

# Linguistic Features Constructing Notions of Peace: A Descriptive Study of English and Filipino Language Textbooks

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-Language is one of the critical aspects of school textbooks, as it may lend itself to either a pro-peace or a pro-violence treatment. As the primary media of school textbooks, languages possess distinct features that may be used as powerful and effective tools in the construction and conveyance of universal and community-specific values such as peace. Exploring the features of language can help clarify its critical role in constructing and promoting peace. However, there is a dearth of studies on linguistic features and how they construct certain notions of peace. Hence, the present qualitative study explores the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino used by textbook writers, as well as the notions of peace constructed by these linguistic features in language textbooks. The study employs Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis, with corpus coding as the primary approach in analysing eight junior high school English and Filipino language textbooks. In-depth analyses of lexical data reveal that morphological (e.g., compound words, the suffix -ation and negative prefixes), syntactic (e.g., lexical categories, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, as well as phrases such as noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases and adverb phrases) and semantic (e.g., synonyms, antonyms and metaphors) features of English and Filipino are employed by textbook writers to discursively construct notions of peace. Among the various notions of peace in language textbooks, self-respect, respect for others, social responsibility and justice are the most prevalent.

**Keywords:** linguistic features, notions of peace, language textbooks, junior high school

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## Jezikovne prvine, ki pomagajo konstruirati pojme, povezane s konceptom miru: opisna študija učbenikov za angleški in filipinski jezik

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≂ Jezik je eden ključnih elementov šolskih učbenikov, saj se lahko uporabi za spodbujanje miru in nasilja. Jeziki kot primarni mediji sporočanja v šolskih učbenikih sledijo svojim zakonitostim ter služijo oblikovanju in posredovanju univerzalnih vrednot, kot je mir, pa tudi vrednot, značilnih za posamezno skupnost. Prek raziskovanja jezika in njegovih prvin lahko lažje razumemo, kako jezik pomaga konstruirati in spodbujati mir, vendar pa je raziskav o tem zelo malo. Ta kvalitativna študija raziskuje oblikoslovne, skladenjske in pomenoslovne prvine, uporabljene pri konstruiranju koncepta miru, v učbenikih za angleški in filipinski jezik. Pod drobnogled smo vzeli osem učbenikov za tretje triletje osnovne šole in pri tem uporabili najprej Geejevo (2011) diskurzivno analizo, čemur je sledilo kodiranje leksikalnih podatkov. Podrobnejša razčlemba pokaže, da angleški in filipinski avtorji učbenikov za diskurzivno oblikovanje pojmov, povezanih s konceptom miru, uporabljajo različne jezikovne prvine, in sicer: oblikoslovne (npr. tvorjenke, končnica *-ation* in nikalne predpone), skladenjske (npr. leksikalne kategorije, kot so: samostalniki, glagoli, pridevniki in prislovi, ter besedne zveze, kot so: samostalniške, glagolske, pridevniške in prislovne zveze) in pomenoslovne (npr. sopomenke, protipomenke in metafore). Med različnimi pojmi, povezanimi s konceptom miru, so v analiziranih učbenikih najbolj razširjeni: samo-spoštovanje, spoštovanje drugih, družbena odgovornost in pravičnost.

**Ključne besede:** jezikovne prvine; pojmi, povezani s konceptom miru; učbeniki za angleški in filipinski jezik; tretje triletje osnovne šole

## Introduction

Peace is undeniably one of the critical elements that influence the continued existence of human beings (Zembylas et al., 2011). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises that peace is necessary for sustainable development, and that sustainable development is indispensable for peace (Zuber, 2016). As one of the targets for SDG 16, peace is closely intertwined with other sustainable development goals (SDGs). Without peace, achieving other SDGs can be very difficult or even impossible (Mediators Beyond Borders, 2019).

As one of the SDGs, peace is a construct that is nurtured in people's minds alongside war (Mukhopadhyay, 2005). The relationship between peace and war is enshrined in UNESCO's constitution, which states that because wars commence in people's minds, it is in people's minds that the defences of peace should be created (Mukhopadhyay, 2005). Deconstructing notions of war from people's minds first requires building the defences of peace in their minds. One of the most likely areas where concepts of war might be initially deconstructed in people's minds is the textbook, as it is one of the primary sites where war and violence are formed and instilled in young minds. The textbook is likewise an ideal location for establishing defences of peace, as it contains a place for agency from which opposition to war and violence may be waged (Naseem, 2007).

A textbook is a teaching-learning resource containing a series of texts and images aimed at certain educational outcomes (UNESCO, 2005). It is an essential source of knowledge and a factor in educational research that elucidates differences in students' knowledge across various levels (Oakes & Saunders, 2004; Pavešić & Cankar, 2022). A textbook is an indispensable component of any language teaching programme, as its use satisfies both teachers' and learners' expectations (Mishan, 2021; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2022). Although the textbook's main purpose is to transmit knowledge, values and skills, it still has its own potential merits and demerits (UNESCO, 2005). According to Georgescu and Bernard (2007), emphasising human beings' commonalities, introducing content related to learners' experiences and environments, and diffusing peace notions are potential advantages of using a textbook. On the contrary, biases, labelling, racism and inappropriate language use are among the textbook's latent disadvantages, which may cause obstacles in cultivating notions of peace among students who use a textbook containing these problems. Furthermore, intensive studies have been conducted focusing on how textbook content has evolved to reflect changing values of societies (Kovač & Mohar, 2022).

As an educational resource, a textbook mainly uses language, which has been defined as an interpretation of reality, a mythical and symbolic construct,

a setting for rational life, an expression of community identities, and a territory for communication and dialogue (Wenden, 2003). As critical linguists argue, language is not a neutral medium for describing realities (van Dijk, 1993; Hodge & Kress, 1993; Fairclough, 1989); rather, language actively forms and provides meanings to human experiences, also affecting actual practices and the way people view concepts, people, objects and events (Hook, 1994). Human realities are not fixedly defined, but must be dynamically interpreted, while language grows as an outcome and agent of its understanding; thus, language has the power to form human consciousness (Halliday, 1990).

The power of language to shape human consciousness is grounded on the premise that certain linguistic features can be employed to form ideologies, which are then used to define, legitimise or validate thoughts and behaviours in areas where they can be properly applied (Wenden, 2003). With this, ideologies indirectly influence how human beings create and understand social practices. This indirect role of ideologies highlights the importance of recognising implicit models of interpretation, as awareness is essential for successful pre-emptive diplomacy and peacebuilding, as well as peacekeeping (Verschueren, 1994; Wenden, 2003). Since ideologies can be conveyed in speech and writing, and because discourses contribute to constructing and validating existing ideologies, it is imperative to critically analyse the ideologies challenging the attainment of a culture of peace. Although language can contribute implicitly to social practices that might result in violence, it has become a neglected variable in investigating the challenges that might hinder the attainment of a comprehensive peace in previous decades (Wenden, 2003).

The few studies that have examined and analysed the inclusion of notions of peace in language textbooks include Wulandari and Murdiono (2018) who analyzed Pancasila and civic education textbooks, Gebregorgis (2016) who investigated English language textbooks, and Chavhan (2014) who studied Marathi language textbooks. However, there is no existing study that thoroughly investigates how linguistic features are employed by textbook writers to construct notions of peace and which notions of peace are promoted. Thus, the present study has been conducted to fill the gap in research on the vital role of language in creating notions of peace in print educational materials like language textbooks.

This qualitative study examines and analyses the features of English and Filipino employed by textbook writers and the notions of peace constructed by these linguistic features in junior high school language textbooks in the Philippines. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino are employed by textbook writers when constructing notions of

peace in junior high school language textbooks?

2. What notions of peace have been constructed by these morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino in language textbooks?

## Method

### Research design

This is a qualitative-descriptive study, employing Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis (DA) as the main approach to exploring textbook writers' use of features of English and Filipino in constructing notions of peace. First introduced by Zellig Harris in 1952, DA is a process that goes beyond examining linguistic structures and establishes a deeper context regarding the use of language in engaging with actions and shaping social identities (Gee, 2011). DA is a critical reading of actual language use, together with multimodal resources to scrutinise its structures and attach meanings (Waring, 2018). Since language textbooks are educational texts that contain various discursive meanings through verbal and nonverbal language, DA can be appropriately used as it explores the structures and expressions of the languages employed in these texts. Moreover, DA examines linguistic content and language use in the text to uncover how meanings are expressed across various social milieus (Paltridge, 2012).

### Corpora of the study

Eight junior high school language textbooks were utilised in this study: four English and four Filipino language textbooks. These textbooks were carefully chosen based on the following inclusion criteria: 1) the textbooks have been used in the teaching and learning of competencies in English and Filipino subjects, and 2) they have been approved for use as instructional support materials in the junior high school curriculum (grades 7–10) of the Department of Education in the Philippines. The selected language textbooks were examined using Forster's (1994) Document Analysis Model, which comprises the following preliminary stages prior to data analysis: (1) accessing the documents, (2) checking the authenticity of the documents, and (3) making sense of the documents (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Following this model, the researchers first accessed the language textbooks from a public junior high school, checked their originality, and then provided general descriptions of the textbooks before properly coding them for ethical purposes. A total of 3,891 texts, consisting of

2,127 words, 265 phrases, 1,139 sentences and 360 paragraphs from the eight language textbooks were examined and analysed to determine the linguistic features used and the specific notions of peace they construct.

### **Data analysis**

Corpus coding was used to analyse the linguistic features used by textbook writers and how these features contribute to the construction of notions of peace. Only the lexical data were considered for in-depth analyses in the study. *A priori* codes were initially developed and employed to categorise the linguistic features and the corresponding notions of peace. The identification of the linguistic features of English and Filipino was guided by Gomes de Matos's (2000) Peace Linguistics theory, which consists of morphological (e.g., compound words, reduplication, suffixes and prefixes), syntactic (e.g., lexical categories, such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections, as well as phrases such as noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, adverb phrases and prepositional phrases) and semantic features (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, metaphors, meronyms and hyponyms). In addition, the determination of notions of peace was guided by Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace's (2010) list comprising the following 12 values: self-respect, respect for others, respect for life, gender equality, compassion, global concern, ecological concern, cooperation, tolerance, justice, social responsibility and positive vision.

## **Results**

### **Morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino that construct notions of peace in language textbooks**

The first level of analysis involved identification of the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino employed by textbook writers to construct notions of peace. Table 1 presents the frequency distribution of these features. In the following paragraphs, each of the features will be discussed in detail.

**Table 1**

*Frequency distribution of the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino that construct notions of peace*

Language Features	Frequency
<i>A. Morphological Features</i>	
1. Compound Words	177
2. Suffix <i>-ation</i>	14
3. Negative Prefixes	6
<i>B. Syntactic Features</i>	
1. Lexical Categories	
a. Nouns	872
b. Verbs	726
c. Adjectives	399
d. Adverbs	130
2. Phrases	
a. Noun Phrases	35
b. Verb Phrases	68
c. Adjective Phrases	23
d. Adverb Phrases	16
<i>C. Semantic Features</i>	
1. Synonyms	38
2. Antonyms	23
3. Metaphors	4

### **Morphological features of English and Filipino that construct notions of peace**

Morphological features refer to the structure and form of words, including their prefixes, suffixes and root words (O'Grady & de Guzman, 2016). The analysis revealed that compound words, the suffix *-ation* and negative prefixes were the morphological features of English and Filipino used by textbook writers in constructing notions of peace in language textbooks.

- Among these features, *compound words* were the most prevalent, as they occurred 177 times in the language textbooks. Examples from the English language textbooks included *human equality* (Tb1, p. 319), *social justice* (Tb3, p. 234), *social tolerance* (Tb3, p. 153), *gender equality* (Tb3, p. 182) and *initiative collaboration* (Tb4, p. 188). In the Filipino language textbooks, examples include *kababaang-loob* [humility] (Tb5, p. 248),

*pagbibigay-pugay* [giving tribute] (Tb6, p. 171), *kasunduang pangkayapayaan* [peace agreement] and *bigyang-katarungan* [giving justice] (Tb8, p. 308).

- The suffix *-ation* followed with 14 occurrences. Examples from the English language textbooks only comprised *environmental preservation* (Tb3, p. 189), *peace negotiation* (Tb4, p. 128), *cultural preservation* (Tb1, p. 90), *multicultural appreciation* (Tb3, p. 101) and *ecological conservation* (Tb3, p. 329).
- Lastly, *negative prefixes*, such as *non-* and *anti-*, occurred six times exclusively in the English language textbooks. Examples include *nonviolent* (Tb2, p. 349), *nonprejudice* (Tb3, p. 309) and *anti-apartheid* (Tb2, p. 349).

### **Syntactic features of English and Filipino that construct notions of peace**

Syntactic features pertain to the elements that ascertain the structure and organisation of sentences (O'Grady & de Guzman, 2016). The analysis disclosed that lexical categories and phrases were the primary syntactic features of English and Filipino employed by textbook writers in building notions of peace in language textbooks.

- Among the lexical categories, *nouns* were the most prevalent, occurring 872 times in the language textbooks examined. Examples from the English language textbooks included *reconciliation* (Tb1, p. 6), *equality* (Tb1, p. 311), *forgiveness* (Tb2, p. 20) and *compassion* (Tb3, p. 198). In the Filipino language textbooks, examples included *pagtutulungan* [co-operation] (Tb5, p. 41), *katapatan* [loyalty] (Tb6, p. 108), *pag-ibig* [love] (Tb6, p. 196) and *hustisya* [justice] (Tb8, p. 89).
- *Verbs* followed closely, with 726 occurrences. Examples in the English language textbooks included *help* (Tb1, p. 152), *forgive* (Tb2, p. 18), *empathise* (Tb3, p. 340) and *apologise* (Tb4, p. 135). In the Filipino language textbooks, verbs such as *nagtulang-tulong* [helped] (Tb5, p. 13), *mahalin* [to love] (Tb5, p. 78), *nagbibigayan* [giving] (Tb6, p. 4) and *nagkasundo* [reconciled] (Tb7, p. 153) were common.
- *Adjectives* occurred 399 times. In the English language textbooks, examples included *polite* and *respectful* (Tb1, p. 69), *humble* (Tb2, p. 94), *generous* (Tb2, p. 94), *compassionate* (Tb3, p. 210), and *helpful* and *kind* (Tb4, p. 266), while *mapagkalinga* [caring] (Tb5, p. 11), *mapagbigay* [generous] (Tb5, p. 82) and *magkakapantay* [equal] (Tb6, p. 196) were found in the Filipino language textbooks.

- *Adverbs* appeared 130 times in the language textbooks. Examples from the English language textbooks were *courteously* (Tb1, p. 167), *humbly* (Tb1, p. 177), *patiently* (Tb3, p. 56) and *please* (Tb8, p. 288), while *mapayapa* [peacefully] (Tb6, p. 139), *tapat* [honestly] (Tb5, p. 79) and *po* (Tb5, p. 3), a variation of *opo* [yes] to signal respect, were identified in the Filipino language textbooks.
- Of the phrases, *verb phrases* were the most dominant, occurring 68 times. Examples from the English language textbooks included “*apologise to a person*” (Tb2, p. 81), “*Respecting unique identities and cultures*” (Tb4, p. 88), “*2. bonding with my friends*” (Tb3, p. 301), and “*Creating a pluralistic society*” (Tb4, p. 137), while “*Paghingi ng tawad sa isang taong nakasamaan ng loob*” [Asking for forgiveness from someone you have upset] (Tb6, p. 126) and “*3. Pagtulong at pagmamalasakit sa kapuwa*” [3. Helping and caring for others] (Tb5, p. 53) were found in the Filipino language textbooks.
- *Noun phrases* followed with 35 occurrences. Examples from the English language textbooks included “*I learned that forgiveness*” (Tb2, p. 14), “*the need to fulfil a responsibility*” (Tb2, p. 41), and “*2. People should be more tolerant of others*” (Tb3, p. 167), whereas “*3. Ang taong mapagkumbaba ay \_\_\_\_\_.*” [The humble person is \_\_\_\_\_.] (Tb5, p. 42) and “*3. Ang taong mapagbigay ay \_\_\_\_\_.*” [A generous person is \_\_\_\_\_.] (Tb5, p. 82) were found in the Filipino language textbooks.
- *Adjective phrases* appeared 23 times. Examples from the English language textbooks included “*peaceful conflict resolutions*” (Tb2, p. 206), and “*3. anti-racist movements*” (Tb2 p. 348), while “*3. Ang mapagkumbabang tao ay \_\_\_\_\_.*” [The humble person is \_\_\_\_\_.] (Tb5, p. 42) and “*3. Ang mapagbigay na tao ay \_\_\_\_\_.*” [A generous person is \_\_\_\_\_.] (Tb5, p. 82) were found in the Filipino language textbooks.
- Finally, *adverb phrases* occurred 16 times. Examples from the English language textbooks included “*politely and courteously*” (Tb3, p. 104) and “*3. Swiftly dispenses justice*” (Tb2, p. 105), whereas “*pagtugon sa kaguluan nang mapayapa*” [resolving conflicts peacefully] (Tb5, p. 205) and “*pagsasabi nang tapat sa iba*” [telling honestly to others] (Tb5, p. 79) were found in the Filipino language textbooks.

### Semantic features of English and Filipino that construct notions of peace

Semantic features relate to the meanings or content of words and phrases

in a language (O'Grady & de Guzman, 2016). The present analysis showed that synonyms, antonyms and metaphors were the semantic features of English and Filipino utilised by textbook writers in building notions of peace in language textbooks.

- *Synonyms* were the most common semantic features, as they occurred 38 times. Examples from the English language textbooks comprised *polite* and *respectful* (Tb2, p. 209), *pardon* and *forgiveness* (Tb1, p. 105), *hope* and *optimism* (Tb1, p. 218), *devotion* and *loyalty* (Tb3, p. 208), and *compassion* and *mercy* (Tb3, p. 211). In the Filipino language textbooks, examples included *niliyag* [cherished] and *minamahal* [loved] (Tb5, p. 257), *sinisinta* [appreciated] and *iniibig* [loved] (Tb6, p. 315), *pag-ibig* [love] and *pagmamahal* [love] (Tb8, p. 311), and *kawang-gawa* [charity] and *pagtulong* [help/assistance].
- *Antonyms* followed with 23 occurrences. Examples from the English language textbooks included *merciful* and *merciless* (Tb3, p. 211), *hopeful* and *pessimistic* (Tb3, p. 147), *poor* and *rich* (Tb3, p. 368), *truth* and *lies* (Tb4, p. 220), and *agreements* and *disagreements* (Tb4, p. 328). Examples from the Filipino language textbooks included *sinisinta* [appreciated] and *kinamumuhian* [hated] (Tb6, p. 326), *mangamkam* [to embezzle] and *magbigay* [to give] (Tb7, p. 105), *pesimista* [pessimistic] and *optimista* [optimistic] (Tb8, p. 39), and *ganid* [greedy] and *mapagbigay* [generous] (Tb4, p. 88).
- *Metaphors* were the least frequent, with only four instances. An example from an English language textbook is the sentence “*Friends are riches to treasure.*” (Tb1, p. 152), which suggests that friends may be like riches that you can keep or treasure and rely on, especially in times of need. From a Filipino language textbook, the phrase “*Aralin 1. Katapatan: Susi sa Samahang Pangmatagalang* [Lesson 1: Loyalty: The Key to Long-Lasting Relationships] (Tb6, p. 108) compares *katapatan* [loyalty] and *susi* [key], emphasising that loyalty is a critical ingredient in long-lasting relationships.

### **Notions of peace constructed by the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino in the language textbooks**

The second level of analysis focused on identifying the notions of peace constructed by the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino used by textbook writers in language textbooks. Notions of peace

refer to peace values-attitudes and principles that must be cultivated among students to promote a culture of peace (Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2010). Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of these notions of peace.

**Table 2**

*Frequency distribution of notions of peace constructed and promoted by the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of English and Filipino*

Notions of Peace	Frequency
1. Self-Respect	414
2. Respect for Others	272
3. Social Responsibility	263
4. Justice	185
5. Ecological Concern	179
6. Cooperation	170
7. Tolerance	148
8. Respect for Life	145
9. Compassion	113
10. Positive Vision	103
11. Gender Equality	55
12. Global Concern	17

- *Self-respect* was the most prevalent notion of peace, as it occurred 414 times. Examples of texts depicting self-respect in the English and Filipino language textbooks respectively were: “1. *Would you do something that you know would be bad for you just because your friends tell you to do it or just so you can impress them?*” (Tb2, p. 22) and “*Hindi dapat na ikahiya ang kalagayan sa buhay bagkus kailangang magsumikap nang makamtan ang tagumpay.*” [One should not be ashamed of one's life situation; instead, one must strive to achieve success.] (Tb6, p. 2).
- Next to self-respect was *respect for others*, which occurred 272 times in the language textbooks. Sample texts conveying this notion included: “*We respect all cultures.*” (Tb1, p. 264) and “*Ang paggalang sa opinyon ng iba ay paggalang sa karapatang pantao nila.*” [Respecting the opinions of others is respecting their human rights.] (Tb5, p. 160).
- *Social responsibility* followed closely with 263 instances. Examples of texts reflecting this value included: “*Everyone should contribute to the betterment of society.*” (Tb4, p. 66) and “*6. Paano matitiyak ang paggalang sa mga karapatang pantao at pagkakapantay-pantay sa ating lipunan? Paano ka*

- *makapag-aambag dito?*” [How can we ensure respect for human rights and equality in our society? How can you contribute to this?] (Tb10, p. 211).
- *Justice* came next with 185 cases. Sample texts expressing this value included: “3. *The freedom to vote, the right to education, and expressing one's opinion as a privilege are all enjoyed in a democratic society.*” (Tb3, p. 249) and “*Ang mga tao'y magkakatulad sa dignidad at mga karapatan. Hindi dahilan ang pagkakaiba ng lahi, kasarian, antas panlipunan, o katungkulan upang abusuhin ng isa ang isa pa.*” [People are equal in dignity and rights. Differences in race, gender, social status or role are not reasons to abuse one another.] (Tb6, p. 209).
- Next to justice was *ecological concern*, which occurred 179 times. Examples of texts included: “5. *We have to be serious in addressing our garbage problem.*” (Tb1, p. 312). and “8. *Paano inaabuso ng tao ang kalikasan? Paano kaya ito mapangangalagaan?*” [How does man abuse nature? How can it be preserved?] (Tb8, p. 89).
- *Cooperation* followed closely with 170 instances. Sample texts reflecting this notion included: “*We work together for we know that is the only path to peace.*” (Tb2, p. 152) and “*Ang pagtutulungan ng magpapamilya ay lubhang mahalaga upang maitaguyod ang kanilang pangangailangan.*” [The cooperation of family members is very important to meet their needs.] (Tb6, p. 92).
- *Tolerance* came next with 148 instances. Examples of texts showing this value included: “*We have different beliefs, but it does not mean that we cannot be friends.*” (Tb2, p. 151) and “*Sa anumang pagpapasiya, tinig ng bawat tao ay dapat bigyang-pansin.*” [In any decision, the voice of each person should be given attention.] (Tb5, p. 195).
- *Respect for life* followed closely with 145 cases. Sample texts expressing respect for life included: “*Everybody needs to forgive and to be forgiven.*” (Tb2, p. 18) and “*Anumang digmaan ay may katapusan kung handang mag-usap-usap ang mga naglalaban.*” [Any war has an end if the warring parties are willing to talk.] (Tb5, p. 149).
- *Compassion* followed with 113 instances. Examples of texts depicting compassion included: “1. *We should remember to help others who are in need.*” (Tb1, p. 152) and “*Ang pagmamalasakit at kabutihang-loob sa kapuwa ay isinasagawa nang walang hinihintay na kapalit.*” [Caring for others and showing kindness is done without expecting anything in return.] (Tb7, p. 2).
- *Positive vision* came next, occurring 103 times in the language textbooks. Sample texts reflecting positive vision included: “*Although everyone*

*is different, there is still hope for unity and tolerance.”* (Tb3, p. 167). and “*Anuman ang pagsubok na kinakaharap, ito ay malalagpasan ng pusong may determinasyon.*” [Whatever challenge is faced, it can be overcome by a heart with determination.] (Tb6, p. 323).

- *Gender equality* came next with 55 cases. Examples of texts reflecting this value included: “*Men and women are equal and they have the same rights, but they have differences.*” (Tb1, p. 318) and “*Walang kasarian na nakakahigit sa isa. Kahit ang mga bagay na inaakalang kaya lamang gawin ng lalaki ay magagawa rin ng babae sa sarili niyang paraan.*” [No gender is superior to another. Even things that are thought to be only achievable by men can also be done by women in their own way.] (Tb6, p. 139).
- *Global concern* was the least prevalent notion of peace, as it occurred only 17 times in the language textbooks. Sample texts depicting this value included: “*4. We need to keep our diplomatic relations to avoid aggressions with other countries.*” (Tb3, p. 365) and “*Hindi lamang malalaking bansa ang dapat magtakda ng takbo ng daigdig. Maging ang maliliit na bansa ay maaaring maging bahagi nito sa pamamagitan ng kanilang taliwanag at kakayahahan.*” [Not only big countries should dictate the course of the world. Even small countries can be part of it through their intelligence and capability.] (Tb8, p. 60).

From the analysed data, it can be concluded that textbook writers employed various linguistic features in the discursive construction of notions of peace. Morphologically, textbook writers used compound words, the suffix *-ation* and negative prefixes. Syntactically, they utilised lexical categories, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, as well as phrases, such noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases and adverb phrases. Semantically, textbook writers employed synonyms, antonyms and metaphors. Consequently, the use of these linguistic features constructed different notions of peace, with self-respect, respect for others, social responsibility and justice being the most dominant.

## Discussion

Considering the results, it can be reasonably deduced that the textbook writers of the selected English and Filipino language textbooks employed various linguistic features to construct notions of peace. In-depth analyses revealed the use of certain morphological, syntactic and semantic features in creating notions of peace. These findings corroborate the belief that all features of a

language can be manipulated for a particular purpose, either positively or negatively (Van Dijk, 1995; Roloff Rothman & Sanderson, 2018). This aligns with Gay's (1998) claim that language, as an institution, can extend psychological rather physical violence, with linguistic violence occurring when individuals are hurt psychologically or socially hurt through words. Furthermore, the findings support Freidrich's (2012) idea that language can be used as an instrument of harm, exclusion, destruction and dehumanisation, or conversely, as an instrument of help, inclusion, construction and humanisation; in other words, language is a potential tool for peacebuilding.

By using these linguistic features, textbook writers discursively construct various notions of peace in English and Filipino language textbooks. Such results are well supported by a study by Wulandari and Murdiono (2018), which also found that self-respect, respect for others, respect for life, gender equality, compassion, ecological concern, tolerance, justice, cooperation, social responsibility, global concern and positive vision were contained in Pancasila and civic education textbooks. In contrast, Gebregeorgis (2016) found only a limited set of peace-related notions – self-respect, tolerance, compassion, social responsibility, respect for life, and ecological concern – in the content and activities of an English textbook. Similarly, Chavlan (2014) observed that notions of peace, such as gender equality, respect for others, social justice, cooperation, social responsibility and tolerance, were reflected in both positive and negative directions in Marathi Language Standard IX and X of SSC Board textbooks.

The foregoing findings likewise confirm that textbooks, as cultural artifacts, can replicate not only society's power relations, but also its value systems; they depict the sociopolitical context of the times where they are published, and are loaded with particular ideologies and values (Kubota, 2001; Grant & Wong, 2018). Textbooks are similarly viewed as indicators of hegemonic or dominant political knowledge in society, as their content is largely influenced by political elites, especially by individuals who are in control of government or the state (Ingrao, 2009). Furthermore, they are perceived by students as factual and authoritative, playing a critical role in forming the beliefs, norms and values prevailing in a society (Bar-Tal, 1998).

Finally, the present study concludes that with the use of various notions of peace implemented through morphological, syntactic and semantic features, language textbooks prove to be essential resources for educational purposes, highlighting the importance of peace as a positive human value. From the same findings, it can be generally inferred that just like school magazines, language textbooks, as instructional support materials, also mirror the *zeitgeist*, which, according to Lemut Bajec (2024b), reflects the values and ideologies that are

essential for a particular community or society at a particular time. Moreover, language textbooks may serve as a platform for political education, where the values and ideologies of the political system are permeated and reflected in the educational setting for the purpose of promoting both political and economic ideologies, especially to young learners. Furthermore, since language textbooks can be a critical resource in intercultural education, they must, as Lemut Bajec (2024a) argues, promote respect, understanding and solidarity in order to guarantee the empowerment of individuals who can become social catalysts in today's culturally diverse world.

## Conclusion

Just like academic subjects, language textbooks can be home to peace values, as they may integrate and convey notions of peace explicitly or implicitly. They can also be powerful media not only in transmitting essential content knowledge and skills, but in fostering universal and community-specific values like peace. Being primary teaching-learning resources, language textbooks can likewise be used as effective "tools for peace", as they may inherently possess and deliver peace value-laden content, activities and examples in a variety of ways. In particular, English and Filipino, being the primary media used in the language textbooks examined, have been found to discursively construct notions of peace. Morphological (e.g., compound words, the suffix *-ation* and negative prefixes), syntactic (e.g., lexical categories and phrases) and semantic (e.g., metaphors, synonyms and antonyms) features of English and Filipino are employed by textbook writers in creating notions of peace. Moreover, these linguistic features discursively construct notions of peace in English and Filipino language textbooks, with self-respect, respect for others, social responsibility and justice being the most dominant themes.

The present research indicates that language textbooks can serve as powerful tools in the construction and promotion of peace by purposely incorporating and highlighting the morphological, syntactic and semantic features of the languages they employ. Pedagogically, this suggests the importance of designing instructional materials, especially language textbooks, that emphasise peace-oriented language use to encourage students to critically engage with how linguistic features construct notions of peace. Teachers can foster peace-focused pedagogy by using peace-evoking instructional materials and allowing students to analyse these linguistic features and their role in building notions of peace. Likewise, curriculum developers should integrate peace-oriented lessons, activities and resources into school curricula to further this goal.

The study does, however, have several limitations. First, the eight language textbooks analysed as corpora in the study limit the generalisability of the results. It is suggested that more English and Filipino language textbooks should be considered for analysis in order to obtain more conclusive results. Second, since there is a dearth of studies on the critical role of language in peacebuilding, it is recommended that intensive studies be undertaken to explore deeply how both foreign and indigenous languages in Filipino private junior high school textbooks, as well as public and private elementary and tertiary school textbooks, can be utilised in the discursive construction of notions of peace. Lastly, considering the indispensability of textbooks in building and promoting peace, it is suggested that government agencies such as the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education, along with schools, publishing companies and textbook writers, ensure that all future school textbooks are peace-focused and promote peace.

### **Ethical statement**

The research did not access any raw data, nor did it involve human and animal subjects. Consequently, no ethical approval was necessary.

### **Disclosure statement**

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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