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Teaching Peace and Conflict

The Multiple Roles of School Textbooks in Peacebuilding

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We dedicate this book to the teachers and students who take up these textbooks, with all their flaws and opportunities, and use them every day with the intent of teaching and learning to create a more just and peaceful world. We additionally dedicate the book to the teachers and students who lack access to textbooks but who admirably strive to achieve the same goals without these essential resources.

Foreword

Teaching Peace and Conflict: The Multiple Roles of School Textbooks in Peace-building is an interesting and valuable scholarly compendium. From the vantage point of the urban global North, where alternative information sources are generally available, it could be tempting to discount the tremendous importance of textbooks as evidence of the intended and the enacted curriculum. Textbooks are, especially in contexts of resource scarcity, shapers of the educational substance delivered to teachers and students, and themselves shaped by an array of national, sometimes provincial or state, and inevitably globalized social-political factors.

Textbooks are tools of hegemony: they represent attempts to instill implicit control, by normalizing a national "common sense" in which the powerful stay powerful, without needing to resort to overt violent repression (see Halilovic-Pastuovic, this volume). The hegemonic interests represented by nation-states, particularly in relation to conflict and social difference, may be most visible in the explicitly "political" texts of civics, social studies, and history books that were selected by most of the chapter authors in this fine volume. At the same time, the rarer mentions here of other subjects including literature, religion, natural sciences, and math indicate that these textbooks, too, maybe powerful indicators of (and contributors to) the conflictual body politic (also Hickman & Porfilio, 2012).

Textbooks, as Russell and Tiplic (2014) articulate, represent "the" knowledge legitimized and valued by the powerful in a society, and they are designed to outline the parameters for citizen identity and action. "Indeed, textbooks may be construed as the authorised version of a society's valid knowledge, a source from which rules of thought and action may be derived" (Russell & Tiplic, 2014, p. 317). The textbook represents the curriculum most likely to be enacted. Based on textual analysis of 528 civics, social studies, and history textbooks from 71 countries (published 1966–2008), just over half of which were coded as affected by armed conflict, Russell and Tiplic show that the textbooks of conflict-affected countries were less likely than those of relatively peaceful countries to include rights-based discourses (2014, pp. 326, 329). So, the violent rule may impede human rights (and related conflict and peace) education; rights-based education does not necessarily cause peace. Whether

recognition of just peace elements is more a cause of change or more an effect of change, textbooks provide evidence of that recognition (or non-recognition).

The paradox is well known: nation-state sponsored education has two faces. In all too many ways, schools, in what and how they teach and operate, often exacerbate inter-group grievances and enmity, systemic and overt violence (Bellino & Williams, 2017; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2011; Matsumoto, 2015; Paulson, 2008). Yet simultaneously, school institutions are sites of encounter and struggle among competing visions—both symbols and resources for people's hopes and dreams for social development and peace (Bellino & Williams, 2017; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2011; Matsumoto, 2015; Paulson, 2008). The symbolic importance of textbooks, inspiring agentic citizen action for or against peace, is especially evident in the Pakistan case, where a textbook's respectful recognition of a Pakistani Nobel Prize winner from a stigmatized minority sect of Islam provoked protests (Kalhoro & Cromwell, this volume), and in the Jordan case, where protests arose over a woman portrayed in a textbook without her head covered (Shahzadeh, this volume). Yet the "better angels of our nature" (Lincoln, 2013, p. 123 [original 1861]) encourage many of us to hope, believe, and work for the transformative peacebuilding potential in education, because nation-state schooling reaches so many people, for such a large proportion of their formative lives. Government-authorized textbooks are a window into the substance of this schooling.

This book applies the **Intersecting Roles of Education in Conflict** (IREC) analytical framework to the pithy qualitative content analysis of textbooks from seven countries on three continents. It thereby illuminates what we need to know next: *How,* in various particular contexts, may school education perpetuate and exacerbate violent conflict, *and* alternatively mitigate and transform it? What factors and actors make a difference—where are the spaces for possible change? It is especially helpful that the book includes two pairs of chapters looking at (different) texts in the same country (South Sudan and Afghanistan), presenting the contexts in complementary but different ways, and includes cases from differing continents and contexts, to illuminate the most relevant actors and actions shaping the textbooks and their war-making (and/or peacemaking) implications under different conditions. There is even a case included, South Sudan, in which no (secondary history) textbooks were distributed at all: this, which apparently left some space for coexisting contrasting historical narratives, even though only one dominant narrative was taught by teachers in the participating schools (Skårås, this volume). Not least, several authors usefully complement the IREC framework with other analytical tools, such as Lynn Davies's (2005) rubric of active or passive as well as negative or positive approaches to conflict (Dunlop, this volume).

The IREC framework helps to make sense of *how* education operates in complex relationship with violent conflict. In most of the cases included in this wonderful book, the textbooks are shown to play multiple roles, simultaneously as **victim** of violence, as **accomplice** (a tool aiding and abetting dominance, intolerance, and other sources of violence), and sometimes, to some degree, as **transformer** (a means for altering the roots of violence and reconstructing the social justice roots of peace).

This is because textbooks, like schools more generally, embody tensions and contradictions: they are written by multiple direct and indirect authors, pushed and pulled by various forces. These complexities and contradictions are crucial: they are the cracks where the light gets in (Cohen, 1992).

The **accomplice** concept is an especially useful update to the "negative face of education" framing because it implies actors and action—not passive stasis. An accomplice may at times be diverted or replaced. On the other hand, this book shows that the accomplice role is most prominent in all the textbooks authors analyzed, which indeed "should send a stark warning to those who see education as inherently contributing to peace and social development" (Akseer et al., this volume). This book presents clear evidence of textbook content exacerbating and legitimizing intergroup violence, directly through nationalist enemy discourses and indirectly through myriad erasures, mystifications, and omissions. I especially appreciate the book's concerted attention to the ways textbooks represent the gender dimensions of culture, reinforcing or mitigating masculine aggression and domination. Violence ideologies and practices are gendered, which deserves far more careful study.

The **transformer** analyses are enticing, because they embody hope but also because reasonable people may disagree about whether any particular incremental change in a textbook—such as rhetoric of tolerant inter-group coexistence or including images of women in leadership (or at least non-servitude) roles—is a building block for "small steps toward transformation" (Akseer et al., this volume), or a diversion or impediment to substantial transformation. In particular, several chapters describe textbook discourses that seem to advocate peace, but in such generalized abstract terms that all of the causes of un-peace are silenced or ignored. Conflict is inevitable (though violence is not): it cannot be transformed by being censored.

Stepping back for a moment to put ourselves in the picture: the authors illustrate a range of interesting roles played by **transnational actors** in these armed conflict zone textbook production, distribution, and change processes, somewhat paralleling the IREC framework. Sometimes, international forces are clearly accomplices, using textbooks to naturalize enmity and war, as in the classic example of a math textbook, produced in Nebraska, USA, inviting students to calculate the timing of a bullet's trajectory toward an enemy's head (Kovinthan Levi, Introduction, this volume; Akseer, this volume). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, many educators rejected transnational involvement in textbook writing (Halilovic-Pastuovic, this volume). Yet at times, transnational actors—including the scholars writing in this book, as well as democratic peace-oriented international governmental and non-governmental organizations described in the Pakistan and Afghanistan chapters—seem to have encouraged, informed, and offered technical assistance for the inclusion of transformative peacebuilding ingredients in some textbooks. So, each of us reading this book has a role to play, too, as national and global citizens contributing to the (re)production and dissemination of textbooks and other aspects of education near and far. This book helps to inform that future action, to make way for building peace.

Toronto, Canada   Kathy Bickmore

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About This Book

This book illustrates the multiple roles of school textbooks as victims, transformers, and accomplices to conflict. It introduces the Intersecting Roles of Education in Conflict (IREC) framework in the analysis of primary and secondary school textbook development, production, distribution, and use. The framework illustrates that, within conflict-affected societies, textbooks often take on victim, accomplice, and transformer roles simultaneously. Country case studies from Asia, Europe, and Africa analyze textbooks from various methodological and theoretical approaches, showing how conflict discourse circulates in educational systems and learning materials in a range of conflicts, including protracted, armed, structural, and socio-political conflicts. They demonstrate that the complex relationship between textbooks and conflict is not unique to one culture, region, or type of conflict. The collection illustrates that textbooks usually reflect a dominant status quo, reproducing divisions and tensions between groups, but that they can create spaces that challenge and transform conflict.

Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction: The Intersecting Roles of Education in Conflict

Thursica Kovinthan Levi

Abstract This chapter introduces the Intersecting Roles of Education in Conflict (IREC) framework and illustrates the overlapping roles of education in conflict through the case of textbooks for peace in conflict-affected societies. The literature on education and conflict often presents education and schooling as a force for peace or conflict. The IREC framework disrupts this polarized narrative by demonstrating that the complex contexts of conflict-affected societies necessitate an approach that takes into consideration that aspects of education can take on multiple roles including victim, accomplice, or transformer of conflict. The classification into the different roles underscores how education is being engaged with by stakeholders, i.e., is it being destroyed, victim, is it being used as a weapon of war, accomplice, or as a tool for social justice, transformer. The overlap between roles, however, emphasizes that education often simultaneously plays more than one role in relation to conflict, and that these can exist in tension with each other. This chapter presents the theory and concepts within the IREC framework in detail. It then provides an overview of its use in a series of diverse country case studies through summaries of subsequent chapters that use the IREC framework to analyze the role of primary and secondary school textbooks. Through this application, the introduction demonstrates that the multiple roles of textbooks do not take place in isolation, often intersecting in unique ways within any given conflict. The dynamics of these intersections require close examination by researchers and practitioners if textbooks are to effectively promote values of peace in conflict-affected societies.

Keywords Conflict · Education · Peace education · Peacebuilding · Textbooks

As researchers and practitioners grapple with implementing best practices for promoting peace through schooling in a world where conflicts are becoming increasingly complex, textbooks and textbook research have become a central focus in education for peacebuilding. School textbooks are considered the most crucial medium for

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knowledge transmission in schools globally (Fuchs & Bock, 2018). They are reliable sources of information that pass on notions of national identity, the state, and its relationship with citizens (Williams, 2014). Thus, textbooks have the potential to be powerful contributors toward education for sustainable development through the inclusion of content that reflects values of peace, human rights, and global citizenship (UNESCO, 2017).

The peacebuilding role of textbooks is particularly salient in countries affected by fragility and conflict, where it has been established that education and learning materials can contribute to peace or further exacerbate existing tensions (Greaney, 2006). Furthermore, schools in conflict-affected contexts often have limited instructional resources and teacher training, resulting in textbooks becoming the de facto curriculum (Greaney, 2006; Smart et al., 2020). In many of these cases, learning is textbook-centered, whereby student and teacher choices are limited, and therefore textbooks drive both the content and processes of teaching and learning (Smart et al., 2020). As a result, textbooks have become a central focus of researchers and practitioners in various disciplines, and it is often noted that the field of textbook studies is both broad and interdisciplinary (Fuchs & Bock, 2018). Consequently, this book's conceptual focus is on the role of textbooks in peace education and conflict studies. In doing so, it utilizes a definition of conflict that recognizes its complex nature in the twenty-first century and includes contexts of both overt armed conflict and latent violence. The inclusion of latent or structural violence in this definition recognizes that the root causes of all forms and levels of violence ultimately begin with social injustice and that the mere absence of personal violence is a limited form of peace (Galtung, 1969). Thus, in thinking about the role of education in conflict, this book includes various forms and types of conflict, including social and historical conflict, with a recognition that these are very much interrelated when it comes to the transmission of knowledge through education and schooling.

The interdisciplinary nature of textbook studies has resulted in its theorization from a multitude of theoretical and methodological perspectives, particularly as it relates to a textbook's potential to contribute to peace. For example, a social psychological analysis by Psaltis et al. (2017) notes that history education can be manipulated to promote singular narratives that negatively portray other groups as something to be feared. A colonial lens informs Cajani's (2013) observation of Italian secondary school textbooks as perpetuating Eurocentric perspectives that minimized the voices of colonized people. The role of gender and gender equality has also become a central focus in textbook research. Representations of gender in textbooks and its intersection with conflict have been explored by Sarvarzade and Wotipka (2017) in their analysis of Afghan textbooks and Sadker et al.'s (2007) framework for identifying gender bias in textbooks. These authors use feminist theory to examine how norms of masculinity and femininity, transmitted through textbooks, contribute to challenging or further exacerbating social inequities and violence. Similarly, Naseem (2014) examines the normalization of military violence in Pakistan using discourse analysis informed by poststructuralist theory and notes that the consistent juxtaposition of nationalism and religion in textbooks contributes to a notion of an ideal

citizen as one that unwaveringly supports the military and is nationalistic, patriotic, and religious.

Whether it is an examination of the ethnic, colonial, religious, or gender differences, a common thread across all of these works, including this book, is the critical exploration of how the self and the other are represented or, in many cases, omitted within textbooks and the resulting impact of these choices on peace. The term Other is commonly used in textbook research and warrants close examination; as a discursive process by which a dominant group constructs and depicts both itself and the Other, it has far-reaching implications for peace. Within a society, the construction of identity differences that constitute a self and other are often based on differences related to gender, race, religion, ethnicity, ability, or a combination of these categories and this process of differentiation is always rooted in unequal power relationships. Bauman (1991) notes that these power differentials often occur dichotomously with respect to the notion of the Other and the process of Othering:

> In dichotomies crucial for the practice and the vision of the social order, the differentiating power hides as a rule behind one of the members of the opposition. The second member is but the other of the firsts, the opposite (degraded, suppressed, exiled) side of the first and its creation. Thus abnormality is the other of the norm woman the other of man, stranger the other of the native, enemy the other of friend, 'them' the other of 'us', insanity the other of reason, foreigner the other of the state subject, but the dependence is not symmetrical. The second side depends on the first for its contrived and enforced isolation. The first depends on the second for its self-assertion. (p. 14)

The resulting hegemonic relationship implicit in Otherness, and Othering is a form of social injustice and a contributor to conflict. Whether the difference is ethnic, linguistic, religious, or gender-based, the inclusion and representation of the Other in the content, research, development, production, distribution, and dissemination of textbooks often mirror power differentials in society. Consequently, if and how the Other is included in the process of textbook development and their representation in the content is an area in need of further research, particularly in conflict-affected contexts (Emerson, 2018; Vanner et al., 2017). Through diverse theoretical and methodological approaches, the chapters of this book engage in examining these processes and their implications for peace.

Much of the research on the role of textbooks in peace is informed by the literature on education and conflict, which frequently depicts education dichotomously, either as a force for peace or conflict (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2003). From Galtung's works (1969, 1976, 1985, 1990) on structural and cultural violence, negative and positive peace, and peacebuilding in the context of education to Bush and Saltarelli's (2000) The Two Faces of Education in Conflict, the widespread assumption that education is always a force for good continues to be dismantled. Researchers recognize the multiple possible relationships between education and conflict, noting the potential of education to be a perpetrator and/or victim of conflict. The chapters in this book examine the multiple roles of education in relation to textbooks in conflict-affected contexts by applying the Intersecting Roles of Education in Conflict (IREC)

framework. The IREC framework considers the intersecting and potentially contradictory nature of education to best reflect and plan for the complexity of conflict-affected contexts. This focus reflects the observation made by Roldán Vera and Fuchs (2018) and Ide et al. (2018) that there remain relatively few studies that examine the relationship of educational media—such as textbooks—within contemporary politics, and they call for additional research and theorizing that applies a critical approach to examine the relationship between such materials and their broader social context.

The IREC framework has been used in textbook research to consider that aspects of education can assume multiple roles, including victim, accomplice, or transformer, and that these roles often intersect and overlap (Vanner et al., 2017). Kovinthan Levi (2021) notes that the classification into the different roles underscores how education is being engaged with by stakeholders, i.e., is it being destroyed—victim (Tawil, 1997)—is it being used as a weapon of war—accomplice (Tawil, 1997)—or as a tool for social justice—transformer. The emphasis on the intersecting roles highlights that education often simultaneously plays more than one role in relation to conflict and that these roles often exist in tension with each other. The following section explicates the three roles and their intersections with a focus on textbooks.

1.1 Victim

In order to understand the extent to which educational policies and systems reflect broader sociopolitical tensions in society, Tawil (1997) noted the need to "distinguish between education as an accomplice to rebellion and to the outbreak of conflict, and education as a victim of destruction when the origin of conflict lies elsewhere" (p. 8). The emphasis on conflict stemming from outside education and contributing to its unintentional destruction defines the victim's role. The victimization of education can occur through the destruction of educational infrastructure (inadvertent bombing of schools), limiting access to schools (unsafe to travel to school for teachers and students), and reduced quality as a result of limited expenditure and insufficient capacity in the case of protracted conflicts (Jones & Naylor, 2014). Secondary impacts that further victimize education by restricting access include the loss of qualified educators and community supports (Cervantes-Duarte & Fernández-Cano, 2016), sexual harassment on the way to and from school (Davies, 2010), reduction in school enrollment and attendance (Seitz, 2004), and the military use of schools (GCPEA, 2014). These examples of reduction in quality and access arising from incidences of violence are common ways in which conflict victimizes education and where education is not a direct source or instrument of violence, as is the case in its accomplice role.

Many of the challenges noted above can be remedied with infrastructure and capacity building during the cessation of conflict. However, conflicts are rarely simple, and in many cases, the victim role of education overlaps with the accomplice role. The intersection of the victim and accomplice role is evident in instances where stakeholders intentionally destroy education due to its perceived role in society, often

linked to religious, political, ethnic, and other ideological affiliations (GCPEA, 2018). Thus, even in some cases where education may not be a root cause of conflict, it is intentionally destroyed for its symbolic role in society. This intersection between the victim and accomplice role may take the form of non-state groups targeting government-run schools to delegitimize the state (GCPEA, 2018). Similarly, the state can intentionally victimize education by using divisive forms of resource allocation between groups, as noted by Bush and Saltarelli (2000) in Serbia and Palestine. The reduction in quality and access may appear to place education in the victim role; however, closer examination of stakeholders' divisive practices demonstrates that understanding the intent to destroy education is as important as determining how to reconstruct education systems that have been victimized by conflict.

Textbooks and their role in conflict commonly occupy this space of intersection. Access to and quality of textbooks are often victimized by conflict, particularly in protracted conflicts where there is low government expenditure on education resulting in the lower capacity to produce, distribute, or replace quality textbooks. In Syria, an extreme shortage of textbooks due to ongoing conflict has forced students to share textbooks or rely on using second-hand textbooks from upper-grade levels (Briggs, 2017). For children in Iraq, ongoing security concerns have resulted in significant shortages of textbooks, with instances of one textbook being shared among ten students (IRIN, 2004). Although the impact of these direct forms of victimization of textbooks is damaging to education systems, it is further exacerbated when it intersects with the accomplice role. Knuth (2006) points out that the central role that textbooks play in nation-building and forming a national identity makes them frequent targets of violence. One of the most famous incidences of this targeting is the 1933 book burnings of university texts that were viewed as opposing German ideology in Nazi Germany (Fishburn, 2008). Over the years, the deliberate destruction of books has continued in conflict situations. For example, in South Sudan, two containers of school textbooks were opened and destroyed during heavy fighting in 2015 (GCPEA, 2018). Similarly, in 2014, Al-Jihad not only destroyed 150 textbooks in Pakistan but they left behind pamphlets for schools with warnings "not to teach Western education in English" (GCPEA, 2018, p. 188). The resulting weakened state of education systems, including in relation to the production, distribution, and use of textbooks, that have been impacted by the intersecting victim and accomplice roles become more challenging to rebuild, and efforts to do so are often diluted due to conflicting agendas among stakeholders.

1.2 Accomplice

Both Tawil (1997) and Bush and Saltarelli's (2000) working on the negative impact of education in conflict have contributed to a considerable shift in the literature to focus on the role of education as an accomplice to conflict. The accomplice role of education in conflict reflects the ways in which education systems, including their governance, curriculum, and policy, foster and amplify identity-based social

divisions and become a contributing factor to the breakdown of social cohesion and a root cause of societal conflict (Tawil, 1997; Tawil & Harley, 2004). A key aspect of the accomplice role of education is the intentional legitimization of direct and structural forms of violence, described by (Galtung, 1990) as cultural violence. In these cases, education is weaponized against particular groups through segregation, uneven distribution, the destruction and closure of schools, and the reinforcement of social, political, and economic privileges for other groups (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Nicolai, 2009).

Schools themselves also have the potential to foster violence by promoting obedience to authority figures through the use of corporal punishment, practices that normalize violence and conflict (Bickmore, 2014). However, these practices can be difficult to discern or challenge because they are usually done under the guise of the transformative role of education through the promotion of tolerance. Education is often complicit in promoting passive forms of conflict resolution such as tolerance rather than approaches that actively identify the root causes of conflict and transform social injustice (Davies, 2006). The decision to teach tolerance in contexts where education has openly promoted hate and division is undoubtedly a transformative step; however, it intersects with the accomplice role when initiatives fail to go beyond tolerance. Although it signifies an important beginning, an exclusive focus on teaching tolerance ultimately promotes complacency to the status quo if students are not simultaneously provided with the knowledge and skills to analyze and challenge inequities that are the root causes of the conflict (Davies, 2006). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the short-term impact of encounter and dialog programs that fail to address the inequities and privileges among different groups which led to conflict in the first place (Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Suleiman, 2004).

Within textbooks, the accomplice role of education is often reflected in the engagement and representation of the Other in the textbook development, content, distribution, and dissemination processes. Greaney (2006) noted that textbook content mirrored and reinforced societal inequities by teaching values associated with "narrow nationalism, religious bias, omission, imbalance, historical inaccuracy, treatment of physical force, and militarism, use of persuasive techniques, and artwork" (p. 51). One of the most famous examples of the accomplice role is the promotion of militarism and violence through textbooks published by the University of Nebraska for Afghan refugees in Pakistani refugee camps in 1984. These USAID-funded textbooks were complicit in promoting warfare. For example, a math textbook asks primary school students to calculate the time a bullet would take to strike a Russian soldier, illustrating how the textbooks simultaneously promoted militarism and demonization of the Other (Burde, 2014; Spink, 2005). Additionally, textbooks can contribute to ongoing divisions, either in the reinforcement of a national identity through the construction of an enemy other or through the construction of a historical narrative that may not explicitly demonize another group, but that still contributes to the continuation of conflict by including only one perspective of the conflict (Roldán Vera & Fuchs, 2018). In other cases, textbooks may foster negative forms of peace by omitting mention of the conflict and structural violence altogether (Cajani et al., 2019; Davies, 2010; Salmi, 2000). This practice of demonization and omission was

apparent in secondary school textbooks in British Columbia, Canada, from 1920 to 1970 that engaged in negative depictions of Indigenous peoples as violent and inferior while omitting any mention of the gross violence against them by European settlers (Carleton, 2011).

Although there are many examples of these overt accomplice roles, textbooks more commonly contribute to conflict in subtle ways. These covert forms of the accomplice role often appear under the guise of passive approaches to peace and consequently overlap with the transformer role. The intersection between the accomplice and transformer role occupies spaces where changes are made to promote peace and inclusion at the interpersonal level, such as incorporating multiculturalism and interpersonal conflict resolution content into textbooks while ignoring systemic forms of injustice. In the case of gender equality, Sadker and Sadker's (2005) framework refers to the tokenistic inclusion of women, which is commonly used to create the illusion of gender transformation while actively ignoring the inequities and challenges women experience, as cosmetic bias. In other contexts, some forms of inequity are recognized and addressed in textbooks, while others are discounted, as in the case of primary school textbooks in South Africa, which focused on racial injustice while omitting gender, class, and ability issues (McKinney, 2005). These selective practices contribute to the exclusion of particular groups and their experiences, even though they may also be transformative to some degree.

1.3 Transformer

Education can play an essential role in transforming societal divisions and conflict; however, in order for education to be a transformer of conflict, the content, pedagogy, and governance of education must first meaningfully acknowledge conflict and injustice and foster values of critical thinking, dialog, and relationship-building to challenge and change the status quo. The emphasis on democratic and collaborative processes to foster critical thinking and action to transform social injustice is a precept of Galtung's (1969) concept of positive peace, which is the absence of structural and cultural violence achieved through social justice, and Freire's (1970/2000) critical consciousness, which is the ability to analyze systems of inequality within society and take action against it. Both authors stress the need for education to engage learners in participation and co-decision-making through dialog and communication that requires schooling to become more egalitarian and grounded in relationships based on mutual respect and equality (Freire, 1970/2000; Galtung, 1969). Thus, education's transformative role is contingent on its capacity to address conflict—which is ever-present in society—in a constructive and just manner through democratic structures and relationships (Cremin et al., 2012). The centrality of democratic processes for conflict transformation was evident in El-Bushra and Smith's (2016) study of peacebuilding in Uganda. They noted the importance of participants having the opportunity to reflect on issues, debate, and assert their agency on topics related to

curricula, training, and leadership. This message is echoed in Davies's (2006) Birmingham International Security Index, where she argues for greater engagement in positive conflict in the classroom through active teaching about conflict at the local, national, and global levels in order to prepare young people to develop the skills and agency to challenge and hold their governments accountable. Bickmore (2014) refers to this as active democratic peacebuilding and strongly advocates for learners to engage in discussions on controversial issues to develop the capacity for "constructive engagement with unfamiliar 'Others' and their conflicting perspectives" (p. 574).

In order to promote critical thinking and conflict resolution among young people, education systems must first acknowledge cultural and structural forms of violence. Failing to do so is in itself a form of cultural violence or, as Davies (2010) and Salmi (2000) call it, violence by omission. The importance of acknowledgment and redressing past wrongs for education to transform conflict is evident in Novelli et al. (2017) 4Rs framework (recognition, redistribution, representation, and reconciliation) for education's contribution to sustainable peacebuilding. Of particular relevance for curriculum and textbooks is the fourth R, which focuses on how education addresses economic, cultural, and political inequity both historically and in the present day (Novelli et al., 2017). Crucial to reconciliation is the role of education in negotiating and teaching about the past with an eye to historic memory, truth and reparations, transitional justice, and bringing communities together (Novelli et al., 2017). The content of textbooks must meaningfully reference past and current injustices and inequities and ways for the future so that teachers can explicitly teach about these difficult topics. Furthermore, reconciliation is contingent on recognizing cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity through the curriculum (Novelli et al., 2017).

Textbooks with content that is relevant to societal concerns and strong pedagogy are central to peacebuilding (Smart et al., 2020). Strong pedagogy provides guidance for teachers and students to develop social and emotional skills, such as respect for the Other, empathy, cooperation, conflict resolution, and reconciliation (Smart et al., 2020). Further, textbooks can transform conflict when their development, distribution, and application adopt a positive peace approach, whereby the direct and indirect causes of structural and cultural violence are addressed through participation, decentralization, and joint decision-making. However, given that education is one part of a larger social agenda for peacebuilding and studies have shown that textbooks, and education more broadly, often fail to transform conflict, the role of textbooks as a transformer of conflict is best approached from an incremental perspective (Kovinthan Levi, 2021; Maclure, 2017). An incremental perspective also brings to light the way that the transformer role frequently intersects with both the accomplice and victim roles. The overlap between the two roles is apparent in debates and resistance to textbook revision, which can be viewed as a barrier to peacebuilding (accomplice role), or a starting point of the democratic processes required for transformation. For example, after analyzing the different forms of resistance to textbook revision in Cyprus, Christodoulou (2018) argues that examination or deconstruction of the discourse surrounding resistance to textbook revisions is a means to understand