposures to the social world,

4. Encouraging students to engage in reflective practices, and

5. Constructing student driven, teacher supported, emancipatory practices.

These peace education benchmarks will enable the construction of appropriate peace education learning objectives and standards. Chapter 4, Research Methodology and Design, will specifically examine how these five benchmarks provide indicators in which to address videoconferencing as a peace education practice. The Youth Talk program's units of study will also be assessed based on these constructs.

The viability of videoconference-based practices within a peace education framework has not been adequately addressed in literature. This lack of research further justifies this project's significance in providing new knowledge to the field. Multimedia tools and social network platforms were described by Elise Boulding (2001) as, "a modern Tower of Babel, where everyone is talking and no one understands". Nevertheless, the face to face contact that videoconference provides could provide a means for teachers and students to assess their local and global contexts. This process has the potential to enable individual and societal transformation across political, economic, and social boundaries through horizontal dialogical

practices. While technology within a peace education framework is not considered by the researcher to be the ultimate solution in addressing cultural and structural violence, it does provide a new avenue of exploration. To counter Boulding's own criticism of multimedia tools, she wrote that, 'the very ability to imagine something different and better than what currently exists is critical for the possibility of social change' (Boulding, 2000, 29).

Peace education practices run contrary to homogeneous educational initiatives. Due to the varied nature of such practices, the three-sphered model is meant to provide an understanding of the field and the justification of subsequent methods. Understanding the viability of intercultural videoconference is vital in both determining whether it can create opportunities for transformative dialogue and in creating concrete understandings of effective peace education practices.

CONCLUSION

This chapter addresses the abstract nature of peace education philosophy and its respective practices. The three-sphered model of peace education provides practitioners and theorists with an understanding of the field of peace education. This understanding is rooted in identifying the epistemological (constructivism), normative (cosmopolitanism), and human agency (critical pedagogy) elements of peace education. Section 3.1 introduces the three elements of the three-sphered model of peace education. The initial examination of each element provides the rationale behind their connection to peace education. Section 3.2 provides the explicit connection between critical pedagogy, constructivism, and cosmopolitanism to peace education. An understanding of this connection enables the author to fashion a concrete model of peace education. Section 3.3 explains the interconnectivity of the three elements in creating a holistic model of peace education. A comprehensive approach to peace education is provided through a combination of critical pedagogy, constructivism, and cosmopolitanism. Finally, section 3.4 explains how the

three-sphered model of peace education equips the researcher with the tools in which to assess inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference as an effective peace education tool. Ultimately, the construction of the three-sphered model of peace education both defines the researcher's understanding of peace education and rationalizes future research findings.

This understanding of peace education validates the research process and justifies the subsequent methodology adopted. The next chapter will consider how the three-sphered model of peace education validates the adoption of the research paradigm and methodology.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design

INTRODUCTION

Previous chapters have addressed the literature review and theoretical framework that drive this research study. In tracing the development of the field of peace education and the theoretical underpinnings of its practice, especially in regard to the specific context of inter-cultural dialogue through video conference, a research methodology and design can be adopted that can most effectively consider the research purpose and questions while taking into account the three-sphered model of peace education. Based on these considerations this chapter will explain why a quantitatively informed qualitative approach to this research is the most effective.

The chapter will begin by introducing the philosophical underpinnings of a quantitatively informed qualitative study through an analysis of the research paradigm, which helps to link the research philosophy to the practice of research (Newby, 2010, p.45). The research paradigm for this research is guided by the Three-Sphered Model of Peace Education in correlation with Gary Anderson and Isaura Barrera's (1995) argument for the adoption of a critical-constructivist paradigm, adapted from Burrell and Morgan's (1979) *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis*. The following section will illustrate the distinct features of a quantitatively informed qualitative study approach to research. This approach will justify the use of subsequent

qualitative methods of research including, individual and group based interviews, observations, and document interrogation, as well as quantitative driven correlational research. The research design, which takes into account the timing of utilizing the various methods behind this quantitatively informed qualitative approach to research, will be the following section. The research design will explain the benefit of using a qualitative dominant, exploratory research design, and how it can enhance the overall study. Finally, the last section will address the reliability and validity in adopting an approach that is a quantitatively informed qualitative approach to research.

4.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Popularized by philosopher Thomas Kuhn (1996/1961) in his work, *The structure of scientific revolutions,* paradigms offer a model that provides an explanation for the ways in which the researcher thinks and act on a given subject. This model shapes the subsequent research methodology, questions, and methods aligning the researcher's philosophical underpinnings with those of others sympathetic to your approach (Newby, 2010, p. 44).

In Burrell and Morgan's (1979/1985) seminal work *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis* they argue, "all social scientists approach their subject via explicit or implicit assumptions about the nature of the social world and the way in which it may be investigated"(p.1). These assumptions relate to four key concepts: ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology. Within these four assumptions Burrell and Morgan offer an essential question in order aid the researcher in the adoption of an appropriate paradigm:

Ontology: Whether the 'reality' to be investigated is external to the individual imposing itself on individual cognition-or the product of individual cognition

Epistemology: What forms of knowledge can be obtained and how can one sort out what is to be regarded as 'true' from what is to be regarded as 'false'?

Human Nature: What is the relationship between human beings and their environment?

Methodology: How does one attempt to investigate and obtain 'knowledge' about the social world (Burrell and Morgan, 1979/1985, pp.-1-2)?

To answer these questions Burrell and Morgan define four sociological paradigms from which subsequent social theories could be developed and analyzed, divided by a horizontal axis that separates assumptions regarding nature in subjective-objective categories and a vertical axis that separates assumptions regarding nature in terms of regulation-radical change categories (Burrell and Morgan, 1979/1985, pp.21-22).

Figure 1: Four Paradigms for the analysis of social theory (Taken from Burrell & Morgan, 1979)
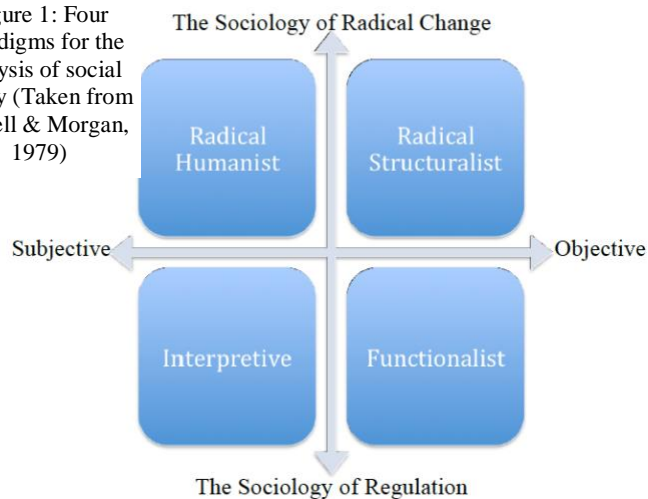
In using Burrell & Morgan's *Four Paradigm Model,* in correlation with the previously developed Three Sphered Model of Peace Education, an Interpretive Paradigm, most associated with a constructivist understanding of reality would be the most appropriate paradigm in which to adopt regarding this research study. The Interpretive paradigm shares a philosophical perspective with constructivism that "sees the social world as an emergent social process which is created by the individuals concerned" (Burrell& Morgan, p. 28). Moreover, in addressing the role inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference might play, a symbolic-interactionism perspective on the role of video conferenced based dialogue aligns itself with an interpretive approach where both begin with a notion that there is no defined knowledge, but rather an individual's experiences and subsequent feelings enable them to interpret their world (Thomas, 2013, 108).

However, the interpretive paradigm falls short in fully addressing the theoretical framework of peace education, and more specifically Paulo Freire's perspective on dialogue and

the acquisition of knowledge within a peace education framework. A Paradigm shift, a process coined by Kuhn (1970) to explain a process by which traditional paradigms give rise to new avenues of thought is needed in order to fully address peace education. Gary Anderson & Isaura Barbera (1995) presented such a paradigm shift with their description of a critical interpretive research paradigm or critical constructivism.

In addressing how special education research tended to be confined to a quantitative, positivist paradigm, Anderson & Isaura argued for the adoption of a new paradigmatic framework which included qualitative paradigms used in other educational fields of research. Using Burrell & Morgan's paradigm matrix, Anderson & Isaura adapted it in order to address special education research. Nevertheless, the work done in this paradigm shift can effectively be applied to peace education research as well. Anderson &
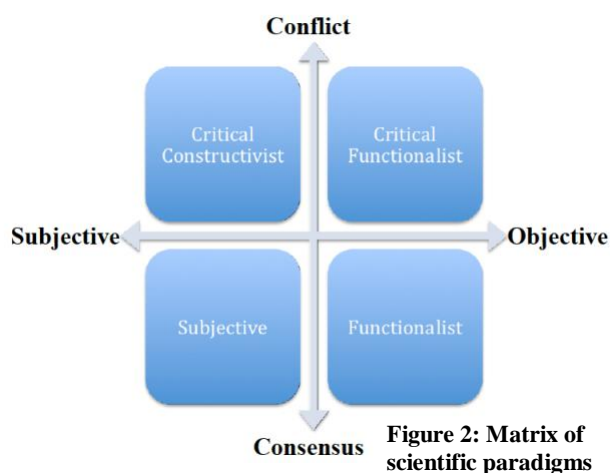
Figure 2: Matrix of scientific paradigms

Isaura's *Matrix of scientific paradigms* maintains the same horizontal axis represented by positivist's perspective on the objective value of reality in contrast with the subjectivist's subjective view that reality is created within the context of social interaction (Anderson & Isaura, 1994, 143). The vertical, however, takes a much different approach from Burrell & Morgan in its paradigm construction. In addressing "basic assumptions about the nature of society" the vertical axis is defined first by its lower axis, marked "consensus". This consensus spectrum is characterized by societal homogeneity, stability, integration and a general consensus that provides unity and cohesion (ibid). In regards to peace education, a consensus view of society would regard peace education initiatives as a means of integration into a greater community.

The opposite end of the vertical spectrum is labeled as conflict, which looks at societal relationships as defined by cultural and structural systems of conflict and power. In terms of peace education, a conflict-based view of society would adopt a critical pedagogical form of instruction, working to address and limit the effect of a 'banking model' of education. The combination of a conflict view of society and a subjective view of reality creates a critical constructivist paradigm. This form of educational research adopts a holistic approach to studying a social phenomenon, such as video-conferenced based dialogue, where attention is given to recognizing that 'outside forces' play an important role in constructing a culture and changing a societal, economic, or power-based dynamic.

A critical ontology requires the researcher to address how students and teachers view themselves, in correlation with addressing how videoconference based dialogue enables individuals to engage in their own self-reflection. Moreover, such an ontological approach necessitates a view that addresses individual collective narratives as opposed to solely group ones. Coupled with a constructivist epistemology that was earlier addressed in the theoretical framework, a critical constructivist paradigm will be used to understand the perspectives of the students, community members, and teachers involved and justify the subsequent methodology deployed. This methodology is defined by the role of a teacher researcher. Joe L. Kincheloe (2003), a chief theorist behind the adoption of a critical constructivist paradigm in educational research, notes, "Critical constructivism argues that the traditional methods of educational science have often reduced our understanding of educational reality". As a teacher conducting research, a tacit, intuitive knowledge guides the researcher throughout the research process in order to see how a socially constructed reality shapes the existence and or change in student consciousness (Kincheloe, 2003, 51-58). The process must thereby be open to change, "as feeling, empathy, the body, are injected into the research process, as the distinction between

knower and known is blurred, as truth is viewed as a process of construction in which knowers play an active role, and passion in injected into inquiry"(ibid).

4.2 QUATITATIVELY INFORMED-QUALITATIVE APPROACH

In order to embrace such a paradigm, a qualitative dominant research approach, which emphasizes the use of rich and subjective data, is essential. This approach will be accurately described as a quantitatively informed qualitative study. However, while a constructivist epistemology rejects the positivist practices of prediction and replication it does embrace a process of triangulation defined by combining methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Denzin, 1978). Triangulation, a by-product of Campbell and Fiske's (1959) concept of "multiple operationism" argues that, "in order to estimate the relative contributions of trait and method variance, more than one trait as well as more than one method must be employed in the validation process" (Campbell & Fiske, 1959, 81). While Flick (2007) contends that qualitative research is intrinsically multi-method in its approach, this process of triangulation primarily dealt with the use of multiple qualitative research methods, rather than the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

However, as the classroom is a dynamic social entity differing between socio-economic, cultural, and geographical positions a dialectical stance towards the adoption of a quantitatively informed qualitative approach enables the researcher to adopt not a single paradigm in which to conduct research but multiple, or in this specific case a hybrid paradigm, critical-constructivism. Joseph Ponterott, Jaya Matthew and Brigid Raughley (2013) contend, "critical researchers employ both quantitative and qualitative methods in establishing a dialectical stance with respect to the researcher-participant relationship that serves to empower the participants"(p.44). In engaging with students, teachers, and community members regarding the phenomenon of inter-cultural dialogue a qualitative approach to research which seeks to understand each participant's

unique experience and interpretation provides a strong interpretation of a given reality, yet as a critical-constructivist paradigm argues, an understanding of how a socially-constructed world can a change a student, teacher, or community's consciousness is essential in conducting thorough research on any given phenomenon. A quantitative component to research enables the researcher to address how inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference can affect quantifiable data, such as student-community engagement.

A quantitatively informed-qualitative study in this study relates to a pragmatic approach of combining quantitative and qualitative methods that seeks to adequately address the research question, which has both quantitative and qualitative lenses, requiring direct engagement with the school community as well as extracted data analysis. The subsequent research questions address this quantitatively informed qualitative approach.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.3.1 QUAL-QUAN

In adopting a quantitatively informed-qualitative approach to research, a variety of stances can be adopted in regards to incorporating several methods. In Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner's (2007) study on defining variants within mixed methods research, they argue, "it makes sense that a researcher might have one primary home (out of the three major homes: qualitative research, mixed research, and quantitative research). Because we argue for a contingency theory of research methodology, however, it also makes sense for the researcher to visit other homes when his or her research can benefit from such a visit (p. 123). The contingency theory of research methodology complements a mixed-methods approach in suggesting that it will help "researchers understand how to combine research components in a way that provides a reasonable opportunity to answer research question(s) and it will require that researchers tailor their designs to unique, and sometimes emergent, research situations" (ibid). However, this

methodology is only quantitatively informed and not purely mixed method in its approach, which requires the inclusion of an adaptable design.

This research is conducted within diverse student and cultural populations that enable the researcher to develop an adaptable research design yet within a defined qualitative quantitative continuum. The type of quantitatively informed qualitative research adopted within this study is a qualitative dominant one (QUAL-quan) as shown through its quantitatively informed-qualitative dominant nature. This design suggests that supplemental quantitative approaches to data collection can benefit the already qualitative driven methodology. As defined by Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007),

" Qualitative dominant mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a qualitative, constructivist-postconstructuralist-critical view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects."
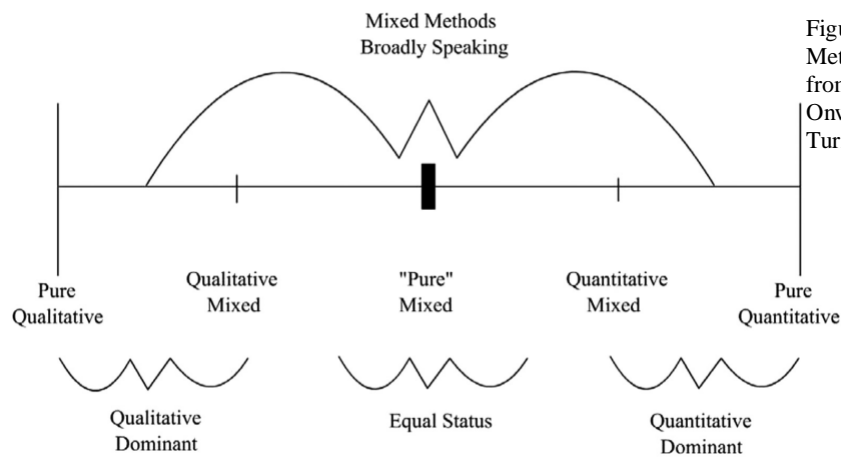
Figure 4: Mixed-Methods Continuum, from Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007.

A QUAL-quan research approach helps to define this quantitatively informed qualitative design, where a dominant qualitative priority is predetermined and planned in correlation with quantitative methods supporting the research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). This level of interaction between qualitative and quantitative strands enables the researcher to pace and implement them in a sequential manner, starting with the collection of qualitative data (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). The point of interface, or the point of strand integration, will take place during interpretation, where mixing occurs during the final step of the research process (ibid). In the final stage of the research process the quantitative data where will be compared with

previously collected qualitative data for a final interpretation.

4.3.2 TRANSFORMATIVE SEQUENTIAL DESIGN

This QUAL-quan design addresses the timing and interaction of qualitative and quantitative data strands. Based on the interplay between these levels of design and the research problem, a typology-based design can be adopted which provides a framework and logic to guide and implement the subsequent research methods in order to ensure that the overall design is persuasive, supportive, and of a high standard (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p. 68).

A transformative sequential design best complements both the Three Sphered Model of peace education and a critical constructivist paradigm in its argument that a researcher conduct research that is directed a enabling change through the empowerment of individuals, communities, or both. As this study adopts a critical pedagogical human agency coupled with a critical constructivist lens, it possesses a 'change-orientated' research perspective, entailing collaboration and empowerment (ibid). Determining whether videoconference based exchanges can enable positive change implies that the researcher is seeking to engage in a transformative educational process, encouraging the adoption of a student-led pedagogical process effectively empowering students, teachers, and community members while providing valuable information to stakeholders on how to sustain or transform the practice.

Adopting change as the primary goal within a research design correlates with Giroux's (1985) notion of the 'transformative intellectual'. A transformative intellectual acts as both a critical researcher and teacher, treating students as active agents while using dialogical methods of teaching and research, as well as seeking to make learning a process where self-understanding and emancipation is possible (Kincheloe, Joe, 2003, p.47).

The weighing, timing, and mixing of data strands are guided by the theoretical framework, research paradigm and research purpose. As this research study design is intended to

foster change in its adoption of a transformative sequential design in correlation with a QUAL-quan driven methodology, subsequent research questions must be designed and implemented in correlation with a sequential design.

4.3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In Tashakkori and Creswell's (2007) study, 'Exploring the Nature of Research Questions in Mixed Methods Research'', the authors note on the difficulty in framing research questions within a mixed method study, yet stress the importance of initially formulating and stating research questions that justify the adoption of a quantitatively informed qualitative approach. While this research study is only quantitatively informed it necessitates a understanding of mixed methods approaches in designing research questions. The structure Tashakkori and Creswell suggests that there exists three ways of writing research questions within a mixed method study:

1. Write separate quantitative and qualitative questions followed by an explicit mixed methods question (or, more specifically, questions about the nature of integration).

2. Write an overarching mixed (hybrid, integrated) research question, later broken down into separate quantitative and qualitative sub-questions to answer in each strand of phase of the study.

3. Write research questions for each phase of a study as the study evolves. If the first phase were a quantitative phase, the question would be framed as a quantitative question or hypothesis. This is found in sequential studies more than in concurrent studies

This study adopts QUAL-quan research within a transformative sequential design. Therefore, Tashakkori and Creswell's (2007) third suggestion of writing research questions in correlation with specific phases of the study correlates with the previously explained research design. Research questions address four phase of inquiry with qualitative research questions appearing throughout the phases and quantitative questions appearing only in the last two phases:

1. What are the critical components in creating and implementing peace education pedagogy with dialogue as its driving force?

2. How can videoconference in the classroom be best implemented?

3. What has been the immediate impact for students, teachers, and communities engaging in videoconference based dialogue and collaboration?

4. What has been the post-program impact for students, teachers, and communities engaging in videoconference based dialogue and collaboration?

The following questions are secondary questions, providing greater detail into the four areas of inquiry

Area of Focus	Question	Qualitative/ Quantitative
Peace Education Pedagogy	1. What are the critical components in creating and implementing a peace education program?	Qualitative
Peace Education Pedagogy	2. How does dialogue drive peace education pedagogy?	Qualitative
Peace Education Pedagogy	3. What are the benefits of student-driven inquiry within a dialogue driven peace education program?	Qualitative
Peace Education Pedagogy	4. How would Paulo Freire address newfound technologies that enable dialogue across concrete and cultural boundaries?	Qualitative
Peace Education Pedagogy	5. Does inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference translate into effective practice and theory in a peace education framework?	Qualitative
Videoconference in the classroom	6. What curriculum based instructional models do current videoconference based programs adopt and how effective have they been?	Qualitative
Videoconference in the classroom	7. How does the videoconference program integrate within greater school curricula and philosophies?	Qualitative

Videoconference in the classroom	8. Does the incorporation of schools into a videoconference program seek the democratization of technology by incorporating schools from various socio-economic groups?	Qualitative
Videoconference in the classroom	9. How are cultural norms/attitudes and language differences addressed in the development of the program?	Qualitative
Videoconference in the classroom	10. In what ways do educators engage in professional development in order to better mediate and encourage dialogue, cooperation, and critical thinking skills?	Qualitative
Videoconference in the classroom	11. How are the collective narratives of students, teachers, and community members addressed within the program?	Qualitative
Videoconference in the classroom	12. How is a student-led pedagogy implemented within the classroom and how effective is its implementation?	Qualitative
Immediate Impact	13. What has been the program's impact on students when comparing pre-program data with post-program data?	QUAL-quan
Immediate Impact	14. Has the program created in students a behavioral change, regarding a disposition towards: critical thinking, understanding, empathy, trust, and peace? Is such a change similar across all cultures involved in the program?	Qualitative
Immediate Impact	15. Has the program resulted in action taken by students towards civic engagement and or peace building?	QUAL-quan
Post-Program Impact	16. Have students engaged in dialogue and action beyond the program's activities?	QUAL-quan
Post-Program Impact	17. What has been the long-term impact on alumni, regarding the development of their own consciousness of peace (career, service, attitudes)? Were students affected by the learning and did it have both implicit and explicit learning?	Qualitative

Post-Program Impact	18. Has the school and greater community undergone a positive change since the implementation of the program?	QUAL-quan

4.4 RESEARCH METHODS & EVALUATION

4.4.1 METHODS

As suggested in section 4.2, 'Quantitatively Informed-Qualitiative Approach' to research, the research questions have both qualitative and quantitative lenses that support the overall study. In order to better understand and address the processes and effects that a videoconference based inter-cultural dialogue program may have, this study makes use of qualitative approaches in regards to case study research, passive observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. Quantitative methods involve the analysis and synthesis of data through extraction. Data sets include GNG constructed student surveys. In the following subsections the respective strengths and weaknesses of these methods will be explained with particular attention given to how they correlate with research at hand.

4.4.2 CASE STUDY-ACTION RESEARCH

Case study-action research was chosen as the most appropriate means of conducting QUAL-quan research in this study. The emphasis in case study research on focusing on phenomena in its

natural setting correlates with the research purpose. Conducting observations, interviews, and focus groups in schools, where the actually learning activity is taking place, in addition to addressing how such a program has affected the greater school community allows the researcher to conduct multiple data collection methods in order to justify later findings. In addition, Benbasat, Goldstein, and Mead (1987) suggests that case study research allows the research to more adequately understand the nature of practices under investigation and "complement research that is being conducted in an area where few, it any, previous studies have been undertaken"(p.46).

Regarding action research, this study contends that the two methodologies can complement the research design. In seeking to understand the practical application of a Three Sphered Model of peace education in correlation with assessing inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference, this research is change orientated. By actively engaging with students, teachers, and community members the researcher is engaging with "with participants in a collaborative process of critical inquiry into problems of social practice in a learning context" (Argyris, 1985, 237). The researcher therefore acts as participant and consultant, gaining valuable insight from participants in order to improve the existing program.

4.4.2.1 SAMPLE SIZE

In order to effectively evaluate the Youth Talk program, the "purposeful selection" of a varied school sampling is critical. Maxwell (2013) argues then when selecting site and participants within a research study, "particular settings, persons, or activities can be selected deliberately to provide information that is particularly relevant to your questions and goals" (97). The Youth Talk program works with private, public, religious and government schools across the United States and MENA region. The random sampling of all of these schools would not guarantee adequate representatives of these diverse geographic and school settings. Random sampling could

also garner results from a unique subset of the Youth Talk participants rather than adequately represent the entire range of schools participating in the program. Three pairings, consisting of six total schools, totaling 144 students was determined to be an adequate data set in which to draw conclusions on the impact of intercultural dialogue through videoconference. Bronx Academy of Letters in New York, Berkshire School in Massachusetts, and Edwardsburg High School in Michigan represent varied socio-economic communities and diverse student populations in the United States. The schools in the MENA region are no different. A co-ed public school in Tunisia running a English Language intensive program, a co-ed private school in Bahrain, and an all-boys public school in Jordan, supported by a joint Western-Jordanian initiative, are unique vantage points into the varied educational frameworks that make up the MENA region. In partnership with GNG, school selection was also based on whether the school and teacher supported the mission of this research project and were given permission to engage by school and state officials. Examining the implementation of a videoconference based peace education program within the context of complex U.S.-MENA relationships, in a variety of educational frameworks ultimately reveals the changing dynamic of educational models and international relations for which peace education can adequately address. This qualitative sampling strategy is known as stratified purposeful sampling where the diverse characteristics the subgroups participating in Youth Talk (type of school and location). The purpose of this strategy is to address significant disparities in data, while taking in consideration common themes that will emerge (Creswell, 1998).

In addition, upon commencing data collection in the MENA the opportunity presented itself to conduct further post-program data collection with two other Jordanian institutions. Due to complications in data collection with Ajloun, which will be addressed in chapter 7, the researcher determined to supplement data with the Salt School AMIDEAST Access Program and the Ruwwad Community Center in Amman. Eight additional IVCs were reviewed and coded,

informing the face-to-face focus group and compared to the three other pairings. This addition enabled the research project to reach saturation where

The adoption of several means of qualitative data collection provides the researcher with a strong sampling that achieves saturation and reaches redundancy. The additional quantitative data also provides greater credibility to the qualitative data, which will addressed in addressed in 4.4.6.

4.4.3 DESCRIPTIVE OBSERVATIONS

In conducting descriptive observations within a case study-action research methodology the research attempts to understand educational practices, student and teacher behavior patterns juxtaposed program design and implementation. These observations will be passive, enabling the researcher to become an informed participant in other research methods. Subsequent interviews and focus groups will be conducted to address the researcher's recorded observations.

Tan and Hall (2007) suggest that engaging in descriptive observations during the early stages of data collection allows the researcher to be open to everything that is going on, taking nothing for granted in an effort to learn the context, structures, actors, and actions involved (p.601). Engaging in initial descriptive observations enables the researcher to transition into more focused research methods, where interviews will help "determine meaning associated with symbols and to concentrate on emerging themes", a primary focus of symbolic interactionists research (Tan and Hall, 2007, 602).

4.4.4 SEMI-STRUCTURED INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews are designed to have a series of interviewer questions prepared in advance. However, while these questions provide a structure during the interview process, they "are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be

planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful and theorized way"(Wengraf, 2001, 5). As the research study will also be conducted across virtual locations and on-site visits, a semi-structured interview method provides the greatest means of ensuring cross-case comparability.

Interviews will be conducted with teachers/school administrators at two different intervals; pre-program and post program. The lengths of these interviews will be between thirty minutes and one hour and will take place in naturalistic settings, including the classrooms, workspaces, and homes of the stakeholders.

4.4.5 GROUP (CLASS) FOCUS GROUPS

The purpose of conducting group interviews involving an entire class of students participating in the program is based on the following:

1. Determining how the group behaves in response to the learning activity

2. Compare the group dynamic with the individual interview results

3. Actively engage with student stakeholders as a facilitator to embrace a critical constructivist paradigm

4. Address the possibility of a 'risky shift phenomenon'. Engaging with the group might elicit a more 'honest' opinion of the given situation, based on Gary Thomas' (2013) suggestion of 'safety in numbers' within group interviews.

Nevertheless, socially acceptable opinions are often the most prevalent to emerge within focus group settings. The dynamics that exist within a classroom require the researcher to address this limitation and the possibility that individual students will dominate the focus group. However, such limitations can also provide possibilities for further understanding. Myers (1998) argues, "the constraints on such talk do not invalidate focus group findings; in fact, it is these constraints that make them practicable and interpretable" (107).

4.4.6 DATA EXTRACTION FROM QUANTITATIVE STATISTICS

Quantitative data analysis will take place following the collection of qualitative data from observations, individual interviews, and group interviews. Extraction will come from Global Nomads Group's led student questionnaires conducted pre and post program. These figures will be analyzed to be better generalize initial qualitative results through inferential statistics.

4.4.7 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Individual and group interviews are designed based on Wengraf's (2011) methods of analysis. A top down progression beginning with the Research Purposes (RP) will lead "to the formulation of a Central Research Question (CRQ) to a number of derived Theory-Questions (TQs) that spelled out the CRQ, and then from each TQ to a number of Interview-Questions (IQs)" (Wengraf, 224).

The method of analyzing the interview data will reverse the interview design process, adopting a bottom up approach. Following the transcription of interview material (IM), answers to theory questions (ATQ) will provide a unified answer to the central research question (ACRQ) (ibid). An analysis of quantitative data will provide supportive material for the ACRQ.

Chapter 5 will address past and present peace education programs in order to adequately construct IQs. A comprehensive peace education framework will provide the researcher with a point of reference in which to effectively address IM and construct a holistic ACRQ.

CONCLUSION

The research methodology and design chapter introduces the critical-constructivist paradigm, which provides a model for the ways and means the researcher thinks and will subsequently act on the research problem. This paradigm aligns itself with a mixed-methods approach to research in addressing the dynamic and diverse nature of conducting research in an educational setting. In adopting a QUAL-quan approach within a transformative sequential design, research methods are implemented in an organized and supportive manner to the research questions and the change

orientated philosophical approach. The rationale for the adoption of case study-action research, in parallel with semi-structured and group interviews is defined and specified in regards to Wengraf's (2011) methods of analysis. Finally, the use of quantitative data extraction within this approach is articulated in how it supports the qualitative material in answering the central research question.

Chapter 5: Assessing the Peace Education Framework

INTRODUCTION

The ACRQ requires the researcher to address past and present peace education programs in order to construct an effective frame of reference in assessing the Youth Talk Program, under the guidance of the three-sphered model. The methodology stipulated in Chapter 4 provides the researcher with the structure to create a framework to create and assess IQs and the IVCs. This subsequent framework is a visual representation of the three-sphered model through a curricular framework.

In order to develop a multimedia based peace education program framework, in light of the teachings of the four previously mentioned peace educators, a primary emphasis must be placed on creating a student-centered pedagogical approach. In order to empower students not only as the learners but also as teachers, a critical approach to peace education, preventing a "one-size-fits all approach that can only enhance the gap between the elites and rest"(Zembylas & Bekerman, 2013, p.203), is an important starting point.

Zembylas and Bekerman (2013) note that in adopting a critical approach to peace education, four elements should be adopted, which would enable the parties involved to engage in an individualized approach to peace education. These elements are: reinstating the materiality of 'things' and practices, reontologizing research and practice in peace education, becoming 'critical experts of design', and engaging in critical cultural analysis (Ibid). The Three Sphered

Model understands that an individual's interaction with the world dictates their understanding of it. Subsequently, enabling students to deconstruct and construct their own educational processes is essential in enabling them to critically examine the structures and beliefs that dictate their interaction with their reality. The four elements that Zembylas and Bekerman (2013) note are rooted in two philosophical approaches: post-positivist realism (Moya and Hames-Garcia 2000) and critical realism (Bhaskar 1989, 2002). Both theories inform the construction of the Three Sphered Model in their emphasis on the importance of individual and collective narrative in systemic change. Both theories argue that our knowledge and participation of and with the world is "socially and conceptually mediated; therefore, it is important to examine critically the concepts we use to understand the world" (Zembylas & Bekerman, 2013, p.204). Subsequently, words such as peace and violence cannot be considered to have universally adopted meanings, and attention should be paid in addressing the historical and cultural factors that have molded an individual's or community's reality or the details or the materiality of 'things'. In doing some, one can understand how the world is assembled. Moreover, as Beckerman, Zembylas, and McGlynn (2009) argue, "young students seem to have different understandings of the world when compared to their teachers". Engaging in dialogue with students is pivotal in addressing what they actually think and do in designing an appropriate peace education program rather than assuming, based on the students' perceived stage of development, thereby reontologizing research.

This approach requires students and teachers to be critical of the world around them and how the world has shaped their individual views. More specifically, as noted in Chapter 3 Beckerman and Zembylas (2013) claim that "if students and teachers are to become critical experts of design, they need to engage in an in-depth interrogation of two elements- 'context' and practice' (p.207). As noted in Chapter 3, critical pedagogy directly opposes the banking model of education and serves as the liberating force Freire calls for, while also adopting the mutually

empowering teacher-student relationship through honest action and honest dialogue that Montessori, Galtung, Boulding, and Reardon have called for.

The most important criteria in adopting the critical peace education model that Zembylas and Bekerman (2013) call for requires a critical cultural analysis through educational practices directed at questioning. Questions pertaining to the acquisition of power, dependency, societal norms, and rights are among the many that require honest dialogue. The process has the potential to be a liberating force in education as students and teachers address their own biases in relation to their own cultural development allowing for improved social interaction. Questioning within a critical pedagogical approach is not a critique, but rather a means in which to enable and foster "cultural awareness of one's position in society and to aid learners' in pursuit of constructive meaning making and action to change their societal position" (Jenkins, 2013, 182).

There are several themes from which a peace education program can be derived. Burns and Aspeslagh (1996) characterized these themes into five domains of possible study: 1. The international system, 2. Peace, 3. Development, 4. Human rights, and 5. The Environment. Within these domains teachers and students work to gain an understanding of the root causes of violence and conflicts, human rights, sustainability, and appropriate peacebuilding skills, amongst others. In order to develop a critical pedagogy, however, simply addressing the root cause of conflict and developing important peace skills, while positive educational practices, do not suffice in enabling a consciousness of peace. If the goal of all peace education programs is to end violence, promote understanding, acknowledge human dignity and rights, and enable empathy, then a framework can be developed to create and asses all peace education programs, despite the necessity of creating unique and culturally specific programs in order to avoid a one-sized approach. This chapter outlines the creation of such a framework for developing peace education programs, informed by the three-sphered model and centered on a student-centered pedagogy using dialogue as the primary educational tool. Past and present peace education

programs will be addressed and integrated into a comprehensive framework. This framework will enable the researcher to address the Youth Talk Program through the construction of specific focus group questions and coding methods.

5.1 Developing A Critical Pedagogy Framework

Betty Reardon's Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility (1988) has been an influential text in the development of all peace education programs since its publication. However, as Tony Jenkins (2013) notes, few models of peace education have emerged since, due in part to Reardon's challenging call for human transformation through a comprehensive peace education framework.

> Comprehensive peace education connotes a generalized approach to education for global responsibility in a planetary nuclear age; it operates at all levels and in all spheres of learning, includes all fields of relevant knowledge, and is a lifelong, continuous process. Although its general purpose can be described as education for peace as a transformed global social order, the learning entailed in acquiring the skills and arts of peacemaking is far more than education about peace. Given the breadth of the purposes of the field and the far-reaching character of the recommended content, I would argue that comprehensive peace education should be the fundamental framework for most social learning, and certainly for all formal education. In short, the basic direction for educational development should be toward embracing the possibilities of the human transformation that is both urgently needed and possible (Reardon, 1988, 74).

The goal of human transformation is at the heart of this framework, which subsequently calls for a critical approach to peace education as it questions a participant's relationship to the world around them. Reardon's framework influenced the later developments of the National Peace Academy (NPA) in the United States' peace education framework, The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century: A Vehicle for Peace Education, co-authored by Reardon in 1999, the Education for Peace Programs (EFP) created by the International Education for Peace Institute, and the frameworks of the United Nations University for Peace (UPEACE) and the other universities who have adopted some study of peace education. Many of the philosophies and frameworks adopted by these initiatives will be incorporated into this integrative critical

approach, as they also reflect aspects of the normative, epistemological, and human agency argued for in the three-sphered model.

5.2 Student-Centered Approach

The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century (1999) argues that students in today's schools should be prepared to take an active role in the development of peace education and their processes. Subsequently, a peace education framework must be designed to encourage student involvement, inquiry, and adaptation based on the specific population's experiences and biases. This framework is not therefore an academic field of study, but rather an action plan for educating students and teachers to enable the creation and sustainability of a consciousness of peace. This action plan is supported by critical pedagogy's call for students to take further action in their individual realities and greater communities, thereby, defining this plan as a emancipatory in design.

The Hague Agenda also calls for a similar plan of action in order to make a cultural transformation possible. In doing so Reardon and her colleagues adopted a conceptual framework which argues that violence is the greatest obstacle in achieving a culture of peace. Using this belief as a foundation, they developed The Learning to Abolish War Model (Ibid) which is comprised of four conceptual strands: "The Root Causes of War/Culture of Peace"; "International and Humanitarian and Human Rights Law and Institutions"; "Prevention, Resolution, and Transformation of Violent Conflict"; and Disarmament and Human Security."

These conceptual strands call for a reevaluation for what inhibits a culture of peace from becoming a reality through an analysis of human rights, gender inequities, and power structures throughout society, amongst others. However, while this framework will be influential in the researcher's subsequent peace education framework, it does not adopt a critical approach towards peace education in addressing a student and teacher's historical and social biases. Therefore, prior

to developing conceptual strands in which to carry out a peace education program, a Living Systems Model of Peace Education must first be addressed.

The Living Systems Model, developed by Burns and Aspeslagh (1996) argued, as noted earlier, that Peace Education should include five domains, which when addressed, "should look at different levels of human existence, including the personal, community, national, regional, structural, cultural, and global"(Figure 2). Students who undertake an evaluation of the specific challenges facing their communities and themselves and reflect on the subsequent biases that they have formed "will understand peace and violence on a deeper and more substantive level" (Kester, 2008, 16). Dialogue will then be an honest exchange enabling cultural understanding and empathy due to an initial critical self-reflection. This critical self-reflection allows for greater student learning as opposed to focusing on teacher practices, i.e. teacher centered pedagogy. Bunting's (1984 & 1985) analysis of teaching strategies defends this pedagogical approach where she argues that in adopting a student-centered pedagogical approach, students and teachers create a free environment to discuss their feelings and experiences. Moreover, in adopting a critical pedagogical approach not only is it critical to address student beliefs, experiences, and their subsequent biases, the same must be done for teachers. Addressing teacher held beliefs prior to any educational practice allows educators to evaluate how biases can influence their practices that in turn influence student learning. Students and teachers can then focus on creating a partnership in the classroom, where the greatest area of attention is given to student learning through autonomous practices rather than teacher practices such as teacher led curriculum design. Toh Wah Seng (2003) argues,

> The need for teachers to shift towards a student-centered paradigm has become more urgent given the recent emphasis on generic and thinking skills in the curriculum. The importance of these skills cannot be underestimated. The argument is that the advent of globalisation and the blistering pace of technological advancement in ICT has made these skills essential if one is to survive and remain competitive in a fast-changing world. There is therefore a need for teachers to reassess their positions, examine their educational beliefs about teaching and learning, and

embark on an appropriate course of action towards a student-centered pedagogy that enables students to acquire these skills (Wah Seng, 2003)

Within a peace education philosophy Toh Wah Seng' argument falls short of addressing the need for a student-centered approach. A peace education format is best implemented when competition takes a back seat to cooperation. Based on the ever-growing impact of globalization trends and technological advancements, it is necessary to foster cultural understanding in order to develop intercultural bonds of cooperation rather than encourage isolationism through competition.

5.3 Curriculum Scope and Sequence

A curriculum's scope and sequences provides an overview of the content to be learned and experienced. Within this guide the curriculum framework is divided into four units of study spanning an intended school year, with one driving question uniting the entire curriculum. These four modules provide the sequencing of the peace education program where student and teacher reflection is giving initial consideration prior to engaging in any inter-cultural exchange. Within each individual module are specific guiding questions, actions, and teacher and student roles and responsibilities. The guiding questions are intended to drive instruction where teachers and students consistently reflect the learning process within each module. The guiding questions relate directly to notions of the student-centered approach argued for in the critical pedagogical human agency of the three-sphered model. Actions pertain to the means of learning for both students and teachers, in order to address the guiding question. In constructing the modules the actions pertain to building blocks of understanding and self-reflection. For instance, students and teachers partake in consistent self-reflection during Module 1 in order to more effectively participate in community outreach in Module 2, which can then lead to effective inter-cultural engagement in Module 3. The student and teacher roles and responsibilities provide specific details on how best encourage horizontal learning in mutually beneficial learning environment.

This component of the scope and sequence eliminates a banking model of education platform enabling co-ownership of the pro

gram's success.

The one facet that is missing from the Scope and Sequence is a greater understanding of the scope of the curriculum, where teachers and students are given guidance as to what amount of time should be devoted to each module, e.g., a month, term, or year. This peace education framework purpose is meant to aid in the development, implementation, and assessment of individual programs that use inter-cultural dialogue as the primary educational tool. Subsequently, these modules can be adapted to fit any timeframe the program developers see best. Moreover, as the three-sphered model encourages students to view informed action as a part of a learning process, adopting a student-centered, critical pedagogical approach to learning to curricular development is essential. Process learning, as outlined in Chapter 3, enables students to be risk takers in the design, implementation and assessment of their own learning.

	Module 1: Student Teacher Reflection	Module 2: Community Reflection and Action	Module 3: Inter-Cultural Engagement	Module 4: Global Partnerships ✧ Long-term module
Driving Question	**"How can Inter-cultural dialogue promote the adoption of a consciousness of peace?"**			
Guiding Question	How does student and teacher reflection regarding their experiences, beliefs, and biases improve student growth?	How can student and teacher reflection impact community growth and encourage cultural empathy?	How can intercultural dialogue enable understanding, empathy, and action?	How can sustained peace education practices based on intercultural dialogue enable long-term positive action and partnerships?

	Module 1: Student Teacher Reflection	Module 2: Community Reflection and Action	Module 3: Inter-Cultural Engagement	Module 4: Global Partnerships ✧ Long-term module
Actions	1. Horizontal Learning 2. Student Self-Reflection, Journals, Guiding Questions, Feedback, Community initiatives, Student led discussion groups 3. Teacher Self Reflection, Guiding Questions, Support community involvement, Request student surveys	1. Address community held biases which have influenced student beliefs and practices 2. Participate in community outreach where honest dialogue between all members regarding intercultural engagement is addressed	1. Honest dialogue with intercultural partner 2. Collaborative and Cooperative projects 3. Teacher exchange	1. Turn reflection into student action, i.e. civic engagement 2. Maintain intercultural bonds with consistent dialogue outside of classroom activities 3. Extended teacher-teacher exchange with curriculum development
Student Roles and Responsibilities	1. Facilitate a safe environment through non-judgmental actions 2. Honesty 3. Encourage student-teacher & student-student exchange 4. Lead community reflection initiatives 5. Design and implement discussion based lesson plan topics 6. Participate in classroom exercises and assessments based on reflective activities	1. Design and implement community engagement through honest dialogue 2. Discuss module units with the community to ascertain community biases	1. Consistently reflect on your own and your cross-curricular partners' exchanges. 2. Facilitate a safe environment through non-judgmental action	1. Foster bonds with intercultural partner 2. Engage in action to generate greater understanding and empathy for yourself and your community

	Module 1: Student Teacher Reflection	Module 2: Community Reflection and Action	Module 3: Inter-Cultural Engagement	Module 4: Global Partnerships ✦ Long-term module
Teacher Roles and Responsibilities	1. Promoting honesty, diversity, and equality in the classroom 2. Empower students through inclusivity 3. Creating a safe environment where students are encouraged and supported to share their experiences and beliefs 4. Allow students to lead discussions and reflective activities 5. Collect and act on student feedback	1. Mediate between students and community members 2. Support students in their community outreach 3. Maintain consistent dialogue between students, and community members through frequent program updates	1. Facilitate rather than lead student exchange 2. Co-produce cooperative and collaborative projects with students. 3. Cooperate and share resources, lesson plans, assessments, and program finds with intercultural partner	1. Provide students with the freedom to change the curriculum, informed by the nature of the partnership 2. Encourage students to continue to foster intercultural bonds outside of classroom projects 3. Maintain relationships with cross-curricular school to foster future exchanges

5.4 Program Benchmarks

Educational benchmarks are standards that students, teachers, and the community are expected to achieve and be assessed on following the completion of each module. Any peace education program should seek to include the greater school community in its inception. Subsequently, student, teacher, and community understanding should be measured throughout a program.

By the end of Module 1:	By the end of Module 2:	By the end of Module 3	By the end of Module 4 ◆ Long-term module
A. Identify how experiences have shaped your own beliefs	A. Students: Analyze community perspectives and their	A. Reflect on the beliefs and practices of the intercultural partner	A. Develop intercultural understanding through sustained

B. Reflect on your own idea of right and wrong, peace and violence, anger and compassion, gender, friendship, love, religion, politics, human rights, rich and poor, and power C. Interpret the relationship between your beliefs and actions D. Describe how your beliefs and biases might add or inhibit to creating a consciousness of peace Identify and address those beliefs and biases in order to foster awareness	subsequent actions B. Students: Explain the role communities play in shaping their citizens C. Community: Reflect on how beliefs have shaped the community and specifically your children Community: Identify and address those beliefs and biases in order to support the work of intercultural exchange	B. Identify points of agreement C. Identify points of disagreement and how to foster better relationships from it D. Interpret the relationship between each others beliefs and subsequent actions E. Identify areas for collaboration F. Engage in critical thinking G. Address areas where reflection can manifest into action Exhibit intercultural understanding	relationship building B. Comprehend the impact of global citizenship C. Identify personal and external biases D. Draw conclusions, make inferences, and determine meaning based on cultural awareness E. Understand exchanges between intercultural exchanges

5.5 Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Students will be able to accomplish the following objectives at the completion of the program. It is critical that students and teachers understand what is expected of them within any educational framework. While students and teachers should discuss program objectives daily, for program effectiveness, the overall objectives and expected outcomes of the program should be discussed and addressed just as frequently. Learning objectives thereby address the instructional content to learned, practiced, and assessed. In contrast to learning outcomes, objectives provide smaller units of measurable learning. Learning outcomes address what students will be able to as a result of the entire program. Each outcome is a statement of student learning and can pertain to what a

student will know and or be able to do. Outcomes relate to the normative approach in the three-sphered model, where notions of a shared humanity permeate throughout its design. For instance, initial outcomes argue that the personal awareness of one's beliefs and experiences can provide individuals with a greater understanding of their own biases, enabling greater personal and cultural awareness.

Program Goal: Foster Personal and Cultural Awareness and a Consciousness of Peace	
Learning Objectives	Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to (SWBAT): Identify and discuss one's beliefs and experiences Identify the qualities of effective partnerships Understand cultures, practices, and their history and how they are interrelated Understand the difference between negative peace and positive peace Identify and explain incidences of structural violence Identify the consequences of gender inequality, racial injustice, discrimination Define human rights and international humanitarian law	Greater personal awareness of one's beliefs and experiences have shaped their biases Design and organize actions which correlate with personal and cultural awareness Recall, define, and address examples of structural violence Practice intercultural exchange Increased student empowerment through intercultural engagement and personal reflection Ability to understand and address conflict from a multitude of perspectives Increased public speaking and critical thinking skills Develop cooperative team-building skills

5.6 Educational Standards

Johnson and Johnson (2000) argue that a compulsory public education system is essential for the development of a peace education program. However, in focusing solely on developing peace education in a public school setting one is overlooking a larger percentage of the targeted population who attend private or parochial schools. Students who attend such schools are not sheltered from personal and external conflicts, nor are they above engaging in inter-cultural dialogue. Therefore, it is important that in developing a peace education program it can be

aligned with multiple internationally accepted educational standards rather than just public school systems. A program can thereby be incorporated within an independent or private school curriculum. Global Nomads Group (GNG) and Bridges of Understanding that engage in inter-cultural exchange via videoconference have done just that. The "Youth Talk Program", developed by GNG and Bridges for Understanding, has aligned their curricula with "Common Core State Standards and 21st century skills through their emphasis on student-led inquiry, project-based learning, intercultural collaboration, along with media and technological literacy. Specifically, the educational impact of GNG's Youth Talk is aligned with the following national educational skills and standards"(Youth Talk Curricula, 2012-2013)

5.7 Developing Units of Study

In order for teachers, students, and community leaders to develop cultural specific units of study within this peace education framework emphasis must be given on how to develop peacebuilding competencies within the classroom. Five essential peacebuilding competencies developed by the NPA and influenced by Reardon's (1999) Hague Appeal for Peace provide a formulaic structure for enabling the necessary conditions for the creation of a consciousness of peace to materialize. The five competencies; analysis, responsiveness, prevention, envisioning, and transformation, however focus on addressing peacebuilding primarily within a period of direct violence, as external conflict is given primary concern over the underlying prejudices and biases that enable structural violence. Therefore, the subsequent competencies will be addressed so that educators can implement units of study in areas of direct violence, structural violence, or intercultural exchange.

5.8 Assessments

There is a dire need within the field of peace education for assessment. This assessment must address the growing number of peace education programs conducted around the world, isolated from the greater field of study. Moreover, for the future of the field validation of effective

interventions is necessary to, as Harris (2013) argues, "establish a casual link between the reduction of violence and the specific instruction provided by peace educators". Such assessment must take place on two levels within a program; 1) to assess student learning within a given program and 2) to assess program effectiveness in relation to benchmark acquisition. More specifically, the first level of assessment must take place at multiple times during a program, while the 2nd level is an ongoing approach addressing the effectiveness of the program at its culmination and on student and teacher growth for years to come. Moreover, the first level of assessments correlate with whether a constructivist epistemology is being adopted throughout, while the second level addresses normative growth both during and after program/practice.

The first level of assessment, student learning, must take place within the first three modules of the curriculum scope and sequence. It is the responsibility of the teacher to address student growth regarding cultural understanding, addressing personal biases, community outreach, and collaboration. An ideal peace education platform based on horizontal learning, and adopting Freire's concept of teacher and student being co-educators, also bears the responsibility of the student to address teacher growth and practice in the same areas. A peace education program spanning six months, a year, or 4 years must be addressed at three different points.

Elise Boulding (1996) proposed that NGOs adopt a new means of partnering with their targeted populations in the future. This proposal aimed at developing true relationships with those citizens they work with, rather than creating a state defined through domination by the 'have' nations and organizations over the 'have-nots', or dependency (Noah & Epstein, p.165). A similar approach is adopted within this peace education framework in which to address student and teacher learning. Based on Boulding's framework for NGO work, students and teachers need to assess three different modes within the program: 1) listening mode, 2) learning mode, 3) partnering mode.

These three modes of assessment correlate with the three previously noted modules; 1) Student Teacher Reflection, 2) Community Reflection and Action, and 3) Intercultural Engagement. Within this pedagogical approach, assessments steer away from the present educational approach embracing testing. In addressing how to adopt a pedagogy of peace, H. Svi Shapiro (2010, 180) argues that in adopting a 'culture of testing', educational practices, primarily in the United States, have pushed aside imagination, critical thinking, creativity, and curiosity in the classroom.

These qualities are critical in addressing cultural biases and actions, engaging in intercultural cooperation and envisioning a future of peace, all benchmarks within this framework. Therefore, assessment, within a peace education framework, should be shaped around dialogue and cooperation.

The second level of assessment, long-term effectiveness, which correlates with Module 4 of the Scope and Sequence, global partnerships requires long term assessment of the program's practices and student and teacher reflections. While this assessment has no direct bearing on a student's academic record it enables student empowerment through ongoing reflection and partnership. Assessment, thereby, is based again on dialogue between teachers, students, and school administration, pertaining to student and teacher opinions on program effectiveness, current civic involvement by former students, and suggestions for program growth. This final state of assessment is the final step in the learner-centered pedagogical process, where Jenkins (2013, 181) argues that such a process "invites learners to engage in modes of critical thinking and self-reflection that are necessary for internalizing the principles and process of peace. It also capacities learners to pose critical queries and questions that may lead to new understanding and possible solutions to personal, interpersonal, social, economic, political and environmental problems for which no answers currently exist".

	Mode of Assessment	Means of Assessment (examples)
Module 1: Student Teacher Reflection	**Listening:** Assessment is based on honest reflection of personal and cultural biases/beliefs	1. Pre and Post Module questionnaire pertaining to biases and beliefs 2. Class Discussion & Debate activities 3. KWL Exercises 4. Student Journaling 5. Historical & Cultural Research and Analysis
Module 2: Community Reflection and Action	**Learning**: Assessment is based on putting new found reflections into effective practice	1. Creative Arts: Expression of reflection through art, creative writing, drama, music, video 2. Civic Involvement (volunteering)
Module 3: Intercultural Engagement	**Partnering:** Assessment is based on engaging intercultural partnerships	1. Intercultural Dialogue 2. Collaborative Project: Focus is on envisioning a better future

5.9 Implementing Videoconference

One perspective of the theory of symbolic interactionism is the contact hypothesis, which argues that contact, under optimal conditions, can reduce direct and indirect conflict (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000). Implementing the contact hypothesis was initially conducted to assess the cognitive impact of contact on participants in conflict (Niens and Cairns 2009). However, Pettigrew and Tropp (2000) argue that contact can be effective in addressing the affective processes, primarily apathy. Moreover, there is evidence that intergroup anxiety, when engaging in consistent contact, has been reduced (Islam and Hewstone, 1993). Nevertheless, under the contact hypothesis contact must be in a controlled setting, where contact does not take place at a superficial level, but where issues pertinent to an ongoing or post conflict, as well as cultural, economic, and political opinions are addressed (Cairns, Gallagher, & Dunn, 1992).

The originator of the contact hypothesis, Gordon Allport (1954) argues that effective contact can only occur under four conditions:

- Equal Status among the groups who meet

- Contact that does take place should involve cooperation between the groups leading to common goals

- Social Competition should be avoided

- The contact situation should be legitimized through institutional support.

Therefore, such conditions stipulated by the contact hypothesis draw into the question the utilization of videoconference. These questions primarily relate to the distance between participants, which could result in superficial interactions and technology, which could not always be equal in capacity ad ability. However, if videoconference is implemented through the auspices of peace education, then the cognitive impact could legitimize as it as a critical dialogical practice, as defined by peace education.

Betty Reardon, The National Peace Academy, Paulo Freire, Johan Galtung, Maria Montessori, and Elise Boulding argue that dialogue is essential in enabling a consciousness of peace to be fermented. Dialogue, a means of contact between parties in direct, structural, or zero violence can be best utilized within a controlled setting, which a school utilizing an effective peace education framework to implement a culturally unique program can provide.

The above peace education framework provides the four conditions that Allport (1954) calls for where students and teachers engage in horizontal curriculum design for intercultural exchange and teambuilding practices that emphasize cooperation over competition. However, in order to maximize contact, students from various locations and cultural backgrounds cannot engage in consistent physical exchange based on the logistic and financial circumstances involved. Videoconference based exchanges within the above noted peace education framework could provide the necessary contact and dialogue to enable intercultural relationships. While this practice would not intend to supplant face to face contact but rather be a means in which to

overcome political, social, and economic boundaries which limit consistent face to fact interactions. Videoconference would thereby create initial steps towards dialogue that could lead to mutual trust and future face to face interactions. Parties involved, after first addressing much needed personal reflection, could see the collective narrative of 'the other' through a structured educational program where they work together on mutually beneficial goals. Moving away from educational practices conducted in isolation to cooperative intercultural understanding which can foster cross-curricular work in a given school can lead to an understanding of the whole, both personally and globally. Through fostering understanding and empathy through contact students, teachers, and school administrators adopt a guiding philosophy that inner peace cannot be pursued and achieved in isolation (Buber, 1970).

In working towards achieving inner peace through contact one is also embracing Moore Lappe and DuBois's (1994) concept of a living democracy. A living democracy is dependent upon the practice of four categories, communication in public dialog, the resolution and management of conflict, thinking, and group facilitation (Jenkins, 2013, 188). The characteristics of these four categories revolve around the adoption of the three modes of assessment under the peace education framework; listening, learning, and partnering. An effective peace education program imploring the use of videoconference could work towards solutions for the common good, and foster imagination, exploration, and inquiry (Ibid).

In designing how best to implement videoconference within the peace education framework one must note the limitations and challenges of a videoconference based platform and the means in which to address them. The most glaring challenge in adopting and implementing widespread intercultural exchange through VC is ensuring equity to the necessary educational technologies available. Creating cultural exchange programs where accessibility is primarily afforded to the privileged classes of society maintains an unequal power distribution in society

and does not embrace Freire's philosophy of education as a means of transforming the structures that surround students so that they can become independent players. Allport's (1954) first condition for positive contact is equal status. However, under symbolic interactionism's contact hypothesis, equal status is only required within the contact situation. If students, of the same grade, yet from various classes are able to connect through VC and cooperative learning is the primary instrument of instruction than equal status can become a reality. Johnson, Johnson, & Maryama (1984) argue that within this situation, all group members, regardless of their ethnicity, or in this example socio-economic standing, have equal status because they all have equally important information to share. Therefore, a VC based peace education program must be offered free of charge for all participants, under the premise that participating schools will be members for the entirety of the programs existence, in order to assess its long-term effectiveness. Subsequently, effective outreach in order to gauge community need and interest through dialogue, rather than adopting a one-size fits all approach to vc which will only widen the gap between the "west" and "the rest" is essential.

Communities that choose to participate in VC based peace education programs must be given the necessary financial and logistical support to operate the program effectively. Such support must be provided be provided equally to avoid an unfair distribution of resources. The concept of fairness, which is at the heart of the equity theory, is at the heart of this argument, as frustration, anger, and ultimately action are byproducts of unfair distribution. As Isenhart (2000) argues, individual morality is unbalanced when "we feel others are benefiting at our expense" or vice versa. This imbalance can often result in resentment and an unwillingness to engage in dialogue or even direct violence.

The second challenge pertains to maintaining the security and privacy of the participants. A goal of any peace education program is to enable long-term intercultural bonds to form and be

sustained. VC provides the greatest means in which to enable this process, but due to the every-changing landscape of social media, while it would be encouraged for students to interact outside of classroom activities, such interactions must be aligned with the philosophy of the program, which is to encourage honest and safe exchange. A social networking program that allows students engaged in the program to interact outside of the classroom is essential. This social network platform, however, must have a means for which students to anonymously, or named, express concern for a specific exchange, student, teacher, or aspect of the program.

The final challenge pertains to the actual implementation of the program. The language of instruction can severely limit a VC program from being inclusive. If a VC program is being conducted within a single country or between nations who practice the same language than delivery is a non-factor. Moreover, international schools or schools which adopt an intensive language program can use a VC program to promote language instruction. However, in connecting students with their peers across cultural and political boundaries overcoming language barriers is critical in creating a consciousness of peace. The first step in implementing a VC based peace education program is to link schools with a common language, or allow students to speak in their native language. However, as the program matures, providing effective translators to connect students and teachers who would not have had the previous opportunity to has the potential for mutually differentiated contact, where the distinctive strengths of each group are recognized as making a unique contribution toward achieving a common goal (Mania and Gaertner, Riel, Dovidio, Lamoreaux, & Diresco, 2010, 95).

Videoconference based activities within a peace education framework requires a multi-faceted approach, while maintaining a student-centered design. This approach requires considerable exchange between the cooperative educators in order to address their respective student interests and trepidations. Saguy, Dovidio, and Pratto (2007) argue that it is important to

emphasize commonalities between the participating groups, while also addressing inequalities between them, such their socio-economic circumstances. This exchange could result in an increased sense of empathy from the perceived 'high-status group' and a reduction in prejudices from the 'low status' group (Tropp & Pettigrew 2005b). This exchange must take place in the initial phases of exchange, where a preventative mindset towards conflict, bias, and prejudice through open and honest dialogue can manifest into envisioning a better future for both groups through cooperative projects. The following addresses how to implement such instructional practices under the previously noted peace education units of prevention and envisioning:

Units of Study Addressing Essential Peacebuilding Competencies (Through Videoconference)	
Units/Peacebuilding Competency	**Instructional Strategies/Learning Activities**
<u>Module:</u> Intercultural engagement **Unit #3: Prevention**	KWL Chart Student Questionnaire addressing the following biases to be discussed with cross cultural partner: media bias, cultural bias, experience bias Cultural Impressions: Students will answer and discuss student generated questions from their intercultural partners Media Analysis: Ask students to analyze the discuss the same news story, as it is depicted in their respective country Conflict Resolution: Students will form groups and synthesize diverse views in order to find amicable solutions on a series of scenarios Debate

Module: Intercultural engagement **Unit #4: Envisioning**	Collaboration Project 1. Based on student generated topics of issues facing present day society students will form cooperative groups where they will determine the cause or causes of the current situation, address conflicting viewpoints, and create a possible solution for a better future 2. Topics could pertain to poverty, health, conflict, human rights gender inequality, access to education, government, social media, racism, prejudice, the environment, animal rights, economic 3. Topics can be general or pertain to specific situation/event Debriefing: It is important for both students and teachers engage in an in-depth conversation pertaining to their intercultural exchange. Students will reassess their KWL chart and poise new questions and comments to their intercultural partners to foster future collaboration

Conclusion

In noting how the development of a worldwide culture of peace requires a major reorganization of society, Elise Boulding (2001) used the words of Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, where he noted that it "means a translation from societies dominated by the State, sole organizer of security in a dangerous world, to the civil society of everyday life...it must welcome and promote citizen participation in national and international affairs. It must construct peace in the minds of men and women by linking the individual to global networks of shared interests and local communities to the international." An effective peace education pedagogy that embraces dialogue as the primary tool of exchange has the power to make Mayor's words a greater reality. Embracing the power that videoconference can provide as an educational tool, especially in a peace education setting, can create the values, honesty, empathy, and societal links needed to foster the creation of a consciousness of peace.

However, the true value in adopting a peace education framework that utilizes videoconference is in its student-centered approach. Addressing the ever-prevalent "banking method of education", coined by Freire, through enabling students to asses their own beliefs, develop a subsequent series of activities which encourage honest exchange, and assess the progression of the program embraces Montessori's argument that peace can only be achieved when education frees a child's mind to seek the peace, honesty, love, and freedom it is so

naturally drawn to. Such a direction addresses the roots of violence, in seeking to remove the structural and cultural causes behind it. Moreover, in adopting a module that charts the long-term success of the program, students, teachers and administrators are reminded of the need for peace action, in the form of intercultural bonds, to enable intercultural peace initiatives.

While multimedia tools and social network platforms can be described as Boulding (2001) notes, "a modern Tower of Babel, where everyone is talking and no one understands", the face to face contact that videoconference provides, when implementing within the noted pedagogical framework provides a means for teachers and students to first and foremost, assess their own beliefs and biases prior to any engagement, which enables honest dialogue across political, economic, and social boundaries. While technology within a peace education framework is not a cure-all to the violence facing society it does provide a new avenue of exploration. As Boulding (2000) noted, 'the very ability to imagine something different and better what currently exists is critical for the possibility of social change' (29).

Chapter 6: Case Study Background

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter examines the development of blended learning as an educational practice. In order to fully understand the application of blended learning it is important to address it in relationship to the use of information and communicative technologies (ICTs) in the classroom. The implementation of ICTs in the classroom have resulted in the emergence of distance learning, e-Learning, and the most pertinent application to this research project, blended learning. The subsequent sections will introduce the Youth Talk Program, which will be analyzed in relationship to how it best facilitates inter-cultural dialogue through videoconference for high school students in the United States and MENA region. The two architects of the program, Global Nomads Group and Bridges of Understanding will reviewed as to their credibility and

overall program delivery. Finally, the selected schools, which will serve as case studies, will be introduced. Individual school backgrounds, as well as the educational relations between the specific MENA nation and the United States will be addressed.

6.1 BLENDED LEARNING

The use of information and communicative technologies (ICTs) within an educational setting falls under the scope of a variety of learning strategies. These varied learning strategies seek to explore how best to implement newfound educational technologies, including computer programs and videoconference. Some technologies are delivered completely online, apart from the traditional educational setting, while others blend ICTs within a traditional educational setting. Subsequently, it is critical to identify the learning strategies that adopt the use of ICTs, in order to better identify how videoconference both fits within the greater field of education and how the Youth Talk program implements the use of videoconference within a peace education framework.

1.Distance Learning: Distance learning is defined by overcoming the physical distance separating teacher and student through technology. Videoconference is implemented within in this learning strategy under what Rumble (1999) and Hulsmann (2004) describe as a Type C technology, which supports mediated human interaction (Anderson, 2008, 168). This interaction however is based on teacher-centered learning and direct interaction between student and teacher is limited.

2. E-Learning: E-learning encompasses all learning that involves electronic means, such as computers, multimedia, interactive whiteboards, the Internet, and videoconference, to name a few. E-learning can be implemented in or outside of a traditional classroom setting. If e-learning is adopted within a classroom setting, a blended learning environment is utilized.

3. Blended Learning- Blended learning has been defined as hybrid instruction, mediated learning, technology enhanced instruction, web enhanced instruction, and web assisted instruction

(Delialioğlu, Ö, 2011). Nevertheless, the literature outlines blended learning as the process of combining traditional face-to-face contact with online learning environments (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003; Delialioglu & Yildirim, 2007; Delialioğlu, 2011). Blended learning subsequently requires a complete reorganization and understanding of the learning and classroom dynamic, taking into consideration teacher training, resources, and organization. The variance between different blended learning programs, based on varying means of program implementation, requires greater student and community involvement in the creation, implementation, and support of a blended learning environment. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) claim that blended learning is "effective in its ability to facilitate a community inquiry. Community provides the stabilizing, cohesive influence that balances the open communication and limitless access to information on the Internet"(p.98). Within this community, it is the responsibility of the teacher to manage the unique environment. In order to effectively implement a blended learning environment dialogue is the driving force behind teacher led instruction and teacher facilitated interaction. A blended learning pedagogy supports independent student thinking, enabling teachers and students to be active participants in a peace education process. Through engaging the school community in the learning process, through dialogue, the teacher drives and supports a consistently reflective learning environment. Hudson (2002), in noting on critical dialogue in online environments, argues, "the very basis of thinking is rooted in dialogue, drawing on a socially constructed context to endow ideas with meaning"(p.53). The dialogue that Hudson emphasizes is the same that Freire argues for as critical in establishing education as a practice of freedom. Peace education, through blending learning, could present an effective means of establishing a student-centered approach, aligned with the Three Sphered Model of peace education through supporting the creation of a participatory, critical thinking, inter-cultural school environment.

The combination of peace education and blended learning best defines the philosophy of the program under review, Youth Talk. The adoption of practices that emphasize the use of a student-

led design, "combining face-to face instruction with technology mediated instruction" defines the adoption of a blended learning environment (O'Connor, Mortimer, and Bond, 2011, 63). Virtual instruction, in a blended learning system, is an extension of the traditional classroom while encouraging the development of critical thinking skills through student led practices. They theory of blending theory is also argued by Driscoll (2007) as a more broad practice, focusing on four different categories of adoption:

- To combine or mix modes of web-based technology (e.g. live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text) to accomplish an educational goal.

- To combine various pedagogical approaches (e.g. constructivism, behaviorism, cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology.

- To combine any form of instructional technology (e.g. videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training.

- To mix or combine instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect of learning and working.

Driscoll's (2007) broad definition provides an educator with the opportunity to combine multiple categories of adoption within a blended learning environment. A peace education program utilizing intercultural dialogue through videoconference in a structured educational setting has the capability of combining a virtual classroom and collaborative learning environment, various pedagogical approaches as defined by a Three Sphered Model of peace education, videoconference with face-to-face classroom instruction, and instructional technology paired with action. Assessing a blended learning environment that utilizes videoconference as its primary means of incorporating online learning is critical in order for researchers to "explore the impact

of blended learning in achieving more meaningful learning experiences (Garrison and Kanuka, 2004 p. 104).

6.1.1 Videoconference

Videoconference is an adaptable medium, enabling individuals, groups, or communities to see and converse with others across geographical and socio-political boundaries. The adaptability of videoconference provides users with the opportunity to engage in cost-effective business practices, gain immediate insight on critical issues, and create diverse learning environments. The early 1980s saw initial efforts made towards the creation of the first working videoconference system by three competing organizations, British Telecom (BT), Satellite Business Systems (SBS), and the Picture Meeting System (PMS). SBS was ultimately successful in establishing the first commercial videoconference system, led by a team composed of Alfonso Fabris (design architecture, human factors, video, audio, touchscreen), Robert Strickland (software development), and John Toth (satellite transmission). The patent for the first video teleconferencing system (VTC) was awarded in 1985 ushering in a new age in business communication, both internally and amongst external constituents and partners. However, due to the substantial cost requirements needed to instill a VTC system coupled with required network capabilities, and the state of technology at the time, the application of videoconference was limited to the business world. It was until the advent of high-speed Internet access, Internet Protocol, and cost acceptable hardware in the early 2000s that the general consumer public was provided with the ability to videoconference, subsequently enabling its adoption in educational settings. However, the opportunity to implement videoconference based blended learning models did not result in the widespread adoption of such practices by educational bodies or individual teachers.

Journnel and Dressman (2011) argue that while there has been a call for a cosmopolitan ethic in middle and secondary classrooms, videoconference has not been widely adopted as a tool to

implement such a citizenship (p. 109). The hesitation to implement videoconference in the classroom is the cause of various factors, not the least of which is a misconception regarding the ease and accessibility of making it a valuable learning tool. Misconceptions, coupled with increased adherence by educational ministries, schools, and teachers to standardized scope and sequence components of curricula allows the misconception that videoconference is both difficult to implement and time-consuming to operate and assess to spread. Nevertheless, Journnel and Dressman (2011) note that as of 2011, "none of the equipment needed to run a videoconference is difficult to use, and much of it (e.g., the Internet, LCD projectors) teachers typically use on a daily basis" (p.111).

The focus in international curricula, including the International Baccalaureate and the Common Core, is on the development of critical thinking skills for high school students. The use of videoconference to enable students in the United States, Germany, and Japan to discuss their interpretations of World War II provides diverse and unique learning opportunities for the development of such critical thinking skills that have become fundamental to all current curriculum development projects. Marie Martin's (2000) study on videoconferencing in teaching and learning argued that case studies in the United States and across Europe showed eleven positive results of videoconferencing in the classroom:

1. Enrich all areas of the curriculum;
2. Enhance the motivation of pupils and teachers;
3. Improve the self-esteem and self-confidence of pupils;
4. Promote the enjoyment of learning;
5. Raise the awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity;
6. Improve communication and presentation skills;
7. Foster educational co-operation;
8. Provide experience of the global classroom;
9. Provide experience of a new and stimulating technology;

10. Give meaningful focus for the practice of IT skills;

11. Promote educational and social inclusion (397-405).

While the benefits of videoconference make it appear to be a beneficial educational tool, it is important to note the reliance that a videoconference based learning activity has on technology, resulting in limited teaching and learning alternatives that can be immediately implemented if the technology fails (Gillies, 2008). The need to train educators in using and adapting technology when a need arises is therefore essential for the success of a program. As cited by several educational technology experts, simply transferring 'live' classroom approach to the videoconference suite is inadequate (Gillies, 2008).

6.2 YOUTH TALK PROGRAM

Youth Talk is a yearlong civic engagement program devised and implemented by a Bridges of Understanding and Global Nomads Group (GNG) initiative, combining the uniquely suited expertise of both organizations. The purpose of the program is to connect high school students in the United States and the MENA region to foster "inter-cultural awareness and global citizenship". Implemented over the course of one academic year, Youth Talk pairs classrooms in the United States and the MENA region. These pairings enable students to engage in intercultural dialogue through videoconference in order to address topics that are considered important to each respective classroom but also, as Bridges of Understanding and GNG argue, issues that are central to "their collective identity as a paired group". Ultimately, the objective of the Youth Talk program is provide the opportunities for students to positively engage with peers from a different region in order to foster relationships in the hope of positively influencing relations between the United States and the MENA region (Youth Talk 2013-2014/2015-2016 Educator Handbook). While Global Nomads Group does not label the Youth Talk program as a form of Peace

Education; it does acknowledge that the program does adopt various philosophies and practices that are typically attributed to peace education.

The yearlong curriculum, which guides Youth Talk, is divided into three modules consisting of cultural exchange, media and society, and global citizenship. Within the three modules there are one to two units, defined by three steps: learn, act, and reflect. These steps are "designed to help integrate and support student engagement", while providing the framework where students are enable to participate in interactive video conferencing (IVCs) with their intercultural peers. GNG justifies the use of IVCs as a "tool students can utilize to connect with their peer classrooms in real-time for face-to-face dialogue, collaboration, and interaction. IVCs provide space for students to exercise high-order thinking and public speaking skills". The curriculum also supports the primary learning activity in the program, known as the GNG Global Citizen Project. The purpose of the Global Citizen Project is to "empower students to work together and with your partners to identify a real world problem in your local/global community that they want to change" (Youth Talk 2015-2016 Educator Handbook). Then they will develop an arts or media project to address the issue in their local and, hopefully, global communities. The collaborative project consists of four primary objectives:

1. To address the Youth Talk's program's driving question, through youth-led investigation of a challenge identified in students' local or global communities;

2. To use intercultural dialogue, media, and technology to deepen understanding of this challenge through collaboration;

3. To problem solve and/or raise awareness about issues or needs in the local or global community and;

4. To engage local and global communities in this challenge by sharing projects and knowledge with wider audiences.

Youth Talk's scope and sequence will be assessed using the three-sphered model. The researcher will determine how effectively the three adopted modules encourage and provide time for student teacher reflection, community reflection and action, intercultural engagement, and sustained global partnerships, as emphasized by the conceptual framework's understanding of peace education best practice. The Learn Act Reflect components of Youth Talk's scope and sequence will be examined in regards to how best they achieve the benchmarks, determined by the researcher, as standards of best practice that a school community are expected to achieve in such a peace education program. Finally, as any peace education program's purpose is to foster a consciousness of peace, the learning objectives and outcomes of the Youth Talk program, specifically the Reflect & Connect components of each module and the GNG Global Citizen Project, will be examined in comparison to the conceptual framework's argument of how a consciousness of peace can be best facilitated in its adoption.

6.2.1 Global Nomads Group

GNG was established in 1998 as an international NGO focusing on the development, organization, and implementation of integrative programs for youth around the world. As of 2014 GNG currently operates in forty-five countries, with offices in New York, USA and Amman, Jordan. The majority of programs GNG engages in involve varying level of virtual exchange between teachers and students across geographical, political, and socioeconomic boundaries. All GNG programs are defined by three elements: Mission, Strategy & Tools, and Theory of Change.

Mission: GNG's mission is to foster dialogue and understanding among the world's youth. GNG operates at the intersection of international and peace education, striving to serve as a vehicle for awareness, bridging boundaries of cultural misconceptions and instilling in our audience a heightened appreciation and comprehension of the world in which they live.

Strategy & Tools: GNG engages and empowers young people worldwide using education and media, including: project-based learning curriculum, interactive videoconferencing, webcasting, social networking, gaming, documentaries, and participatory filmmaking. Through the use of these media tools, GNG creates opportunities for global collaboration and communication.

Theory of Change: GNG's work is predicated on the belief that critical thinking and 21st century learning skills are fundamental tools in promoting positive social change and peacebuilding. This belief has been tested through years of experience promoting intercultural exchange and people-to-people connections.

6.2.2 Bridges of Understanding

Bridges of Understanding was founded as a not-for-profit, non-political organization in 2007.

Adopting a focus in personal diplomacy, Bridges of Understanding seeks to foster positive

relationships between the United States and Arab World. Efforts include building relationships

between decision makers in the United States and MENA region and supporting the creation and

implementation of youth-centered programs. Bridges of Understanding is also guided by three

essential elements: Vision, Mission, and Programming.

Vision: Bridges of Understanding's vision is to bridge the cultural divide between the United States and the Arab World.

Mission: Bridges of understanding aims to foster an emotionalized understanding amongst the American people and people of the Arab World through curated relationships between though leaders and the creation of original youth focused and orientated programs. In order to carry out this mission BoU does not accept funding from the United States government

Programming: Bridges of Understanding maintains a primary focus on youth through in-classroom and digital programming and community outreach events that engage experts and the public in discourse concerning the role of younger generations in the socio-political landscape.

6.3 SCHOOL PROFILES

6.3.1 Pairing # 1: Lycee El-Esteklal, Oued Ellil, Tunisia & Urban Assembly Bronx Academy of Letters, Bronx, New York

6.3.1.1 Lycee El-Esteklal (LEE)

Lycee El-Esteklal is a secondary school in the town of Oued Ellil of the Manouba Governorate.

Manouba is one of twenty-four governorates in Tunisia, located in the northern part of the

country. Oued Ellil is 15 km west of the capital, Tunis and has a population of 69,000 as of 2014.

The Tunisia educational system is structured into four levels, primary, basic, secondary and higher education. It takes four years to complete secondary education, which is divided into two stages, general academic and specialized (Integrity of Public Education in Tunisia: Restoring Trust, OECD, 2013). Within the general academic stage students follow a state-sponsored common curriculum. Following this first year students transition to specializations in literature, economics and management, or mathematics and technical studies (ibid). Mathematics and technical studies is conducted in French with the other specializations conducted in Arabic. While the educational system is credited with enabling the highest level of human development in the MENA region after the Gulf States in 2010 and 2011, high unemployment, increasing distrust in public education and heightened corruption in the educational ministry as reported by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, became catalysts in the Tunisian Revolution of 2011. For instance, prior to 2011 Afonso, Ayadi and Ramzi (2013) warned in their assessment of secondary education in Tunisia from 2004-2008 that schools were ill equipped to "satisfy the needs of current and future generations" arguing for the development of educational technology as a means of improving human capital (126).

However, while Tunisia has been commended by the world community for the democratic processes that have been initiated since the 2011, revolution educational reforms have stalled, resulting in 130,000 students dropping out annually and Tunisia ranking in the bottom five among 65 countries for educational quality. A National Dialogue on transforming the educational system in Tunisia was initiated in 2016 focusing on four critical areas: governance, university life, curriculum development, and supporting scientific research. While the implementation of Youth Talk program correlates with curriculum development and the need to address educational technology, as noted by Afonso, Ayadi and Ramzi, the program operates outside of the national curriculum. A considerable number of students in Tunisian secondary schools are enrolled in out-of-school-instruction programs, like Youth Talk. In 2006, 54% of

secondary students participated in out-of-school lessons, ranking 9th highest of all 54 countries for which the PISA study included (OECD, 2013). This reality also represents a growing divide in Tunisian education along socio-economic lines, for which pre and post revolutionary rhetoric has noted.

Students at LEE engage in Youth Talk as part of an extracurricular program supported by the work of the AMIDEAST organization. America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST) was established in1951 with the objective of providing educational opportunities for student in the MENA region to study in the United States. This mission has now come to include language and professional development programs for students in the region in order to "build cross-cultural understanding, expand educational opportunities, prepare individuals for jobs in the global economy, strengthen institutions and communities, and empower women and youth"(AMIDEAST). LEE partners with AMIDEAST to deliver English language programs, for which Youth Talk was viewed as a complimentary. Students range from 14 to 18 years of Age in the program and miss once a week, every Friday, which is a no school day in Tunisia.

6.3.1.2 Urban Assembly Bronx Academy of Letters (BAL)

Bronx Academy of Letters is a public school located in the Bronx, New York, created and sustained by an outside organization known as The Urban Assembly. The Urban Assembly was established as an alternative to the growing charter school movement in the United States. Charter schools are publicly funded but privately operated, tuition free public schools. Charter schools are sponsored by an organization and overseen by an independent governing board that reports academic performance to the sponsoring body. Based on reports of academic performance the sponsoring organization can determine to continue or cease a charter school's operation. Moreover, based on state benchmarks, a charter school can be terminated by state and or city educational bodies for failing to achieve acceptable academic standards.

In comparison, The Urban Assembly operates in conjunction with the New York City Department of Education on assessment, academic planning, teacher hiring and mission. Rather than oversee the governing of the school, Urban Assembly acts as a fundraising organization to maintain small class sizes and adopt individual missions and objectives for their 21 schools across New York City. The argument made for the establishment and growth of charter schools is that they can establish standards, curricula, and expectations for both students and staff apart from state bodies, enabling greater flexibility and control. Due to the New York City Department of Education maintaining oversight of Urban Assembly Schools, the argument that the lack of accountable for charter schools operating outside of the reach of state control drains community resources and applies undue pressure on all members of the school community is directly addressed. However, Urban Assembly has established partnerships with public, private, not for profit and higher education sectors, which influence mission and program adoption/implementation.

BAL's unique mission is to support the development of effective communication skills across disciplines. Specifically, students and faculty emphasize literacy throughout the curriculum. Self-expression through writing is a consistent standard amongst all courses and grade levels, where students are encouraged to engage in personal reflection in order to critical engage in their local and global communities. Teachers facilitate a robust selection of extracurricular activities to support these endeavors. Youth Talk is currently running two programs at BAL. This research project specifically examined how Youth Talk was implemented in an after school club. The club was not directly connected to the school curriculum or specific courses of study, but students are required to attend the IVCs prior to the school day beginning.

6.3.1.3 Tunisian-American Educational Relations

Tunisian-American Relations continue to evolve since the 2011 Tunisian Revolution. Ben Ali's dictatorship placed a major emphasis on educational spending prior to 2011. Tunisia spent 7.2

percent its GDP education, more than any other North American country, and trailing only Denmark and Iceland in Europe (http://www.cnbc.com/id/41237865). However, while the government's focus on education created an educated labor force, job development was not given sufficient attention. Prior to the revolution Tunisia's unemployment rate was 30 percent and youth unemployment was a key catalyst in ushering in the revolution. Due to growing economic and security opportunities as a result of the revolution, Tunisia and the United States have initiated new partnerships across several strategic areas.

The United States supported the Tunisian Revolution and the subsequent construction and adoption of their new constitution in 2014. Current trends in Tunisian-American relations have primarily focused on counter terrorism initiatives and economic cooperation. Educational partnerships between the two states subsequently focus on U.S. aid and scholarship offerings to improve Tunisian human capital through an American framework. Since 2014 the following programs have been adopted and implemented though Tunisian-American partnerships:

- Thomas Jefferson Scholarship Program- Provides Tunisian students (400 in 2015) scholarships to attend university in the United States

- Fulbright Tunisia Tech + Scholars- Provides 40 masters degree scholarships for students pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, math and business.

- University partnerships

- Science and Technology Cooperation- Agreement to provide a structure for collaboration in science and technology research, development, and teaching and learning.

6.3.2 Pairing # 2: Arabian Pearl Gulf School, Manama, Bahrain & Berkshire School, Sheffield Massachusetts

6.3.2.1 Arabian Pearl Gulf School (APG)

The Arabian Pearl Gulf School is a private school in the Capital Governorate Manama, Khamis, Kingdom of Bahrain. A participant in the Youth Talk program since 2010, the APG was founded

in 1996, and educates students from preschool to grade 12 with English as the medium of instruction. Within their high school program APG offers the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) for grades 9 and 10, which is a British based curriculum, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) for grades 11 and 12, and the national Bahraini Ministry of Education curriculum. The presence of private schools in Bahrain has been prevalent since 1892 with the opening of the American Mission School for Girls. The founding of the American Mission School also signaled the emergence of Western-style education in Bahrain (Pandya, 2012, p. 33). Unique among other Gulf countries, Bahrain features a high percentage of private educational schools, both national and foreign, often adopting of combination of Western and National curricula (Al Arrayed Shirawi, 1989).

6.3.2.2 Berkshire School (BS)

The Berkshire School is a private, co-ed boarding school in Sheffield Massachusetts. Founded in 1907, Berkshire School serves students in grades 9-12. It is a highly selective and competitive school, with 90% of their graduating students in 2015 gaining acceptance to the most competitive universities in the United States. In addition, the school's total enrollment is 406 with an acceptance rate of 26% and tuition ranging from $56,150 for boarding students to $44,700 for day students. Berkshire School has students from 29 countries and sits on a 400-acre campus. Due to the fact that Berkshire is a private school, they are not dictated by state or national standards, curricula or testing. The Youth Talk Program resides within a student elective offered to 11th and 12th graders named *Islam, Christianity and Judaism*. Subsequently, the students who choose to enroll in this class understanding that the IVCs correlate with the themes and issues discussed around these monotheistic religions.

6.3.2.3 Bahraini-American Educational Relations

Bahraini modern educational development first came in the form of Kuttab schools, where learning was provided through co-educational village institutions with elementary curricula

"focused on Arabic, mathematics and rote memorization of the Qur'an" (ibid). However, little development was provided for students past elementary education. With the founding of the American Mission School, Western-based religious schools began to take root, countering Kuttab-based educational models with a curriculum based on English and Bible instruction. The influence of Western educational models was a direct result of Bahrain being established as a protectorate of Great Britain in 1830. A second phase of private school education came from the establishment of the Al-Ittihad school by the Persian minority in Manama in 1910, followed by the Al-Falah School, and the Dar al'ilm school, which focused on the teaching of practical skills for primarily elementary aged children (Al-Arrayed Shirawi, 1989). The establishment of national private schools in contrast to their foreign counterparts ushered in an age of where public gatherings served as an important medium for educating the general public. These public gatherings, known as a Matum to the Shia population and Salon or Majlis to the Sunni provided communal discussion, religious ceremonies, and business practices (ibid). However, the establishment of a modern public educational system in Bahrain did not come about until the aftermath of the First World War.

The establishment of public education in Bahrain also commenced with continued Western influence in its educational development. In 1939, Adrian Vallance, a British education specialist, was appointed as Director of Education to the Bahrain Government. This position gave Vallance administrative control of all schools, including frameworks, curricula, teacher salaries, and school planning and construction. Vallance's initiatives provided structure and resulted in a steady increase in student retention and qualified teachers. By 1945, Ahmed Omran, a Bahraini, was appointed Director of Education, ending British led educational direction of Bahrain's educational system. Increased Bahraini control of their its social services in the 1940s also coincided with the beginning of U.S. military influence in Bahrain.

United States military presence in Bahrain would commence in 1948 with the establishment of the U.S. Middle East Force on Royal Navy land. As Great Britain began relinquishing influence in the Gulf by the late 1960s, ultimately leading to Bahraini independence in 1971, the United States supplanted Britain as Bahrain's most important strategic ally. While J. William Fulbright, chairman of the U.S. Senate's Committee on Foreign Relations, argued against the furtherance of American naval presence following Britain's withdrawal, the Nixon administration argued for the continuation of a U.S. presence, based on strategic importance of the region for current and future American interests (Joyce, 2012). In order to secure the presence of US Naval forces in Bahrain, the United States were forced to meet two critical issues for Bahrain, monetary compensation and educational support. Minister Al-Shirawi, the Chairman of the Committee for the Liquidation of the British Empire led negotiations with American officials leading to an agreement over the establishment of an annual rent from the United States and the continuation and expansion of the United States Department of Defense School in Bahrain. The Department of Defense School enrolled both American and Bahraini children, including Al-Shirawi's daughters (ibid). The Bahrain School, as it is known today, has had a considerable influence on the political landscape of the country, educating the children of diplomats, business leaders, the Saudi Arabian Oil Co., and members of the Royal Family, such as the Crown Prince, HRH Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and his son.

The mutually beneficial relationship between the United States and Bahraini governments provided necessary supports in supporting American military initiatives in the Gulf and Afghanistan, as well in forming a defensive coalition between neighboring Arab states in against Iran. In 1995 the United States and Bahrain signed a ten-year security agreement, which included the establishment of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, the first new American naval fleet in fifty years (Joyce, 2012). This strategic relationship was however tested with the Arab Spring uprising in Bahrain that began in February 2011 and continues to today. Much of the violence that has been

witnessed has been incited against youth and within schools. Following the lead of the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, Bahraini citizens began a mass movement in and around the capital of Manama calling for democratic reforms.

The attacks on schools only increased during this time. The Bahrain Center for Human Rights notes that security forces raided more twelve all-girls middle and secondary schools, consisting of students aged between 11-17, where girls were arrested in their classrooms, beaten, tortured and detained for several days without access to legal representation (Bahrain Center for Human Rights, *Bahrain: The Human Price of Freedom and Justice*, November 2011). Teachers were also targeted by the Ministry of Education, which suspended and fired hundreds of teachers for their alleged participation in anti-government demonstrations (Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, 2011). The Government response against both teachers and students resulted in nationwide teacher strikes, which led to further reprisals from security forces (ibid).

Violence against Bahraini youth has continued despite Bahrain being elected as Vice-President of the UNESCO International Bureau of Education in January 2012. As of June 2013 eighteen children, under the age of eighteen, have been killed as a result of excessive force by security forces since February 2011, amidst countless reports of unlawful arrests and torture of the general public (Bahrain Center for Human Rights). However, while the Obama administration supported the other Arab Spring uprisings in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt, it remained, "deeply ambivalent about supporting political change in the strategically invaluable Gulf region"(Pandya, 2012, p.13). While the United States has limited arms sales to the Bahraini government following the outbreak of unrest, military aid from the United States has totaled $1.4 billion from 2000 to 2013, including plans for the expansion of the 5th Fleet Naval Base (Elliott, Revealed: America's Arms Sales to Bahrain Amid Bloody Crackdown", Propublica, January 2013). Addressing these events and the relevant American-Bahraini political relationship through the Youth Talk is

critical to determine whether videoconference based dialogue can be effective in addressing bias and fostering understanding and ultimately, peacebuilding. However, in 2011 and subsequent years, the Arabian Pearl Gulf School has requested IVCs refrain from political and religious themed topics.

6.3.3 Pairing # 3: AMIDEAST/ACCESS Program, Ajloun, Jordan & Edwardsburg High School, Edwardsburg, Michigan

6.3.3.1 AMIDEAST/Access Program, Aljoun, Jordan

AMIDEAST/ACCESS Program, as noted previously, is one of many educational program facilitated by AMIDEAST organization, America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST). Established in1951 with the objective of providing educational opportunities for student in the MENA region to study in the United States, the Jordanian AMIDEAST office is one of the first established branches and has expanded its programs to include language, cultural exchange, grassroots work and professional development. The ACCESS program is the language-focused initiative where student apply for acceptance into a two-year English immersion program, consisting of students from the local area and facilitated by an AMIDEAST selected educator. This ACCESS program is based in the town of Aljoun, consisting of students in the first year of the program, aged 14-15. The IVCs operate separately from the normal school/program day but are fully supported by the Jordanian educational ministry. Students meet once a week after school to engage in English language instruction. The Youth Talk program is incorporated within the ACCESS curriculum and educators receive professional development training from both AMIDEAST and GNG to effectively combine both programs.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's secondary educational framework is based on two tracks of study: secondary education and vocational secondary education, consisting of two years of study. The Ajloun students are all enrolled in secondary education institutions in Ajloun qualifying them for entrance to national and international universities. Within the Jordanian

educational framework there has been considerable level of recent attention given towards preparing students for an increasingly modernizing world. The adoption of effective ICTs in the classroom has been at the core of the new Jordanian curriculum and initiatives to better prepare Jordanians to compete in international markets and gain acceptance to prestigious international institutions. The greater Ajloun Municipality has been the beneficiary of this new educational focus since 2013. The JEI is based on six initiatives:

- Improve the development and delivery of education to citizens through public-private partnerships,

- Introduce 21st century learning and teaching skills into the public education sphere,

- Encourage the development of an efficient public-private model for the acceleration of educational reforms in developing countries by brining out the innovation of teachers and students through developing and integrating ICT in the educational strategies and approaches,

- Build the capacity of partners for the development of innovated learning solutions in partnership with world class firms, and creating economic value that will lead to mutually beneficial business opportunities,

- Leverage an environment of national commitment and corporate citizenship to build a model of reform and replicate it to other countries in the region, and

- Expand innovation and research to accelerate and effectively support education reform and develop economic and business models.

The JEI has been spearheaded by several American corporations including CISCO Systems, IBM, Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, Texas Instruments, and Oracle, as well as USAID, in their pursuit to work with national governments and non-profit organizations to design and implement effective e-learning platforms.

6.3.3.2 Edwardsburg High School, Edwardsburg Michigan

Edwardsburg High School is an American public high school located in Edwardsburg, Cass County, Michigan. It is the only high school in Edwardsburg serving roughly 880 students in grades 9-12. Edwardsburg and the surrounding Southwestern Michigan area is described by the Edwardsburg public school district as socio-economic diverse. Within this setting Edwardsburg prides itself in offering a variety of academic extracurricular opportunities with an emphasis on virtual learning. Edwardsburg Early College and Edwardsburg Middle College is a catalog of online courses that students can enroll in to earn high school and college credits. Courses are primarily designed as e-learning deliverables rather than blended learning and are compliant with the State and National instituted Common Core Standard Initiative. The Common Core seeks to established uniform standards in math and English language arts. The English Language Arts standards include writing, speaking and listening, language, and media and technology. In addition to the adoption of uniform standards, standardized testing form a critical component in assessing student growth. Edwardsburg High School was named a "Beating the Odds Reward School" by the Michigan Department of Education (Edwardsburg School District). This awards was based on their 2013-14 standardized test scores.

6.3.3.3 Jordanian-American Educational Relations

As of 2007 the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was composed of almost five million people, one in ten of which were illiterate, and one of every eight were living below the national poverty line (Wilkie, 2007, 6). Khaled Toukan (2007), the minister of education for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, notes that the "overall approach to education in Jordan is to transform programs and practices for teaching and learning supported by reform of the management of the general education system to produce graduates with the skills necessary to be successful in a knowledge based economy". In order to enable such a transformation, the Jordanian government has adopted a policy of collaboration and adoption of western educational practices involving testing,

higher education development, and teacher qualifications. Jordan embraces a view of educational development as, primarily, a means towards sustained economic growth in competitive world markets. Toukan (2006) argues, "education is a key factor in encouraging investment in Jordan's economy since it is the primary mechanism for upgrading labor market quality"(p.18). To facilitate the correlation of Jordanian educational systems with Western models, Jordan has established twenty-three universities, of which, all "require students graduating at the top of their class to apply to U.S. graduate schools, and attend if accepted"(Wilke, 2007, p.37). However, Jordan, much like its counterparts in the region continue to have a major problems in terms of demand outnumbering supply in public higher education. Toukan notes, that the "degradation of education quality, with crowded classrooms, high fees for evening programs, a dearth of research being conducted by faculty and a saturation in the sociology, psychology, history and philosophy disciplines, has resulted in students in these studies unable to land jobs after graduation"(Wilkie, 2007, p.37). While official unemployment figures note a twelve percent rate, more accurate estimates argue that it is closer to thirty percent, with youth, who make up thirty percent of the population, contributing heavily to the joblessness rate (Moon, 2012).

Greater emphasis on educational collaboration with the United States, in adopting standardized computer science, computer engineering, physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, pharmacy, and business tests have been implemented to address areas of concern in the Jordanian educational system. In addition, a $500 million program intended to train Jordanian students from early childhood in the skills necessary for competing in the global economy further points to the Jordanian's emphasis on a competitive educational pedagogy (Loveland, 2006, p.20). The inter-cultural dialogue facilitated by the Youth Talk aligns itself with both the United States and Jordan's aim of forming stronger ties. Scott Greenwood (2003) argues that the Jordanian government determined in the early 2000s that its survival was dependent on continued U.S. aid, coupled with direct foreign investment. This calculation has resulted, as of 2006, in four percent

of Jordan's gross national income coming from foreign aid, the majority of which is American (Adely, 2012). An emphasis on foreign businesses implementing ICTs in Jordanian classrooms through JEI continues to represent the current Jordanian educational and business model, for which Youth Talk is a natural conduit.

6.3.4 Supplemental Schools

Upon commencing data collection in the MENA region the opportunity presented itself to conduct further post-program data collection with two other Jordanian institutions. Due to complications in data collection with Ajloun, which will be addressed in chapter 7, the researcher decided to supplement data with the Salt School AMIDEAST Access Program and the Ruwwad Community Center in Amman. Five additional IVCs were reviewed and coded, informing the face-to-face focus group and compared to the three other pairings.

6.3.4.1 AMIDEAST/Access Program, Salt, Jordan

Salt was an additional Youth Talk participant that was added to fieldwork while in Amman, Jordan. Salt is a suburb of Amman located forty-five minutes outside of the city-center, and is primarily a middle to upper class area of greater Amman. Salt was organized much in the same way as Ajloun and LEE where students from the area participated in the Access Program. All Salt students participating were at level two English, in comparison to Ajloun, which was at a level one. Youth Talk is viewed by the Salt students and educator as an extension of their language course, where more considerable attention can be given to conversational skills, writing, and listening skills.

6.3.4.2 Ruwwad Community Center, Amman, Jordan

Ruwwad Community Center was an additional Youth Talk participant that was added to fieldwork while in Amman, Jordan. Ruwwad is a community center located in East Amman, serving a predominantly Palestinian Refugee population. Ruwwad functions on two major levels:

educational support/tutoring and professional training. Students are able to enroll in language and other academic support programs while also receiving interview skills, and job training support.

Prior to arriving at Ruwwad, the researcher was able to briefly view the pre-recorded IVCs between Ruwwad and their partner school, Excel Academy Charter School. Excel is a charter school located in Boston Massachusetts, serving a lower socio-economic student population.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between the United States and Tunisia, Bahrain, and Jordan is complex and unique in all three cases. However, there is a consistent aspect to these relationships that is present throughout; the influence of American educational development practices on the growth of their MENA constituent's own educational frameworks. Exploring how explicit or implicit this connection influences student and faculty opinions, actions, and biases is critical to this overall research project. The importance placed on the adoption of blended learning platforms that encourage dialogue and inter-cultural understanding for all four communities also points to the growing argument that educational exchanges can fuel domestic economic growth, as seen in the adoption of the JEI, the partnership with AMIDEAST, and the growth of unique school missions focused on outreach, communication and international understanding. This research project subsequently addresses two critical topics in the growth of peace education: whether videoconference is an effective form of dialogue and whether blended theory is an effective system in which to delivery this dialogue.

In order to effectively evaluate the Youth Talk program, the selection of a varied school sampling is critical. Bronx Academy of Letters, Berkshire School, and Edwardsburg High School represent varied socio-economic communities and diverse student populations. The schools in the MENA region are no different. A co-ed public school in Tunisia running a English Language

intensive program, a co-ed private school in Bahrain, and an all-boys public school in Jordan, supported by a joint Western-Jordanian initiative, are unique vantage points into the varied educational frameworks that make up the MENA region. In partnership with GNG, school selection was also based on whether the school and teacher supported the mission of this research project and were given permission to engage by school and state officials. Examining the implementation of a videoconference based peace education program within the context of complex U.S.-MENA relationships, in a variety of educational frameworks ultimately reveals the changing dynamic of educational models and international relations for which peace education can adequately address.

Chapter 7: Field Research

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings from virtual and on site face-to-face semi-structured focus groups and IVC observations. A total of 12 IVCs, some of which were divided due to time and technological factors were observed, and 15 student focus groups and 11 teacher interviews were conducted. All pre and mid program student focus groups were held between October 2015 to September 2016 using Skype and were electronically recorded. Pre-program teacher interviews were all held between October and November 2015 using Skype and were also electronically recorded. Global Nomads Group shared all IVC recordings through Google Drive, which the researcher had constant access to. The researcher travelled to Jordan, Bahrain, Massachusetts, the Bronx and Michigan between June 2016 and September 2016 to conduct post program focus groups/interviews with students, teachers and administrators. The researcher determined that travel to Tunisia at the time was not in the best interests of his safety and a post program focus group with students and the educator was conducted through Skype. All interviews, focus groups and IVCs were transcribed. Key themes were then developed in correlation with predetermined coding categories.

Chapter 4 addressed the methodology used in this research project. Due to data collection being spread over three phases, consisting of both virtual and onsite focus groups, a detailed coding framework for all exchanges is essential. Prior to conducting virtual fieldwork three coding categories were established; organizational, substantive and theoretical. Organizational, substantive, and theoretical categories provide a "conceptual distinction" in which to sort data (Qualitative Research Design). Joseph A. Maxwell (2013) notes that each category provides distinct coding purposes. Organizational addresses broad areas or issues and functions primarily as bins for sorting the data for further analysis. Examples for this research project include class structure, curriculum, policies, videoconference, and peace education. Substantive explicitly addresses the content of the individual's statement or action, making it descriptive in nature. Examples for this research project include stereotypes, biases, student assessment of purpose, student assessment of success versus failure, and critical engagement. Finally, theoretical places data in a more abstract framework, typically representing the researcher's concepts. Examples for this research project include consciousness of peace, conscientization, critical pedagogy, cosmopolitanism, constructivism, and dialogue.

A formal organizational and retrieval system that explicitly identifies these categories is essential for capturing ideas (including participants' ideas) that don't fit into existing organizational categories (Maxwell, 2013, 108). Once data was collected and organized into organizational, substantive and theoretical categories common themes were then identified, including the meanings students and teachers put behind words and actions. Since all of the IVCs were recorded by GNG, the researcher was given access to repeatedly review IVCs to ensure substantial analysis. Data analysis from each stage of collection informed subsequent focus group questions, creating unique points of analysis for each partnership based on specific exchanges. Baseline questions pertaining to program impressions, pace and goals remained the same across

all partnerships. The three partnerships and two additional Jordanian programs were all examined using this data analysis matrix for each category.

It is important to note that virtual fieldwork was conducted over two years. The first year garnered no data in which to draw pertinent conclusions. Three partnerships were established but two partnerships declined to continue in the research project at various points and the third was too difficult to schedule timely focus groups preventing substantial timing and assessment of data collection. The issues arising from school participation throughout this research project will be addressed in Chapter 8.

7.1 LYCEE EL-ESTEKLAL & URBAN ASSEMBLY BRONX ACADEMY OF LETTERS, BRONX, NEW YORK

Esteklal and BAL both participate in the Youth Talk Program outside of the school day. Esteklal is a part of the AMIDEAST Access program, where students are required to attend English classes every Friday, which is part of the weekend in Tunisia. AMIDEAST reached out to potential ACCESS instructors in garner their interest and availability in implementing Youth Talk. Esteklal's teacher is subsequently required to balance both the English language curriculum and the Youth Talk Program. The following themes

BAL, as noted in chapter 6.3.1.2 runs two different Youth Talk programs and the one which was directly addressed in this research project operates as an after school club. Much in the same manner as Esteklal the educator at BAL was approached by the school administration to implement Youth Talk in addition to their regular teaching schedule. Subsequently, all focus groups were conducted outside of the student and teacher's class schedule. This condition created a difficulty in planning for this project and the implementation of Youth Talk as a whole. This discussion formed the basis for the early stages of the focus group, with such data being primarily sorted into organizational categories.

7.1.1 Pre-program Student Focus Groups

The following themes emerged within this first pre-program focus group informing subsequent questions in mid and post program exchanges.

PEACE

Peace Education was a major theme that emerged within this partnership's pre-program focus group requiring further analysis to understand how the student's understanding, or lack thereof, of peace education impacted their growth, empowerment and emancipation. Neither school had ever come across the term and was unfamiliar with what it meant within an educational context. Global Nomads Group/Bridges of Understanding conscientious effort to avoid using the term will be addressed during the GNG pre and post focus group, but such a choice clearly impacted the student's and teacher's understanding of peace education. In contrast, students were eager to discuss peace as a more general concept, which helped to establish a baseline to chart conscientization and overall adoption of the three-sphered model of peace education. Students from Esteklal both individual and collective through group affirmation believed that peace was ingrained within Tunisian society. When discussing how they define peace, students noted that, "peace is everything to us. It is part of our culture. It is part of our religion. It is who we are"(Esteklal, pre-program focus group). Esteklal students see peace and the pursuit of peace as a unique facet to their society, noting the recent revolution in 2011 and on the day of the focus group, several students were keen to note that the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet were to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize later that afternoon.

Responding to how they felt Americans view peace, one student noted, "Americans have a different definition of peace" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group). This response was followed by significant group affirmation and subsequently followed by the argument from a different student, "We don't have racism in Tunisia. Americans don't want peace in the same way as we do because Tunisians are all the same" Esteklal, pre-program focus group). The examples that

students provided of such uniformity in society included socio-economic status, religion, education, goals and overall culture. Another student remarked, "We as Tunisians don't suffer from differences" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group). This comment was met by even greater group affirmation. Based on their understanding of Tunisian society, students argued that Tunisians are the same but Americans are different and, "don't want peace in the same way as we do" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group).

In contrast BAL provided general definitions of peace rather than provide an initial American context. Students noted, "peace is all about looking for each other, sharing our problems, and trying to understand each other" (BAL, pre-program focus group). This points were met were strong group affirmation. When the conversation changed to the American context regarding peace, a student argued, "Peace is when people share the same rights or freedoms. In the US though, we don't have the same rights and freedoms. We don't live in peace". Students were quick to provide affirmation to this point and offered further clarification, noting that students who are Black and Latino face more injustice than white Americans. Responding to how they felt Tunisians view peace, one student noted, "Everywhere has problems. Here we have poverty and police brutality, and they probably have war, but I think we have the same idea of peace as they do" (BAL, pre-program focus group).

Both schools reflection on how they view peace and how their partner school views peace correlates with a constructivist understanding of education. In Chapter 3, Larochelle and Bednarz (1998) and Johan Galtung (2004) argue that through an honest exchange regarding your own situation one can understand him or herself and others more critically.

LANGUAGE

Students and educators from both schools noted the difficulty in fully immersing themselves within the Youth Talk Program due to time constraints and other student obligations. Students in

both Tunisia and the Bronx were asked how much training they received prior to engaging in this program and both answers provided insight on how students perceive the purpose of the Youth Talk Program. Students in Tunisia noted their English language proficiency on five separate occasions within a forty-five minute focus group. Students cited that English was their third language and four students explained that their love of the English language and subsequent proficiency fully prepared them to engage in this program. However, students did not cite any other qualifications in regards to their ability and willingness to participate in the program.

In contrast, BAL did not freely mention English in the pre-program focus group and when asked about their feelings regarding the program being conducted in English, two students commented that maybe this program will "help them improve their English". This singular comment elicits an important context in intercultural dialogue programs. Due to English being the dominant language in all of the assessed partnerships in this research project, a clear power imbalance is manifested. This imbalance calls into question whether such a program represents a critical pedagogical approach to education, by forcing students to speak in their non-dominant language. As noted in chapter 2.5 Freire (1972) argues that a liberated mind is also a self-directed mind, willing and able to learn without having to be led. By asking students to speak in their non-dominant language are they being led by their American partner and, thereby, engaging in their own oppression? A peace education program can only be defined as such if the practices are emancipatory in nature. Language, as representative of power dynamics, is an inductive realization by the researcher that spans all partnerships and will be examined and compared, both within and between organizational, substantive and theoretical categories.

NARRATIVES

There was an emphasis placed on the sharing of individual and collective narratives by both sets of students. Students in Esteklal noted eleven times in a forty-five minute focus group that they looked forward to the opportunity to share their culture, their ideas, tell the Americans the truth

about Tunisia, and to emphasize the positive aspects of their country and culture. In regards to sharing culture, students noted, "It is important to know their problems and for them to know ours. But we are proud of our accomplishments and want to share them. I am interested to talk to them about our religion and how important it is to us" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group). Students repeatedly noted the pride they feel about their culture and their eagerness to share that with Urban Assembly but also believed that their American partner might have a very different perspective on what Tunisia is and what defines it. When the students were asked for clarification, they noted that, "Whenever they (Americans) hear about Tunisia they hear about terrorism and we want to tell them that it is not that bad here. We are not affected by that "(Esteklal, pre-program focus group). There was a group affirmation on this point and a further note that they believed that the Americans will not background on Tunisia and that it was subsequently their responsibility to defend and honor their culture. One student noted that this program could possibly improve tourism to Tunisia that would be beneficial to both parties. This was the first instance that students believed that there could be a financial, political, and social improvement as a result of the Youth Talk program.

While LEE students routinely noted the importance of sharing Tunisia with BAL there was less of an emphasis placed on understanding American culture. There were eight instances of "making friends" noted by the Tunisian students but these notions were often followed by the rationale that because, "we already know American culture" it will be easy to connect with BAL. When the Tunisians students were asked about their knowledge/understanding of American culture, music, movies, videogames, pop culture were all mentioned as representative of their understanding Esteklal, pre-program focus group). During this focus group the educator also noted that she is routinely amazed at the amount of knowledge her students have on American culture. She argued that, "my students know everything about America"(Esteklal, pre-program focus group).

BAL also noted the importance of sharing their culture and their community. Perspective was a term raised on four separate occasions pertaining to a wish to examine the perspectives both schools had on a variety of topics (BAL, pre-program focus group). When students at BAL were asked what perspectives, experiences and overall insights they wanted to share regarding their community and culture difference was raised quite often. Students described themselves as different in the eyes of their Tunisian counterparts (BAL, pre-program focus group). They noted that difference was not intended to be a negative but were excited to share a different perspective of American culture than, perhaps, what the Tunisians were expected. A student followed up this point by noting that she viewed her school community as average. Average meant both typical and lacking diversity in her opinion. When asked for clarification, she described the community in the Bronx as close, lively, funny, and family orientated but that, "everyone is either Black or Latino, so we don't have much diversity" (BAL, pre-program focus group). This comment was met with almost uniform group agreement, except from a student who noted that her religion makes her unique within the school community.

7.1.2 IVC OBSERVATIONS

Several logistical issues plagued Esteklal and BAL's IVCs over the course of the school year. Due to the fact that BAL's Youth Talk program is a morning club, organizing an IVC where all students were on time and prepared to engage was a difficult task for the educator and the students. The second IVC was forced to become IVCs because at the onset, only two students were present BAL. At the end of the IVC only five students from BAL were present.

Technological issues also raised several problems regarding ease of communication and connectivity. In the second half of the first IVC, LEE's connection dropped four times and both schools accounted for nine total technology based issues in. The second IVC did Due to these issues, the first two IVCs were divided into four separate IVCs.

Due to the difficulties in communication during the first IVC there was limited dialogical exchange between the students. In the *Community Lens* activity students were asked to share pictures of their school community, which would elicit questions from their partner schools. LEE asked, "what is was like living in one of the word's most popular cities", where students responded that New York is not as "spectacular" as someone might think and that, "there are a lot of run down places too"(IVC 1: LEE and BAL). BAL made efforts throughout the first IVC to focus on their unique experience in the Bronx, as compared to all of New York City. These efforts resulted in a student at LEE asking BAL what the ugly side to New York is. There was an immediate response by BAL with all students sharing various ideas amongst themselves. Poverty, crime, drugs, and racism were all mentioned as issues plaguing their society, with considerable amount of attention given to racism with a focus on police brutality. The same question was raised to Esteklal, which responded that, "we have many problems like crime, poverty, drugs and bullying"(IVC 1: Esteklal and BAL). However, there were no specifics or follow up discussions based on this response during this first IVC.

The researcher made an observation on a BAL response, where a student noted that there is a lot of diversity in their community, which results in significant exchanges between cultures. This statement runs in direct contradiction to a point made to the researcher during the pre-program focus group, where students noted that they did not have diversity in their community because the school community is primarily composed of two ethnicities.

The second IVC saw a transition into more personal reflections by the students. While two students at LEE shared personal triumphs, including acceptance into a top-level university and overcoming nervousness in having a life changing experience as a musician, one student shared a brief experience of an attempted kidnapping that she escaped from. While there was no response from the students at BAL regarding the experience during this IVC, they immediately began sharing incidences of personal struggle following the LEE student's story. The two narratives

included parent abandonment, alcoholism and domestic abuse. LEE students showed collective surprise upon hearing the experiences, shown through body language. One student from Tunisia on both occasions said the following to the BAL students who spoke:

"I hear your story and I'm sorry for that. I really respect you for staying strong and getting through that. I hope that nothing like that happens in your life again."

"I'm really sorry for that. Don't think that way actually. You should never think about it like that. The most important thing is you're here. Try to love your mom and your dad"

The point at which the LEE student said, "The most important thing is you're here", the student at BAL motioned to her face symbolizing that the LEE student's words were going to make her cry.

This interaction changed the dynamic of the subsequent IVCs with a student from Esteklal opening up the next IVC with the following statement:

"I think we are closer now. Distance doesn't mean anything anymore because of this videoconference. So I think we are family now".

These reflections began an open discussion pertaining to their Global Citizens Projects with both focusing on growing inequalities in their respected communities. Esteklal is focusing on educational inequality while BAL chose to examine gentrification in the Bronx. Both groups stressed the importance of bringing awareness to the issues but both groups also emphasized their interest in helping each other's projects. Both schools also noted the influence and power that those with money can have on developing social policies within their communities and how the government of both nations should be held accountable. During this exchange efforts were made by students to connect over social media, apart from the GNG/BoU networking site, GNG Connect.

By the third IVC the schools had decided to carry on with their own individual projects but to actively provide feedback to one another. Issues regarding student attendance were no longer an issue after the third IVC and students began to take a more active role in the IVCs with their

teachers stepping away from being active facilitators. Trust continued to be a common theme, with students referring to information and reflections they had shared from the program on social media. The themes of gentrification and educational inequality became clearer, as students from both schools began to understand the meaning and implications of the respective topics. BAL chose to share a student poem, which was the first attempt at sharing a talent or hobby. LEE continued to share student talents and culture as students attended the third IVC wearing a variety of Moroccan clothing, which they provided a detailed description of each. Students from BAL were late for the following class as a result of refusing to leave as this instructional lesson on Moroccan culture was being conducted.

7.1.3 MID-PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP

The mid-program focus group addressed specific themes that had emerged both in the pre-program focus group and IVCs. Students were asked to respond to a series of questions related to specific experiences during the IVCs and to reassess ideas and opinions from the previous data collection periods. The most prevalent theme that emerged during this mid-program focus group was a reshaping of the narrative students had begun the program with. Based on IVC observations and the pre-program focus group, questions were presented with the following thematic concepts in mind.

TRUST

The personal stories from both schools transformed the dynamic within in the IVC. A student from LEE was surprised by direction this partnership had taken, noting that what she had believed she knew about Americans was limited:

> I am still so surprised that they shared those stories with us. I mean, we had only talked a few times and they were comfortable telling us that, I mean Wow. The stories were horrible too, I didn't think things like that could happen there but then they also looked happy. It is sad but they are so strong. I really admire them (Mid-Program Focus Group, LEE).

The notion of trust appeared throughout this focus group, where students noted on five separate occasions that they felt comfortable around each other, even though they were speaking through videoconference. When asked how they are viewing BAL at this mid point in the program, family was noted by five students, with four others saying friend.

BAL students were less than clear regarding notions of trust in comparison to LEE. However, at the midpoint of the program a BAL student shared that they had shared social media information via GNG Connect. This was the first mention of students utilizing GNG Connect, but such an act was done to connect to their partner student's private social media accounts. Within the same discussion BAL students described LEE students as open-minded, peaceful, talented, and nice, but also intimidated by their academic ability. Yet, BAL concluded the mid-program focus group by noting,

"We're talking to them respectfully and I'm doing this because I want to be friends with them. It's peaceful. We aren't talking about peace but we're being peaceful"(BAL mid-program focus group).

CHANGING NARRATIVES

BAL was honest in noting that they had done no prior work to learn about Tunisia. Subsequently, by the mid-program focus group, BAL reflected that students were self-conscious about their lack of resources and knowledge on Tunisia, while also being highly impressed by, "how smart the students from Tunisia were". LEE's language ability, openness to discuss issues, and general knowledge led a BAL student to identify the BAL community, in comparison, as "average". In comparison to other Youth Talk schools, BAL experienced a change in personal narrative (how they saw themselves). This change in narrative related to their academics, sense of diversity, and local community. In addition, when the topic of peace was presented, BAL students argued that peace relates to, "getting along, understanding, having fun, avoiding arguments and war, understanding difference and knowing how to work with those differences". When asked whether

LEE had the same understanding of peace, all the BAL students, through verbal and nonverbal cues, said yes.

7.1.4 POST-PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP

Both schools ended their participation in the program abruptly. As noted earlier, the partnership was plagued by inconsistency and a lack of community support. Due to LEE being forced by school administration to end the program, the researcher was unable to conduct a post-program focus group or teacher interview. This development also coincided with BAL ending all communication with GNG and the researcher upon program completion. Despite attempts made by the researcher to connect with both schools, a final focus group was unable to be scheduled. BAL has continued the Youth Talk Program but have focused on utilizing a course where Youth Talk can be implemented directly into the curriculum instead of as an outside club.

7.2 Arabian Pearl Gulf School (APG) & Berkshire School (BS)

APG and BS are the only private schools examined as a part of this research project. Youth Talk was implemented within specific school courses. For BS students Youth Talk is a part of their Islam, Christianity and Judaism senior course elective and for APG students, Youth Talk is a part of their Creativity, Action, Service requirement in the International Baccalaureate Program. The impact that a private school structure has had on the Youth Talk program's implementation, sustainability and impact will be further addressed in Chapter 8. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that this pairing was the only one out of the three that remained on schedule and finished the program at the expected end date. Consequently, pre, mid and post program focus groups were easily arranged and conducted. Due to the fact that this pairing was student led as opposed to moderator led, teachers rarely provided greater insight or clarification during the focus groups and in the APG's case, the educator often left the classroom entirely during the focus group. The four IVCs were the same with both teachers never appearing on camera. The themes that

emerged from this pairing were unique and will be identified below. The analysis behind such thematic development will be presented in Chapter 8.

7.2.1 PRE-PROGRAM

The following themes emerged within this first pre-program focus group informing subsequent questions in mid and post program exchanges.

STUDENT-LED

Students from both APG and BS placed significant emphasis on this pairing being unique in its student-moderated approach to the program. Prior to the pre-program IVCs four student leaders from BS and three from APG had met online to informally discuss the overall program. BS students noted the word control on seven different occasions regarding their involvement in Youth Talk. APG noted this is the 5th year they have been involved in the program and this experience had led to gain greater confidence as a school community in engaging in more of a student-centered approach. One student noted,

> "I appreciate our school because they are always allowing us to stretch our comfort zone. I think we are an opened minded community and that is why this program will be successful. It will only help us grow more confident"(Pre-program IVC, APG).

BS students also argued on three separate occasions that APG and BS shared similar goals and expectations going into the IVCs because made a conscientious effort to engage in a student-led approach to the program. This commonality also led an APG student to note that people will be more open-minded to the program and the discussions that result because of this student-centered approach. This comment was met with significant group affirmation in the form of head nodding.

BS shared this argument in once sense but differed greatly when addressed from an American context. One BS student noted that both APG and BS,

"Obviously we share similar goals because we are both a part of this program and leading it, but students in Bahrain have slightly different goals because America is more well known than Bahrain but the end goal is the same" (Pre-Program Focus Group, BS).

The fact that this pairing is student-led impacted the role of the teacher with the first focus group. APS's teacher did not appear on camera and stepped out of the room. His actions will be addressed more specifically in the educator interviews below. In comparison, the BS teacher only spoken three times to encourage student involvement but did not appear on camera either. This lack of direct teacher involvement was a stark difference when compared to the other focus groups. Students from APG and BS freely engaged in the focus group with every student speaking at least once.

CULTURE

Learning new cultures, understanding culture and finding similarities between the two cultures was mentioned nineteen times over the course of both pre-program focus groups. APG specifically noted the word culture thirteen times in reference to what they perceived as the purpose in engaging in Youth Talk. Within these thirteen statements an emphasis was placed on understanding how Americans, and specifically BS students think. There was a perceived purpose in conducting the IVCs as understanding culture and both schools believed that they could have a strong understand of each other's respective cultures after four IVCs. However, both schools were unsure whether this partnership would continue after the four IVCs. When asked for further clarification BS and APG gave mirrored responses.

"Since the school has been doing this for five years I think the Berkshires has an interest in continuing the conversation with Bahrain but not sure if Bahrain would be interested" (Pre-program IVC, BS)

"We want both schools to find the answers to the questions they have but we aren't sure if the American school will want to continue the conversation afterwards" (Pre-program IVC, APG).

The BS's belief that APG may not want to continue the partnership was not based on any concrete evidence. Students had limited background knowledge on Bahrain, other than noting its general location and that, "it looks like Dubai, because I think it is close to it" (Pre-program IVC,

APG). Research conducted on Bahrain prior to the partnership commencing was solely student self-directed. Due to the nature of BS students participating in this partnership through a religious based course, students noted that due to their newfound knowledge in Islam they had greater confidence in engaging with APG. According to BS, this understanding in Islam enabled greater confidence in addressing complex religious rooted or related topics.

In contrast, students from Bahrain were confident in engaging with their American partner based on their experience with American culture. This experience was rooted in pop culture, music and movies. However, one student noted,

> "I want to see how different American culture is from what we see in movies or the media. We know a lot about Americas through these things but I think it is very different from what we see and hear" (Pre-program Focus Group, APG).

STEREOTYPES & GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Both APG and BS regard understanding culture as a primary purpose behind the Youth Talk Program. Both schools also noted that through understanding culture they want to actively address stereotypes. BS argued that through actively addressing stereotypes they are working towards peace.

> "Connecting with people around the world, from a different standpoint, helps us see how they see us and how we see ourselves"(Pre-program Focus Group, BS).

It took ten minutes into the focus group for the students from BS to begin mentioning the word stereotypes and by the end of the fifty-minute focus-group the word was mentioned eighteen times. It took fifteen minutes into the focus group for the discussion on stereotypes to also involve terrorism. Terrorism was used as the primary example of stereotypes regarding Bahrain from the BS student's perspective. Terrorism was also used in reference to Global Citizenship. Global Citizenship implied an understanding of other cultures, which included addressing terrorism according to three BS students. One student noted that the Paris terrorist attacks

(December 2015) had recently taken place and in that same week they had the opportunity to visit

a local Mosque. One student reflected,

"After meeting the people at the Mosque and seeing kids wrestling and singing and playing and after seeing an Islamic service I see things differently now. I am definitely breaking down stereotypes since ISIS is nothing like the Muslim religion. One thing that hit me was what the Imam said, "when you kill one person you are killing all of humanity" (Pre-program Focus Group, BS).

Following this statement another student raised the point that,

"I don't think ISIS is in Bahrain so I don't think Paris will have an impact but how they view terrorism will be interesting to see" (Preprogram Focus Group, BS).

In contrast APG never mentioned the word terrorism in regards to stereotypes or global

citizenship. One APG student did note,

"There are a lot of stereotypes about Arabs and, you know, we are trying to get to know people, who they really are. We want to know how they view themselves and what they think some stereotypes are of Americans and Arabs"(Preprogram Focus Group, APG).

Global citizenship and stereotypes were noted in direct reference to the courses that the students

were enrolled in while participating in Youth Talk. When the researcher asked the nature of the

student's stereotypes, two BS students noted,

"Our class has helped me definitely break down some stereotypes, since I know ISIS is nothing like the Muslim religion" (Pre-program Focus Group, BS).

"The things we've gone over in class I think gives us more understanding and confidence going into the IVCs" (Pre-program Focus Group, BS).

PEACE

The meaning and importance of peace was a point of considerable discussion for both schools.

While both schools noted that they were unfamiliar with the term peace education, both believed

that their engagement in Youth Talk was a form of peace education. Both students pointed to the

need to find general cohesiveness in how they see and understand our global community. One

APG student noted that peace means, "acceptance, in order to live safe communities free from

disturbance" (Pre-program Focus Group, APG). This response was met with universal agreement

amongst the class, where other noted that "in order to live happy, acceptance is important" Pre-program Focus Group, APG). In comparison the BS students were quite clear in their argument that "we", in reference to the entire world, is not at peace because of the ongoing threat from ISIS but that at a personal level we (in reference to just BS, are at peace. When students were asked how to engage in peacebuilding, APG students noted that all people have different questions that they need answered. "I want both schools to find answers to their questions, which is making peace" Pre-program Focus Group, APG). BS students also noted the need to work with their partner school, which serves as an example of peacebuilding. "Working towards general cohesiveness at achieving peace which can only be done by working with people at the same level" (Pre-program Focus Group, BS).

7.2.2 EDUCATOR PRE-PROGRAM INTERVIEW

Due to BS and APG engaging in a student-led IVC program, both educators had experience in implementing Youth Talk within their class curricula. Subsequently, time was allotted to student preparation and reflection prior to and after each IVC. Both educators were also confident in their understanding of the purpose behind Youth Talk. The APG educator noted that the program,

"Emerged because of 9-11 to bring the two cultures from the Middle East and the US together through communication to have better understanding of each other and to address stereotypes"(Pre-program Teacher interview, APG).

The BS educator also noted 9-11 in reference to the purpose of the program in noting,

"9-11 had a major impact on how we engage with others. Dialogue is important and I think that Youth Talk is an effective form of dialogue" (Pre-program Teacher Interview, BS).

Both educators noted that Youth Talk is a form of dialogue and an effective form of dialogue.

"There is a definitely a focus on global education. Global communication or dialogue with another school is essential and I think Youth Talk is a great way for our students to engage in dialogue"(Pre-program Teacher Interview, APG).

The APG educator further pointed to the importance of bringing students together from different cultures in order to address stereotypes, be open-minded, and embrace the concept of a global

citizen. The BS educator highlighted the importance of global citizenship at BS in relation to "avoiding the bubble" that students can get trapped in.

In regards to peace education, both educators were unfamiliar with the term, but both assumed that it meant using education as a peacebuilding tool. In order to use education as such a tool the APG educator highlighted the importance of students continuing the conversation after the IVCs and beyond. However, both educators noted the difficult in navigating the GNG Connect.

7.2.3 IVC OBSERVATIONS

Due to this IVC pairing being student led, the educators were rarely present on camera. There were incidences where the educators could be heard giving instructions to their students but both groups of students had the freedom to stand, ask a question, or respond to questions. However, both groups of students operated from pre-ordained questions that provided a structure to the IVCs. Each IVC consisted of a new student facilitator from each school. Both groups also utilized a projector and microphone set up that enabled all students to be heard and seen.

The first IVC functioned as an opportunity for students to get to know each other and their respective schools. Culture was an overwhelming theme throughout the discussions where APG asked BS to define American culture within a boarding school. BS noted,

"The US, culturally, is very different and being at a boarding school with students from all over makes it very different. I'm from the South but I go to school in the North but it is very different"(1st IVC, APG-BS).

The discussion on culture transitioned into a BS student asking, "would any of you move to the US permanently for school or economic reasons?"(1st IVC, APG-BS). This discussion lasted fifteen minutes with a follow up question from BS focusing on what specific aspects of the United States attracts students from Bahrain. The reaction from the APG students was varied. One student emphasized that she would not hesitate to move from Bahrain because of the lack of

opportunities. Others noted that opportunities exist in Bahrain and that they are considering a number of opportunities for college. APG did not ask, at any point during this first IVC or subsequent ones, whether BS students had considered moving to the MENA region.

The most significant interaction of the first IVC was when a female student from BS asked whether ISIS has had impact on Bahrain. APG students immediately reacted with smiles to one another when the word, "ISIS" was mentioned but some also gave a series of grimaces to one another. The first response from an APG student was to note that "they" do not agree with ISIS and that ISIS does not represent Islam. Two other students arguing that they do not support ISIS followed this exchange. The third student noted,

"We just want to clarify to you that we are not terrorists. And we want to know if you think we are terrorists because we are not" (1st IVC, APG).

In response a BS student clarified their question in saying,

"We are not saying that you guys are associated with ISIS but we just wanted to know whether the refugees is affecting you guys and whether the backlash from Iraq and Syria is coming any where close to Bahrain"(1st IVC, BS).

In response,

"In Bahrain we are not really affected by what is going on with ISIS and the Bahraini government does not provide access to refugees so it does not affect us" (1st IVC, APG).

The second IVC transitioned away from the conversations presented during the first IVC and focused on the projects each school were planning on completing within the program. Both schools chose to focus on educating their respective communities in environmental policy. APG chose to focus on littering and recycling while BS wanted to focus on sustainability, regarding water usage, clean energy adoption, and the distribution of resources and literature on environmental policy. However, there was an obvious absence in tackling the political, religious, and social themes that were raised in the first IVC. This development will be addressed in the post-program focus group for both schools.

The APG student facilitator was never without the schedule for the 2nd IVC and read directly from the piece of the paper on numerous occasions. The time when the schedule and prompts were not used was during the student talent showcase where music, general questions, and personal questions began to emerge. The talent showcase ended with one APG student asking,

"How did your opinion of us change from the last IVC"(2nd IVC, APG).

BS asked for clarity regarding whether the question was for them as a country or them as individuals, for which APG said "both".

A BS student noted,

"I did a little research and I realized that as a country you are a lot more developed than what I first realized and as teenagers I realized we can relate a lot more on a personal level" (2nd IVC, BS).

Throughout the third IVC the BS educator took a more active role in the IVC, dictating the questions and points to make to APG. This development resulted in the conversation focusing on the US presidential election within the first quarter of the 3rd IVC. One BS student asked,

"As foreigners, as foreign, what do you guys really think about Donald Trump and would you guys have a big issue if he became President of the United States" (3rd IVC, BS).

APG students responded,

"The way Donald Trump is usually portrayed in social media is as xenophobic and a lot of jokes are made about him, usually about hairstyle. But it usually about how offensive he is to other cultures and how xenophobic he is" (3rd IVC, APG).

The conversation then transitioned again to their group projects where BS students constructed the majority of the questions. Within the first sixteen minutes of the IVC, APG students only responded to BS student questions. The first question offered by APG students referred the winter weather BS students were experiencing. Upon answering the APG student's weather related question, the BS educator prompted their student to ask the APG students about their weather.

At the midway point of the IVC the BS students again veered the conversation towards politics,

asking APG students,

"We did some research on Bahrain and found out that there is a US Naval base in Bahrain and we wanted to know if that shaped your opinion of Americans" (3rd IVC, BS).

In response,

" I don't think the US Naval base is making as much effect on our opinion of Americans as media does. I think media shapes our opinion about other cultures more than the naval base does (4th IVC, APG).

" Most of our opinions are influenced by the media and entertainment like movies and TV shows. Most of our entertainment is Western movies and TV shows" (4th IVC, APG).

To follow up on this response, BS students asked how often interactions occurred between

American military personnel and Bahrainis, to which, APG noted that there is little to no

interaction between the groups.

As the IVC turned towards its final stages it was obvious that BS students again shifted the

conversation towards Bahraini perceptions of Americans. BS students asked APG students how

their opinions of Americans have been shaped by movies. Two APG students noted,

"Some stereotypes of Americans are that Black People, African Americans, are viewed as criminals, one of the stereotypes is that Americans are overweight. That Americans are not very smart, fat, and ignorant of other cultures. I'm not saying this is true. The other is that most of your food is from McDonalds. No offense"(4th IVC, APG).

These comments were met with several students from APG putting their hands over their mouth,

putting their head down or throwing their hands in the air towards the students. One APG student

took the microphone immediately after the student comments and emphasized,

"Just to make things clear, these are just stereotypes and you guys have been able to prove that these are all incorrect. These are just things that we have seen in movies. In social media they are joked about but they are not our personal opinions" (3rd IVC, APG).

Students from APG and BS exchanged several examples of nonverbal communication during this

comment. Following the statement that BS students have negated the above-mentioned

stereotypes, APG students shared a thumbs up and BS students responded with heart symbols and their own thumbs up.

With twenty-minutes left in the IVC APG students asked their first question of the IVC relating to what stereotypes the BS students had of them. One BS student noted,

"Some ignorant Americans would say that everyone wears Turbans or are terrorists or something like that. We do think anything like that here but there is a lot of Islamaphobia in the United States" (3rd IVC, BS).

BS students then asked what the state of Shia, Sunni relations are in Bahrain because one stereotype is that there are " a lot of killings between Shia and Sunni".

APG argued,

"In Bahrain, specifically, there is no killing or anything like that. It is more about peace but there is conflict between certain people like extremists in Shia and Sunni" (3rd IVC, APG).

"I'm Shia and my best friend is Sunni. We can get along but there are some people who choose not to" (3rd IVC, APG).

The fourth IVC began with a focus on leadership where students were asked to identify leaders who inspire their respective student populations. APG chose leaders from India, United States, and Great Britain, while BS chose leaders from Afghanistan, and the United States. This conversation quickly transitioned to their global citizenship project, where each group presented their project and current status. While both groups designed projects on environmental sustainability neither group had begun their program initiatives, but both schools promised to update each other in the future on their progress.

Following the project update students engaged in a general question and answer period on a variety of topics. Students ask each other questions on their respective political systems, social issues, and sports. There were limited follow up questions on a respective topic but considerable

time was given to the US election where APG students asked BS where they stand on policies and who they would vote for. APG students argued,

"First of all, concerning the wall, I and probably most of the class disagree with it and we should be fostering immigrants because we are a country of immigrants. Concerning Trump's recent success, studies show he is reaching out to the less educated people in our society, so you might look at videos and wonder who would vote for him. The way that he talks incites support from the less educated people who do not vote. So in my opinion he is everything that is wrong with our democracy and I hope he doesn't get any more support"(4th IVC, BS).

This response led BS students to ask whether APG's opinions of the United States would change if Trump were elected president.

"Personally, I don't think my opinion would get any worse or it wouldn't change on America because from what I see a very large majority of Americans don't agree with Trump and if it were up to them he wouldn't be present, so I would actually pity Americans if he became president" (4th IVC, APG).

Students finished their last IVC reflecting on what they had learned from the program. BS noted that,

"I didn't know a whole lot about the Middle East or Bahrain and I learned a lot about your culture and you just seemed so similar to me. We're all just kids around the world and we just seem similar to me"(4th IVC, BS).

"Even though we are two countries that are far apart, we have problems that we can help each other with" (4th IVC, APG).

APG noted,

"Personally, I have enjoyed the IVC and enjoyed the contact. It gave me new perspective and it was a breath of fresh air for me and I hope we continue to contact on GNG.org. Thank You"(4th IVC, APG).

7.2.4 MID-PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP

The mid-program focus group addressed specific themes that had emerged both in the pre-program focus group and IVCs. Students were asked to respond to a series of questions related to specific experiences during the IVCs and to reassess ideas and opinions from the previous data collection periods. The following themes emerged.

AWKWARDNESS

Both APG and BS noted that the initial IVC was a difficult, and at times, awkward interaction with their partner school. While student leaders from each school had the opportunity to meet each other prior to the first IVC, it did not negate feelings of nervousness and tension. Students from APG expressed that during the first IVC they felt,

"Tense. The whole thing was unexpected, interesting, but we were all nervous. It felt creepy, because we were just looking at each other" (Mid-Program Focus Group, APG).

APG students also noted on three different occasions during the focus group that they felt that the BS students had an agenda going into the Youth Talk. According to APG, this agenda was driven by the course that the BS students were enrolled in, where much of the questions that BS asked related to topics about religion. An APG student remarked,

"Friendship can be built if both sides are on the same page, but I don't think we are. They (BS) have a lot of questions they want answered"(APG Mid-Program Focus Group).

The notion of being on different pages led to a discussion with APG students on the awkwardness of the partnership thus far. APG believed that they had a different purpose in participating in the Youth Talk program, which related to addressing stereotypes, while BS wanted to talk about religion and terrorism. Other APG students remarked that instead of awkward, the first IVCs felt tense, nervous, but interesting. In comparison, the 2nd IVC evoked feelings of comfort, enjoyment, and open. Students remarked that the different between the two IVCs related to questions to the topic of the discussions. The first IVC revolved understanding personal geography, an area that neither school had addressed prior to the IVC. An APG student remarked,

"Location kind of defines culture, so knowing each other's location you can guess what the other person's culture is so you don't offend them"(Mid-Program Focus Group).

Notions of being trying not to be offensive dominated the interactions in the first IVC for APG.

A student remarked,

"When a sensitive topic was brought up about terrorism, we were a bit aggressive about defending ourselves, so maybe that offended them, but we tried not to be offensive, so when they

asked us about stereotypes about their own country we tried to refrain from doing it"(APG Mid-Program Focus Group).

Sentiments regarding not making offensive comments directed at BS dictated much of the mid-program focus group. This perspective was explained by an APG student, which will be more directly addressed in stereotypes.

In regards to BS, students believed that the APG students had an agenda in addressing stereotypes. which made the first two IVCs awkward at times. A BS student noted,

"They think we have all these stereotypes of them, but we don't really, but they kept wanting to talk about it, so that was interesting"(BS Mid Program Focus Group).

BS students went on to note that the APG student's defensiveness regarding terrorism made such topics, "hot topics", but that their (BS) own lack of knowledge regarding the region, specifically Bahrain, made the exchanges awkward. "Most of us didn't even know Bahrain existed until the IVCs"(BS Mid Program Focus Group).

STEREOTYPES

The BS-APG partnership was the fastest pairing to begin discussing notions of terrorism. The fact that a BS student raised a question regarding ISIS, led an APG students to reflect.

"We were already expecting that topic (terrorism) so we saw it coming",

"The minute it was brought up they became more hesitant and they wanted to defend their point better and maybe they just worded it wrong",

"They didn't want to offend us, so after they said they tried to change what they said, because they didn't want to offend us"(APG Mid-Program Focus Group).

APG students did note that they realized that the question posed by BS was not directed at them, while BS students were not sure whether they understood that the question was regarding the refugee crisis. BS students did not feel like they were offensive during the IVC, but also remarked,

"There are more stereotypes that they (APG) have of us than we (BS) have of them (APG) because the US is just in the news so much more, so they're more defensive on when something like ISIS comes up because that's the big stereotype people have of them" (BS Mid-Program Focus Group).

However, APG students remarked that during the second IVC,

> "They were very surprised how we were open to YouTube or expect us to know about songs. They thought that we were living under a rock or something. But I was not expecting them to know much about Bahrain. People think, in general, that we are under-developing"(APG Mid-Program Focus Group).

Follow this reflection, APG students spent fifteen minutes discussing perceived stereotypes they had Americans. Students were asked by the researcher, "would you mention these stereotypes to the students at BS?". Students unanimously responded that they would not mention any of the stereotypes they had of Americans, because they feel that the Americans would be offended. APG students remarked at the end of the focus group that, "we want the school (BS) to see us in a positive way"(APG Mid-Program Focus Group).

SAMENESS

Notions of commonality and "sameness" emerged early in the mid program focus group. BS students were surprised about how laid-back APG was during the IVCs, expecting them to be serious throughout, but a BS student noted,

> "They're more like us. They weren't super serious which was cool"(BS Mid-Program Focus Group).

BS students also reflected that they were surprised that APG students listen to the same music and know the same bands,

> "They seem just like any American School. They just seem pretty similar to me, so they're pretty much like us, they're just teenagers"(BS Mid-Program Focus Group).

In regards to APG, the student comment regarding their surprise at BS students being surprised at the level of "development", was immediately followed by students noting,

> "We listen to the same music as them, we see the same movies, we all teenagers, we do the same things"(APG Mid-Program Focus Group).

However, notions of sameness were not complimented with a belief that

7.2.5 POST PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP

The post-program focus group addressed specific themes that had emerged throughout the focus groups and IVCs. Students were asked to respond to a series of questions related to reflect on the program as a whole and reassess ideas and opinions from the previous data collection periods. The following themes emerged.

SAMENESS

Notions of "sameness" dominated both school's post program focus groups. During the BS post-program focus group the subject of "sameness" was raised eleven times in a forty-five minute session. Students defined "sameness" in respect to how much relateability existed between the school communities. In comparison, APG students commented,

"We're so similar but we don't realize it",

"In the end we're all a bunch of teenagers regardless of our cultures and religions".

BS students explained "sameness" in regards to APG students listening to the same music, watching the same movies, and experiencing the same teenage issues. In comparison, APG noted that the Youth Talk Program gave them the opportunity to see how similar all teenage students are around the world, and that despite disparities in culture, we all have similar lives.

However, relateability did not result in consistent communication. APG and BS ended all communication upon program competition. Also, APG did not believe that BS wanted to continue this partnership or Skype on a continuous schedule.

STEREOTYPES

The interaction regarding ISIS from the first IVC was brought up by both schools during the focus group. APG continued to believe that BS students viewed them as "hotheaded" and "extremely defensive". BS believed that addressing stereotypes was the most critical purpose of the Youth Talk Program. Criticisms of the media were used to justify the adoption and continuation of Youth Talk in its ability to counter stereotypes. However, APG believed that

stereotypes prevented other people from viewing Arabs as peaceful and some of those stereotypes still exist. At the post program stage an APG student reflected,

"A major stereotype is that all Muslims are terrorists and many Americans still have it" (APG Post Program Focus Group).

This sentiment continued when relating stereotypes to peace, "most people think it's (peace) there, but it's not. It is the number one objective that should be reached but just isn't" (APG Post-Program Focus Group). In comparison BS students argued that Youth Talk provided them with an opportunity to, "break stereotypes, have fun, and try and understand others without judgment. BS argued that breaking down stereotypes were the first step in understanding "how were are all the fame"(BS Post Program Focus Group)

7.2.6 EDUCATOR POST-PROGRAM INTERVIEW GROUP

Both educators highlighted the importance of using a student-led approach in the program. APG, reflected,

"In the classroom my students often look to me in the classroom for help or an answer. This is not the case with Youth Talk. An educator within the Youth Talk should be a facilitator and nothing more. Youth Talk also believes the same and the student-centered approach has made them more comfortable".

The BS educator echoed the same sentiment and stated,

"I don't want to move away from a student-centered model. Forcing them to tackle awkwardness, technology, and just having a conversation is really important, without me helping them the whole time".

However, both educators noted that they felt their students needed more training in how to facilitate dialogue amongst each other. One training session was not considered enough. APG also emphasized more student training based on a language perspective. APG argued,

"There is a disadvantage of speaking only in English for my students. Students are embarrassed to be wrong or make a mistake. This is why there needs to be some critical reflection for students prior to the program"

The BS educator never raised language, but when the educator raised whether language might play a role in the exchanges, he noted,

"Its possible that all US counterparts in the program might be missing something because it is not in their native tongue".

However, both educators, while raising some concerns over language, did argue that the program enables students to address global citizenship and focus on awareness and competiveness. Both educators noted that being better prepared to engage with others made them more capable of competing in a variety of future careers.

Finally, when asked to address whether Youth Talk is a dialogue based program considering differences in language, limited IVCs, and the fact that none of their students have continued speaking with each other post program, both educators believed it was dialogue. The BS educator noted, "We might not see a change in our students until much later".

7.3 Ajloun AMIDEAST/Access & Edwardsburg High School

The Ajloun-Edwardsburg partnership presented the researcher with a unique situation. The Ajloun educator, while having committed herself to the project, believed that it entailed too much work, thereby; allowing her students to conduct limited preparation work and limited engagement during the program. In contrast, the Edwardsburg educator conducted outside program reflection and became highly involved in the organization and planning of the partnership in order to save it. Data collection is subsequently varied, which will be further addressed in Chapters 8 & 9. Ajloun only engaged in a post-program focus group and their engagement during the IVCs was highly limited.

7.3.1 PRE-PROGRAM

The pre-program focus group was only conducted with Edwardsburg. Despite communication with the educator from Ajloun, from both GNG three separate focus groups and myself were scheduled and then rescheduled. Greater detail will be provided regarding the Ajloun,

Edwardsburg partnership, as technological problems and organizational issues on the part consistently plagued the partnership.

In comparison, the Edwardsburg educator provided consistent reflections throughout the research process. The following themes emerged within this first pre-program focus group with Edwardsburg, informing subsequent questions in mid and post program exchanges.

CULTURE

Culture was mentioned eight times in a thirty-five minute discussion. These sentiments related to understanding a culture other than their own, but also coming to understand their own culture a bit more, based on how another country's views them. One student reflected,

> "The entire school is interested in breaking that wall because it is a part of our daily lives to see the way that one person feels about another culture",

> "It is a really importance experience to get to another culture and get to know people on a more personal level".

The wall referenced things that prevent people from getting to know each other. In order to support this philosophy the educator and students chose not to conduct prior research on Jordan to avoid them forming additional biases and stereotypes prior to starting the IVCs.

STEREOTYPES

Following the discussion on understanding culture and conducting limiting pre-program research, students noted that they felt a major purpose behind the Youth Talk Program was to actively address stereotypes. Many of the stereotypes that they addressed were ones they expected Ajloun to have of them which included, "preppy", one of those American schools from TV or the movies, urban, and big". When asked whether they felt Ajloun had the same goals, Edwardsburg believed,

"I think their goals are kinda similar but I think they probably want to know more about how we speak, because Mr. K (Edwardsburg educator) told us that their English is broken, so I think they probably want to work on their English",

"I think they want to break that boundary of biased opinions about each other, because I think there are people here who have different opinions towards them, so until we talk with them on a personal level some things won't be talked about",

"Maybe they want to change the stereotypes that they think we have of them",

"There is a lot going on between the United States and the Middle East so maybe they want us to come together".

Peace was also mentioned in regards to stereotypes and a large collection of students did not believe Ajloun has the same definition of peace because, "they have a lot of different issues and problems over there that are different then us."

CHANGE

The end of the pre-program focus group focused completely on changes that Edwardsburg students want to make on their community. Dress code, and more freedom were brought up as examples, but no examples were made in regards to changes that might be informed by Youth Talk.

7.3.2 EDUCATOR PRE-PROGRAM INTERVIEW

In a similar fashion to the pre-program focus group, the pre-program interview with the Ajloun educator was never conducted. Efforts were made by GNG and the researcher to schedule individual meetings but they were also rescheduled on two separate occasions, eventually leading to zero communication until the post program focus group. In comparison, the Edwardsburg educator conducted a two part, pre-program interview regarding the nature of Youth Talk, his involvement with Global Nomads Group, and global citizenship.

The Edwardsburg educator had extensive experience with the Youth Talk Program, which involved helping to develop parts of the Youth Talk curriculum. Much of the pre-program interview revolved around the pre-program planning that the Edwardsburg teacher conducted prior to the IVCs. The educator chose to give their students limited background knowledge prior to engaging in the program. He choose to do this in order to avoid them developing "unavoidable biases". He also believes that his students would find it hard understanding where Ajloun is and that, "it would be better to learn about their partner school with them, rather than before meeting them".

The second series of questions related to institutional support. The Edwardsburg educator believed that describing Youth Talk, as a peace education support would not get the same institutional support. He noted that there are more "hoops" to jump through in order to get approval and funding is limited to support the program. This in addition to the focus the school has on state tests makes Youth Talk prohibitive for other classes.

The interview also focused on the nature of dialogue. The Edwardsburg educator was clear in his understanding that Youth Talk is a form a dialogue and the purpose was to provide exposure to the students and open their eyes to our more Global landscape and interconnectedness.

7.3.2 IVC OBSERVATIONS

The IVC schedule between Ajloun and Edwardsburg was consistently changing and rescheduled throughout the partnership. Ajloun also experienced a consistently high number of technical issues, requiring GNG staff to travel to the school in order to make some necessary improvements.

The first IVC was extremely tense and awkward for the students involved. Questions and answers related to the student's favorite course of study, the weather, the school day, and information about their local communities. Edwardsburg informed Ajloun that they are known for their academic and athletic programs, while Ajloun noted the high level of their academic program, especially in regards to the ACCESS. At the end of the first IVC, Ajloun did not prepare a showcase to present to Edwardsburg, so the IVC ended with preparations for the next IVC.

The second and third IVCs continued in the same manner as the first. Ajloun had not prepared prior to the second IVC requiring a representative from GNG to visit Ajloun and address the situation. Ajloun had not posted anything on GNG Connect, leaving students to ask unprepared questions, based on noting contextually. The IVCs consisted almost completely of Edwardsburg based presentations. The 2nd IVC ultimately resulted in outreach from the Edwardsburg teacher who asked to speak directly with the Ajloun students in the hope that they would be more involved in the IVCs going forward. It was as a result of this intervention that both schools decided to address the same issue. Also, Ajloun had not used the GNG Connect website to message any students, while Edwardsburg posted several comments on the interface.

7.3.3 MID PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP

The mid-program focus group addressed specific themes that had emerged both in the pre-program focus group and IVCs. Edwardsburg was asked to respond to a series of questions related to specific experiences during the IVCs and to reassess ideas and opinions from the previous data collection periods. The following themes emerged.

STRUGGLES

The struggles that have plagued the first two IVCs were the most frequent points of conversation. Students found it hard to remember an event or memory that had a lasting impact. For instance an Edwardsburg student noted,

" We just haven't had enough time to talk about stuff. Its made it difficult to just talk about stuff"

(Edwardsburg Mid-Program Focus Group).

Frustration on the part of Edwardsburg student manifested itself into feelings a pity. At three different moments, students from Edwardsburg reflected that, "I feel bad that they're having so many technology issues"(Edwardsburg Mid-Program Focus Group). These sentiments were then followed by a reason why they still felt the partnership was beneficial however.

COLLABORATION

Edwardsburg made the decision to change their global citizenship project to match Ajloun's interests in order to make a larger impact on the partnership. Both schools decided to adopt projects addressing recycling and environmental sustainability in their local communities. As a result of changing their global citizenship project, Edwardsburg utilized GNG Connect to send messages to Ajloun in order to foster greater collaboration. However, at the midpoint of the program, those students, those students were still waiting on responses from Ajloun. In regards to GNG Connect, Edwardsburg students remarked that GNG Connect, "isn't really dialogue, its just like a quick message and maybe you'll get a response" (Edwardsburg Mid-Program Focus Group)..

7.3.4 POST PROGRAM

The post-program focus group addressed specific themes that had emerged throughout the focus groups and IVCs. Students were asked to respond to a series of questions related to reflect on the program as a whole and reassess ideas and opinions from the previous data collection periods. The students and educator from Ajloun were willing to participate in a post-program focus group

despite not having a pre or mid program focus group/interview. Ajloun's focus group prompted a unique set of reflection, quite different than other pairings. The following themes emerged.

POWER

The technological issues presented in this pairing dramatically contributed to an examination of power during the IVCs. While some schools in the MENA region had noted the influence the United States has on the rest of the world through their entertainment industry, education, and military structures, a hierarchical relationship did not emerge again after the pre-program focus group for any school. In comparison, Ajloun noted the following reflections, which never appeared during their IVCS. Edwardsburg did repeatedly mention technology issues, and their suggestions for how to improve the program in the future often pertained to improve the technological capabilities of partner schools.

"We think they have a beautiful school and in it they have so much technology."

"Their school (Edwardsburg) is so big and it is very developed and very beautiful."

"I see them (Edwardsburg) using technology in their daily life and they see Jordan that doesn't have technology."

"I think they see themselves as normal and we see them as very developed and bigger than us."

" I love to travel to America because it's the dream land."

"I love America. I dream about going there."

"I hope to be an American person."

Edwardsburg noted the following regarding technology and their partner school and country:

"I now view Jordanians as peaceful people. Very similar to us but less technology."

"They probably saw the US as wealthy and huge in size. I now see the Jordanians as kind, quiet and a bit behind on technology."

"It seems like they see us as superior or better or richer or something. Probably had something to do with technology."

"I would rate my experience an 8 out of 10. The reason being so is because the first two videoconferences did not go too well due to technical difficulty. When we had a good connection, it was a very good experience."

"The one thing I would change is the technology difficulties."

These reflections will be further examined in Chapter 8 in relation to Critical Pedagogy.

STEREOTYPES

The prevalence of stereotypes continued more in this partnership than in any other. Ajloun noted,

"They (United States) see us as ISIS",

"They (United States & Edwardsburg) see Jordan as a primitive society",

"They (Edwardsburg) see Jordan that they don't have any technology" (Ajloun Post-Program Focus Group).

In comparison Edwardsburg students noted that they do not see Ajloun as terrorists, but rather see them sharing many qualities. However, topics such as terrorism, ISIS, and refugees were not raised during the IVC, but students from Edwardsburg continued to mention it during the post-program focus group.

CHANGE

Edwardsburg students yielded some critical reflections regarding their changing perspectives as a result of the Youth Talk Program. Change, as noted by several Edwardsburg students, was the result of simply connecting with another culture, religion, or country. Some of the changing perspectives Edwardsburg students shared included,

"We are the same human being inside. We may have different beliefs and religions, but we still think the same. We are both human."

"We are all equal, all human, and just because our country's positions are different doesn't mean we are different."

" We are the same. We have equivalent moral values but having differences like religion, sports, and hobbies are good."

"We are all equal in wants and needs. They might be a little behind in technology but we think the same."

"The program was life changing for me. My perspective did change. It gave me a broader view of life" (Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

"I know have a different opinion than my family about people from the Middle East. The election (United States Presidential) has made me angry and made me want to take more actions".

"My parents are big supporters of Trump and after Youth Talk I have a different opinion. I have no problem with refugees coming into this country".

In contrast, Ajloun student growth and subsequent change in regards to their English proficiency. One student noted that they were, "more comfortable speaking in English and hope to continue practicing it". However, in regards to aspects of global citizenship and change within their local community, the students had not continued their recycling project, nor tried to speak with any student from Edwardsburg, because they were under the impression that Edwardsburg did not want to continue talking with them.

7.4 Ruwwad Community Center, Amman Jordan

A major difference of the Ruwwad-Excel pairing was that students from Ruwwad did not speak in English. The educator at Ruwwad provided consistent translation during the IVCs. The

Ruwwad-Excel pairing also yielded some of the most critical data during this research project, despite the lack of a year-long examination by the researcher. The use of each schools primary language, in correlation with the pre, during, and post program work each school conduct provided unique results which will be identified below and more fully examined in subsequent chapters.

7.4.1 IVC OBSERVATIONS

In the first IVC there was obvious tension in their interactions. This tension was further mentioned in the post-program focus group. While the use of their respective languages changed the dynamic of the IVCs, it did result in the longest gap between question and answer periods. During the first IVC students did not know how to manage the time and often lost attention during the interactions. Language was addressed in the first IVC, where one student from Ruwwad, speaking in English, remarked,

"I hope to learn English from you but I hope I can also teach your some Arabic"(Ruwwad-Excel 1st IVC).

Students from Excel reacted with smiles and thumbs up to the opportunity of learning Arabic during the partnership. However, the first IVC extended into two IVCs because of technical difficulties. Ruwwad was consistently plagued by dropped connections during their IVCs.

Nevertheless, the first showcase changed the dynamic of the IVCs interactions quite seamlessly. A student from Ruwwad beat boxed and students from Excel performed a dance. Both showcases were met with laughs, cheers, and smiles.

During the second and third IVCs, students shared more specific details about their respective communities, addressing both the challenges and benefits of their personal geography. Both groups were able to relate to living in a city and discussed public transportation and the diverse

nature of their communities. When students from Ruwwad asked Excel about their background knowledge of Jordan, a student from Excel responded,

"We don't know much about Jordan but that is our fault and we apologize, but we want to learn more"(Ruwwad and Excel 2nd IVC)

This sentiment combined with Ruwwad's suggestion of teaching Arabic while also learning English was symbolic of frequent notions of mutual understanding during the IVCs. The second half of the second IVC and the majority of the third IVC were spent discussing the communities' global citizenship project. Ruwwad chose to address Christian and Muslim experiences in Palestine, highlighting the systemic oppression that they encounter around the Al-Aqsa complex in Jerusalem. Excel asked, what the students from Ruwwad intend to do, going forward with this project. Students were curious whether it was meant to inform, support people,

"This issue is really important, religiously and politically. We love to have a solution for this problem, but it is difficult. What we would like to do is just start with spreading awareness, first with all of you (Excel) and then worldwide" (Ruwwad-Excel 3rd IVC).

Excel noted during the exchange that they had a guest speaker come and conduct a class on the topic of Palestine, in general, but that it included information on the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Students from Excel subsequently began asking questions about how they intend to make a change to the situation and offered advice on how to connect with their community to make change.

The third IVC also consisted of a political discussion regarding the US elections, where students from Ruwwad asked whether Excel agreed with what some people are saying about Muslims. In response Excel noted,

"I don't agree with what the candidate (Trump) is saying. What they are doing is trying to slander Islam, just to get votes. The people that are Islamic or Muslim, they have shown me a completely different way from how these people are depicting Islam and everyone from this class would agree with this" (Excel, 3rd IVC).

Following this Excel student's argument the rest of class responded in cheers and claps. Following a translation by the Ruwwad educator, the students at Ruwwad responded in the same manner.

This exchange and the direct line of questioning that was a part of this exchange resulted in a series of straightforward and honest discussions amongst the school communities. Excel chose to address drug and alcohol addiction in their local community and Ruwwad students asked students at Excel whether they were directly impacted by these addictions, either because they are suffering an addiction or know of someone who has suffered or is suffering through addiction. Students at Excel shared several personal experiences related to addiction in response, which resulted in Ruwwad students sharing sentiments of how cheap, synthetic drugs are impacted the younger population in Amman.

The third IVC eventually ended with both schools agreeing to share their work on social media. This agreement resulted in the sharing of social media accounts.

The final IVC allowed students to present their work on their respective projects but also provided the following reflections:

"No matter where we are, the youth can come together and talk about different things. We might be disconnected from one another, but we can connect through this program and after to try and solve some problems" (Excel 4th IVC).

"We got a lot of benefits from this experience. We are going to miss you and we are sad that this is the last video call. It is hard to connect through GNG but we want to continue connecting through Facebook" (Ruwwad, 4th IVC)

7.4.2 POST PROGRAM

The majority of students who participated in the Youth Talk Program were in attendance during this post-program focus group. The focus group was conducted at the Ruwwad Community Center where translation was provided by GNG staff from the Amman office and the Ruwwad educator who provided translation during the IVCs. The focus group provided some critical information regarding the experience Ruwwad students had and the insights they now had months after the program finished. Students were asked to respond to a series of questions related

to reflect on the program as a whole and address some events and experiences from the previous IVCs. The following themes emerged.

FRIENDSHIP

Friendship was mentioned more times during this focus group than the other focus groups combined. The notions of friendship will often followed by reflections from social media exchanges between students from Ruwwad and Excel. Ruwwad students were able to remember several Excel student names and noted that they have still been keeping in touch through social media.

Friendship was never mentioned in regards to "sameness" and students did not note that they viewed Excel in a more positive light because they found more things in common with them. Rather, friendship related to notions of communication, awareness, empowerment, understanding, advocacy, and difference.

DIFFERENCE

Difference was routinely mentioned in a positive manner during the focus group. Peace, understanding, and change, were often related to notions of finding acceptance in difference. For instance, Ruwwad noted that, "It (United States) has its problems but is still beautiful". They also argued when asked about how they view their relationship with Excel now,

"There will be peace between all of us even if there were differences"

LANGUAGE

The uniqueness of the Excel- Ruwwad partnership, in regards to language, resulted in a series of questions by the researcher relating to freedom, power, understanding, and overall impact. However, the Ruwwad students were consistent in their argument that they could not have envisioned this partnership being conducted any differently. The thought of only speaking in English was difficult to comprehend for many of the students, and one student simply replied,

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"Why would I want to", when asked their feelings about speaking in English for this partnership.

One student remarked,

> "Arabic is an emotional language and it cannot be translated perfectly. It would be even harder for us to try and say what we mean in English. It would mean something very different".

RESPONSIBILITY & CHANGE

Ruwwad noted that change was a purpose of the Youth Talk program. This change was rooted in "acting on empathy", because of the new friendships that were formed. Participating in Youth Talk was seen as a responsibility to improve your community and the greater world. This was further shown when students were asked whether they view the purpose of Youth Talk in a different way now, after the program,

> "Youth Talk is about changing perspectives and finding more understanding. An example is empathy. We understand each other more now and we will need to advocate for each other now".

7.5 Salt /AMideast/Access, Salt Jordan

Unlike Ruwwad, Salt program IVCs were not viewed prior to meeting with the students. Only one recording was available of Ruwwad's partnership with the Houston Quran Academy (HQA). Subsequently, the majority of data used to examine this pairing is from the post-program focus group conducted with Salt students.

7.5.1 IVC OBSERVATIONS

The third IVC between Salt and HQA focused primarily on their global citizenship projects. Students from HQA decided to focus on the Refugee Crisis, with a special focus on the refugee population in Houston. Salt students decided to address two different issues, recycling and the high unemployment rate in Jordan.

The interaction between the schools was the most scripted in comparison to other Youth Talk pairings addressed. Salt students primarily engaged in the IVCs through pre-written comments and questions. Salt students rarely looked up to the screen to engage, choosing to read from a collection of handouts. However, during the third IVC, students from Salt designed and presented a language lesson in Urdu. The primary language spoken within the HQA community, other than English, was Urdu, which the Salt students learned a basic understanding of. This self-driven exercise was much appreciated by HQA and the Salt students remarked that it was important for them to connect in this meaningful manner.

7.5.2 POST PROGRAM

Viewing the IVC following the post program focus provided some greater clarity regarding the student's comments and points of views. Salt had a consistently high opinion of them during the post-program focus group. Routinely commenting on their level of English of proficiency and economic development, Salt noted their interest in engaging in future partnerships based on this self-reflection. For instance, Salt students commented,

"Salt is a great town for all Jordanians",
"It is a beautiful city and a cool and good place to live",
"Salt is small city but has a good school",
"Salt is a city of civilization",
"I think they (HQA) will love it"(Post-Program focus group, Salt).
However, this narrative was quickly replaced when students were asked to reflect on how they defined dialogue. Salt noted that in order to have peace,

"We must first delete our wrong ideas and replace with good and right ideas. Change comes when we replace our opinions with other peoples".

When asked whether this was a major purpose of Youth Talk, the students responded yes. Youth Talk was viewed as an opportunity to practice their English and subsequently, be able to "compete" on a higher level with their American counterparts. One student remarked, which was followed by several nonverbal agreements that,

" I hope that I will change our community to a good or modern community"(Salt Post Program

Focus Group).

However, while Salt students viewed Youth Talk as a, primarily language based program, where aspects of global citizenship could be explored, they did not view HQA as a "a real American school". Every Salt student was keen to continue participating in Youth Talk, yet, their participation was contingent on whether they were partnered with a new school. Salt students viewed HQA as, "like them" and not as developed as other American schools. "They had names we know, they were Muslim, so we don't think they are like the normal Americans"(Salt Post Program Focus Group).

This reflection regarding the nature of difference and what defines an American had a critical impact on the Salt partnership. For instance, a remarked at the end of the focus group,

"I was thinking that American people hated Arab people, that was before Access and Youth Talk Program but now my thoughts have been changed to better because the social media shows negative things about American people"(Focus Group).

However, as noted previously, Salt students did not view HQA students as representative of the United States. Also, Salt students did not conduct any pre-program preparation on culture or difference in the Jordan or the United States.

7.6 GNG Survey data extraction

All schools participating in the Youth Talk Program are asked to complete a pre and post-program survey conducted in partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences. A series of demographic information was initially

collected relating to student, age, gender, religion, and location. The second half of the survey consisted of "Self-Other-Overlap" questions, where students were asked to choose from seven pictures that best represent their personal relationship with each of the groups listed (Pakistanis, Muslims, Afghans, Americans, Christians, Arabs, Jews). The last section consists of "Feeling Thermometers", where Afghans, Pakistanis, Arabs, and Americans were asked to assess Trust and Hope in regards to their partner school. Students answered on a sliding scale between strongly disagree and strongly agree. Students were asked to assess the following statements:

Trust and Hope- re: Arabs (same questions were asked in pre and post surveys)

- I can see a future where my people and Arabs live in harmony and mutual respect
- I trust that Arabs want what is best for me and my people
- I do NOT trust in the peaceful intentions of Arabs
- I am hopeful that strong relationships between my people and Arabs are possible
- Choose the picture that best represents your personal relationship with each of the groups listed below

Potential Mediators of Change- Americans (only post-program)

- I made new Muslim friends through GNG
- I made personal connections with the Muslim students in
- I intend to keep in contact with the Muslim students I met through GNG
- I learned something positive about Muslims and/or Islam that I didn't know before from GNG
- I gained a new appreciation of Islam and/or Muslims through GNG
- I realized that some of my negative views about Muslims/Islam were wrong through the GNG experience

Trust and Hope- re: Americans (same questions were asked in pre and post surveys)

- I trust that Americans want what is best for me and my people
- I do NOT trust in the peaceful intentions of Americans
- I can see a future where my people and Americans live in harmony and mutual respect
- I am hopeful that strong relationships between my people and Americans are possible

Potential Mediators of Change- Muslims (only post-program)

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- I made new American friends through GNG

- I made personal connections with the American students through GNG

- I intend to keep in contact with the American students I met through GNG

- I learned something positive about Americans and/or the U.S. that I didn't know before through GNG

- I gained a new appreciation of Americans and/or the U.S. through GNG

- I realized that some of my negative views about Americans and/or the U.S. were

The following data reflects MIT's findings from the student surveys.

Participation rates

U.S. Students:

Program Participants (Students and Educators)

- 982 pre-program surveys (- identified dropouts) → 525 Complete pre- and post-program surveys → 457 pass both check questions

- Completion rate: 53%

- Check pass rate (for those who complete both): 87%

Controls (Students and Educators)

- 549 pre-program surveys (- identified dropouts) → 244 Complete pre- and post-program surveys → 201 pass both check questions

- Completion rate: 44%

- Check pass rate (for those who complete both): 82%

Non-US Students:

Program Participants

- 797 pre-program surveys (- identified dropouts) → 561 Complete pre- and post-program surveys → 377 pass both check questions

- Completion rate: 70%

- Check pass rate (for those who complete both): 67%

Controls

- 481 pre-program surveys (- identified dropouts) → 308 Complete pre- and post-program surveys → 213 pass both check questions

- Completion rate: 64%

- Check pass rate (for those who complete both): 69%

Note: Initial attitudes across almost all measures differed significantly for GNG versus control participants.

Conclusions

More complete participation by Muslim students, but 1/3 failed attention checks; poorer participation by American students, but they generally passed the attention checks.

Comparable participation for each group across participant and control participants

Results Summary

Overall, results were very consistent to past evaluations: significant change in Americans for how warm and close they felt towards all target groups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis) after Youth Talk, versus before the GNG Program; similarly statistically significant, but less strong, effects for non-Americans re: Americans. Americans experienced positive changes in trust and hope in the target groups.

However, similar changes on nearly all outcomes for controls. Exception: non-American controls showed decrease in overlap with Americans and sharp decrease in Hope and Trust towards Americans, while GNG participants increased modestly on both of these measures.

Feelings of Closeness with the other group (Self-Outgroup Overlap)

Participants

- AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (N = 414): significantly closer to all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: $ts > 3.9$, $ps < 0.001$). Range: .37 - .75 change on 7-point scales.

- AMERICAN EDUCATORS (N = 43): significantly closer to all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: ts > 2.8, ps < 0.01).

- MUSLIM STUDENTS (N = 321): marginally closer to Americans (t = 1.9, p = 0.06).

- MUSLIMS EDUCATORS (N = 54): no closer to Americans.

Controls

- AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (N = 156): significantly closer to all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: ts > 2.5, ps < 0.02). Range: .40 - .85 change on 7-point scales.

- AMERICAN EDUCATORS (N = 45): significantly or marginally closer to all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: ts > 1.6, ps < 0.10).

- MUSLIM STUDENTS (N = 321): no closer to Americans (non-significant negative change)

- MUSLIMS EDUCATORS (N = 32): no closer to Americans (non-significant positive change).

Feelings of warmth towards the other group (Feeling Thermometer)

Participants

- AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (N = 414): warmer towards all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: ts > 3.5, ps < 0.001). Range: 5.0 − 9.0 change on 100-point scales.

- AMERICAN EDUCATORS (N = 43): no warmer towards any target outgroups (however, all non-significant positive changes)

- MUSLIMS STUDENTS (N = 321): no warmer towards Americans (non-significant positive change)

- MUSLIMS EDUCATORS (N = 54): no warmer towards Americans (non-significant negative change)

Controls

- AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (N = 156): warmer towards all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: ts > 2.1, ps < 0.001). Range: 5.5 – 10.2 change on 100-point scales.

- AMERICAN EDUCATORS (N = 45): no warmer towards any target outgroups (however, all non-significant positive changes)

- MUSLIMS STUDENTS (N = 321): no warmer towards Americans (non-significant negative change)

- MUSLIMS EDUCATORS (N = 32): no warmer towards Americans (non-significant negative change)

Trust and Hope about the future (Trust/Hope)

Participants

- AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (N = 414): expressed significantly more trust/hope towards all target outgroups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis: ts > 2.0, ps < 0.05). Range: 3.4 – 6.2 change on 100-point scales.

- AMERICAN EDUCATORS (N = 43): expressed no more trust/hope towards any target outgroups (however, all non-significant positive changes)

- MUSLIMS STUDENTS (N = 321): expressed no more trust/hope towards Americans (non-significant positive change)

- MUSLIMS EDUCATORS (N = 54): expressed no more trust/hope towards Americans (non-significant negative change)

Controls

- AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (N = 156): expressed no more trust/hope towards all target outgroups (however, all non-significant positive changes).

- AMERICAN EDUCATORS (N = 45): expressed no more trust/hope towards any target outgroups (however, all non-significant positive changes)

- MUSLIMS STUDENTS (N = 321): expressed no more trust/hope towards Americans (non-significant negative change)

- MUSLIMS EDUCATORS (N = 32): expressed no more trust/hope towards Americans (non-significant negative change)

CONCLUSION

The results of the MIT Youth Talk survey yielded similar results for the 2015/16 school year as it did in years past. The significant positive change that Americans experienced regarding how warm and close they felt towards all target groups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis) versus the less than positive results for how non-Americans regarded Americans, requires a more critical examination of what is defined as "positive" within the study. The perceived changes in American students that were registered in this research project related to notions of "sameness". Notions of cultural reproduction, which will be examined more thoroughly in the following chapters, more adequately define the change for American students than any perception of perceived social and emotional growth.   While American students experienced positive changes in trust and hope towards the target groups, such impact benefitted the group in power, the Americans, rather than being symbolic of overall participatory growth and empathy.

Chapter 8: Assessing Youth Talk Through the Three-Sphered Model

Introduction

The previous chapter provided summaries of the focus groups, IVC observations, and interviews conducted with the three school pairings and two additional Jordanian schools participating in the Youth Talk Program. This chapter will take the information that the students and teachers

provided to address their responses and interactions in correlation with their understandings and viewpoints of Youth Talk. Student and teacher responses and analyzes will be addressed in three ways. First, Chapter 8 will examine how student and teacher data relate to the Three-Sphered Model of Peace Education, introduced in Chapter 3. Secondly, the central research questions addressing four areas of inquiry noted in Chapter 1 (peace education pedagogy, best practices of videoconference in the classroom, immediate effects, and post-program effects) will be addressed in relation to how effective interactive videoconference can be as a peace education practice. Finally, the chapter will conclude with questions over the effectiveness of the Three-Sphered Model in addressing peace education programs, including within an interactive videoconference context.

8.1 Review of the methodology

The methodology used to analyze this data, as detailed in Chapter 4, was taken from Wengraf's (2011) methods of analysis. The formation of Central Research Questions (CRQ) were developed to support the predetermined research purpose of determining how effective intercultural dialogue through videoconference could be as a peace education practice. The CRQ enabled the development of Theory-Questions (TQ) that spelled out the CRQ. The TQ asked the expectations and assumptions of teachers and students engaging in intercultural dialogue programs and in regards to their specific partner school. These questions revolved around participants understanding of peace, conflict, communication, peace education, critical pedagogy, conflict resolution, global citizenship, the purpose of the program, and how personal and school experience has contributed to their engagement in Youth Talk. Interview Questions (IQ) were established to aid in answering the TQ. IQ were asked in semi-structured student focus groups at pre, mid, and post program intervals. IQ were also asked of teachers in semi-structured interviews at pre and post program intervals. The first focus group asked personal and group reflection of student aims, concepts of peace, community, educational and program goals, their partner school,

global citizenship, and the use of technology in education. The second and third focus groups built upon the observed and recorded IVCs and previous focus groups to obtain student and teacher assessment of their pre-program aims and beliefs and those of their partner school.

These student and teacher responses were then coded to gain an understanding of teachers and students' views of critical pedagogy, constructivism, and cosmopolitanism in order to address the TQ. Each school had a set of the same IQ but also developed different mid and post program IQ based on their specific context. However, these IQ were still constructed to address the TQ in all contexts. For instance, while examples differ from each pairing, student and teacher definitions and examples of critical dialogue are compared to peace education and the concept of power is introduced.

8.2 Three-Sphered Model & Youth Talk

Teacher interviews, student focus groups, and IVC observations enabled the researcher to examine intercultural dialogue through videoconference in correlation with the ideology behind the Three-Sphered Model in practice. Theory Questions (TQ), as introduced in Chapter 4 relate to the Three-Sphered Model and influenced the development of Interview Questions (IQs). IQs were posed to teacher and student groups in order to measure their understanding behind the purpose of Youth Talk and the concepts of dialogue, peace, and global citizenship. All pre, during, and post program questions can be found in the appendix.

In the following section, the student and educator responses, and IVCs will be outlined in correlation with the Three-Sphered Model of Peace Education.

8.2.1 CRITICAL PEDAGOGY & YOUTH TALK

Chapter 3 noted that critical pedagogy addresses two significant questions: "How do we make education meaningful by making it critical and how do we make it critical so as to make it emancipatory"(Giroux, 1983, p.3). Views and actions pertaining to the purpose and practice of

education were varied amongst teachers and students in both regions; however, educators and students in the MENA region and in the United States often reflected on the role that freedom, change, and stereotypes play within educational settings.

8.2.1.1 Student-Led Design

One out of the three school pairings was a student led design. The other two pairings had a Global Nomads Groups facilitator leading the discussion. Students participating in the student led pairing argued that structure of the IVCs provided the necessary freedom to engage in meaningful dialogue. This was the only pairing which yielded a majority positive response regarding the structure of the IVCs (Ruwwad Community Center was not assessed as a pairing). Students from Edwardsburg High School, a school participating in a non-student led pairing commented,

"The IVCs were light and fluffy. I would have liked, maybe, one more IVC to just meet the students and break the ice. The IVCs felt superficial" (Edwardsburg post-program focus group).

Non-student led IVCs were described by students as limiting, too structured, awkward, `too short, strict, and slow. The ability to freely design, apply, and change the learning process is a hallmark of critical pedagogical practices. Paulo Freire (1970) argues that the goal of education is to provide students with the freedom to challenge and transform the structures that surround them. The scripted nature of the facilitated IVCs did not allow students to design the context and delivery of the IVCs. Moreover, all of the facilitated IVCs were conducted using the same script, eliminating context specific deliverables. The APG and BS pairing also reflected this scripted nature of the IVC, despite it being student-led. An APG student noted,

"Having structure limits what we can say. After the first IVC we needed to be political correct because of the format" (Mid-Program Focus Group, APG).

During the post-program focus group discussion APG students reflected that many of the questions that they had going into the program were never fully addressed because of the structure. A discussion over structure led two APG students to mention,

> " We want both schools to find the answers to their questions. We don't think we will continue the conversation with the American school but we think that people will be more open minded and this program will be helpful in moving on after high school. I just want them to see us in a positive light"(Post-Program Focus Group APG).

8.2.1.2 Power Dynamics

Henry Giroux (2010) notes that critical pedagogy, according to Freire, "allows students the opportunity to read, write, and learn from a position of agency—to engage in a culture of questioning that demands far more than competency in rote learning and the application of acquired skills". The scripted nature of each IVC, across all pairings, directly limited the student's agency to engage and question. When the concept of change was discussed with schools in the MENA region, every school and educator noted that two major purposes of the Youth Talk Program. The first was to replace their own ideas with good or better ones. Upon further discussion, these good or better ideas were defined as modern. Second, MENA schools viewed Youth Talk as an opportunity for the Americans to understand their national and religious heritage in order to combat the stereotypes of Muslims and Arabs that exist in the United States.

In regards to the first purpose, the American schools never defined change in regards to replacing one's ideas with better ones. However, two out of the three American schools viewed change in regards to changing American stereotypes of Muslims. The purpose of the Youth Talk Program in the majority of both the American and MENA schools sampled was American-centric. Addressing American stereotypes was the key purpose for both communities, which points to a process of cultural reproduction.

Chapter 3.1.1 addresses the banking model of education in contrast to the goals and practices of critical pedagogy. Eliminating processes of cultural reproduction from any educational model enables actors to challenge cultural reproduction that reflect the banking model of education. While Chapter 3 notes that cultural reproduction sustains identity in singular societies through processes of domination and the reproduction of power, such a process can also occur through intercultural engages. An examination of program purpose for both communities points to a reproduction of power, as MENA schools engage in Youth Talk as a means of supporting American opportunities for reflection in order to elicit a positive sentiments on an individual and national level. This imbalanced power dynamic is established and legitimized through the adoption of English as the primary means of communication (Allen Morrow &Alberto Torres, 2002, 67).

8.2.1.3 Language

Every MENA School examined in this research study, including Ruwwad Community Center and Salt explicitly stated that improving their English proficiency was an important part of their involvement. APG was the only school that did not note it as a primary motivation, because much of their coursework in already conducted in English. None of the American schools sampled in this research project noted language as a primary goal or motivation. APG, who had the highest level of English proficiency amongst assessed MENA schools, believed they were at a consistent disadvantage throughout the program, because it was only offered in English and many of their students were embarrassed when engaging with their US partner in their dominant language (APG Post program focus group). Using English as the primary means of dialogue ignores the relationship between knowledge and power. Fitzclarence and Giroux (1984) argue that it is critical to examine, "how power functions in the interests of specific values and knowledge forms so as to sustain the political, economic, and social interests of some groups at the expense of others" (462). Two of the pairings examined consisted of schools participating in AMIDEAST's

Access program, Ajloun and LEE. Salt was an additional Access program examined only in country. Because Access functions as an English language-training program, MENA students were expected to communicate in English. American students were never asked to speak in Arabic nor did any make an effort to communicate or learn Arabic prior to and during the IVCs. In the case of LEE, English was their third language and BAL was not asked to speak or learn Arabic or French. Youth Talk's emphasis on English reflects the American school's lack of humility in the program. According to Pablo Freire (1970),

> Dialogue cannot exist without humility. The naming of the world, through which people constantly re-create that world, cannot be an act of arrogance. Dialogue, as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lack humility.

In comparison, Ruwwad Community Center participated in Youth Talk primarily in their native tongue with Youth Talk facilitators and Ruwwad educators serving as translators. In reference to their American school partner, Ruwwad used the word "friend" in their description more than any other MENA school and was the only MENA School to have more than one student exchange social media information with the American partner and where the majority of the students expected to continue communicating with their American partner post program. Ruwwad was also able to remember five student names from their American partner school at the end of the program, while APG remembered one, and Ajloun did not remember a single student name. Salt students, remarked that HQA had students with name that they were familiar with, so that was the primary reason they remember some student names. Ruwwad students also noted during their post-program focus group,

> "Arabic is an emotional language and it cannot be translated perfectly. It would be even harder for us to try and say what we mean in English. It would mean something very different" (Ruwwad Focus Group).

However, as Ruwwad students argued that the use of English would limit their ability to freely engage with their partner school, Ajloun viewed English as critical, in order to help their communities. Ajloun students noted,

> "Our language program is good, but their (Edwardsburg) language is excellent. But this program (Access) is a great program to learn English and do some activities to help our communities because of the language".

8.2.1.3 Technology

The use of technology correlated with this imbalanced power dynamic as two of the three pairings had to address IVC rescheduling, dropped calls, and equipment deficits, often plaguing the MENA schools to a greater extent. For instance, Ajloun engaged in the IVCs through a single laptop computer without an external microphone or camera. Students were required to crowd around the computer screen to be seen, heard, or engage in the conversation. In comparison, Edwardsburg had external speakers, a camera, and microphone to facilitate the IVCs. This pairing experienced the highest number of missed of IVCs, dropped calls, and technical malfunctions. The post program focus also elicited unique reflections, in comparison to the other pairings, regarding technology and their partner school and country. Ajloun students noted the following:

> "We think they have a beautiful school and in it they have so much technology."

> "Their school (Edwardsburg) is so big and it is very developed and very beautiful."

> "I see them (Edwardsburg) using technology in their daily life and they see Jordan that doesn't have technology."

> "I think they see themselves as normal and we see them as very developed and bigger than us."

> " I love to travel to America because it's the dream land."

> "I love America. I dream about going there."

"I hope to be an American person."

Edwardsburg noted the following regarding technology and their partner school and country:

"I now view Jordanians as peaceful people. Very similar to us but less technology."

"They probably saw the US as wealthy and huge in size. I now see the Jordanians as kind, quiet and a bit behind on technology."

"It seems like they see us as superior or better or richer or something. Probably had something to do with technology."

"I would rate my experience an 8 out of 10. The reason being so is because the first two videoconferences did not go too well due to technical difficulty. When we had a good connection, it was a very good experience."

"The one thing I would change is the technology difficulties."

SUMMARY

The prescribed structure, limited humility, imbalanced power dynamics, and technological deficiencies limit the effective adoption and implementation of dialogical practices in an educational setting. As noted in Chapter 5, critical pedagogy requires a critical cultural analysis through educational practices directed at questioning the acquisition of power, dependency, societal norms, and rights. Students and teachers are not given the freedom to develop trust within the pairings in order to critically address their realities. According to Freire (2005), "whoever lacks this trust will fail to initiate (or will abandon) dialogue, reflection, and communication"(p. 66). Patterns of cultural reproduction have subsequently remerged in the Youth Talk Program because it primarily provides only American students with a means towards critical reflection and liberation. Critical dialogical pedagogy,

"Must be forged ***with, not for***, the oppressed in the incessant struggle to regain humanity. This pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation (Freire, 2005, p.48).

According to Freire, an educational practice must first establish a pedagogical approach that enables students to design their own liberation, which is informed by their individual and collective narratives. Fuad Al-Darawesh (2010) argues, "that prescribing un-contextualized recipes for human liberation is depriving humans from the process of reflection. This process is an integral part of education, as well as liberation " (p. 131).

The prescribed nature of the Youth Talk Program enables cultural hegemony, as exemplified by the quantitative results of this research project. The finding that Americans grew in warmth and closeness towards all target groups (Arabs, Muslims, Afghans, Pakistanis) after the Youth Talk Program represents, not a positive development as a result of the IVCs, but the inability of all students to question their realities and critical engage with it. In comparison, the MENA student's quantitative results represent this lack of freedom and viability in educational frameworks, because their findings noted that students felt no warmer towards their American partners following the program.

While the quantitative findings legitimize the qualitative observations and student reflections, the exposure to varying cultures and realities that Youth Talk provides, enables the imagination of a more empathetic outlook. Molding this outlook requires the educational platform to challenge students to move beyond limited perspective and understand the narratives of a diverse world. Giroux (2010) highlights that Freire's understanding of critical pedagogy, "presupposes some notion of a more equal and just future and as such, it should always function in part as a provocation that takes students beyond the world they know in order to expand the range of

human possibilities and democratic values"(p.158). Students in each pairing, and the two additional on-site school discussions, all noted that they had learned something new about their partner school's country and culture. Students at APG noted at the end of the their program that the experience had left them feeling that Americans were,

"Friendlier than imagined",

"Better than expected",

"Do not all hate us", and

"Unexpected, but in a positive way".

Critical pedagogical praxis, however, necessitates that critical cognition is followed by "individual reflection and action upon their world in order to transform it"(79). Whether the Youth Talk Program enables liberation, and thereby, eliminates the banking model of education remains to be determined. The effectiveness of the intercultural dialogue through videoconference as a peace education tool will be fully assessed in Chapter 10.

8.2.2 COSMOPOLITANISM &YOUTH TALK

The cosmopolitan theme of a shared humanity was the most prevalent data point in this research project. Both regions produced significant references to the concept of "sameness". The word "same" or the phrase, "we are the same", for instance, was noted by each pairing during both mid and post program focus groups. Post program focus groups garnered the most frequent use of these notions. During the BS post-program focus group the subject of "sameness" was raised eleven times in a forty-five minute session. BS students further defined this "sameness" in regards to how much their student population could relate to the APG student body.

8.2.2.1 "We Are the Same"

Music, movies, and pop culture references were the examples that BS students noted in reference to such relateability. APG also noted "sameness" on five different occasions during an hour-long post program session. APG students noted,

"We're so similar but we don't realize it".

"In the end we're all a bunch of teens regardless of our cultures and religions."

"We all have similar lives and thoughts."

"I was surprised to find out that teenagers from another part of the world are just like us. There is nothing different, they have the same lifestyle, well not exactly the same, but yes, we are the same."

BS students also provided similar reflections on "sameness",

"We are all just teenagers, and we have so much in common, and share the same problems."

"It was cool to see that they are interested in the same music, like some students sang Adele."

"We are pretty much the same. We can relate to each other on so many levels."

Edwardsburg provided similar reflections, but also focused on the positive aspect of this "sameness",

"Both classes are the same to me, and that can be a positive thing. We are just using a different language."

"We are the same human being inside. We may have different beliefs and religions, but we still think the same. We are both human."

"We are all equal, all human, and just because our country's positions are different doesn't mean we are different."

" We are the same. We have equivalent moral values but having differences like religion, sports, and hobbies are good."

"We are all equal in wants and needs. They might be a little behind in technology but we think the same."

BAL also drew comparisons between what they share and what makes them different,

"Like, we have differences, we go through different things, and live in different places, but we're all just teenagers."

"There's more about us that is the same than different."

8.2.2.2 Shared Humanity

The notions of identity and of finding connection through shared experiences reflect Kantian cosmopolitanism's belief of a shared humanity. As noted in chapter three, a shared humanity argues that all human beings are a part of a universal moral community. Within this community lies an understanding that each individual is equal in dignity and value, thus requiring individuals to support and act in defense of this humanity. APG students noted that Youth Talk "was a nice way to increase acceptance and open-mindedness" (APG Post-Program Focus Group). However, the same students also remarked that while Youth Talk Program sought to work for peace, "most people think it's (peace) there, but it's not. It is the number one objective that should be reached but just isn't" (APG Post-Program Focus Group). When asked for further clarification, an APG student remarked that, "justice is what is missing. Because of stereotypes, justice needs to be restored" (APG Post-Program Focus Group). The entire class agreed upon this comment. Ajloun remarked, during post program that, "peace is a dream for all people", and Salt remarked that in order to have peace, "we must first delete our wrong ideas and replace with good and right ideas. Change comes when we replace our opinions with other peoples".

The notion of sameness encompassed the themes of change, peace, stereotypes, and empathy when discussed amongst Youth Talk participants. In all of the examined Youth Talk Pairings, and two additional on-site examinations, only one school spoke of sameness or referred to the concept of a shared humanity as one of a responsibility. Ruwwad continuously noted that the Youth Talk Program was rooted in empathy.

"Youth Talk is about changing perspectives and finding more understanding. An example is empathy. We understand each other more now and we will need to advocate for each other now"(Ruwwad Post Program Focus Group).

Ruwwad was also the only school to note that a goal of Youth Talk was to learn each other's language and not only English. The frequently agreed upon purposes of Youth Talk, according to Ruwwad, were

- Making connections
- Communication
- Awareness
- Empowerment
- Cultural exchange, and
- Change

Ruwwad was the only school to explicitly note change as a purpose of Youth Talk, while also emphasizing the importance of acting on empathy. Subsequently, Ruwwad was the only school to embrace Cosmopolitan norms of responsibility. In comparison, while the LEE and BAL pairing did not yield an understanding that a purpose of the program is change, BAL students found commonality with the LEE based on shared emotional experiences.

"In the US, we don't have the same rights and freedoms. Things are different for you based on your race, culture, where you live. I feel like Tunisia has similar issues that we have, because of the stuff they have between private and public schools"(BAL Mid-Program Focus Group).

LEE also noted,

"I feel like there is an ugly side to New York with poverty, crime, and racism. Tunisia also has an ugly side with poverty, crime, bullying, and drugs. We have same problems but just in different ways"(LEE Mid-Program Focus Group).

8.2.2.3 Reflection

Cosmopolitan norms dictate an individual and collective responsibility to ensure every individual's human rights. The pursuit of peace is, thereby, the pursuit of respect and dignity for all human beings, as noted in Chapter three. While it can be argued that the Youth Talk Program incorporates reflective practices, through their curricular framework and online portals, which will be examined in Chapter 8, Youth Talk does not entail a normative component. Betty Reardon (2011) defines cosmopolitanism, in relation to peace education, as the "value of universal moral inclusion, grounded in respect for human dignity"(p.2). Cosmopolitanism, as further articulated by Reardon (2011), best expresses "the normative goals of our evolving field…the vision of universal moral inclusion that inspires the normative goals of peace education; a vision in which all human beings are accorded respect of their fundamental human dignity"(ibid). In order to enable this vision, reflective practices by all participants, rooted in examining the sociopolitical world, must be implemented through open and honest inquiry.

The notion of "sameness" as expressed by Youth Talk participants does not reflect a practice rooted in critically examining their social world. Examinations of power, social structures, and social institutions are not incorporated within the wider application of reflective practices within Youth Talk. Dale Snauwaert (2011) further articulates Reardon's argument in noting, "Reflective inquiry is not only a means to the actualization of cosmopolitanism; reflective inquiry is an ethical requirement, and thus a constitutive element, of cosmopolitanism. It can be argued that the cosmopolitan ideal of universal respect for human dignity and moral inclusion itself necessitates open reflective inquiry and in turn its reflective capacities"(p.4). Youth Talk does not meet these elements of cosmopolitanism. In fact, the notion of "sameness" runs counter to students

examining elements of power and social structures. When students were asked to elaborate on "sameness", every instance included the following connections:

- "We listen to the same music."

- "We watch the same movies."

- "We know the same celebrities."

- "We have the same problems as teenagers."

However, these notions of commonality were all based on Western music, movies, and pop culture. Problems were presented from the American perspective, such as higher education and politics, and were agreed upon by their MENA partners.

8.2.2.4 Hospitality vs. Sameness

As noted in Chapter three, peace is dependent upon the interaction, cooperation and trust amongst individuals. Cooperation and trust amongst individuals first recognizes the right to access for all individuals. The right to access implies a universal care and concern for the needs of others. An understanding of hospitality, within the context of cosmopolitan norms, dictates an equal right of all persons to the society of others and the resources of the Earth that we inhabit together (Dowdeswell, 2011). This right to access implies a universal care and concern for the needs of all.

However, as argued in Chapter Three, the notion that all individuals inhabit the same Earth and are entitled to hospitality does not dictate one's rights based only on our similar nature. Cosmopolitan norms do not deny an individual of its uniqueness in relation to the community, state, or world. For instance, Benhabib (2008) argues, "If I recognize you as being entitled to rights only because you are like me, then I deny your fundamental individuality which entails your being different. If I refuse to recognize you as a being entitled to rights because you are so

other to me, then I deny our common humanity"(p.16). "Samenes", within the Youth Talk Program, referenced one's connection to American culture, regardless of region. While no implication was made that a partner school or student was not entitled to rights because they were deemed "other", American schools found connection through their own culture, and MENA sounds found connection through their adoption of American culture. Subsequently, the cosmopolitan theme of a shared humanity was not fully realized in the Youth Talk pairings. Because our shared humanity is governed by our equality and our difference, interaction is rooted in finding commonality amongst diversity. Cosmopolitan norms are grounded in universal human rights that acknowledge and are responsible for one's humanity and individuality.

Beck's (2010) argument regarding the failure of cosmopolitanism, in the philosophical sense, bears repeating in light of addressing cosmopolitanism in Youth Talk. Beck (2010) argues that the failure of cosmopolitanism lies in the fact that while it, "means something active, a task, a conscious decision", it is "clearly the responsibility of an elite and is implemented from above"(p.129). The active task of engaging in intercultural dialogue through videoconference faced technical issues throughout, which supports Beck's argument. Each school in the MENA region during on-site focus groups noted their perceived deficiencies in technology and "development". Peace, when viewed in the eyes of all but one of the MENA schools necessitated a change in the stereotypes Americans held in order for it to be achieved, and these stereotypes where the ones held by Americans of the MENA population. Therefore, change was the responsibility of those who the MENA students perceived as elite, the Americans, and "sameness" was based on an American cultural affinity or cultural assimilation. In order for Youth Talk to embrace cosmopolitan norms, participants must have the freedom to participate in their own global choices (Archibugi, 2008). As noted in Chapter Three, within a cosmopolitan vision, active participation by individuals in global issues does not imply hegemonic process of cultural assimilation. Archibugi (2008) argues,

"It is impossible to draw a dividing line between "us" and "them," between "friends" and "enemies". The planet is made up of "overlapping communities of fate," to use the apt phrase coined by David Held, and it is a difficult, and often impossible, task to mark the confines between one and the other"(p.4).

8.2.2.5 Cultural Reproduction

While the Youth Talk Program provides critical steps in initial intercultural engagement, which will be addressed in Chapter 9, the same questions exists for cosmopolitanism as it does for critical pedagogy in relation to Youth Talk, namely, whether this program enables processes of cultural reproduction. Critical Pedagogy argues that a critically informed educational model can provide a means to critique processes of cultural reproduction that can maintain systems of power and domination. While critical pedagogy provides the framework for the construction of an education model that can effectively address systems and processes of cultural reproduction, cosmopolitanism differs in its relationship to cultural reproduction. Cosmopolitanism, within a Peace Education model, enables participants to form behaviors that can better support critical pedagogical practices through an emphasis on identity formation. Enabling individuals to address notions of identity can enable tolerance, empathy, justice, and inclusion. Within the Youth Talk contest, as a result of not actively embracing explicit notions of cosmopolitanism, which are supported to consistent reflection, participants facilitate an imbalanced power dynamic and cultural hegemony that benefits American participants.

Historical and cultural understanding of respective partner nations was not adopted as a requirement or obligation prior to engaging in the Youth Talk program by any school studied in this research project. BS noted that the focus of the course that the students were enrolled in was to focus on the three monotheistic religions. Subsequently, pre-program work did not consist of any historical or cultural research on their partner school. The same case existed in Edwardsburg, where the teacher did not want students to conduct independent research on Jordan, in fear that research sources, primarily media based, would be biased and give students an inaccurate picture of both Jordan and the entire region. BAL's educator noted that they simply did not have enough

time to conduct research and that their students were quite "uniformed" on Tunisia. In comparison, when the same question was posed to MENA students, each school argued that they "already knew about America, so we didn't really need to know more". APG did provide some background information on BS consisting of identifying that the school was located in Massachusetts, that the region receives a significant amount of snow, and that it is known for their maple syrup production.

The limited, context specific, prior knowledge all schools had before the Youth Talk program beginning limited the student's ability to come to know the community that surrounds each individual. As noted in Chapter 3, the lack of knowledge acquisition limits the self's responsibility toward one another.

Though understanding the plurality of each community's context, cosmopolitan norms rooted in universal human rights can, as Benhabib (2008) writes, "empower democracies by creating new vocabularies for claim-making for citizens in signatory states as well as opening new channels of mobilization for civil society actors who then become part of transnational networks of rights activism and hegemonic resistance". Moreover, as noted in Chapter 3, "Responsibility for the other, however also involves concern. This dynamic comprises a responsibility and concern not just for individuals but for the world that surrounds them. Levinas (2008) argues that such understanding "drives our aspiration for a more just and humane order"(p. 116). The lack of concern for each other's respective partner school can be reflected in in the number of names each school remembered of the other, as noted in the previous section on Critical Pedagogy. Ruwwad was the only school to remember five student names from their American partner school at the end of the program, while LEE and APG remembered one, and Ajloun did not remember a single student name. American students could not recall a single MENA student's name.

Individualized processes of reflective change provided the fist inclination of success in the Youth Talk Program. As argued by Torill Strand (2010), cosmopolitanism can be characterized as "globalization from within", signifying global awareness over forced interdependence. Each school had a majority of students who noted a personal change as a result of Youth Talk. This change did not result in direction action, nor did this change come completely as a result of cooperation with their partner school, but interaction led to a reevaluation of one's reality, apart from the curricular framework and activities.

"I have changed in result of our project and it really made me think about the presidential election"(Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

"This program had a short term impact for me, very little to no long term effect. My view did change after I met them though. I am not as nervous as I was after our first IVC and I'm ready to have conversations about culture, terrorism, whatever "(Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

"The program was life changing for me. My perspective did change. It gave me a broader view of life" (Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

"In the future I will be a doctor and make programs like GNG connect to learn the Arabic language for Americans" (Salt Post-Program Focus Group).

"I hope that I will change our community to a good and modern community" (Ajloun Post-Program Focus Group).

"I think that all Muslims should be allowed in our country now, especially if they are younger people"(Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

"I now view Jordanians as peaceful people"(Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

"I like them (Americans), but they may implement freedom of speech way too much. They (Americans) were friendlier than imagined. Not all of them hate us" (APG Post-Program Focus Group).

In post program focus groups, "I" statements were frequently made in regards to reflections students had at the end of the program. In addition, similar statements were made by students during the their final IVCs. Students from Edwardsburg, BAL, and BS all noted a changing perspective of MENA student in regards to terrorism. BS students raised the largest number of questions relating to terrorism, and noted that they found it "interesting that Bahrain is not involved in terrorism, and so we can understand why they would get defensive when the topic was raised" (BS post program focus group). This points to the global awareness that Strand (2010) argues about in defense of cosmopolitanism.

SUMMARY

Understanding cosmopolitanism as "globalization from within" describes the numerous interactions and reflections by students in the Youth Talk Program. Hospitality correlates with these data points in noting Youth Talk's ability to empower individuals to embrace tolerance and openness towards otherness as an ethic of social relations in an interconnected world (Strand, 2010, p. 31). A respect of human dignity is a critical justification for the adoption of cosmopolitanism as a normative underpinning to peace education practices. However, while Reardon (2011) argues that cosmopolitanism is "the value of universal inclusion grounded in respect for human dignity", participants in Youth Talk have a newfound appreciation for human dignity, though not directly resulting in action towards inclusion (p.4).

8.2.3 CONSTRUCTIVISM & YOUTH TALK

Chapter Three noted that an individual's relationship with the world is transactional, because knowledge is constructed from experiences in and with the world. Subsequently, the participants in the Youth Talk Program are actively constructing their social world. Within any educational setting it is, thereby, critical to empower students to take active roles in the construction of their own learning. This role can relate to student-driven curricular design, student designed and implementing assessment protocols, or student driven dialogue.

8.2.3.1 Student-Centered Learning

As argued in Chapter Three, a teacher's responsibility in a constructivist based design is to enable a student-centered learning process by recognizing the experiences and conditions which mold their students in order to better foster growth. Constructivism promotes the idea that knowledge is best obtained when students are challenged to take responsibility for their learning.

A key objective of the partnership between the Bridges of Understanding and Global Nomads Group is to "foster a personal understanding between the American people and people of the Arab World through curated relationships between though leaders and the creation of original youth-focused and orientated programs"(Youth Talk Student Workbook 2015-2016). These interactions are designed and implemented in order to promote empathy and peace. Within this curricular framework there exists two different deliverables, a GNG moderated dialogue or a student facilitated dialogue. Both frameworks rely on pre-planned curricular benchmarks and modules. The student-facilitated dialogue, however, relies on the students from each partnered school to facilitate discussion topics, question and answer periods, and the global citizenship project.

APG and BS was the lone case study that operated under the student-facilitated program. However, both APG and BS noted that they would have preferred, "less structure" in the Youth Talk Program. APG students argued that through,

"Increasing the modules and IVCs would give us more ownership over the program"(APG Post-Program Focus Group).

BS students noted,

" Even though it was student led, the whole thing felt very business like. The early stages were redundant because we were following instructions. Not much freedom at times"(BS Post-Program Focus Group).

Despite the differences in the program offerings, both student-facilitated and GNG moderated programs produced similar reflections regarding the small number of IVCs, the limited freedom to change the modules, and the "scripted" nature of the IVCs. Edwardsburg argued,

"There was very little to no long-term effect because we didn't have enough time to learn about each other" (Edwardsburg Post-Program Focus Group).

8.2.3.2 Perspective & Stereotypes

Each school noted the need to address stereotypes within the Youth Talk Program. Providing students with the opportunity to construct great intercultural understandings was prevalent. As previously discussed in 8.3.2, personal reflection was the fist inclination of success in the Youth Talk Program when addressed through the Three-Sphered Model. Two Edwardsburg students noted,

"I know have a different opinion than my family about people from the Middle East. The election (United States Presidential) has made me angry and made me want to take more actions".

"My parents are big supporters of Trump and after Youth Talk I have a different opinion. I have no problem with refugees coming into this country".

Youth Talk participants from Edwardsburg had the most numerous changes in perspective following the Youth Talk Program. This result correlates with a unique teacher approach to the

program, which worked outside of the Youth Talk curriculum. This approach and the subsequent results will be more fully examined in Chapter 9.

8.2.3.3 Role of the Educator in Knowledge Creation

However, it is important to briefly note that the educator from Edwardsburg worked outside of the curriculum by providing students with frequent means of personal reflection. As noted in Chapter Three, Larochelle and Bednarz write, "knowledge cannot be transmitted; it cannot be neutral either. Instead, it is constructed, negotiated, propelled by a project, and perpetuated as long as it enables its creators to organize their reality in a viable fashion" (p.8). A teacher's responsibility is then to enable this process by recognizing the experiences and conditions which mold their students in order to better foster growth. Constructivism promotes the idea that knowledge is best obtained when students are challenged to take responsibility for their learning.

In order to create an environment that best enables students to take responsibility for intercultural dialogue, GNG required educators to attend three to four professional development sessions focusing on: understanding goals, and timelines, and the role of the educator in these exchanges (Workshop 1), practicing the implementation of curriculum activities, understanding how to use GNG's digital tools (Workshop 2), meeting your partner educator(s) in an IVC, sharing goals and planning how to work together (Workshop 3), and the fourth professional development sessions was for the pairings operating through student facilitation. The professional development also provides educators with a more nuanced understanding of the terminology used in the program. Global Citizenship, for instance, is defined by Global Nomads Group as, "the ongoing process of becoming culturally aware and well informed about people, places, and events worldwide" (Youth Talk 2013-2014/2015-2016 Educator Handbook). Through understanding this definition, there is an expectation that educators will empower students to foster cultural awareness and active global citizenship. Student outcomes are further articulated to include:

1. Students will demonstrate critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and innovation' in their project work,

2. Students will communicate with their partners across cultures using public speaking skills, giving presentations, and asking complete questions,

3. Students will collaborate with peers to take positive action and increase cultural and global awareness,

4. Students will engage in digital literacy (research, media and technology) to address problems in their communities, and

5. Students will engage in deep discussions and reflection to appreciate and respect multiple perspectives and increase leadership skills" (Youth Talk 2013-2014/2015-2016 Educator Handbook).

8.2.3.4 Student Reflection During Youth talk

In addition to supporting these outcomes, educators are asked to help their students in reflecting upon their culture and the culture of their partner school through addressing cultural sensitivity, cultural awareness, and cultural knowledge. Within the Youth Talk Curriculum, reflection functions as the fourth step within each Youth Talk module. Each module contains four components, Learn, Act, IVC, and Reflect. Module also has a preparation component. An online portal created and maintained by Global Nomads Group, called GNG Connect provides the means for students to continue the conversation amongst each other following the IVCs. However, each pairing and the two additional on-site focus groups did not utilize the GNG Connect Portal. Aljoun did not make a signal online posting on GNG Connect and Edwardsburg was the only school which saw a majority of its students use the online portal. A GNG alumni Facebook was established for students post program, but students are not encouraged to share independent social media accounts during the program over safety and security reasons. Both the

school educators and GNG administrators also supervise GNG Connect. While GNG Connect provides an essential means of communication for its participants, it preordained prompts and structured nature limits students from creating a fully individualized learning experiences. Because the social and individual is interconnected, choosing to only encourage students to connect via social media platforms in the post program phase limits program impact and the potential for sustainable peacebuilding. As noted in Chapter Three, the relationship between the social and the individual in the learning process is, "closely interconnected, functionally unified, constantly interacting, and the change and development in one relentlessly influencing the other provides a valid explanation for both group and individual change" (Liu & Matthews, 392). Liu and Matthew's argument would, thereby, limit the potential to Act, a stated goal of the Youth Talk Program.

The limited nature of student autonomy to connect through a variety of mediums, coupled with the uniform application of the Youth Talk curriculum across all schools and regions contradicts the constructivist philosophy regarding the deconstruction and reconstruction of knowledge. Students in each pairing and the two on-site focus groups remarked that they needed more time to get to know each other, less formality, and more freedom. Teachers also remarked that less structure for students in the initial phases would be beneficial, but only two schools, LEE and Ajloun, noted on the need for increased teacher training. Within a constructionist epistemology, teachers must seek to understand how the world is constructed, thereby, addressing their own construction. Teachers must go about reflective practices within the Three Sphered Model. Chapter Three argued that a constructivist epistemology of peace education enables teachers and students to be mutually active participants in the learning process. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the teacher to create a self-regulating learning environment. Within a self-regulating environment students are enabled with the freedom to address their own, as well as, societal perspectives. The Youth Talk Curriculum is provided to both teachers and students to

follow, but not create. For instance, the first skill that GNG identifies for educators under professional responsibilities, collaboration, and growth is to be "aware of critical issues that students may face in cross-cultural dialogue and project work with their international partners" (Youth Talk 2013-2014/2015-2016 Educator Handbook). Yet, it does not require educators to be critically aware of their own issues. Apart from the student facilitated pairing, the two other pairings featured consistent teacher explanation, clarification, and correction of their student's questions and comments during the four IVCs. LEE's educator noted,

> "My pupils know everything about the United States, really. They know more than me, so they do not really need to know more about America. They want the others to know about Tunisia. They are very proud of their culture and they want to share it" (LEE Pre-Program Focus Group).

The BS educator clarified student points and prompted discussion topics during each IVC. For example, students from BS raised a question regarding the role the Arab Spring played in Bahrain. During the post-program focus group, this situation was given further explanation, because while APG provided a brief overview of the events, they chose not to provide any specific details. BS believed that there was a sense of discomfort regarding the question and answer and the BS educator subsequently muted the IVC in order to inform his students that they needed to move onto another question. This action came after both educators agreed that any topic could be discussed within the IVCs. However, during the pre-program interview with the APG educator, they recommended to students that, for their own safety, it would be best to refrain from any discussion regarding politics. In relation to the APG and BS pairing, transparency did not exist and this pairing was further influenced by their educator's influence on the discussion.

8.3 Effectiveness of the Three-Sphered Model

Chapter 2 argued that the practice of peace education is meant to create a consciousness of peace, rather than the mere absence of conflict. In order to foster the conditions for the creation of a consciousness of peace, an individualized and empowering educational model must be

implemented and sustained to support the student. Chapter 3 highlighted Ian Harris and Mary Lee Morrison's (2013) argument, "Peace education has as one of its aims to foster the conditions for learning that will enhance the potential for inner transformation. Inner transformation then can point the way to creating the right conditions for building social change"(p.11). However, Chapter 3 further observed that a consciousness of peace is an abstract concept that lacks an understanding of how to create and implement practices that can support its adoption. The Three Sphered Model addresses the abstract nature of peace education. Chapter 3 further clarified its creation, highlighting that the model identifies the purpose of peace education and the subsequent underpinnings that support peace education practices. This understanding identifies the researcher's understanding of peace education and enabled the creation of a more explicit and effective evaluation of intercultural dialogue through videoconference.

During data collection and analysis it became apparent that the normative sphere of cosmopolitanism was the most critical mechanism in driving the Three Sphered Model's application. The constructivist and critical pedagogy spheres imply a normative underpinning to their application. As highlighted in Chapter 3, cosmopolitan norms inform the change that a critical pedagogy and constructivist epistemology provides in the learning environment. And while peace education's constructivist epistemology argues that individuals have the ability to transform their consciousness and critical pedagogy is rooted in change and student choice, neither sphere specifies how educational practices can foster outward change through inner transformation. Cosmopolitan norms of equality, justice, and liberty apply directly to the norms guiding peace education practices and appeared to honor and espouse the educational values of Reardon, Boulding, Montessori, and Freire. However, as noted in Chapter 8, students and faculty participating in the Youth Talk program misconstrued "sameness" as an example of empathetic growth, cultural understanding, and the fulfillment of a shared humanity. Sameness, within this context best defines cultural reproduction, but as the development of a consciousness of peace is

an abstract concept, so is a shared humanity, enabling participants to see notions of powerblindness and cultural reproduction as positive. This reality was further proven by Global Nomads Group highlighting student notions of "sameness" as a sign of program success in a Facebook posting. Ultimately, as argued in Chapter 8, American schools found connection through their own culture, and MENA schools found connection through their adoption of American culture. Subsequently, the cosmopolitan theme of a shared humanity was not fully realized in the Youth Talk pairings and, in fact, has the potential to support continued cultural reproduction.

Betty Reardon (2011) and Benhabib's (2008) understanding and defense that cosmopolitanism is a driving normative force in peace education, enabled the researcher to critical examine reflections from the students over the course of the program, while also critically examine how the Youth Talk curriculum was being implemented. While a cosmopolitan normative underpinning is still defended in this research project as the underpinning force in peace education practices, those engaging and designing peace education practices must be given a more explicit understanding of critical cosmopolitanism, which could enable them to address and change instances and philosophies that support cultural reproduction.

Chapter 4 acknowledged Valentine Moghadam's (2009) argument, that cosmopolitanism norms both support a shared humanity, while embracing the diversity of experience and thought. However, while peace education practices and philosophies rooted with cosmopolitanism provide tools individuals can adapt to their own contexts, imbalanced power dynamics within an exchange often result in change becoming the responsibility of an elite, implemented from above (Moghadam, 2009 & Beck, 2010). This was the reality for the majority of Youth Talk partnerships examined.

In order to effectively design, implement, and sustain peace education practices the normative sphere of cosmopolitanism must be adapted to recognize and honor difference in order

to support a shared humanity. Hermeneutic Cosmopolitanism can provide a more effective understanding. In, *A relational hermeneutical approach to human rights education;* Fuad Al-Daraweesh (2010) defines hermeneutics as, "human actions and social phenomena that can be explained by interpreting the subjective meaning of social action"(p. 23). A key concept of hermeneutics is the fusion of horizons, first developed by Gadamer (1976). The fusion of horizons, "calls for posing questions in one's "interaction with other cultural traditions (horizons). Posing questions within local traditions, or within different traditions, makes learning feasible because the process facilitated learning from different horizons" (p. 29). A hermenutical approach to cosmopolitanism celebrates a shared humanity through recognizing, respecting, and honoring difference (Al-Daraweesh, p. 46). This approach would support an understanding of a shared humanity as a process of critical engagement with diverse traditions. The adoption of hermeneutical cosmopolitanism will be fully examined in Chapter 10's conclusions and suggestions for future research.

Nevertheless, the Three Sphered Model enabled the researcher to quickly identify and critique imbalanced power dynamics, teacher driven curricular approaches, and the lack of equity in regards to technological capabilities, and positive behavioral changes and moments of conscientization. The effectiveness of the model, in this context, provided the researcher with a clear understanding of what critical components are needed in implementing intercultural dialogue through videoconference. These components directly related to each sphere and will be more fully described in Chapter 9. Moreover, the Three Sphered Model provided the researcher with a critical lens in which to examine the nature of dialogue within a peace education framework and ultimately argue that Youth Talk is not a dialogue-based program. This finding will be more fully examined in Chapter 9. Within this finding, though is the realization that Youth Talk provides students and educators with an exposure to new cultures, ideas, and experiences. In the process behavioral changes were see, evidence of students engaging in

reflective processes to address bias and stereotypes. While such growth was not apparent in all partnerships, and where growth was seen it was not uniform. The Three Sphered Model enabled this examination and provided the researcher with an understanding, that while Youth Talk cannot be defined as a dialogue, it does provide students with an opportunity to adopt a consciousness of peace that is better understood as a dialogical process, than the end result of dialogue.

CONCLUSION

8.3 uses the assessment of Youth Talk by the Three Sphered Model to identify what critical components are needed to facilitate videoconference based dialogue within a peace education framework. Epistemology, human agency and normative components are not further identified as necessary, because it is implied that all peace education programs, regardless of delivery must possess such properties. While a student-centered approach is further examined as a critical aspect within a videoconference based program, which correlates with peace education epistemology, it is given further specificity as to how student engagement should be adopted in virtual spaces. Reflective practices and access directly address how technology can support peace education programs but require organizations, schools, teachers, and students to engage in supplemental actions and assessments in order to provide greater equity and opportunities to counter the limitations of said technology.

An individual's subjective reality is constructed by their interaction with it. Participants who engage in the Youth Talk Program, but are unable to freely and openly express themselves in it are unable to construct their knowledge and, thereby, sense of reality. Intervention by educators, curricular frameworks, and the lack of reflection during engagement can impact a student's ability to freely create knowledge. Moreover, Youth Talk's limited focus on initial reflection can stymie knowledge deconstruction and construction. As noted in Chapter Three, Elise Boulding

argues, "self-understanding comes by reflection and leads to action"(Peace & Change, 402). Understanding one's social, economic, and political situation can enable the empowerment, which is at the heart of peace education, leading individuals to change their reality. Self-understanding is subjective knowledge creation that can enable informed action and a greater realization of a shared humanity. An observable, yet unchangeable curriculum coupled with teacher intervention and the lack of consistent student reflection defines an educational program centered on the acquisition of objective knowledge, and therefore supports Freire's argument regarding the banking model of education. An assessment of the Youth Talk program in regards to subjective and objective knowledge will be addressed in Chapter 9, informed by the assessment of the Three Sphered Model in this chapter.

Addressing the effectiveness of the Three Sphered Model underscored the abstract nature of cosmopolitanism in providing a foundational piece to supporting critical pedagogy and constructivism. While the this criticism of cosmopolitanism and the argument that it is dictated by the elites were both addressed, its abstract nature enables students, educators, and program organizers to misconstrue cultural reproduction with empathetic growth and intercultural understanding. A subsequent need to explicitly outline how cosmopolitanism supports the adoption of a shared humanity through honoring and embracing difference. A hermeneutical approach to cosmopolitanism, which defines this normative approach to peace education, will be examined in Chapter 11.

Chapter 9: Central Research Question Analysis

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the Three-Sphered Model was used to examine the range of student, teacher, and curricular data. Using critical pedagogy, cosmopolitanism, and constructivism in addressing Youth Talk, data will now enable the researcher to assess how effective interactive videoconference can be as a peace education practice through addressing the four areas of inquiry

noted in Chapter 1 (peace education pedagogy, best practices of videoconference in the classroom, immediate impact, and post-program impact).

9.1 Critical Components to Implementing Intercultural Dialogue Through Videoconference

Chapter 5 outlined a framework for the development, implementation, and assessment of peace education programs. The framework was constructed under the premise that a student-centered pedagogical design, using dialogue as the primary educational tool within a critical peace education approach, most aptly defines peace education. However, upon further analysis of peace education practices and purposes, every peace education practice and program must rely on a student-centered pedagogical approach, with critical pedagogy as the basis for human agency. Regardless of whether intercultural dialogue plays a pivotal role within the peace education program, a student-centered approach to curricular construction and program practices where students are given the agency to critically examine and reflect on their learning is essential.

Chapter 5's curricular framework outlines benchmarks that support the assessment of peace education initiatives through the lens of the Three Sphered Model. A critical component of this framework is an understanding of global citizenship and the correlating need to explicitly implement a normative approach to any practice or program. To deny a normative approach would be to deny a social purpose. Tony Jenkins (2007) notes,

"All education has a social purpose. The social purposes of education are those conditions in society, which educational planners and authorities seek to influence, maintain or change the education they design and deliver. The real assumption that is made about education, in any form, is that it is neutral and value free. Take a moment to reflect upon your formal educational experiences by asking yourself the following questions.

- Who was taught?
- What was taught?
- Who determined what and who was taught?
- How was it taught?

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- How was the learning evaluated?
- What values were at the core of this learning?" (p. 28-29).

The answers to these questions all suggest a normative value to peace education. Peace education works towards a social order rooted in a normative understanding of responsibility and hospitality. Cosmopolitan norms govern notions of responsibility and hospitality among individuals in this community, so as to ensure equality and dignity for all. But more importantly, a cosmopolitan approach to peace education adopts justice as the objective. A respect of human rights, not only of a state's citizens but also for the universal global community would establish and maintain this perpetual peace.

The goal of all peace education programs is to end violence, promote understanding, acknowledge human dignity and rights, and enable empathy; all within a context-specific practice. While Chapter 5 chapter outlines the creation of such a framework and benchmarks for developing peace education programs, which enabled the researcher to form and assess the IQs, 8.3.1 will specify the critical components needed to implement and sustain intercultural dialogue through videoconference. This assessment will re-examine some of the program benchmarks, scope and sequence, learning objective and outcomes, and standards in reference to videoconference based dialogue.

Chapter 5 also highlighted Zembylas and Bekerman's (2013) adoption of a critical approach to peace education, where an argument is made for the adoption of four elements, which would enable the parties involved to engage in an individualized approach to peace education. These elements are: reinstating the materiality of 'things' and practices, reontologizing research and practice in peace education, becoming 'critical experts of design', and engaging in critical cultural analysis (Ibid). The emphasis within these four elements is to examine how individuals and groups understand the world, because context specific forces mediate our

knowledge and participation with it. GNG and BoU view videoconference as an educational medium that can transcend boundaries, both geographically and culturally. In BoU's programming mission, they argue, "The youth age demographic has the power to create the type of desired cultural shift that served as the catalyst for the creation of the organization, as members are less encumbered by prejudices and special interests that blind in adulthood"(Youth Talk Educator Handbook 2013-14). The creation of shift is best achieved through According to BoU, in-class and digital programming can best achieve this cultural shift. Youth Talk believes that interactive videoconferencing creates opportunities for "global collaboration and communication" are established (ibid). However, technology can also increase the divide between communities, where language, power, access, and opportunity legitimize stereotypes and prevent honest collaboration. The Three-Sphered Model further clarifies this debate, and in correlation with data collection, the following components have been deemed essential in developing, adopting, and sustaining intercultural dialogue through videoconference.

9.1.1 REFLECTIVE QUESTIONING

Reflective questioning requires peace education practitioners and participants to question their biases, assumptions, and motivations as well as, "interrogate how localized experiences engage with, shape, and challenge totalizing and universalizing assumptions, discourses, and practices that frame the field, and consider the ways in which this examination might move peace education forward so that it is compatible with its intentions (Peace Education: International Perspectives, 234). Chapter 2 argued that dialogue is the most persistent and pivotal component of any peace education practice. It is through dialogue that we both learn and educate. Yet as Freire (1970) argues, dialogue or the essence of dialogue requires both true reflection and honest action. Honest action is informed action, which honors the unique individual and collective

narratives of all participants, which can only be manifested by pre, during, and post program reflection.

Tony Jenkins (2007) argues in Community-Based Institutes on Peace Education,

> "Peace education, philosophically, embraces difference and diversity and also recognizes and values the autonomy of the individual learner. In consistency with these values peace education learning is often pursued through critical, reflective learning modes. In such learner-centered methods authentic values are autonomously developed by and within the learner, not inculcated by instructors"(p.29-30).

Videoconference based dialogue removes direct face-to-face contact, thereby, necessitating more deliberate and organized periods of reflection. Technical failures, limited timeframes in which to engage, and misinterpretations cause by the lack of direct contact can all negatively affect dialogical practices. For example, the validations of cultural stereotypes or participant biases were seen in each pairing. The LEE and BAL pairing exemplify this reality. Because IVC attendance was a consistent issue for BAL students throughout the program, notions of distrust emerged within the LEE students. Videoconference based dialogue can result in a lack of participant responsibility to engage, as the lack of direct to direct contact impacts a participant's responsibility to their dialogical partner.   However, in order to actively address participant responsibility, notions of hospitality must be actively addressed in reflective practices. As argued in Chapter 2, before an intercultural community built on trust can be established, dialogue must allow and encourage each individual need to reflect and express their uniqueness. As Elise Boulding observes, "self-understanding" comes by reflection and leads to action"(Peace & Change, 402). Understanding one's social, economic, and political situation can enable empowerment, leading to an understanding of self and an individual' ability to change their status-quo in order to support our shared humanity.

The limited pre-program reflection by each school limited sustained dialogue within the partnerships. Each pairing noted that the initial IVC was awkward and each American school was

unable to provide any background knowledge on their MENA partner. Because reflective practices were neither taught to educators nor required by students, short-term impact was minimal. This finding will be further examined in the following section. Furthermore, differences amongst students and entire school communities were not embraced during the IVCs, as cultural reproduction became a reality in all but one pairing.

Cultural reproduction is legitimized by powerblind practices that negate difference. Castagno's (2013) understanding of powerblindness, "refers to our reluctance and avoidance of race, social class, language, gender, asexuality, and other politicized aspects of identity that are linked to power and the distribution of resources" (p. 108). The inadequate amount of time given to students and teachers to participate in critical reflection during a pre-program phase results in an avoidance by students to recognize the experiences that have shaped their own identities and those of their partner school. A further examination of powerblindness and its relationship to this research project will be provided in Chapter 9.

The ability to recognize difference is a critical step in The Community-Based Institutes on Peace Education (CIPE) Organizer's Manuel. The CIPE argues that, "engaging learners in an inquiry into their values and views, their daily lives, and the structures and systems in which they are lived is an important in understanding how their individual and group identities are formed. This process is often described as "awareness-raising." Such engagement is often nurtured through practices and processes of reflection" (p. 26). These practices, according to the CIPE, must be firmly rooted in a peace education program that is consistently assessed. This educational setting also calls for establishing daily reflection groups, which make up one of the six critical program components. Within these daily reflection groups, participants engage in two rounds of inquiry pertaining to individual perceptions and/or attitudes, integration, deepening understanding, clarification, extension, and explication and exploration.

Youth Talk's design and implementation draws some direct contradictions to the CIPE. The Youth Talk Program's Handbook and curriculum does not dictate reflection as a critical pre-program action and only notes reflective processes as pertinent in regards to the Global Citizenship Project. While pre and post program surveys are conducted, they were not school specific and do not require students to engage in any additional reflective practice in conjunction.

Only one Youth Talk school, addressed in this research project, conducted pre, mid, and post program reflection for students. One additional school conducted only post-program reflection. In both of these situations, the schools operated outside of the auspices of the Youth Talk curriculum. Moreover, both schools experienced considerable changes in initial student perspective, with the MENA school recording the highest number of post program conversations with their partner school. This school was the only participant in this research project that was not conducted within a school structure but operated within a community center and the American school had an educator who chose to utilize Youth Talk outside of the State sanctioned curriculum, further adapting it to meet the unique needs of this students. Both of these cases reflect the CIPE's argument that, "the social purposes of peace education cannot be achieved without far reaching changes in education systems, their goals and practices"(p. 36). While each school within the Youth Talk Program engaged in a pre and post program survey, such surveys did not engage individual students in reflective practices or support questioning.

As noted in Chapter 5, incorporating questioning within a peace education framework is not a critique, but rather a means in which to enable and foster "cultural awareness of one's position in society and to aid learners' in pursuit of constructive meaning making and action to change their societal position" (Jenkins, 2013, 182). The peace education curriculum examined in Chapter Five designed a scope and sequence where the modules and actions focus on building blocks of understanding and self-reflection. For instance, students and teachers partake in consistent self-reflection during Module 1 in order to more effectively participate in community

outreach in Module 2, which can then lead to effective inter-cultural engagement in Module 3. The student and teacher roles and responsibilities provide specific details on how best encourage horizontal learning in mutually beneficial learning environment. However, reflection is the most consistent and critical component within each module. Peace education participants must be given the time and space to engage in separate, reflective practices apart from their interaction with other partners. A videoconference based dialogical exercise requires teacher supported and organized face-to-face reflective practices. Students who undertake an evaluation of the specific challenges facing their communities and themselves and reflect on the subsequent biases that they have formed with members of their community in face-to-face conversations "will understand peace and violence on a deeper and more substantive level" (Kester, 2008, 16). Dialogue will then be an honest exchange enabling cultural understanding and empathy due to an initial critical self-reflection. Without critical self-reflection dialogue cannot exist, thereby, resulting in possible cultural reproduction, increased bias, and negative peace.

While Youth Talk will be fully assessed as a program in Chapter 9, each learning module in the program goes through a three-step cycle of: Learn, Act, Reflect. The Reflect component emphasizes a student's responsibility to connect and respond to their peer's ideas on the GNG Connect online interface, while also reflecting on their own experience within the IVCs in order to more fully engage in the Global Citizenship Project. While consistent and structured reflection within a dialogue-based program is essential, an assessment of individual and collective bias must also support student learning during reflective practices. John Dewey argued that in order to create peaceful and trusting classroom environments, they should be structured in a "problem-solving way" in order for students to discover their own truth (Harris & Morrison, 2013, 166). Elise Boulding notes that it is critical that educators foster environments where students are able to feel,

"Autonomous, competent, confident about her own future and the future of society, able to cope with stress, relates warmly to others and feels responsibility for them even when they are not directly dependent on her. (Boulding, "The Child and Non-violent Social Change" in Harris and Morrison, ed., *Peace Education: Third Edition,* 2013, p.167).

However, not a single school praised GNG Connect as a positive vehicle for sustaining dialogue. In fact, students observed feelings of awkwardness, forced participation, and rigidity regarding its use. Creating additional virtual spaces to the IVC that can support and sustain critical dialogue must address the limited amount of direct contact that defines an IVC based program. These supplemental spaces must be designed to support continued student reflection and, only after such time, allow students to drive inquiry-based exercises.

As noted in Chapter 7, student exchanges within the Youth Talk model never emulated this said design. Interactions often displayed a lack of critical reflection, where student bias and overall experiences were rarely challenged. For instance, LEE students noted, "peace is everything to us. It is part of our culture. It is part of our religion. It is who we are"(Esteklal, pre-program focus group). Esteklal students see peace and the pursuit of peace as a unique facet to their society. Furthermore, when responding to how they felt Americans view peace, one LEE student noted, "Americans have a different definition of peace" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group). This response was followed by significant group affirmation and subsequently followed by the argument from a different student, "We don't have racism in Tunisia. Americans don't want peace in the same way as we do because Tunisians are all the same" Esteklal, pre-program focus group). The student examples focused on a view of their society as homogenous, included notions of socio-economic status, religion, education, and overall culture. Another LEE student remarked, "We as Tunisians don't suffer from differences" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group). This comment was met by even greater group affirmation. Based on their understanding of Tunisian society, students argued that Tunisians are the same but Americans are different and,

"don't want peace in the same way as we do" (Esteklal, pre-program focus group). Students from BS also made an initial discussion point with APG, which did not display critical self-reflection prior to the program commencing. Students noted a series of implicit biases regarding their understanding of the MENA region. For example, one student remarked, "I did a little research and I realized that as a country you are a lot more developed than what I first realized and as teenagers I realized we can relate a lot more on a personal level" (BS, 1st IVC). The ability, or the perceived ability, to engage on a personal level with their partner school came as a result of their partnered school's perceived "development." Questioning further addresses theses implicit biases in a dialogue based peace education program.

As noted in Chapter 2, educators within the framework of a Montessorian educational philosophy allow their students to make independent inquiries pertaining to both their studies and their own personal growth. Subsequently, they are developing a sense of humanity, which enables reflection and action. According to Montessori (1949), a critically constructed educational system is required to 'enable men to understand and structure social phenomenon, to prepare and pursue collective ends, and thus to bring about orderly social progress' (Montessori, 1949, viii).

The focus group responses from LEE point to substantial bias prior to the Youth Talk Program commencing. While such responses speak to a unique individual and collective narrative, such biases require practices aimed at fostering cultural awareness, for which the Youth Talk Program could support, but not solely within IVCs. Peace education practices that utilize intercultural videoconference must explicitly make space for teachers and students to foster questioning outside of the IVCs.

This exercise eliminates a banking model of education platform enabling co-ownership of the program's success. Student ownership over the adoption, implementation, and assessment of the program views education as student-centered, where a student's experiences are recognized

and honored. In stymieing a student's ability to question their education, and subsequent varied experiences, students are perceived as *passive tabula rasa.* Programs and educators that view students as empty receptors effectively obstruct their natural inclinations, turning them into forgotten citizens (38). Subsequently, as noted in Chapter 2's assessment of Montessorian educational philosophy, any peace education model must seek to encourage independence which can enhance the value of all individuals and prepare young adults to understand and respond appropriately to the challenges of their time (30).

The opportunity and freedom for students and educators to freely question their education and educational practices can directly address processes of cultural reproduction and power blindness, directly address the relationship between culture and power in educational programs. Giroux (1981) notes that Freire,

"Views knowledge as fundamentally linked to the question of social relationships. This means that the critical pursuit of knowledge has to be paralleled by a quest for mutual humanization among those engaged in such a pursuit. Unlike banking education that inhibits creativity and domesticates students, a radical pedagogy requires non-authoritarian social relationships that support dialogue and communication as indispensable for questioning the meaning and nature of knowledge and peeling away the hidden structures of reality" (Giroux, Ideology, Culture and the Process of Schooling, p.133).

Reflective questioning views our present and future reality as one of our own making. An understanding of our world and subsequent responsibility to improve it is at the heart of peace education practice. For instance, as noted in Chapter 2, Lennart Vriens (2000) argues that a balanced concept of peace education integrates the perspectives of young people with their future responsibility for peace.

Educators must therefore embrace the conflict that might emerge from questioning educational practices as a means to understanding. Conflict is a basic fact of human existence because we are each unique (Boulding, 1995, 197). Peace education practices that provide opportunities to engage in reflective questioning then function as a vessel by which we embrace conflict and, through dialogue, manage it in order to embrace our present difference and our future ones. In contrast, if an educational framework chooses to adopt a platform where

differences are ignored in order to avoid direct violence, then a lasting state of structural and cultural violence will be perpetuated. Differences can be celebrated through reflective questioning, which can support students and teachers to critically act upon their reality and embrace a critical cosmopolitan normative approach to learning.

9.1.2 STUDENT-CENTERED DESIGN

Enabling student to freely question their education provides the first step for students to deconstruct and construct their narratives. As noted in Chapter 5.2, The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century (1999), students in today's schools should be prepared to take an active role in the development of peace education and their processes. Subsequently, implementing an interactive videoconference based practice must encourage student involvement, inquiry, and adaptation based on the specific population's experiences and biases. An IVC driven curriculum must therefore be a living document, able to change and adapt based upon the context in which it is being implemented. As noted in the previous section, videoconference based dialogical practices can enable participants to avoid the responsibilities necessary that direct face to face contact emphasizes naturally. The Youth Talk curriculum does not address this reality, as it functions as adaptable as a one-size fits all approach to dialogical practices instead of as an adaptable action plan. Within this model Youth Talk activities are pre-planned with instructions, operations, and assessments provided to educators and students. While all activities are recommended and not required, there is no direct contact between Youth Talk administrators and student participants prior to the program commencing, except in student facilitated pairings. This reality enables the lack of responsibility and trust that was manifested in the LEE-BAL pairing. As observed in both the IVCs and focus groups, videoconference can provide students with an excuse to disengage from the responsibilities of sustaining

videoconference-based partnerships. Participant designed deliverables can directly address this reality by providing students with direct ownership over their IVCs.

Bunting (1984 & 1985) argues that in adopting a student-centered pedagogical approach, students and teachers create a free environment to discuss their feelings and experiences. If videoconference based dialogue is directed towards the creation of such environments, it must be constructed to honor the basic dignity of all people (Harris and Morrison, 2013).

A common misperception, as noted in Chapter 2, is that peace education is education about peace, where peace activists, movements, and philosophies are presented as the primary source of course material. However, such a practice does not enable the participant to critically engage in their personal and collective narratives, which honors their basic dignity, while also creating a student-centered learning environment. Chapter 2 argues that, understanding the nature of violence is necessary in order to transform it. However, the nature of violence is context specific, requiring educational practices to seek unique, student-facilitated processes to address violence at all levels. The lack of direct face-to-face contact can sustain apathy between paired communities. Because structural violence argues that poverty, discrimination, oppression, underdevelopment, and illiteracy contribute to the violent state of the world", a peace education program rooted in dialogue must seek to tackle the thoughts, practices and institutional barriers facing peace educators and participants (Harris & Morrison, 2013, 53). Freire's conscientization utilizes reflective questioning to empower human autonomy in knowledge deconstruction and reconstruction. As noted in Chapter 3, Freire argued that conscientization is not manifested from standardized processes, but through interactive learning and dialogical practices driven by a student-centered design process (Morrow & Torres, 2002). This design directly addresses the responsibility to a dialogical partner that videoconference can negate.

This research project's predesigned scope and sequence design for videoconference based peace education practices specifies the need for a continuous process of student input and design. For instance, students and teachers partake in consistent self-reflection during Module 1 in order to more effectively participate in community outreach in Module 2, which can then lead to effective inter-cultural engagement in Module 3. The student and teacher roles and responsibilities provide specific details on how best encourage horizontal learning in mutually beneficial learning environments. The teacher roles and responsibilities for Modules 1 and 2 are to empower students through inclusivity in the learning design, encourage and support students to share their experiences and beliefs, allow students to lead discussions and reflective activities, and to collect and act on student feedback. Throughout the modules, teachers are also expected to provide students with the freedom to change the curriculum, informed by the nature of the partnership.

This process of sequencing a peace education program rooted in videoconference-based dialogue is not seen in Youth Talk. While the Youth Talk curriculum specifies that,

> "Students engage in intercultural dialogue, explore media bias, gather resources, and build leadership skills to identify and address topics and issues that are important to their collective identity as a paired group" (Youth Talk Educator Handbook).

However, Youth Talk does not acknowledge the need to identify individual student or singular school identities. Furthermore, the student facilitated Youth Talk Program consists of student training on how to engage within the IVC, rather than providing a space for students to discuss their individual and collective identities and subsequently design a context specific partnership. Focus group data also pointed to this reality. Only one pairing within this research project elicited a positive response regarding the IVC structure. In Chapter 8.2, it was noted that students participating in the student facilitated pairing argued that the structure of the IVCs provided the necessary freedom to engage in meaningful dialogue. In contrast, the overall responses from students reflected this Edwardsburg student's argument on the nature of the IVCs,

"The IVCs were light and fluffy. I would have liked, maybe, one more IVC to just meet the students and break the ice. The IVCs felt superficial" (Edwardsburg post-program focus group).

Non-student facilitated IVCs were described by students as limiting, too structured, awkward, `too short, strict, and slow. And despite the student-facilitated pairing providing majority positive feedback regarding student engagements, students were still critical of its scripted nature. As noted in section .2 of this chapter, An APG student noted,

"Having structure limits what we can say. After the first IVC we needed to be political correct because of the format" (Mid-Program Focus Group, APG).

The uniform application of dialogical programs in educational experiences stymies student voice. Tony Jenkins (2007) argues in Community-Based Institutes on Peace Education,

"Process and methods used should provide a space for facilitating new knowledge and should recognize the knowledge, experience and differing opinions of each learner. It is not the role of the peace educator to provide solutions to every possible problem or obstacle to peace, rather, they should seek to nurture a well rounded set of capacities and skills that will enable students to identify and address these potential challenges and respond to them in an appropriate manner" (p.31).

In order to provide effective programs that can educate for a culture of peace, peace educational practices, as noted in the Community-Based Institutes on Peace Education, should seek to, "Model values of diversity and community through learner centered teaching. The reflection/action mode of Paulo Freire (who has profoundly influenced the pedagogies of peace educators) provides a lived sense of participatory learning that cannot be acquired through traditional teacher education or conventional conference formats"(ibid). Students are, thereby, encouraged to be risk takers in their learning. Embracing such risk provides them with an opportunity to pursue change in order to recognize and act upon their own values (Reardon, 1988, p.67). This critical approach to both program design and student empowerment roots the peace education practice in personal and collective transformation.

9.1.3 ACCESS (TECHNOLOGY, RESOURCES, & LANGUAGE)

Chapter 1 argued that the design and application of positive dialogue requires equity and humility amongst participants and an optimistic view of the power of humanity to cause positive change both individually and globally to create the necessary conditions for personal and cultural transformation. A critical observation from this research project is the importance of addressing power dynamics within an intercultural dialogical practice. 8.2.1 specifically argued that limited humility, imbalanced power dynamics, technological deficiencies, and the prescribed structure seen in Youth Talk limited the effective adoption and implementation of dialogical practices. While Youth Talk did not result in instances of direct violence amongst participants, and based on quantitative data, elicited empathetic growth, the absence of direct violence or a state of negative peace, as noted in Chapter 2, "does not necessarily indicate an absence of structural violence; on the contrary, many oppressive and authoritarian societies, families, schools, and classrooms exhibit an uneasy 'peaceful' front, with revolt and rebellion lingering just beneath the surface"(Duzek 22).

Creating educational environments where the perceived dominance of the English language, as noted by students in the MENA region, is the adopted means of dialogue, delegitimizes the native tongues of the other participants. Such a practice defines cultural violence and legitimizes structural violence, where the notion of "other" manifests itself into acts of prejudice, stereotypes, and biases. One of Galtung's (1990) six cultural domains is in fact, language, which when examined in reference to the Youth Talk Program encourages a society in seeing educational repression as normal, which enables a society, based on structural violence, to justify the growth and sustainment of a society built on a system of haves and have not's. This is further exemplified by the dichotomy in technological capacities between school pairings. APG and BS had the fewest registered comments regarding technology during focus groups and IVCs. In contrast technological issues plagued the Edwardsburg and Ajloun pairing. Ajloun experienced the most frequent drop connections and participated in the program without an external

microphone or speaker system. Edwardsburg had substantial technological capacities, with all the necessary external components, which had been tested prior to the IVCs. Ajloun was forced to gather around one laptop and did not receive an on-site visit from GNG administrators until the midway point of the program. Subsequently, Edwardsburg students had the highest number of student reflections that drew upon their partner school's limited technological capacities. More than half of the Edwardsburg student reflections that noted aspects of "sameness" also included additional insights on the perceived differences in technological capacities between the two communities. Furthermore, while not a single MENA based school noted American technological capacities limiting the IVCs, all of the American schools did note that the MENA schools' technological capacities limited the IVCs in some aspect.

Chapter 2 argued that dialogical programs that utilize technology in any facet, must seek the democratization of technology, avoiding the possibility of videoconference being a tool of the few in order to sustain the banking method of education. Moreover, Chapter 2 also raised Freire's argument that "the answer does not lie in the rejection of the machine but in the humanization of the man". The allowance of disproportionate technological capacities in correlation with the use of a singularly dominant language in all but one of the schools addressed in this research project, dehumanizes the non-dominant participant. Dehumanization directly correlates with Galtung's understanding of violence as directed at the obstruction of potential, where "actual somatic and metal realizations are below their potential realization" and Betty Reardon's understanding of violence as a process of denying human dignity (Galtung, 1996, p.2).

Reardon (2015) further argues,

I identity violence as the central problematic of peace education. All violence degrades/or denies human dignity. This is why I assert that the substance of the field should comprise an inquiry into violence as a phenomenon and a system, its multiple and pervasive forms, the interrelationships among the various forms, its sources and purposes, how it functions and potential alternatives for

achieving the legally sanctioned socially accepted, or political tolerated commonly pursued through violence"(p.152).

Designing and implementing consistent inquiries into whether peace education practices maintain the status quo of the dominant social structure at play, and, thereby, engages in processes of cultural reproduction is a critical step in creating, implementing, and sustaining equity. Granting equal access to peace education programs can directly address individual and collective bias, where processes of humanization can be explicitly detailed and implemented. When the status quo is maintained, however, then Chapter 5's argument that, dialogical programs will primarily be afforded to the privileged classes of society. This reality will then maintain an unequal power distribution in society and oppose Freire's philosophy of education as a means of transforming the structures that surround students so that they can become independent players.

While Youth Talk does not provide equal access to technology, deficiencies in access for a dialogical practice using technology can stand in contrast to program goals seeking to foster dialogue and intercultural understanding. Chapter 5 argued that in designing how best to implement videoconference based dialogical practices within the peace education framework one must note the limitations and challenges that a videoconference based platform possesses. Ensuring equity for all participants, both in regards to existing educational technologies and knowledge acquisition, specifically language adoption, is a consistent challenge.

During post-program interviews, GNG administrators noted that the implementation of Youth Talk would be easy and, often times deemed successful, if they only chose to work with private schools in the United States and MENA (Post-Program Interview, GNG). Yet while GNG argues that in selecting only private institutions to conduct the Youth Talk Program would ease logistical issues, it would only benefit the privileged segments of both populations. However, differences in technological capacities between partners can result in the same unequal power

distribution if as argued in Chapter 5, creating cultural exchange programs where accessibility is primarily afforded to the privileged classes of society maintains an unequal power distribution in society and does not embrace Freire's philosophy of education as a means of transforming the structures that surround students so that they can become independent players. For instance, Edwardsburg students remarked,

"It seems like they see us as superior or better or richer or something" (Edwardsburg post-program Focus Group).

'I feel like they viewed Americans as a rich country and some Americans are very prepared, and we are a strong country" (ibid).

In contrast, students from Ajloun remarked that,

"It is my country, but they (Americans) think it's a poor country"(ibid).

As noted in both Chapter 5 and 7, Allport's (1954) first condition for positive contact is equal status. However, under symbolic interactionism's contact hypothesis, equal status is only required within the contact situation. Based upon this premise, the researcher argued in Chapter 5 that if students, of the same grade, yet from various classes are able to connect through interactive videoconference, and cooperative learning is the primary instrument of instruction, than equal status can become a reality. This argument is limited when addressed in correlation with the Youth Talk Program. While cooperative learning strategies are critically important in Peace Education practice, to assume that cooperative learning strategies can alone ensure equal status amongst participants is misguided. Johnson, Johnson, & Maryama (1984) argue that all group members, regardless of their ethnicity or socio-economic standing, have equal status because they all have equally important information to share. However, one's ability to freely and accurately share their narrative can impact its power. Therefore, a video conference based peace education program must be offered free of charge for all participants, under the premise that

participating schools will be members for the entirety of the programs existence, in order to assess its long-term effectiveness. Subsequently, effective outreach in order to gauge community need and interest through dialogue, rather than adopting a one-size fits all approach to video conference which will only widen the gap between the "west" and "the rest" is essential.

Communities that choose to participate in videoconference based peace education programs must be given the necessary financial and logistical support to operate the program effectively. Such support must be provided equally to avoid an unfair distribution of resources. The concept of fairness, which is a critical component of the equity theory, is at the heart of this argument. In contrast, frustration, anger, and ultimately structural and direct violence can be byproducts of unfair distribution. As Isenhart (2000) argues, individual morality is unbalanced when "we feel others are benefiting at our expense" or vice versa. This imbalance can often result in resentment and an unwillingness to engage in dialogue. 8.2.1 further noted the prescribed structure, limited humility, imbalanced power dynamics, and technological deficiencies present in Youth Talk limit the effective adoption and implementation of dialogical practices.

9.2 Short Term Impact

As noted in Chapter 5, GNG's mission is to, "foster dialogue and understanding among the world's youth. GNG operates at the intersection of international and peace education, striving to serve as a vehicle for awareness, bridging boundaries of cultural misconceptions and instilling in our audience a heightened appreciation and comprehension of the world in which they live."

Youth Talk's other partner organization, BoU, articulates that their mission, "aims to foster an emotionalized understanding amongst the American people and people of the Arab World through curated relationships between though leaders and the creation of original youth focused and orientated programs."

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The missions of both GNG and BoU inform the creation and implementation of Youth Talk. Subsequently, providing opportunities for students to foster global citizenship and inter-cultural awareness defines the Youth Talk Program and informs the guiding philosophies of both organizations' missions. This sections aims to determine what impact the Youth Talk program had on students throughout the duration of the IVCs. This assessment will also determine whether Youth Talk supports the missions of its parent organizations, and whether the initial impact of the program define it as a peace education program in relationship to the Three Sphered Model.

Chapter One noted that a critical aim of this research project is to determine whether mutually beneficial dialogue via videoconference has the potential to compel awareness, empathy, and sustained global interaction, enabling the levels of dialogue Freire called for in 1970. In order to fully address this aim the initial research questions that were formed to address four phase of inquiry in the research project also possessed secondary questions. The secondary questions provide greater detail into the four areas of inquiry and will organize this section's findings. Secondly, because this section directly addresses the impact Youth Talk had on students throughout a yearlong program, two spheres will be used throughout. While addressing a constructivist epistemology will help understand and determine why and how initiatives succeeded or failed in regards to short and post program impact, it will not enable the researcher to measure change over time. Using the normative sphere enables the researcher to assess whether the concepts of a shared humanity, empathy, justice, and "universal moral inclusion" were present in the program (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2011). Empathetic growth was specifically determined in relation to conscienziation. Students who were actively given the opportunity to engage in reflective practices were more prone to addressing notions of responsibility and hospitality. Reflective questioning can then enable critical action, informed by notions of a shared humanity, where students recognize and share narratives.

The human agency sphere of critical pedagogy provides the researcher with an understanding where aspects of conscientization became reality. As noted in Chapter 3, conscientization represents the blending of critical reflection and action as two separate but joined processes in individual and collective emancipation. Freire's conscientization recognizes that human autonomy and knowledge creation are not manifested from standardized processes, but through interactive learning and dialogical processes (Morrow & Torres, 2002). Therefore, student action taken to inform their own narrative, their communities, or simply advocate for their partner school, while possibly small in scope, can be critical in determining growth in Youth Talk. The epistemological sphere informs the researcher as to how improvements can be made to the existing Youth Talk Program, and the use of interactive videoconference as a whole, but as just noted, can only rationalize, but not measure short and long term impact

The three secondary questions are:

- o What has been the program's impact on students when comparing pre-program data with post-program data?
- o Has the program created in students a behavioral change, regarding disposition towards critical thinking, understanding, empathy, trust, and peace? Is such a change similar across all cultures involved in the program?
- o Has the program resulted in action taken by students towards civic engagement and or peace building?

In order to fully address these secondary questions, a quantitatively informed-qualitative approach, articulated in Chapter 4, was implemented to first examine and assess all qualitative data.

The short-term effects of the Youth Talk Program will be identified, solely based on this initial qualitative data, critically examined through the Three Sphered Model. Youth Talk student surveys conducted in partnership with Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences were evaluated in reference to the initial qualitative data. As stipulated in Chapter 4, this design suggests that supplemental quantitative approaches to data

collection can benefit the already qualitative driven methodology.

The point of interface, or the point of strand integration, is conducted at this point in the research project. In this final stage of the research process the quantitative data, extracted from the student surveys, will be compared with previously collected qualitative data for a final interpretation.

9.2.1 BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

A total of eight schools were examined in this research project at varying degrees. Salt and Ruwwad were only examined by the researcher while conducting in country fieldwork. However, their IVCs were later viewed and coded in order to address them in relation to field notes. Qualitative data collection showed that seven of the eight schools experienced behavioral change at numerous stages of the Youth Talk Program. Moreover, these changes were individualized responses to intercultural interactions where students in these seven schools went through increased awareness, knowledge growth, motivation to empathize, and avocation.

In regards to American schools in this study, none of the schools participated in pre-program reflection regarding their own perspectives and experiences. Initial awareness by American schools related to basic knowledge acquisition regarding the unique identities of their MENA partner and not in relation to their implicit biases. American schools did not explicitly mention anything regarding the partner school or region. Rather, pre program focus groups and the first IVCs all related to stereotypes or media induced perspectives that Americans, as a whole, held of the MENA region. These perspectives did not include a single "I" statement during the first IVCs.

In comparison, two of the three MENA schools noted their superior knowledge of American culture and subsequently believed that it was unnecessary to conduct preprogram research on their American school partner. For instance LEE students noted on several occasions,

"we already know American culture". During the pre program focus group, the LEE educator also legitimized this perspective by arguing, "my students know everything about America"(Esteklal, pre-program focus group). A similar sentiment was shared by APG.

Every MENA School participating in this research project did emphasize a desire for their American partner to understand their cultural heritage and in the process address the stereotypes that surround individuals from the MENA region as well as their countries. Subsequently, behavioral change was initially perceived by MENA students as the responsibility and objective for American students and it was, in fact, their (MENA students) responsibility to support the American schools in this process. LEE, APG, and Salt also assumed a responsibility to education throughout in their IVCs. Youth Talk was essentially viewed as an opportunity to share their culture and narrative in order to change their perceived understanding that Americans had a negative opinion of the region. In contrast, Edwardsburg, BS, and BAL all expressed a desire to show that they were not, prejudiced and "narrow-minded". This resulted in American students controlling the majority of the conversations in all observed IVCs. Ruwwad and Excel had the greatest level of equity in speaking time between the students. For example, APG students did not ask a question during their second IVC until the forty-minute mark, which related to what stereotypes the BS students had of them. The understanding amongst all MENA schools that they did not need to learn anything new about American culture, coupled with America students lack of initial understanding of their partner country's unique culture and history established a low initial baseline of knowledge. Behavioral change was, therefore, an apparent short-term effect throughout the pairings, except for one school, based primarily on the weak initial starting point for all communities.

The school that did not show any significant change throughout the program was Ajloun. Ajloun's educator noted during the post program interview that she did not implement any aspect of the Youth Talk curriculum during the yearlong partnership. Responses from students during

the post program represented a disconnect from the nature of the conversations during the IVCs. Students frequently noted during the post-program focus group the following sentiments regarding the United States:

"A dream land"
"A place I want to be"
"It has the strongest military in the world"
"I want to be American"

These sentiments were outliers in comparison to the other MENA schools. Such sentiments were absent during post program focus groups and were actually quite the opposite, representing a more communal understanding of the United States and its citizens. This sentiment will be further examined in the shared humanity section in both short and long term effects.

Students from APG, Salt, Ruwwad, and LEE remarked that the first IVC was characterized as, "tense, creepy, nervous, uncoordinated, scary, exciting, and new". During the mid-program focus groups, the same schools noted that the IVCs were well-coordinated, open, fun, enjoyable, interesting, comfortable, learning, and changing". When students were asked to clarify what "changing" meant, LEE and Salt students remarked,

"Before the program I was thinking that America is a special country, different than others, but after the program I discovered that it's a normal country,"
"Before the program I was watching movies about the USA and thought that was what the USA was, but after the program I think I can connect, because it is a big country and has lots of different people,"

"I was thinking that American people hated Arab people, that was before Access and Youth Talk Program but now my thoughts have been changed to better because the social media shows negative things about American people"(Focus Group).
I'm so honored for this partnership in such a great, exciting program and I thank everyone for your efforts because it changed my thoughts about American people"(LEE).

MENA schools, except for Ajloun, all expressed a new understanding regarding the size and diversity of the United States. Sentiments related to the notion that the media, both the press and entertainment world has presented a singular narrative of the United States that they understood now as incorrect. This narrative has also hidden the various structural and social inequalities that have resulted in systemic racism throughout the country. Students from Excel School, who was

partnered with Ruwwad, BAL, and APG specifically, shared experiences related to stereotyping, racial profiling, police brutality, and discrimination. LEE responded to such examples with later notions of empathy and understanding, which will be examined in subsequent sections, but students were initially surprised that such incidents occur in such frequency in the United States.

The political landscape within the United States also provided students from the MENA region with an understanding of the diverse perspectives that exist within the United States. LEE, APG, Salt, and Ruwwad also raised questions regarding the candidacy of Donald Trump and eventually asked what their American partner's opinions were on the upcoming election. Excel, who partnered with Ruwwad noted,

"I don't agree with what the candidate (Trump) is saying. What they are doing is trying to slander Islam, just to get votes. The people that are Islamic or Muslim, they have shown me a completely different way from how these people are depicting Islam and everyone from this class would agree with this" (Excel, IVC).

In comparison to their MENA partners, awareness was limited in respect to growing more cultural aware of the differences that exist within the MENA region. Students from BS continued to make references to Dubai when speaking about Bahrain throughout their IVCs and during mid and post program focus groups. Students from Edwardsburg did reflect, in high numbers, on their growing interest in learning more about the Middle East. Twenty-three out of twenty-eight Edwardsburg student reflections pointed to a desire to continue learning about Jordan and the region in general.

BS students noted at the midpoint of the program that they expected the female students from APG to be passive. When asked why they expected this condition, they related that they had assumed that women in the Muslim world would be more conservative because of the politics and culture that they live in. This reflection also pointed to an BS student argument that,

"Seeing a human face is important. It is exposure that makes this successful. It made it easier to

talk with them about war and terrorism than just talking about it in class"(BS Focus Group).

The nature of the class that BS students were enrolled in while participating in Youth Talk,

greatly informed their questions and overall interaction with APG students. BS students were the first to address terrorism, religious differences, and politics amongst all Youth Talk participants. APG students, subsequently, noted that they did not want to offend but answer their questions honestly rather than address their own interests.

This sentiment was similar in nature to the partnership between LEE and BAL. LEE believed that due to their knowledge and understanding of American culture, it was critical to inform BAL on the history, culture, and strength of Tunisia. As noted in Chapter 7, students at LEE noted, "I am interested to talk to them about our religion and how important it is to us. We want to tell them that it is not bad here" (LEE, pre-program focus group).

Throughout the Youth Talk pairings a consistent observation was that MENA schools sought to "prove" to Americans that their country, culture, people, and religion were not worthy of what they perceived to be, a negative connotation in the United States. Based on comments from American students throughout the program, such an impression was not unrealistic. Awareness by the American students often revolved around feelings of similarity, and a further negation of notions of violence. For instance, an Edwardsburg noted reflected, "I now have an idea of what life is like through the student's eyes in Jordan. I can assure myself that all Muslims are not bad"(Edwardsburg, Post Program). However, this sentiment was followed by, "I still agree with Donald Trump though because it is better to be safe than sorry and take the precautions to keep our country safe (Edwardsburg, Post Program).

In comparison, BS students noted that the program provided them with an opportunity to, "break stereotypes, have fun, and try and understand others without judgment. We all realized that we are the same during the IVCs" (BS Post Program). This notion of sameness will be further examined in the shared humanity section.

Awareness and knowledge growth were consistently observed during the IVCs and based on student responses during the focus groups. Chapter 5 notes critical educational benchmarks or

standards that students, teachers, and the community are expected to achieve and be assessed on following the completion of modules meant to support the motivation to empathize and advocate. Module 1's benchmarks point to a need to engage in critical self reflection, which, as noted earlier no school actively engaged in. However, Module 2 benchmarks more aptly reflect student growth in the Youth Talk Program. Through community lens activities and question and answer periods between partners, students met the following benchmarks throughout the program:

- Analyze community perspectives and their subsequent actions

- Explain the role communities play in shaping their citizens

- Reflect on how beliefs have shaped the community

- Identify and address those beliefs and biases in order to support the work of intercultural exchange

In regards to module 3 benchmarks, results were limited in comparison to module 2, where students were only able to do the following:

- Reflect on the beliefs and practices of their intercultural partner

- Identify points of agreement

- Exhibit intercultural understanding

Notions of reflection, which could support an understanding of how difference can inform intercultural understanding was not present. Collaboration was limited as only one pairing chose to work on the same Global Citizenship Project, which was not mutually agreed upon by the students, but rather the educators involved.

Empathy, as addressed in this research project, related to an initial focus on critical individual and group reflection. Critical reflection can then support intercultural cooperation. Notions of empathy were observed during this project. For instance, as previously noted in the LEE and BAL partnership, the interaction between both communities during the 2nd IVC changed

the dynamic of the partnership. Following a series of personal stories from BAL, a LEE student responded,

> "I hear your story and I'm sorry for that. I really respect you for staying strong and getting through that. I hope that nothing like that happens in your life again. I'm really sorry for that. Don't think that way actually. You should never think about it like that. The most important thing is you're here. Try to love your mom and your dad"

The point at which the LEE student said, "The most important thing is you're here", the student at BAL motioned to her face symbolizing that the LEE student's words were going to make her cry.

An LEE student eventually reflected in the next IVC,

> "I think we are closer now. Distance doesn't mean anything anymore because of this videoconference. So I think we are family now"

This interaction points to legitimate aspects of empathetic growth. During the pre-program focus group LEE students noted,

- "Americans have a different definition of peace"

- "We don't have racism in Tunisia. Americans don't want peace in the same way as we do because Tunisians are all the same"

- "We as Tunisians don't suffer from differences".

The LEE student's belief that they felt more like family following their second IVC, when addressed in correlation to notions of distinct difference in pre-program focus group, present a distinct change in sentiments regarding their partner school. LEE student also began addressing a sentiment raised during their first IVC, "we have many problems like crime, poverty, drugs and bullying", in more detail following their second IVC. The interaction between LEE and BAL forced LEE students to address their own reflections and subsequently change the dynamic of the partnership. In comparison, BAL student attendance during the IVCs grew following this second

IVC and LEE's subsequent response. Unfortunately, administrative interference in this partnership negatively impacted their continued interaction, forcing it to end early.

Empathetic growth was also seen in the other partnerships, with Ruwwad being the second most significant. APG and BS were limited in examples of such growth, as the partnership became a means of BS examining their own interests and curricular work than legitimate exchange. APG students reflected throughout the process that they believed BS students viewed them as "hotheaded" and that they needed to change this impression. Terrorism and ISIS were mentioned more times in the APG and BS partnership than the others combined. This supported the APG impression that BS had an agenda going into the program, as it pertained to their class curriculum. Reflection from APG at the mid and post program point, reflected this. APG students noted,

- "Friendship can be built if both sides are on the same page, but I don't think we are. They (BS) have a lot of questions they want answered".

- "I like them (BS), but they may implement freedom of speech way too much."

However, during the post-program focus group APG noted a change in their understanding of justice, which was informed by their interaction with BS.

Notions of empathy between Edwardsburg and Ajloun were severely limited, partly due to several technological deficiencies and lack of curricular buy-in on behalf of the Ajloun educator. One student from Edwardsburg during both Mid and Post program focus groups, noted on her increased understanding of the students in Ajloun. She reflected,

"Getting to know these young men, I feel the same concern for them that I have with my friends here at home. I'd love to hear more about their lives and be able to keep the friends I have made."

At the post program stage, two Edwardsburg students, including the above mentioned, pointed to dramatic personal change as a result of this partnership. This will be more fully examined in the long-term effects section.

Ruwwad and LEE were previously mentioned, as having the most frequent occurrences of empathy. Despite the researcher not being to conduct pre, mid, or post program focus groups for both schools in the partnership, data collection taken from the recorded IVCs and post program focus group with Ruwwad provided significant evidence for critical reflection and group interaction. The most significant growth was observed in a post-program focus group with Ruwwad, which will be examined in post-program effects.

During the fourth IVC, Excel students asked Ruwwad students about current events in Jordan. This was the only occurrence where current events questions, poised by American schools, related to their partner's country specific events. The American school's interpretation of the event was incorrect but it enabled a conversation to ensue regarding politics, religion, and security in Jordan and Palestine. This question correlated with Excel's self-motivated initiative to bring in a guest-speaker to teach the students about the Arab-Israeli Conflict. This session included an examination of both past and present events.

In comparison, the LEE exchange with BAL regarding the experiences and reflections of BAL students presented the earliest occurrence of empathetic growth on behalf of Youth Talk participants. This exchange enabled genuine exchange to begin, until the partnership was abruptly suspended because of outside forces.

Salt and Houston Quran Academy shared a genuine empathetic exchange regarding language. While there was a religious affinity between the two schools, language was not a commonality. Students at HQA study Arabic within a religious context, but the students who were participating in the Youth Talk program were of Pakistani descent, and, thereby, fluent in and English. Subsequently, students from Salt began an IVC displaying messages of friendship

and community in Urdu. While comments made by Salt students during the post program focus group point to a negative trajectory in the program, short-term effects reflect a heightened sense of trust, understanding, and empathy.

9.2.2 ACTION

Chapter 2 argued that consistent and sustained action is needed to maintain the fragile state that defines peace. Johnson and Johnson (2005) note, "Peace is a relationship variable that cannot be maintained by separation or isolation". This nature of peace requires the continuous development of the tools needed to maintain and spread it, which defines the need for peace education. Elise Boulding observes, "Self-understanding" comes by reflection and leads to action"(Peace & Change, 402). Understanding one's social, economic, and political situation can enable the empowerment that is at the heart of peace education, leading individuals to change their status quo.

Informed and critical action both defines peace education practice and directs dialogue as a peace education practice. As argued in Chapter 2, dialogue allows the bonds of a community to form and thereby the need of the community to care for its people. Care, or hospitality, is only enabled when true reflection leads to dialogue, which dictates honest action. Without both reflection and honest action, as argued by Freire (1970), words become meaningless and action becomes characterless.

Action taken by Youth Talk participants during the program was a rare occurrence. While each partnership culminated in a global citizenship project, only one partnership decided to work together on a unified project. Moreover, each school examined in this research project criticized the online dialogical portal, GNG Connect, choosing to rarely utilize it, and, thereby, limit communication outside of the IVCs. It was the responsibility of the students to find alternative methods of continuing the conversation, which only Ruwwad and Excel, and LEE and BAL did.

LEE and BAL's exchange of social media was limited with only a few students exchanging social media information. Ruwwad and Excel experienced the largest exchange of social media information, where the majority of the Ruwwad cohort expressed that they had spoken to Excel students via social media platforms. Zero communication has taken place, post Youth Talk Program, between Edwardsburg and Ajloun, BS and APG, and Salt and HQA.

Salt students saw change as a process where "our opinions are replaced with other people's opinions, to make our community more modern". Modernization was raised by every other MENA school, except for APG, as a goal of change. Change was subsequently viewed in regards to individual change, rather than communal or societal change. For instance, not only did the global citizenship projects not involve sustained collaboration between the parties, except for Edwardsburg and Ajloun, they reflected issues that only pertained to their local communities. While Chapter 2 argued that critical pedagogy empowers students and teachers to be critical of their local and global contexts and address the way in which these contexts have shaped their individual views, a unified global citizenship project combining an understanding of local and global contexts was absent. For instance, schools adopted the following global citizenship projects:

APG	Recycling
BS	Water/Energy Usage
LEE	Educational Development in Tunisia
BAL	Gentrification
Ajloun & Edwardsburg	Recycling
Ruwwad	Christians and Muslims in Palestine
Salt	Recycling

Students were encouraged to continue the conversations on GNG Connect in order to support each other's projects and future collaboration but at the post program focus group, such actions were not taken.

The limited action taken by participants in the Youth Talk Program legitimizes a discussion as to whether Youth Talk can be defined as a dialogue based program. Coupled with

the limited pre-program reflection taken by participants and the subsequent lack of action taken by students and schools, Youth Talk would not define dialogue, as understood and defined by peace education. This reality will be further examined in this chapter.

9.2.3 SHARED HUMANITY

8.2.2 examined the prevalence of the normative approach of cosmopolitanism to the Youth Talk program. While a constructivist epistemology and critical pedagogy human agency informed program adoption and implementation, a cosmopolitan normative approach enables the researcher to explicitly determine short and long term impact of the program by addressing social and emotional change. As noted in 8.2.2, the cosmopolitan theme of a shared humanity was the most prevalent data point in this research project. However, the notion of a shared humanity will be further examined to determine whether such understanding by Youth Talk participants reflects a cosmopolitan understanding.

Both regions produced significant references to the concept of "sameness". The word "same" or the phrase, "we are the same", for instance, was noted by each pairing during both mid and post program focus groups. A mere examination of this data represents legitimate short-term effects throughout the program. On May 23, 2016 Global Nomads Group supported this notion of "sameness" by posting on their Facebook page,

"Check out this Global Citizenship Project from Buffalo High School in Texas! After connecting with students from Saudi Arabia, they have realized that teenagers all around the world are basically the same"(GNG Facebook, May 23, 2016).

As noted in previous chapters, the prevalence of "sameness" in this research project consistently correlated to one's connection to American culture, regardless of region. However, the adoption of a common humanity based on sentiments of, "you are like me", denies the fundamental individuality and inherent difference that must be embraced in all peace education programs (Benhabib, 2008).

Ruwwad was one of the few schools to note difference as a critical component to understanding. As the only MENA school examined which maintained the use of their native language during the IVCs, Ruwwad students argued that the use of Arabic provided them with the freedom to explore their experiences and perspectives, subsequently finding connection through difference. For instance, despite the language barrier, Ruwwad used the word "friend" when referencing their partner school more than any other MENA school. Within this context, Ruwwad also noted,

"Communication was easy between us",
"There will be peace between us all even if there are differences",
"We both learned a lot of things about each other that will help our futures".

Ruwwad was consistent in their reflection that positive growth could be achieved through an acceptance of difference and, thereby, understanding. For instance, as noted in a summary of fieldwork, Ruwwad remarked that the United States "has problems but is still beautiful". It is also important to note, that despite consistent technological difficulties on the part of Ruwwad (dropped connections and clarity), they expressed the fewest self-deprecating comments regarding their own development, in comparison to the other MENA schools.

Students from both regions experienced exposure to new cultures as a result of the Youth Talk program. As noted in the previous section, such exposure supported behavioral changes in the Youth Talk participants, most notably, in reference to awareness, knowledge growth, and motivation to empathize. However, as noted in Chapter 3, within this universal moral community, as argued by cosmopolitanism, each person is equal in dignity and value. Cosmopolitan norms govern the relations among individuals in this community, so as to ensure equality and dignity for all. A respect of human rights, not only of a state's citizens but also for the universal global community would establish and maintain this perpetual peace. Notions of "sameness" do not equate to notions of equality and human dignity. In regards to Youth Talk, "sameness" stood in opposition to justice and equality, perpetuating notions of powerblindness and subsequent

cultural reproduction. This reality, as observed throughout the Youth Talk program, had a considerable impact on the post-program effects for program participants.

9.3 Post-Program Impact

Post-program impact was solely based on-site focus groups or post program student reflections. Due to the LEE and BAL partnership postponing their partnership abruptly and then not completing a post program focus group, a post-program assessment of their partnership could not be ascertained. Salt and Ruwwad are included in the long term effects assessment, because their IVCs were examined and the researcher was able to conduct post program focus groups with both school communities.

The previous short-term effects section noted that a critical aim of this research project is to determine whether videoconference based dialogical practices have the potential to sustain global interaction. This goal drives the assessment of Youth Talk in regards to post-program impact. The secondary questions regarding post-program impact, as stipulated in Chapter Four, are:

1. Have students engaged in dialogue and action beyond the program's activities

2. What has been the long-term impact on alumni regarding the development of their own consciousness of peace (career, service, attitudes)? Were students affected by the learning and did it have both implicit and explicit learning?

3. Has the school and greater community undergone a positive chance since the implementation of the program?

9.3.1 BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

As noted in the short-term effects section seven of the eight schools in this research project experienced behavioral change at numerous stages of the Youth Talk Program. This finding correlates with observed post-program impacts as well. Post-program empathetic growth was

apparent in all but three of the schools participating in this research project. Ajloun consistently showed little signs of positive short or long term effects and their post-program focus group, as noted in the short-term effects section, represented a dramatic disconnect from the nature of the conversations during the IVCs. Ajloun students also expressed an understanding that Edwardsburg did not want to continue the conversation, but also admitted that they had not used the online interface to continue the conversation, nor ever fully understood what a Global Citizenship Project is. However, students from Ajloun did remark that they were now, "more comfortable speaking in English and hope to continue practicing it".

While the BS and APG pairing provided students with a more balanced interaction, due to the proficiency of the APG student's language ability and reliability of each school's technological capabilities, both schools yielded limited behavioral growth during the post-program focus group. APG students did not believe BS students knew much about Bahrain at the post program mark, and believed that BS did not have much interest in knowing about Bahrain. While APG and BS were the only observed partnership that was student directed, collectively, the two school communities noted the rigidity of the program as a major hindrance to their engagement.

Both schools noted, "Breaking stereotypes", as the primary purpose of the Youth Talk program by the post program phase. However, APG noted that while BS was an "open-minded", "cool", and "kind" community, the nature of partnership prevented them from addressing their own stereotypes of Americans and the United States. Rather, APG believed that BS had an agenda and used the IVCs to "talk about their own stereotypes of the Middle East". BS's post program group focus group reflected this notion. BS students noted that, "the early stage buildup in the program was redundant and pointless at times." However, as Youth Talk progressed, five students in the focus group commented on how it was "helpful to break down stereotypes, like Sunni vs. Shia, ISIS, and Trump". Nevertheless, BS students, not APG, raised all of these

"stereotypes". Donald Trump's candidacy was initially asked by BS in order to gauge APG student's opinion, and Sunni and Shia relations were raised in regards to their current program of study. The mention of ISIS in the post-program focus group was mentioned in light of students come to more fully understand that ISIS does not operate in the entire region, like in Bahrain for instance. These reflections further point to the lack of initial student reflection within these programs, as a means of addressing bias, stereotypes, and prior knowledge.

It was also revealed during the post program focus group that BS students would mute the microphone in order to encourage a change in topic because something was perceived to be uncomfortable or to alter the direction of the conversation. Several BS students commented, "The mute button helps change topics and respond to uncomfortable situations. It helped us change the dynamic". The example used by BS students referred to a time when questions regarding the Arab Spring were raised and the BS educator believed that the APG students were responding in an uncomfortable manner, prompting the entire BS class to change topics. In comparison, while APG argued that, "they have the freedom to talk about whatever", the APG educator noted, "the students are free to discuss whatever topic they like, but for their own safety, I suggest they stay away from politics here". There was a subsequent lack of transparency by both schools throughout their partnership, which could have been ideally addressed in the IVCs. Students from APG commented on this reality, arguing in reference to peace, understanding, and dialogue,

"Most people think it's (peace) there, but it's not. It is the number one objective that should be reached but just isn't".

In stark contrast, Ruwwad's post program focus group reflected growth in regards to how they saw themselves and their partner school. A sense of community was a continuous theme throughout, where Ruwwad students remarked,

"Their community and our community is peaceful and beautiful",

"I think they (Excel) views community as cooperation, but I view it as loving. But we are both working together and loving our time".

A greater understanding of community changed their understanding of their collective future, noting,

"There can be peace between all, even if there were/are differences",

"I learned a lot of things that help my future and they did too",

"I learned how to work for my future. I know they (Excel) tried to learn about our future, even if they had to study it more. I appreciate that".

Notions of community emerging in the final stage of the Youth Talk program correlates with Boulding's argument from Chapter 2 and section 9.1.1, in that dialogue allows the bonds of a community to form, but before a community built on trust can be established, dialogue must allow and encourage each individual's need to their uniqueness. The Ruwwad and Excel partnership defined this reality.

9.3.2 ACTION

Post-program action taken by all program participants and greater school communities was minimal. As noted in the short-term effects section, while the Global Citizenship Projects provided a means for students to engage in a specific concern regarding their local community, none of the projects continued outside of the program framework and none of the programs consisted of collaboration with their partner school post. Furthermore, while LEE and BAL exchanged social media information during the program, the researcher was unable to conduct a post program focus group and is unable to verify whether communication continued. Ruwwad did confirm during the post program focus group that they had continued communication with Excel, post program. This update was followed by the following affirmation:

"We will connect with them in a better way and we know they will try to connect with us more in the future".

The only school to offer insight on post-program action taken as a result of the program, and in correlation with behavioral change is Edwardsburg. During the post program focus group, two students provided reflections on their changing position on American politics, the Middle East, international relations, and their own personal biases. These changes resulted in action taken towards their family and community members. For instance, a female student noted that she has had to stand up to her friends who have spoken poorly about people from the Middle East during the election. "I have changed my opinion about things since the program and I've gotten into arguments for it". This is the same student who noted that she now viewed the students from Ajloun as friends and felt like it was her responsibility to support and defend them. Another student remarked that the program had changed his political views, which stand in opposition to his family's views. Similar to the other student, this male student has gotten into arguments with his family regarding the Middle East and its people, but has been able to "make them see different sides of the issue". Both students are also beginning to consider pursuing a field in international relations.

9.3.3 COMMUNAL CHANGE (SHARED HUMANITY)

Post-program communal change was only observed in Ruwwad. While Edwardsburg and Ajloun was the only partnership that collaborated on their global citizenship project, Edwardsburg students remarked that the Youth Talk Program did not have a major impact on the school culture, and Ajloun students never continued the recycling project after the program.

In regards to Ruwwad, students provided the largest amount of feedback regarding peacebuilding practices during the post program phase. Ruwwad students also noted that the program changed how they engage and understand their community, foreigners, and the concept

of peace. One student, remarked, "peace seems more doable now". Other remarks relating to peace included,

"We need to stop racism and killing and looting",
"It is important to change people's energies from "demolition" to "building",
"In order to get peace, we should work seriously with every one to make it happen",
"We need to give everyone their rights. Say no to terrorism and make peace between countries,
"Preserving peace in the world is an important task that we can do".

Students, while not explicitly noting actions taken to address these specific issues, did state that students in the community were more freely discussing and debating these issues since the partnership. Also, while Excel organized an outside speaker during the program to come to the school and provide more information on the Arab-Israeli Conflict, with specific information regarding Palestinian refugees in Jordan

CONCLUSION

9.1 uses the assessment of Youth Talk by the Three Sphered Model to identify what critical components are needed to facilitate videoconference based dialogue within a peace education framework. Epistemology, human agency and normative components are not further identified as necessary, because it is implied that all peace education programs, regardless of delivery must possess such properties. While a student-centered approach is further examined as a critical aspect within a videoconference based program, which correlates with peace education epistemology, it is given further specificity as to how student engagement should be adopted in virtual spaces. Reflective practices and access directly address how technology can support peace education programs but require organizations, schools, teachers, and students to engage in supplemental actions and assessments in order to provide greater equity and opportunities to counter the limitations of said technology.

The short and post-program impacts of the Youth Talk Program were assessed through an understanding of the critical components that define peace education programs, which are

informed by the Three Sphered Model. Short-term impacts, pertaining to behavioral changes in the students, were consistently observed. These behavioral changes were initially significant because students had done little to no pre-program preparation, enabling even the most minimal knowledge growth to be significant in scope. This initial knowledge growth pertained to cultural, historical, and geographical understanding. In most partnerships, this knowledge growth led to empathy, trust, and further understanding. Notions of "sameness" were further addressed in this chapter as an inadequate understanding a shared humanity.

Post-program impacts were limited in scope, warranting more of a longitudinal study, which will be addressed in Chapter 11. Nevertheless, students in Edwardsburg and Ruwwad noted individual and communal changes that reflected a more reflective approach to the program, which drove subsequent action. While not addressing virtual practices and the role that students engage through such mediums, Larochelle and Bednarz's (1998) argument regarding constructivism, from Chapter 3, points to learners as "inventors", "where we see ourselves as participants in a conspiracy for which we are continually inventing the customs, rules, and regulations. "(p.5). Videoconference based peace education practices must support individuals to construct their subjective reality through their interaction with it, rather than the mechanical operation of it. The effective constructive of such environment to support a student's maturation as an inventor correlates with the practical application of the Three Sphered Model within a videoconference based practice.

Chapter 10: Emerging Themes

10.1 QUAL-quan Interpretation

Chapter 4 noted that the weighing, timing, and mixing of data strands are guided by the theoretical framework, research paradigm and research purpose. The QUAL-quan driven methodology was adopted in order to better understand the relationship between intercultural

videoconference, peace education and how such philosophy impacted the Youth Talk program. Research questions and data collection were designed and implemented in correlation with a sequential design, specifically a QUAL-quan approach.

A QUAL-quan research approach places a priority on qualitative data, where quantitative methods can support the research. As argued in Chapter 4, this level of interaction between qualitative and quantitative strands enables the researcher to pace and implement them in a sequential manner, starting with the collection of qualitative data (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). The following section will examine the quantitative data and evaluate it in regards to already analyzed qualitative data.

The GNG survey data was extracted and detailed in Chapter 5. This evaluation argued that the following results were present:

1. Feelings of Closeness with the other group

    a. American Participants: significantly closer to all target outgroups

    b. Muslim students: Marginally closer to Americans

2. Feelings of warmth towards the other group

    a. American Participants: Warmer towards all target groups

    b. Muslim Students: No warmer towards target groups (non-significant change)

3. Trust and Hope about the Future

    a. American Participants: expressed significantly more trust/hope towards all target outgroups

    b. Muslim Students: expressed no more trust/hope towards Americans (non-significant positive change)

4. Potential Mediators of Change

a. Potential Mediators of Change were a series of questions, which informed determinations of warmness, trust, hope, and overall growth in the program. These questions will be further detailed below.

5. Student Participation in Survey Completion

a. American Participants: Poorer participation by American students, but they generally passed the attention checks.

b. Muslim Students: More complete participation by Muslim students, but 1/3 failed attention checks.

10.1.1 CLOSENESS

Notions of closeness yielded positive growth for both parties, with American students feeling significantly closer to their partners. Closeness was determined in relation to feelings of greater understanding and empathy in both pre and post program questionnaires. Qualitative data also displays significant behavioral change in participants, both from the MENA region and the United States. As noted in section 9., qualitative data collection showed that seven of the eight schools experienced behavioral change at numerous stages of the Youth Talk Program. Moreover, these changes were individualized responses to intercultural interactions where students in these seven schools went through increased awareness, knowledge growth, motivation to empathize, and avocation.

Qualitative data also shows greater evidence of American student growth in regards to increased awareness and knowledge growth, which correlates with the GNG survey data. However, while Youth Talk is quite clear in its goal of fostering "inter-cultural awareness and global citizenship", students from each region differ in their own understanding of the purpose behind their involvement in the program. American schools are unanimous in their understanding and agreement with this purpose. Subsequently, if surveys are aimed at gauging closeness, which

is an implied aspect of intercultural awareness and global citizenship, American students will show evidence of growth. In comparison, MENA schools did not share a similar understanding of program purpose. Out of the five schools from the MENA region, only one school shared an understanding of program mission with the other American schools, APG. The other MENA schools believed program purpose related to language acquisition, outreach, skill building, or a combination. While APG understood the mission of Youth, as defined by GNG and BoU, the short and long-term impact the program had on their school community was minimal. In contrast, Ruwwad engaged in Youth Talk as a language, skill building, and global awareness program resulting in considerable short and long-term impacts.

Closeness also correlates with the prevalent theme of "sameness". Determining closeness in the survey pertained to students answering a question where seven pictures were presented where a red circle represents "You" and a black circle represents the "group". Students were asked to select, "the picture that best represents your personal relationship with each of the groups listed below", which includes the circles being separated to them being intertwined. As noted in Chapter 8, most schools reflected on aspects of "sameness", with American schools provided the most prevalent instances. Subsequently, a question which asks students to determine whether you feel the circles are the same or different has a direct correlation with the frequency of "sameness" in this research study, which does not support evidence of closeness but, rather, cultural reproduction.

10.1.2 WARMTH

An assessment of warmth was made through a single question where students were asked to use sliders to indicate how "cold" or "warm" you feel toward various ethnic groups. Students and teachers at Ajloun, Ruwwad, and Salt noted that they found this question confusing and were unclear how to define "cold" or "warm". Muslim students showing no growth towards their target

groups points to both the confusion of the question and notions of language and cultural reproduction again.

Due to the fact that only one pairing involved students speaking their native language, while the majority of the program is delivered in English could possibly point to how Americans view the efforts made by their MENA partners to participate in Youth Talk. For instance, BS, BAL, and Edwardsburg all remarked on being surprised and impressed by their partner school's English proficiency.

10.1.3 TRUST AND HOPE

Trust and hope were measured based upon a series of questions asked in pre and post program surveys. The answers to these questions were able to determine where and when aspects of trust and or hope existed in MENA and American school communities. Students were asked to determine whether they strongly disagree or strongly agree with the following statements:

Trust and Hope- re: Arabs (same questions were asked in pre and post surveys)

- I can see a future where my people and Arabs live in harmony and mutual respect
- I trust that Arabs want what is best for me and my people
- I do NOT trust in the peaceful intentions of Arabs
- I am hopeful that strong relationships between my people and Arabs are possible choose the picture that best represents your personal relationship with each of the groups listed below

Trust and Hope- re: Americans (same questions were asked in pre and post surveys)

- I trust that Americans want what is best for me and my people
- I do NOT trust in the peaceful intentions of Americans
- I can see a future where my people and Americans live in harmony and mutual respect
- I am hopeful that strong relationships between my people and Americans are possible

First, it is important to note that students were only able to respond based on whether they strongly disagreed or strongly agreed with the above statements. Every MENA School

participating in this study noted, that they had a strong understanding of American culture prior to beginning their IVCs. LEE argued during their pre-program focus group that, "we already know American culture". Based on this understanding, and as noted in the previous section regarding closeness, since MENA students believed that they already had a deep understanding of American culture, American history, and America's influence in the world, limited growth is to be expected regarding trust and hope where limited pre-program reflection was conducted by the MENA schools and their intended purpose was not to build a sense of global citizenship based on sustainable partnerships. In contrast, because the American schools did not conduct any pre-program reflection, other than BS engaging in a monotheistic course of study, which involved Islamic content, growth is to be expected because their understanding of program purpose correlated with Youth Talk and they were beginning from a limited knowledge base.

Moreover, all pre-program focus groups with students from the MENA region mentioned an expectation that American students would mention terrorism, ISIS, al-Qaeda, or the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. APG students laughed the ISIS was brought up during the first IVC, and students noted during the mid-program focus group that they laughed because, "we were waiting for it, like we knew they were going to do it". The reality of the two regions and the similar characteristics regarding program preparation and an understanding of program mission, explains why a survey question regarding trust, which only allows students to pick one of two extremes, would garner disproportionate results.

Qualitative data yielded different findings than the GNG survey regarding trust. While there was evidence of trust in both regions, there were more reflections from MENA that correlated with this sentiment. Both LEE and Ruwwad provided strong statements of trust, which transformed their respective interactions. Edwardsburg provided the majority of trust-related sentiments, but only during post-program reflections and not directly to their partner school. As noted in Chapter 7, LEE students stated, "I think we are closer now. Distance doesn't mean

anything anymore because of this videoconference. So I think we are family now". Ruwwad noted the following in relation to trust and hope:

"There was trust between us. I trust them",

"There was peace between us",

"I felt they saw us as peaceful and loving people. I saw them as that",

'With our thinking and talking about these themes and expressing our feelings, we understood their issues and they understood ours. So we had peace between us",

"There will be peace between all of us even if there were and are differences",

"We both learned lots of things that will help the future of the world".

It is important to note that the LEE-BAL and Ruwwad-Excel partnership were the only ones to maintain communication outside of the program. Furthermore, MENA students instituted all the exchange of social media information.

10.1.4 POTENTIAL MEDIATORS OF CHANGE

As noted in 9.4, Potential Mediators of Change were questions used to inform determinations of warmness, trust, hope and overall change in Youth Talk participants. Like the previous questions, students were given two choices for a series of questions. They were asked to determine whether the following statements were, "Not at all true for me" or "Very much true for me":

1. I made new American/Muslim friends through GNG

2. I made personal connections with the American/Muslim students through GNG

3. I intend to keep in contact with the American/Muslim students I met through GNG

4. I learned something positive about Americans and/or the U.S./ Muslims and/or Islam that I didn't know before through GNG

5. I gained a new appreciation of Americans and/or the U.S./ Muslims and/or Islam through GNG

6. I realized that some of my negative views about Americans and/or the U.S./ Muslims and/or Islam were not at all true for me.

First, it is critical to examine the framing of the survey questions both in this section and the survey as whole. While MENA students are asked to reflect on their relationship with their

partners through a national lens, American/United States, American students are asked to reflect on their relationship with their partners through a religious lens, Muslims/ Islam. The difference in the nature of the survey makes the data difficult to analyze and compare. For instance, if Christianity or Judaism replaced American/United States, results from MENA students would most likely be different. Furthermore, in the BS APG partnership, BS students were already viewing their partner through a religious lens because of the course they were enrolled in. APG students, however, never asked a single religious question to BS. BS students also related religious understanding to terrorism within the pre-program focus group and were the first school to raise religion and terrorism in the same context within an IVC. For example, during the pre-program focus group, BS students remarked that the monotheistic religion class they were enrolled in had enabled them to, "see things differently now. I am definitely breaking down stereotypes since ISIS is nothing like the Muslim religion" (Pre-program Focus Group, BS).

Following this statement another student raised the point that,

> "I don't think ISIS is in Bahrain so I don't think Paris will have an impact but how they view terrorism will be interesting to see" (Preprogram Focus Group, BS).

BS students had already begun to see Youth Talk as a religious-based program rather than a secular global citizenship program at the pre-program stage. By the post program focus group, BS students still had a limited knowledge of Bahrain but did make general statements regarding Muslims and their own misinterpretations, which would represent growth according to the GNG survey. However, both BS and APG did not expect to continue their partnership following the IVCs and neither school could remember a single student name from their partner school.

The two MENA schools with the most significant examples of empathetic growth, LEE and Ruwwad also had a different understanding of the purpose of Youth Talk, which was unrelated to developing notions of forming personal connections. Both schools believed program purpose related to language acquisition, outreach, skill building, or a combination. By program

end LEE and Ruwwad were both relating notions of friendship and family with their partner, but they also reflected that they had an immense amount of prior knowledge of the United States, which would support a conclusion that they did not learn something positive or gain a new appreciation, because they already had an appreciation and believed they knew everything about the United States before the program.

Furthermore, Chapter 8 argued that "Samenes", within the Youth Talk Program, referenced one's connection to American culture, regardless of region. American schools found connection through their own culture, and MENA schools found connection through their adoption of American culture. While this research project will argue that notions of a shared humanity were not fully realized in the Youth Talk pairings, the survey presents strong evidence in support of American students finding positive growth. In contrast, such growth and change was not as apparent for MENA students, which this research project will argue is inaccurate. While Ajloun showed the smallest degree of behavioral change, notions of a shared humanity and action, other MENA schools displayed significant area of growth. However, what the survey does not account for is the impact language has had on Youth Talk and whether using English as the primary medium of communication enables American students to achieve a perceived higher rate of growth as compared to their MENA partners.

10.1.5 STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SURVEY COMPLETION

Student participation in the Youth Talk program is diverse. The partnership with the highest level of participation in the program, in regards to focus groups and timely IVCs was BS and APG. However, this partnership also yielded limited growth amongst student participants. Edwardsburg had a consistently high level of participation in the program, but were also plagued by Ajloun's lack of organization in completing the program. GNG's survey results showed that American students were poor in survey participation but were consistent in program checks, while MENA

students were just the opposite. In comparison to Qualitative data collection, one MENA school completed every data collection point and two out of three American schools completed every data collection point.

SUMMARY

Chapter 5 noted the importance of the contact hypothesis in this study. The contact hypothesis argues that contact, under optimal conditions, can reduce direct and indirect conflict (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000). However, under the contact hypothesis, contact must be in a controlled setting, where contact does not take place at a superficial level (Cairns, Gallagher, & Dunn, 1992). In order to negate such conditions, Gordon Allport (1954) argues that effective contact can only occur under four conditions, one of which is the equal status among the groups who meet. The differences in language delivery and technological capacities negate the existence of equal status in all but the Ruwwad-Excel pairing, subsequently requiring peace education practices, where dialogue is the driving force, to address this reality explicitly. This finding also refutes this research project's hypothesis where the researcher argued that intercultural videoconference would enable the examination of one's narrative and subsequent biases. However, the imbalanced power dynamic existing in language and technological capacities propagated an inability of many students to engage in critical self-reflection.

In addition, Emile Bruneau (2012), who was charged with carrying out the Youth Talk surveys, argues that while intergroup contact programs typically result in a reduction of hostility and negative stereotypes, "one caveat, though, is that the positive effects of contact are largely one-sided: while effective for members of a dominant group, intergroup contact is generally ineffective for members of the non-dominant group"(855). Bruneau (2012) provides three reasons why dominant groups could benefit from intergroup contact, at the expense of the non-dominant group. First,

"If members of disempowered groups are more likely to be already perspective-taking, then explicitly instructing them to do so in an intervention would have less effect. Second, dominant group members have a need to be perceived as moral, by themselves and others (Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009). Playing the role of the virtuous, tolerant and sympathetic listener could fulfill this need (especially if not threatened by expectations of blame (Vorauer & Sasaki, 2009)). Third, one proposed mechanism by which perspective taking improves attitudes is through self-other merging (Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996; Galinsky, Ku, & Wang, 2005). However, self-other merging may actually be threatening and aversive to members of disempowered groups who are strongly identified with their group" (856).

Bruneau's argument could provide a greater understanding of the results of the Youth Talk survey, but the survey does not provide any such analysis. Rather, the data collection and analysis simply points to significant growth on the part of American schools and marginal growth on the part of the MENA students. Language is not stipulated as a tool of the dominant group to enable self-other merging, nor is self-other merging examined as a process of cultural reproduction. Ruwwad presents a counter-argument to Bruneau's argument in this sense. Since the Ruwwad-Excel partnership consisted of schools participating in their own language, limited notions of "sameness", or in Bruneau's perspective, self-other, emerged. However, while equity in language delivery can limit an imbalanced power dynamic, the varying degree of technological capabilities within a videoconference based program can then increase this power imbalance and the subsequent need of the dominant group to appear moral and the non-dominant group to appear "the same" as the dominant group.

10.2 Peace Education & Videoconference

9.1 identified critical components to implementing intercultural dialogue through videoconference. The complex design, delivery, and adoption of technology to support peace education initiatives require an identification of possible drawbacks and the subsequent actions needed to address these possibilities. The Three-Sphered Model provides the lens in which to identify, understand, and address these drawbacks, while also encouraging and supporting potential advantages that videoconference can offer to peace education practices. Ultimately, the components identified in 9.1; reflective questioning, student-centered design, and access, all

correlate with a specific sphere in the Three Sphered Model. This development provides evidence of how the practical application of the Three Sphered Model can critique and design peace education, or the possibility of peace education practices.

Reflective Questioning & Cosmopolitanism

The cosmopolitan sphere provides the justification for emphasizing reflective questioning as a critical component in videoconference driven peace education practices, because, as noted in 9.1.1, in order to actively address participant responsibility, notions of hospitality must be actively addressed in reflective practices. Reflective questioning can then enable critical action, informed by notions of a shared humanity. As argued in 9.1, student exchanges within the Youth Talk program were not consistent in their support of student and teacher reflective practices. Subsequently, interactions often displayed a lack of critical reflection, where student bias and overall experiences were rarely challenged. As cosmopolitan norms govern notions of responsibility and hospitality, the first step is for participants to assume initial responsibility to engage in critical self-reflection. Due to the nature of videoconference, participants can avoid notions of responsibility because of the distance ingrained in the practice. The philosophy of a shared humanity requires consistent reflection in both virtual and physical worlds. Providing time, instruction, and support for students to navigate these spaces will enable honest and conscientious action. These supplemental spaces must be designed to support continued student reflection and, only after such time, allow students to drive inquiry-based exercises. In order to create the conditions that a cosmopolitan normative approach to videoconference based peace education practice can achieve, as noted in Chapter 3, an understanding of the diversity of each community's context and experiences is essential in order to avoid notions of "sameness" replacing celebrations of difference. However, as observed, Youth Talk participants rarely placed importance on pre-program reflection, insisting in the case of one American school, that too

much pre-program reflection could create more bias and, thereby, negatively impact the partnership going forward.

Interaction, within a cosmopolitan normative approach, is rooted in finding commonality amongst diversity, in order to question bias, stereotypes, power, and history. As noted in Chapter Three, this approach can open, "new channels of mobilization for civil society actors who then become part of transitional networks of rights activism and hegemonic resistance" (Benhabib, 2008).

Student-Centered Design & Constructivism

In order to support processes of reflective questioning, a student-centered design focus in videoconference-based activities creates the opportunity for students to have autonomy over their education. The constructivist sphere ultimately justifies the importance of a student-centered design focus in videoconference-based activities, because, as noted in 9.1.2, providing students with the freedom to question their education provides the first step for students to deconstruct and construct their narratives, thereby, making stronger, more sustainable, and engaging relationships. While emphasizing a student-centered design process is a critical component to all peace education practices, 9.1.2 noted that virtual practices could provide students with an opportunity to disengage from intercultural encounters. 9.1.2 argues that participant designed deliverables can directly address this reality by providing students with direct ownership over their IVCs.

The Learn, Act, Reflect modular framework, designed and implemented by Global Nomads Group, emphasizes student responsibility in the implementation of their educational practice. However, as the nature of Global Nomads Group and the Youth Talk program is to provide learning opportunities for students across the world through virtual means, one size fits all curricula have been adopted to meet this mission, because of the time, distance, and cost associated with designing and implementing context specific curricula. Each school participating in this research project noted the lack of freedom within the IVC structure. The high rate of

students ending their partnerships without an intention of continuing the conversation relates to the lack of student insight, ownership, and instruction within Youth Talk's curricular framework. Student led design, thereby, requires a unique, context specific approach, utilizing frequent, organized and action based reflection when implementing videoconference within a peace education practice.

Access & Critical Pedagogy

Due to the nature of videoconference based educational practices, students require the needed equipment, infrastructure, and opportunity in which to engage effectively. However, when access to technology, native language, and support is not assessed and subsequently changed to provide equal access, implicit biases and stereotypes can be legitimized and spread. Chapter 3 argued that a human agency rooted in critical pedagogy could provide a means to critique processes of cultural reproduction that can maintain systems of power and domination. The use of videoconference can support processes of cultural reproduction, when notions of development, advancement, and power are perceived traits of an already established elite. Because Youth Talk is primarily offered in English, MENA schools perceive English as the ideal means of communication and development. This finding, along with perceived notions of higher levels of technological development by MENA students towards their American peers removes the necessary student autonomy from the peace education practice. However, such notions do not negate the use of videoconference as a peace education, but, rather, requires videoconference-based educational programs to actively address processes of cultural reproduction. The critical pedagogy sphere can inform this process of actively addressing such processes.

As noted in Chapter 3, critical pedagogical practices can identify and act upon the power dynamics that exist within a student's reality, providing the means in which to deconstruct and reconstruct consciousness. This process enables the adoption of Freire's conscientization, or critical conscious.

Ultimately, equal access to technology and language proved to be two of the most visible hindrances to program development and requires intercultural dialogue through videoconference to address these two flashpoints in order to how critical pedagogy can best address these two characteristics of intercultural dialogue through videoconference in order to make it a more inclusive peace education practice. For instance, implementing a pre-program assessment of technological capabilities and subsequent needs, in correlation with providing translation so that participants are not forced to adopt a non-native language, intercultural dialogue thorough videoconference can better support the benefits that videoconference based practices can offer peace education.

10.3 Dialogue vs. Encounter

8.3 made the initial observation that Youth Talk cannot be defined as intercultural dialogue. This argument is based upon an extensive examination of how dialogue is defined by peace education, and more specifically, how the Three Sphere Model defines it. This definition highlights the characteristics, practice, and philosophy behind intercultural dialogue and enables the researcher to determine, that, while Youth Talk shows significant evidence that students experienced behavioral change, the conditions presented to students in which to engage with their partner school is not dialogue. However, such a judgment does not delegitimize the value and impact of a program like Youth Talk. Rather, the virtual spaces that Youth Talk creates provide participants with a critical first step in the dialogical process. Chapter 2.5 noted that both Freire and Habermas argue for an initial step in dialogical practices aimed at addressing the justifiability of knowledge claims. While Habermas defines this as the discursive dimension of dialogue, Freire regards discourse as the sheer beginning of dialogue. However, while Youth Talk cannot be defined as dialogue, it can neither be defined as discourse.

9.5 will reestablish the definition of dialogue within a peace education framework. This definition will be used to argue that Youth Talk cannot be defined as such, and in fact, is more

aptly defined as an encounter. Using Vera Fisogni's (2005) argument that an encounter is a prerequisite for dialogue, by providing the basis of the ethical commitment in a future exchange, Youth Talk will be ultimately defined in such a manner.

Dialogue has been addressed through the lenses of Paulo Freire, Maria Montessori, Johan Galtung, Elise Boulding, and Betty Reardon. Within all of these practitioners' understanding of dialogue are the notions of equity and humility. As noted in Chapter 1, the design and application of positive dialogue requires equity and humility amongst participants and an optimistic view of the power of humanity to cause positive change, both individually and globally in order to create the necessary conditions for personal and cultural transformation. Dialogue is, thereby, a humanizing process, where participants reflect upon their own experiences and act upon their reality in cooperation with another to embrace notions of a shared humanity. Freire (1970) argues, "dialogue requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to recreate, faith in their vocation to be more fully human"(Freire, 1970).

However, as argued in Chapter 2, Elise Boulding observes that creating spaces where, "a constructive arguer offers her ideas rather than imposing them, and builds upon her interlocutor's ideas rather than tearing them down" is an essential first step in supporting dialogue (Rhetoric, 399). The virtual spaces that exist in the Youth Talk Program, as noted in the previous section, provide students with a means of connecting with their peers from around the world, but also necessitate a greater sense of responsibility because of the distance ingrained in the practice. 9.1 specifies what critical components are needed in implementing intercultural dialogue through videoconference, and through using those benchmarks in correlations with data collection, this thesis argues that the Youth Talk Program is not a dialogue based exchange. Reflective questioning (cosmopolitanism), student-centered design (constructivism), and access (critical pedagogy), pertaining to language and technological capabilities, were limited in each pairing. The Three Sphered Model provided the means of defining intercultural dialogue, and through

such an understanding was able to identify the pitfalls limited student and teacher engagement, growth, and sustainability. While students from Ruwwad and Excel took greater autonomy within this program, and found success through language choice and reflective practices, the majority of other schools did not. Equity, in regards to technological capabilities, language usage, and student design plagued program development

Nevertheless, the Youth Talk Program does provide significant learning opportunities for students, which cannot be disregarded based on the grounds that it is not dialogue. In the same manner that the Three Sphered Model provided the means to examine Youth Talk and recognize that it is not dialogue, it also substantiated the following argument that dialogue is a process rather than a singular act, consisting of critical steps that Youth Talk is actively engaging in. Freire (1970) commented,

> "Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world. Because dialogue is an encounter among women and men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some name on behalf of others. It is an act of creation; it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one person by another. The domination implicit in dialogue is that of the world by the dialogues; it is conquest of the world for the liberation of humankind. "

However, rather than support Freire's belief that dialogue is the encounter, Chapters 8 and 9 provided substantial evidence that the encounter leads to both discourse and dialogue, where initial exposure and the sharing of one's narrative can build trust amongst the partners. The imbalanced power dynamic, and the subsequent cultural reproduction that is created by the lack of reflection, the limited student-centered approach, and the disproportionately between partners based on technology and language negate the existence of dialogue. Habermas (1984) argues, "communicative activity is underway when the actions of agents involved are coordinated not through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching understanding"(pp.285-6). An engagement in validity claims through discursive practices, which aim to seek this

understanding, cannot occur prior to humility and equity amongst participants. These notions must be correlated with notions of cultural reproduction.

Fisogni's (2005) theory on encounters provides an understanding of dialogue as a process rather than a singular act. An encounter provides the first step in an individual's commitment to the humanity of another. Fisogni (2005) contends,

"Each encounter, from the simple act of looking at the other person, calls for the commitment…commitment presents its two main faces: it is an effort of the whole person in order to perform a willed-intential act, followed by a sense of (moral) obligation"(p.7).

This commitment is a process, where an initial encounter is essential to establish the possibility of dialogue. Fisogni (2005) argues,

"If we pay attention to it, we cannot help recognizing the deep linkage existing between encounter and dialogue. The encounter (an interpersonal event in which the partners are face to face in a communicative relation), always comes before the making of a dialogue (a face to face confrontation marked by reciprocity and the common will of discussion about a specific issue, in which is going to be produced in a new and veritable sense. There isn't any dialogue without an encounter"(p.3).

While Fisogni's assessment of dialogue as, "a face to face confrontation", contradicts peace education's understanding of dialogue as an act of equity and humility that empowers individuals to adopt an optimistic view of the power of humanity to cause positive change, the interpersonal nature of an encounter that enables and supports a more action based dialogue correlates with an understanding of peace education as a holistic process. As argued in Chapter 3, the holistic change that peace education supports implies an inward to outward transformation of the individual, based upon new exposures to their social world. One's consciousness can then be open to new perspectives. New exposures to their social world require time and space for individuals to reflect and subsequently act upon. However, the structure of the Youth Talk program blends encounter, reflection, and action, through the Global Citizenship Project. While such a structure attends to the philosophy and practice of peace education, such a process dictates a uniform time frame for students to change their reality. In order to realize the peace culture that

Boulding argues for, and was identified in Chapter 3, students require the time and space, in order

to learn how to maintain a,

> "Creative balance among bonding, community closeness, and the need for separate
> spaces. It can be designed as a mosaic of identities, attitudes, values, beliefs and patterns that
> leads people to live nurturingly with one another and with the Earth itself without the aid of
> structured power differentials, to deal creatively with their differences and to share their
> resources"(Peace Change, 403).

The recognition of difference can support students and educators in understanding the

power of difference in creating a shared humanity. Nevertheless, the Youth Talk Program did not

emphasize or celebrate difference, allowing the adoption of "sameness" to become the most

frequent data point during collection and an implied objective of the program. A critical question

to pose is whether the timing of the Youth Talk Program, where students engage in four IVCs

over the course of the year, with an expectation that they will engage in consistent reflective work

throughout, facilitated an understanding of "sameness" as an ideal objective. "Sameness", is in

fact an initial reflection from students engaged in intercultural dialogue, as they begin to find

similarities in the shared experiences of teenaged student in the early stages of the program. The

limited time to challenge this reflection enables the pursuit of "sameness" as an ideal outcome of

the program, when it is in fact, more accurately defined as an opportunity within an encounter to

critically engage in reflective questioning. Working through notions of sameness, requires

students to actively address personal bias and their collective and individual narratives, which can

eventually develop into legitimate dialogical practice, but the existence of "sameness" within an

intercultural exchange negates the existence of dialogue. Georgia Warnke (2011) questions

whether, "dialogue just as easily reinforces or even exaggerates our fore-meaning? And what if

consensus is as easily to be feared as sought? (p.92). Understanding dialogue as a process, where

encounters provide an initial step in exposure and reflection, directly addresses the possibility of

dialogue supporting processes of consensus, or in respect to Youth Talk, cultural reproduction.

Hastily achieving consensus contradicts Boulding's understanding of a culture of peace, by

supporting "structured power differentials' that can maintain the status-quo. Rejecting the status quo requires an openness to other narratives and a commitment to a process of experiential reflection. In analyzing Gadamer's understanding of dialogue, which directly connects with Chapter 8's examination of hermeneutic cosmopolitanism, Georgia Warnke (2011) notes,

"For Gadamer, then, an openness to and interest in others involves listening to and taking seriously their "claim to truth" such that we try to find in it a "truth that is valid and intelligible for ourselves." This practice he takes to be a dialogical one. In being open to and interested in the claims of others, we take them up, ask questions about them, listen to answers, and follow up on responses. Our openness to the otherness of what others say reflects an interest in the possible legitimacy of their claims, and our interest in the possible legitimacy of their claims requires the sorts of conversations in which we explore possibilities, compare values and arguments, consider alternative world views, and so on. Dialogue or conversation, for Gadamer, is not, therefore, a process of arguing or trying to find only the errors in the opinions and views of others in an effort to reassert the validity of our own. Rather, he calls dialogue the art of "strengthening," in which one tries to follow through the logic of what another says. The point here is to discuss with others whether and how their claims can be accepted, and to revise, transform, or develop them if they can" (103).

The willingness of students to participate and engage with their partner school provides evidence of student openness. However, being an open to another narrative does not imply being interested in it. Greater interest comes with more exposure, which can then lead to critically informed action and the achievement of dialogue. However, Youth Talk participants have shown signs of openness in each pairing. However, all schools have not shown consistent interest. Through forming a long-term relationship through Youth Talk, students can subsequently feel limited pressure to form attachments in only four IVCs. An intercultural encounter, thereby, consists of three processes. The first process pertains to the above argument, where individuals listen to claims, experiences, and questions and begin to explore possibilities for change. The second pertains to an evaluation of your own narrative and experiences. Warnke (2011) observes,

"Nor is it only the positions of the other that we critique, revise, and develop. In the process of dialogue, we also put our own assumptions and claims in play. Rather than "making our own standpoint safely unattainable," by empathizing with others or treating them as objects to be observed, we participate with them in the dialogic exploration of a topic. Just as we ask questions of others, we explore challenges to our views and assumption" (p.103-104).

This form of reflection would represent horizontal communication, which is defined by participatory exchange and interaction with others regarding feelings, impressions, and thoughts. This process opposes vertical dialogue, which is defined by knowledge transmission and can lead to cultural reproduction. Yet, horizontal encounters are not horizontal dialogue. Horizontal dialogue connects to the final process, action. Critically informed action is the result of personal and communal reflection with consistent, long-term virtual exchanges. Dialogue emerges from trust, rather than obligation. Youth Talk's global citizenship project does not provide amble time for the students and educators to plan meaningful, cooperative action plans, and fails to provide a sustainable, long-term platform for students. Both Freire and Boulding's beliefs on the nature of dialogue bear an additional note.

Freire's (1970) argument that dialogue, or the essence of dialogue, requires both true reflection and honest action, and Boulding's point that, "self-understanding" comes by reflection and leads to action", further negates the belief that Youth Talk is a dialogue based program. Youth Talk students were limited in their commitment and understanding of reflection, which resulted in none of the global citizenship projects continuing post program (Peace & Change, 402). Honest action was not a consistent point of evidence in this research project and powerblindness enabled individuals to avoid responsibility within the IVC. Yet, it is critical to note that student growth, on an intellectual and empathetic level was seen throughout the Youth Talk pairings. However, such growth is in correlation with our understanding of encounter, which is not to be interpreted as a negative development or setback in a student's overall maturation, but rather, a critical pre-condition for critically informed action in the future. Fisogni (2005) clarifies this point, that an encounter should not be interpreted as a meeting, but a critically informed engagement. Fisogni (2005) argues,

"The appeal for the dialogue reveals, above all, the role of the encounter as a pre-condition of each dialogue and the close relation existing between these two events. A dialogue can be

performed only if the encounter of the partners has taken place; it doesn't simply mean to meet each other; it means to accept the other as a term of relation and communication"(p.9).

The process of acceptance, of both individual students and their narratives, were consistent outcomes from the majority of examined Youth Talk pairings. Applying a more realistic approach to intercultural practices can provide applicable, supportive, and context-specific change orientated frameworks. Freire's (1970_ initial assessment of dialogue as an encounter, mediated by the world, in order to name it, is better defined in regards to a dialogical process. An encounter is the first step within a dialogical process, where students are given the opportunity to engage in practices of reflection and self-liberation in order to more effectively transform their reality.

CONCLUSION

Assessing the Three Sphered Model as an effective peace education tool while considering the necessary components of videoconference based dialogue for required an analysis of a variety of different data points. The Three Sphered Model has provided the framework to both understand and assess videoconference based peace education initiatives. Chapter 5's framework to assess any peace education program was informed by the Three Sphered Model and provided the researcher with a critical lens in which to view the Youth Talk Program. 8.2 explicitly assess the Youth Talk Program in relation to peace education philosophy through the Three Sphered Model. Concepts of cultural reproduction, power dynamics, and the nature of dialogue were examined as they pertain to the Three Sphered Model, and whether such functions support or contradict peace education philosophy and practice.

Reflective questioning and cosmopolitanism, student-centered design and constructivism, and access and critical pedagogy, address how peace education practices can adapt to the given context. Videoconference based encounter and dialogue requires program design and implementation to be different than in-class activities. The Three Sphered Model provides

understanding, critical guidance, and goals for these adaptive change. The practical application of the Three Sphered Model can ultimately critique and design peace education, or the possibility of peace education practices.

This analysis ultimately led the researcher to conclude that Youth Talk is not a dialogue program, but rather, an encounter. Establishing the difference between these two interconnecting practices can provide greater clarity in both designing and assessing programs, but also empowering students to take on more autonomy in their own reflective practices and subsequent engagement.

Chapter 11: Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The general problem of this thesis is whether intercultural dialogue through videoconference can be defined as a peace education practice, and if so, how. As educational technology continues to play a dominant role in educational development programs, a critical understanding, rooted in peace education philosophy, of how such a practice can support processes of conscientization is absent. As Journell and Dressman (2011) noted in Chapter 1.6, while recent scholarship advocates for the use of videoconference in the classroom there is little evidence to suggest that its incorporation is beneficial. Therefore, this thesis seeks to provide a clear understanding of what elements define peace education philosophy, which can, thereby, assess peace education practice. The construction of the Three Sphered Model provides the means in which to accomplish these goals. The Three Sphered Model is a holistic approach to peace education, which outlines the field and its practices as being composed of a 1) human agency element, 2) epistemological element, and 3) normative element. The creation of this model allows the researcher to examine the general problem in this thesis, as well as examine dialogue as a peace education practice, specifically, what defines dialogue in peace education, how should secondary

students engage in dialogical processes, what are the goals of a peace education program rooted in dialogue, and how effective is videoconference as a peace education practice.

The goals were translated into Central Research Questions, and connected to the general problem that this thesis seeks to address:

1. What are the critical components in creating and implementing **peace education** pedagogy with dialogue as its driving force?
2. How can videoconference, within a peace education framework, be best implemented?
3. What has been the short-term and post program impact for students, teachers, and communities engaging in videoconference based dialogue and collaboration?
4. What has been the post program impact for students, teachers, and communities engaging in videoconference based dialogue and collaboration?

11.1 Review of the research process

The steps taken in this research process follow those presented in Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design. The research paradigm is guided by the Three-Sphered Model of peace education in correlation with Joe L. Kincheloe (2003) and Gary Anderson and Isaura Barrera's (1995) argument for the adoption of a critical-constructivist paradigm, adapted from Burrell and Morgan's (1979) *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis.* A Critical-Constructivist Paradigm was a foundational lens in framing interview and focus group questions, observing the IVCs, and designing the research process as a whole. The researcher intended to adopt a holistic approach to studying a social phenomenon, such as videoconference based dialogue, where attention is given to recognizing that 'outside forces' play an important role in constructing a culture and changing a societal, economic, or power-based dynamic. The researcher recognized that reality was governed by notions of power, but such power dynamics play a variety of roles in forming identity and one's interaction with their reality (critical ontology); understood that individuals construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their understanding of their social world (constructivist epistemology); and collected and analyzed data where supplemental quantitative approaches qualitative ones can benefit the already qualitative driven methodology. This study

adopts a QUAL-quan approach to research within a transformative sequential design. As this research study design is intended to foster change, subsequent research questions were designed and implemented in correlation with a sequential design. The transformative sequential design was further informed by Tashakkori and Creswell's (2007) study, 'Exploring the Nature of Research Questions in Mixed Methods Research" and the Wengraf Model of the Research Process. Individual and group interviews were designed based on Wengraf's (2011) methods of analysis, where a top down progression, beginning with the Research Purposes (RP) led "to the formulation of a Central Research Question (CRQ) to a number of derived Theory-Questions (TQs) that spelled out the CRQ, and then from each TQ to a number of Interview-Questions (IQs)" (Wengraf, 224). Tashakkori and Creswell's argument regarding the creation of research questions in a sequential sequence supports Wengraf's model. Research questions address four phase of inquiry with qualitative research questions appearing throughout the phases and quantitative questions appearing only in the last two phases. The sample size of 144 students within this research project was also designed to ensure stratified purposeful sampling, enabling saturation and meeting redundancy in order to substantiate the practical implications of this study.

11.2 Observations and Reflections

This research project was an engaging and rewarding experience. There were facets of this process that proved to be helpful and beneficial, such as:

1.   Partnership with GNG and BoU,

2.   Literature Review,

3.   Virtual and On-site Field Research.

However, there were other facets that proved challenging, such as:

1.   Partnership with GNG and BoU,

2.   Language,

3.   School involvement.

The first facet that proved the most supportive during the research process was the partnership with GNG and BoU. The negative aspect of this partnership will also be examined later in this section. While the use of videoconference has become more of an established practice in the classroom, there are few programs that offer yearlong partnerships between schools from around the world. Youth Talk was one of four other programs that were contacted to conduct this study and were the only one to maintain a commitment to the project and also support it financially at times. The level of dedication they have to this work is inspiring and their openness to take suggestions and constructive criticism made this partnership very rewarding.

The literature review in Chapter 2 and the subsequent development of the Three Sphered Model formed the foundation of this research project. Using the Three Sphered Model as a lens in which to address the numerous data points in this research was pivotal in making critical findings, supported in theory and practice.   The literature and Three Sphered Model supported productive and informative fieldwork experiences, both virtually and on-site. The literature provided substantial background in how to conduct virtual data collection and allowed for the blending of various data sets to happen seamlessly.

However, the challenges faced in this research project were substantial. While the partnership with GNG and BoU was noted as being a rewarding experience, the research project also worked with four different Youth Talk directors over the course of four years. An entire year of research was also lost, because the schools that had agreed to partner in this research left the program abruptly and there was limited support offered by GNG as a result. The past year saw a change in management of the Youth Talk program and a positive change was seen in organization, outreach, and support.

A major finding in this research project relates to language being a critical symbol of power and privilege. Ruwwad was noted as having some of the more positive results, due in large

part to the students being allowed to speak in their chosen language. However, the researcher does not speak Arabic and conducted all of the focus groups/interviews and on-site field work in English, which maintains the power dynamic being addressed in this research project. Moreover, an interpreter had to travel with me throughout Jordan as well as translate data collection from Bahrain and Jordan.

As noted in the first challenge related to GNG and BoU, the researcher lost an entire year because schools decided to leave the program or were unable to make the commitment. Dozens of schools have been potential partners in this research project and the ones that were finally settled on still were inconsistent at times. Government oversight, lack of school/teacher organization, and miscommunication plagued Youth Talk, causing so many of the schools to not have a full experience.

11.3 Implications and recommendations

The reflections made in 10.3 provide understanding for the implications of this research and suggestions for future research. Addressing intercultural dialogue through videoconference as a peace education tool is a new entry into the field. Subsequent research will be needed to continue this study and draw further implications for both peace education blended learning as well as the combination of the two. Moreover, the Three Sphered Model provides several opportunities to explore what a holistic model of peace education means in a variety of scenarios.

11.3.1 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

- *The potential and pitfalls of intercultural videoconference for peace education*

Chapter 1 argued, "Mutually beneficial dialogue via videoconference that can be assessed in an academic environment has the potential to compel awareness, appreciation, and sustained global interaction." This research hypothesis was further substantiated by the claim that,

"Such a program, if adopted alongside a fully integrated and supported school curriculum, can also provide a cross-curricular framework for establishing a teacher and student global classroom network."

However, this hypothesis was proven incomplete, due the varied power imbalances that existed between schools throughout the program. While there are considerable benefits to engaging in Youth Talk and intercultural dialogue based programs as a whole, until student, faculty, and community reflection is organized and implemented when videoconference is implemented as a form of dialogue, cultural reproduction will continue to spread and be propagated as an ideal.

Youth Talk must make it a priority to reevaluate their curriculum in order to make it student driven and context specific. Technological capabilities must be addressed to make access equitable, in order to avoid enable implicit biases to grow. Finally, language must be defined as a critical component in the adoption of the Youth Talk program, where students are given the choice, apart from a program dictated directive, like ACCESS, to choose whether they speak in their own language. The reflection made by a student from Ruwwad speaks to this reality,

"Arabic is an emotional language and it cannot be translated perfectly. It would be even harder for us to try and say what we mean in English. It would mean something very different" (Ruwwad, Post-Program Focus Group).

The use of language has a direct relationship with the power dynamics present in the Youth Talk program. While cultural reproduction is the processes of domination that facilitates the reproduction of power relations from one generation to another, the use of English as the dominant language supports such a process (Allen Morrow &Alberto Torres, 2002, 67). Subsequently, the answer to the research question regarding the critical components necessary in creating and implementing peace education pedagogy with dialogue as its driving force, pertain to the power dynamics existing in the medium supporting dialogical processes. Intercultural dialogue through videoconference must address the power dynamics present through the adoption of language and the technological capacities of the respective participants.

- *Encounters*

In not defining Youth Talk as a dialogue based program, one can make the legitimate conclusion that such a finding points to the program as a failure. However, in identifying a difference between the two practices, organizations, programs, and individuals can use dialogue as a process, where attainable steps can be achieved in pursuit of engaging in critical dialogue. Such an argument also has considerable implications for peace education. Chapter 1 noted,

> Ellis and Warshel (2010) claim that direct face-to-face contact presents the best means for enabling understanding and reconciliation. Peace education initiatives call on all parties involved to engage in dialogue

Encounters have the possibility of designing long-term, context specific peace education initiatives, where the process is as important as the end goal.

- *Sameness, the new Cultural Reproduction*

The amount of times students, faculty, and GNG noted "sameness" as a sign of positive growth and peacebuilding was alarming. Explicitly identifying "sameness" as a negative impact of the banking model of education can enable educators to efficiently address patterns of cultural reproduction and change them immediately. GNG posting a comment regarding Youth Talk participants being "the same" also shows that cultural reproduction can be easy to disregard if critical pedagogy does not take an active role in program development and assessment.

Notions of cultural reproduction refuted many of the arguments made in the research hypothesis. While Youth Talk was able to provide initial notions of awareness, introspection, and narrative work, it happened at a superficial level at times, only further supporting cultural reproduction. Notions of sameness, further resulted in limited action taken by Youth Talk participants, which stood in contradiction to the research hypothesis' argument that personal and communal change would be a post program impact of intercultural dialogue.

11.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- *Hermeneutic Cosmopolitanism*

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The number of student reflections pertaining to "sameness" being an "ideal" caused the inclusion of hermeneutic cosmopolitanism in Chapter 8. While the cosmopolitan normative sphere within the Three Sphered Model assumes that difference is to be celebrated it is not explicated stated. Subsequently, in order to provide effective tools of peace education practitioners and create effective assessment tools a more explicit understanding of cosmopolitanism that celebrates a shared humanity through recognizing difference is essential.

- *Long-term Research Study*

This research project was conducted over the course of one year and depended on the cooperation of Global Nomads Group and Bridges of Understanding. An independent, intercultural study could be conducted if more time and funding were available. Longer and more frequent fieldwork, focus groups conducted over the course of several years, consisting of researchers fluent in each of the schools preferred tongue could critically important research findings.

- *Cultural Reproduction & Peace Education*

Cultural Reproduction also emerged as a result of "sameness" being promoted during the Youth Talk pairings. An examination of how and why processes of cultural reproduction emerge in peace education environments would provide a needed critique of the field.

- *Encounter, Discourse, Dialogue*

The pursuit of dialogical practices within peace education was explicitly explored through the three sphered model of peace education. However, as argued in 10.3, Youth Talk can neither be defined as dialogue or discourse. Discourse, nevertheless, presents a critical perspective in understanding the normative, epistemological, and human agency components of peace education. Acknowledging validity claims that can support consensus and subsequent change reflects aspects of equity and humility that an encounter and dialogical process must possess.

Exploring whether an encounter provides a key initial step towards discourse, which can then lead to dialogue, would provide greater clarity to the three-sphered model of peace education.

- *Identity and the Three-Sphered Model*

Identity, specifically, cultural identity was a persistent component of this research project's findings. Students consistently reflected on their own understanding of cultural identity and acceptance, often leading to notions of cultural reproduction and assimilation. However, these interactions also enabled students to engage in reflective processes which enabled them to deconstruct and construct their personal and cultural identities. Schools that did not engage in considerable pre-program reflection continued to enable their student's implicit biases.

In Chapter 3.2.1 H.B. Danesh's (2006) integrative theory of peace education was introduced, suggesting that all human beings are molded by their unique reality. The creation of the Education for Peace curriculum (EFP), co-authored by Danesh, applies this argument in creating a structural framework for peace education that addresses peace as a psychological, social, political, ethical, and spiritual state, expressed through intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, international, and global areas of human life (Danesh, 2006, p.55). Both the EFP and the Three Sphered Model of Peace Education argue that through a focus on reflective processes a greater understanding of the power of the human consciousness can be understood, which can thereby inform a critical human agency. Conscientization is a process of identity. Self-awareness of one's individual and cultural identity ties the three spheres of the Three Sphered Model together. This research project's conclusions, in regards to identity formation and its connection to reflective practices, necessitates a further consideration of how identity can drive an understanding and implementation of the Three Sphered Model, where it lies at the center of the epistemological, human agency, and normative model.

CONCLUSION

Intercultural dialogue through videoconference is a potentially powerful resource for peace education. This thesis sought to address this potential, while also determining what defines peace education philosophy and practice. The Three Sphered Model of Peace Education framed the question, providing a basis in which to critique intercultural dialogue through videoconference and ultimately draw the conclusion that its adoption, implementation, and assessment has as many pitfalls as potential as a peace education practice. For instance,

1. Short-term impact pertained to cultural, historical, and geographical understanding. In most partnerships, this knowledge growth led to empathy, trust, and further understanding,

2. Post-program impacts are limited in scope when students and educators are not provided with frequent opportunities to engage in critical reflection and when the program design is not student centered, and

3. Reflective questioning, a student-centered design, and an assessment of access and power within an intercultural dialogical practice are critical components to implement and further consider.

These elements can be addressed and systematically avoided or supported via a framework informed by the Three Sphered Model. However, as peace education and blended learning continue to be labeled as emerging fields, critical questions must be fashioned prior to answering the question Giroux poised at the beginning of the research project,

"How do we make education meaningful by making it critical and how do we make it critical so as to make it emancipatory" (Giroux, 1983, p.3).

Peace educators must first ask,

1. How do we support our students in being critically participants in their reality, and

2. How do we provide our students and educators with the tools to identify and change instances of powerblindess and cultural reproduction?

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Appendix

The pre-program questions asked to educators included the following:

1. Background questions: Position, experience, place of birth, school, school structure

2. How did you come to know the Youth Talk program?

3. What is your understanding of the program and its purpose?

    a. Probing Question: dialogue

4. How does the Youth Talk program fit within the structure and philosophy of the school?

    a. Probing Question: How do you view dialogue as an educational tool?

5. What is your educational philosophy?

    a. Purpose & Practice

6. Are you familiar with the term "peace education"?

    a. What is your definition of peace education?

    b. Do you think Youth Talk is a peace education program?

7. Are you familiar with the term "global citizenship"?

    a. Probing Question: Does your understanding of global citizenship play a role in the school community?

    b. Probing Question: How?

8. What role should technology play in the classroom?

9. What is your definition of blended learning?

10. Why did you agree to facilitate Youth Talk in your classroom?

11. Why did you agree to support Youth Talk in your school?

12. What are your feelings about leading this program in your classroom?

    a. Supplemental Question: How do plan on facilitating the program?

13. Do you feel you have sufficient training and preparation prior to beginning the program?

14. Can you tell me anything about your partner school?

    a. Supplemental Question: views of the foreign country

15. How do you think your partner school views your school and the Youth Talk program?

    a. Supplemental Question: What do you think your partner school hopes to gain from Youth Talk?

    b. Probing Question: How do those expectations make you feel?

16. How do you think your students view the partner school and their peers?

17. What do you think your students want and need

    a. In their education?

    b. In their community?

    c. From you?

    d. From each other?

    e. From the partner school?

18. What do you hope will be the results of the Youth Talk program for yourself, your students, your school, and the community?

19. What do you expect will be the results of the Youth Talk program for yourself, your students, your school, and the community?

    a. Question will ask the T&A for their expectations for the school year and for years to come.

20. Is there anything else you would like to add?

The pre-program questions asked to students included the following:

1. Can you tell me what you know about the Youth Talk program?

2. Why do you think your school is a part of this program?

3. What do you think the goal of the program is?

4. Do you agree with that goal?

    a. Supplemental Question: Why or why not

5. Can you tell me anything about peace education or take a guess at what you think peace education is?

    a. Supplemental Question: Has anyone discussed peace education with you?

6. How do you feel about using videoconference in your class?

    a. Have you used Skype or Facetime before?

7. Can you tell me anything about your partner school?

    a. Supplemental Question: What are your opinions of (partnered country)? Can you describe the country to me?

8. How do you think your partner school views your school and the Youth Talk program?

    a. Supplemental Question: What do you think your partner school hopes to gain from Youth Talk?

    b. Probing Question: How do those expectations make you feel?

9. Are you interested in learning anything specific about your partnered school, country, or students?

10. What do you want them to know about you?

11. How would you describe your community?

12. What do you think the students from your partnered school want and need

    a. In their education?

    b. In their community?

    c. From you?

    d. From each other?

13. Can you define what peace means to you?

14. Do you think students from the partnered school have the same definition of peace?

15. Using your definition of peace, do you think you are living in peace? Do you think your partnered school is living in peace?

16. What do you hope will be the results of the Youth Talk program for yourself, your class, your school, and the community?

17. What do you expect will be the results of the Youth Talk program for yourself, your students, your school, and the community?

18. Is there anything else you would like to add?

The mid-program questions asked to students included the following:

1. What were some of your favorite memories from the IVCs?

2. What surprised you from your two IVCs?

3. What excited you from your two IVCs?

4. What have you learned about your partner school?

5. What have you learned about yourself?

6. Were you surprised by what they knew or didn't know about your country?

7. What do you want them still to know?

8. How do you think they look at you now?

9. Were you able to find any connections between your own school and your partner school?

    a. Do you share anything in common?

    b. What are some major differences?

10. Were you able to share your culture?

11. You have two more IVCs, what are your goals for these last two?

12. Can you remember any of the names of the student you spoke with?

13. Have any of you connected with these students outside of Youth Talk?

The post-program questions asked to students included the following:

1. Since the end of the program, can you describe using 3 words what the experience was like?

2. Were there any memorable experiences from this year's program?

3. Were any of your goals from the beginning of the program achieved?

4. Youth Talk prides itself in being a student-led program. Do you believe that you were able to lead the discussions and had ownership over the program development?

5. Were there times when you felt like a topic wasn't open for discussion?

6. Did any of you use the Youth Talk online discussion board? Why or why not?

    a. Did any of you exchange social media accounts?

7. At the beginning of the year I asked you a series of questions that I want you to readdress now:

        a. Can you tell me anything about your partner school?

        b. What are your opinions of (partnered country)? Can you describe the country to me?

        c. How do you think your partner school views your school and the Youth Talk program now?

        d. What do you think your partner school hoped to gain from Youth Talk?

        e. How do those expectations make you feel?

8. Has there been any impact on your school community as a result of this program?

        a. Clubs, student initiatives, discussions

9. Do you think students from the partnered school have the same definition of peace following the program?

10. Peace requires a commitment to action in order to enable it and sustain it.

        a. Do you think you will continue these conversations with your partner school?

            i. Do you believe they want to continue them?

11. Is there anything you wished you had spoken about or mentioned during these exchanges?

12. Is this program just a first step?

13. Do you believe you and your partner school were equals in this exchange?

        a. I will note the following to consider:

            i. Language

            ii. Time

            iii. Technology

            iv. School involvement

            v. Topics

14. Can you describe your end of the year project?

        a. Was this project co-designed with your partner school?

            i. Why or why not?

15. What was the impact of this project?

16. Is there anything you would change about Youth Talk?

17. What would you keep the same?

18. Do you believe you will hear from anyone from your partner school again?

The post-program questions asked to educators included the following

1. What were some immediate takeaways from this year's program?

2. Do you feel you had sufficient training throughout the program to facilitate program objectives?

3. Do you believe you adequately supported your students throughout the program?

    a. Why or why not?

4. Was the school community actively involved in the program?

    a. Why or why not?

5. How would you describe the relationship with your partner school?

    a. Would you continue a relationship with this school in the future?

        i. Do you think Youth Talk encourages schools to maintain the same relationship?

6. Describe your experience with Youth Talk this year?

7. What are some aspects that work well within the program?

8. What are some aspects that did not wok well within in the program?

9. Did you voice these concerns with Global Nomads Group?

10. At the beginning of the program you noted that this was indeed dialogue, based upon the interactions that students would have.

    a. Do you still believe the program was based upon dialogue?

11. What do you believe the student experience has been?

    a. Do you think any students will continue the discussion going forward?

    b. Has there been any noticeable change in your students since taking part in Youth Talk?

        i. School community?

            1. Has the school had any discussions regarding this program?

        ii. Yourself?

12. Were there any topics of discussion that were difficult for your students to tackle?

    a. For your partner school?

    b. How did you handle these situations?

13. Youth Talk prides itself in being a student-led program. Do you believe the students led the discussions and had ownership over the program development?

14. What do you hope will be the future of the Youth Talk program for yourself, your students, your school, and the community?

15. What do you believe the results of the Youth Talk program have been for yourself, your students, your school, and the community?

    a. Are your students encouraged to create new relationships via social media with their partner school?

16. How do you respond to the following statement, in regards to this program:

    a. Before dialogue can occur, an encounter between parties is necessary. Encounter poses the basis of the ethical commitment in a future dialogue

17. Would you consider continuing the program?

    a. Why or why not?