Sri Lankan teachers as agents of peace

Perceptions and actions of formal secondary school teachers within the larger policy and governance framework of post-conflict Sri Lanka

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The first teacher

You are
The first teacher
Awaken the conscience
On rhythm of the Earth
Light up the minds
To demystified the knowledge.

You are
The great thinker
Planted seeds of truth
On the dried soil
In search of a road
for generations.

You are
The great explorer
Walking the walk
To expose the world
As a full moon
With fruits of arts.

You are
The beloved teacher
Spreads the hands
With essence of love
Look forward to the kids
Fly away from the nest.

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# List of acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>2NL</td>
<td>Second national language</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEG</td>
<td>Citizenship Education and Governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education For All</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESDFP</td>
<td>Education Sector Development Framework and Program</td>
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<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
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<tr>
<td>JVP</td>
<td>Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCCE</td>
<td>Life Competencies and Civic Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTTE</td>
<td>Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>NCoE</td>
<td>National Colleges of Education</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>National peace council</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Education Commission</td>
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<td>NIE</td>
<td>National Institute of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PGDE</td>
<td>Post-Graduate Diploma in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCPEU</td>
<td>Social Cohesion and Peace Education Unit (within MoE)</td>
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<td>SJP</td>
<td>Social Justice Pedagogy</td>
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<td>SRA</td>
<td>Strategic-Relational Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>Teacher Centres</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UoC</td>
<td>University of Colombo</td>
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Acknowledgement

During the entire process from the first vague ideas for possible research topics to the final editing of my master thesis many people have supported me. First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the academic guidance of my supervisor drs. Mieke Lopes Cardozo, whose elaborate work on peace education in Sri Lanka inspired me to write this thesis. She gave me insightful academic advice, suggestions and comments that have guided me where needed, while at the same time giving me considerable freedom during the research process, which encouraged me to discover my own strengths and weaknesses as a researcher.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

‘If we are to teach real peace in the world we shall have to begin with children’ Mahatma Ghandi

Let me start this thesis by sharing one experience of my three-month field research in Sri Lanka from July to October 2011. During the school holiday, I accompanied an education official to a school in the Mannar peninsula, which is a predominantly Tamil area located in the North-West of Sri Lanka. While a few years ago this area was still a restricted war zone, now people were rebuilding their homes and their lives and could finally move around the peninsula and the whole of Sri Lanka without restrictions through renewed bus connections. When I entered the school, which was still home to around a hundred internally displaced children, the bus with pupils from the Sinhalese South had just arrived. The coming two days would be dedicated to the interaction and sharing of experiences between 130 Tamil and Sinhalese pupils from grade ten and eleven. After the restricted interaction between the ethnic groups during the war, now each pupil was given the task to find a buddy from the other ethnicity to get to know one another with hands and feet, as both were speaking different languages. It was one of my most special experiences in Sri Lanka. At the first encounter the pupils seemed somewhat at unease, and although this new “friendship” remained somewhat unnatural and at times difficult, the same night the pupils were dancing, drumming and singing together on the beach in the light of an enormous campfire.

1.1. Aim and relevance

This personal experience illustrates a project initiated by a community-based non-governmental organization (NGO). At the same time, similar interethnic peace building initiatives are carried out by other NGO’s and the Ministry of Education (MoE) of Sri Lanka (MoE 2008; MoE et al 2010). These positive notions of peace building seem to reflect the wider sentiment in present-day Sri Lanka. In a newspaper article Perera (2011) noted that more than two years after the war officially ended...
between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sinhalese government, which dominated Sri Lanka for more than 25 years, the population yearns for a new and peaceful Sri Lanka.

The ethnicly driven conflict officially ended in May 2009. However, in countries emerging from ethnic conflict the pressing question remains how to address the often fragile state of peace, mainly since studies indicate that around 30 percent of ended conflicts relapse into war within five years (Höglund and Orjuela 2011a). To address conflicting ethnic relations, education reform has figured prominently in many peace building initiatives around the world, mainly since it is increasingly acknowledged that the wrong kind of education has the potential to aggravate tensions between different ethnic groups in society (Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Davies 2005a, 2005b, 2010; Vongalis-Macrow 2007). Along these lines, many argued that certain negative features within the education system in Sri Lanka fuelled the ethnic conflict in the past (MoE 2006a; Lopes Cardozo 2008; Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Colenso 2005). For instance, the ethnically segregated school structure where children from different ethnic groups and religions are educated separately, using their own language of instruction, has limited interethnic contact and tolerance (Lopes Cardozo, 2008).

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), teaching children how to live together peacefully, by recognizing the “other” and overcoming prejudice within the individual, between individuals and between communities, has been the main objective of peace education programs (Nicolai 2009). This objective seems inherently related to the concept of social justice, a perspective on peace building which might be highly relevant for countries emerging from ethnic conflict. To create an integrated and peaceful school environment in post-conflict Sri Lanka, an alternative mind-set is required: a new way of thinking that encourages critical reflection rather than passive acceptance, that includes rather than excludes, that ensures tolerance rather than prejudice, that promotes peaceful and just community change rather than violence, that stimulates democratic values rather than repression and that fosters inner peace and joyfulness rather than frustration. Along these lines, a critical pedagogy, or what I have termed social justice pedagogy (SJP) in this thesis, might be a valuable theoretical approach to analyse the negative face of education in post-conflict Sri Lanka in order to build towards a more positive and sustainable peace (Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Lopes Cardozo 2008; Said 2000; Giroux 1992; Davies, unpublished paper; Freire 1974; Bretheron et al 2003; UNESCO 2011; Howard 2003). Although education will most likely not build peace on its own, it might be an important step towards preparing the future generation for non-violence and a peaceful way of living together (Davies 2010).

In Sri Lanka, peace education, or more recent designations of social cohesion, character, value or citizenship education, seems very much alive. The formulation of a specific National Policy
on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions (national policy on ESCP) seems to illustrate a high engagement. Although peace education policy formulation reflects an important first step, ultimately teachers are the ones who have to implement peace in schools. However, within the literature less heed is given to teachers. Based on his experience in South Africa, Weldon (2010) argued that a teacher in a country emerging from ethnic conflict has to ‘signal a new society, with new values that stand in stark contrast with the old’ (353). In other words, the teacher in the wake of an ethnic conflict has to challenge the old exclusionary and biased values that might exist within the classroom and replace these by new “socially just” norms. Moreover, authors writing about SJP, as a form of critical pedagogy, define the teacher as a key actor of change (Giroux 2009; Cochran-Smith 2004; Howard 2003; Grant and Agosto 2008; Enns and Sinacore 2005). However, describing teachers is not an easy task. For instance, a teacher is not a tabula rasa, but through his or her own ethnic lens has experienced the conflict (Weldon 2010). Moreover, the strategies a teacher adopts in the teaching profession are not merely based on personal and professional experience and motivations, but are also to a certain extent influenced by the larger education governance framework, which may either facilitate or impede the ability of teachers to act as agents of change (Vongalis-Macrow 2007; Lopes Cardozo 2009; Giroux 2009). 

Along these lines, my research explores teacher agency for peace education in post-conflict Sri Lanka using a multilevel approach, whereby the concept of agency might be understood as the dialectical relationship between the context and the agent (Hay 2002). The context refers to peace education policies and governance in post-conflict Sri Lanka, whereas the agent who navigates within this broader context refers to formal secondary school teachers, whose practice might be both facilitated and impeded by the contextual framework.

My research does not cover the entire education system in Sri Lanka, but instead is focused on formal secondary education. The reasoning behind this choice is twofold. On the one hand, more than ninety percent of children in Sri Lanka attend the formal school system (MoE 2006a). Following the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Education For All (EFA) targets, formal education in Sri Lanka is well ahead of other developing countries and is marked by a high enrolment rate (Education International 2007; Department of Census and Statistics 2008). On the other hand, pupils attending secondary school might benefit from peace building initiatives within education. In Sri Lanka, children attending junior and senior secondary school are between 10 and 15 years old (MoE 2006a). Children in this age group are capable of critical reflection and can integrate the perspectives of the self and the other into a mutual perspective (Schaffer 1996), or in the words of Fosnot (2005) ‘others are to understand and be understood by’ (134). Thus, as secondary pupils can critically reflect on concepts of ethnicity, conflict and peace they might gain from peace education initiatives.
1.2. Research question and sub questions

To explore the multilevel concept of teacher agency for peace in Sri Lanka, and to analyse it through my theoretical lens of SJP, my thesis aims to answer the following research question:

**How can the agency, including the dialectical interplay between context and agent, of formal secondary school teachers for peace education in post-conflict Sri Lanka be understood, and can it be analysed through the theoretical lens of Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP)?**

In order to answer the research question, I focused on different levels of analysis during my research at fairly different stages in time. Before leaving for the field, I studied different theories related to my topic to get a more informed understanding of what kind of data I could encounter during field work in Sri Lanka. This helped me to formulate the research questions. However, this theoretical analysis was never set in stone, but rather functioned as a useful framework, which was changed and reshaped during the research process and was used to structure and critically analyse my research findings. Chapter 2 describes my theoretical framework and defines the conceptual scheme of my research, which represents the first steps from theory to practice.

The second phase of my research aimed to bridge the gap between theory and practice by developing my own research methodology, by choosing relevant research methods and by defining the number and type of locations and respondents. Especially with respect to the post-conflict context of Sri Lanka, this phase was important to consider research ethics and possible field work challenges. Hence, Chapter 3 defines my research methodology, methods, locations, respondents and ethical considerations and reflects on the challenges I encountered in the field. Chapter 4 defines the relevant contextual characteristics of Sri Lanka and combined different research stages, drawing from literature research, my field work period and the Sri Lanka Roundtable “Sri Lanka in the World; the World in Sri Lanka” in November 2011, which brought together many researchers conducting research on Sri Lanka.

The third phase of my research, during my field work in Sri Lanka, focused on the government’s approach towards peace education at the secondary school level in post-conflict Sri Lanka. In this phase I collected and critically analysed the peace education policy documents. Thus, Chapter 5 answers the following sub-question: **Against the background of the post-conflict context of Sri Lanka, how do the education policies aim to create peace through education and how does this relate to SJP? And how do the education policies define the role and in-service training of teachers?**

At the same time, my field work explored the perceptions of the different actors engaged in peace education governance and aimed to get a more informed understanding of the
implementation of the government’s approach of peace education in Sri Lanka. By adopting a broad definition of governance (explained in Chapter 2) this phase included not only education officials at national and more regional levels, but also actors from institutions, NGO’s, universities and peace education experts in order to develop a more critical understanding. Accordingly, Chapter 6 answers the following sub-questions: How do the education governance actors understand peace education? How do the education governance actors define the role of formal secondary school teachers in peace education? And how did the education governance actors implement peace education, more specifically the in-service training of teachers?

The final phase of my field work focused on the actual agents of peace education, the formal secondary school teachers. Against the backdrop of the contextual framework, which I explored in the previous stages of my field work, this phase explored the strategies of teachers to practice peace education at school level. By including the school, the principal and several lessons and pupils in my exploration I attempted to enrich my understanding. Thus, Chapter 7 answers the following sub-questions: How have the teacher respondents (in-service formal secondary school teachers) been made aware or trained in peace education? How do they understand and practice peace education? How do they perceive their own role, commitment and motivation with regard to peace education? And what are the challenges and requirements of the peace education practice put forward by the teacher respondents (and the education governance actors)? All data chapters (Chapter 5, 6 and 7) are critically analysed by means of the theoretical lens of SJP.

‘If we are peaceful, only then we can develop the country’
Female pupil from grade ten in a Sinhala-medium school

‘We need peace to develop the country’
Female pupil from grade ten in a Tamil-medium school
Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

This chapter will critically discuss a number of theories and argue their relevance for my research on teachers’ agency for peace in post-conflict Sri Lanka. The first section defines the concept of ethnicity. In the second part, I will portray the popular debate on the possible interrelations between education and ethnic conflict. The third part introduces my meta-theoretical framework of social justice and argues its importance for education within a country emerging from ethnic conflict. In the fourth section, I will extend the broader social justice lens to the pedagogical level, focusing on debates surrounding SJP, in which pedagogy refers to the arts and methods of instruction within the teaching profession. The fifth section portrays the dialectical relationship that exists between teachers and education governance, which together explains the concept of teacher agency. Finally, based on the theories, I will explain and visualize the main concepts that have guided my research.

2.1. The concept of ethnicity

Ethnic relations vastly define Sri Lankan society. Therefore, it seems important to clearly define how this thesis will approach the concept of ethnicity. Ethnicity is a rather new concept, appearing in the Oxford English Dictionary only in 1972 (Eriksen 2002). Lange (2011) defined ethnicity as ‘a community of people who define themselves or are defined by others as sharing a common culture and heritage, with language, religion, and race being the most common elements on which ethnicity is based’ (2). This thesis is inspired by the work of Eriksen (2002), who complements this definition by the notion of interaction. According to him, ‘ethnicity is an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction’ (12). In this manner, ethnicity creates a distinctive notion of Us versus Them and carries both a symbolic and political/organizational connotation.

2.2. The two faces of education

‘Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world’ Nelson Mandela

The UNICEF report “The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict” by Bush and Saltarelli (2000), challenged the previously held assumption that education is inevitably constructive for the development of human beings or a society, referred to as the positive face of education. The report emphasized that education can also drive a wedge between people, instead of uniting them. While this powerful weapon, called education, has the potential to increase tensions within society, ethnic tensions might as well boost the negative face of education (Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Davies 2010).
Within development research, the debate on this complex interplay between conflict and education has been on-going. Novelli and Lopes Cardozo (2008) linked this growing interest to the rise of internal armed conflicts around the world, especially in low-income countries, and the increase in civilian causalities.

To portray the interplay between ethnic conflict and education, Bush and Saltarelli (2000) named seven negative and conflict-provoking manifestations of education, which have been summarized in Table 1. For instance, when children learn in schools that their own ethnic background is superior to the ethnic background of other children, the school might foster ethnic intolerance, prejudice and injustice, thereby fuelling ethnic tensions. Then again, the destruction and closure of schools during war might be used as a physical or symbolic weapon of war, for instance, to discourage civilian support or punish rebellions by endangering the intellectual future of their families and ethnic group (Bush and Saltarelli 2000).

Table 1. Seven conflict-provoking manifestations of education

| 1. Unequal distribution of education by denying access to some, while privileging others |
| 2. Education as a means to cultural repression or ethnocide |
| 3. Closing and destroying schools as a physical or symbolic weapon of war |
| 4. Education serving the political goal of manipulating history |
| 5. Manipulation of textbooks by emphasizing war instead of peace or reinforcing ethnic stereotypes and bias |
| 6. Education as a means of decreasing self-worth or encouraging scapegoating |
| 7. A segregated education system to enforce inequality, low self-esteem and stereotypes |


In the more recent debate, Vongalis-Macrow (2007) underlined the risk of educators becoming pawns of political powers, while Davies argued (2010) that, within a conflict or post-conflict situation, one should be aware that education might reinforce the wider social and political structures of society that are part of the conflict. For instance, education might reinforce religious or ethnic tensions, might buttress grievances around unequal opportunities and political representation, or strengthen the social acceptance of violence (Davies 2010). However, Davies acknowledged that education can also create avenues to break the vicious cycle of ethnic conflict, by building resilience and opportunities for children and parents. Then again, as Perera (2004) argued, education will not build peace on its own, and will always require simultaneous change in society.
Therefore, if Sri Lanka intends to prevent its country from falling back into war and to seek genuine peace, it seems to be imperative that the negative features of education are recognized and sufficiently tackled. ‘Just as Frantz Fanon recognized the need to decolonize the minds of formerly colonized peoples, so it is essential that we recognize the need to de-segregate the minds of formerly segregated people’ (Bush and Saltarelli 2000: 16). In the wake of ethnic conflict, education is burdened with the difficult task to create a new society, based on new inclusive and open-minded values. Balancing between peace and war, education in a post-conflict setting has a precarious, but important task to fulfil (Nicolai 2009).

2.3. Social justice as meta-theoretical lens

In a country emerging from ethnic conflict the absence of violence is often seen as an indication of peace. However, an absence of personal or direct violence, defined as negative peace, does not seem to be sufficient to develop genuine and stable peace within a country. As Galtung (1969) argued, peace should be more than the mere absence of direct violence, but should include concepts such as equality and social justice in order to develop sustainable peace in a country, which he defined as positive peace. Especially, in the wake of ethnic conflict, creating social justice between the different ethnic groups in society might be imperative to create positive peace.

To define and address the negative face of education in Sri Lanka and to effectively educate children to learn to live together in peace, I believe a social justice perspective is of great relevance. Fraser described the concept of social justice within the larger realms of society (Fraser 1996, 2005, 2009), but her concept has proven to be just as relevant within the more confined field of education (Ayers et al 2009). Fraser (2005) defined parity participation as the ideal form of social justice, referring to a society where the social arrangements allow every individual to relate and interact with one another as equals. In my research in Sri Lanka, this ideal approach to social justice functioned as a meta-theoretical framework to recognize social injustice and explore the obstacles to social justice (Avendaño 2009). Fraser (2005) formulated social justice around three separate yet interconnected dimensions: the economic dimension of redistribution, the cultural dimension of recognition and the political dimension of representation, which I will now discuss in relation to education.

The first dimension of social justice, which Fraser (1996) termed redistribution, seeks a fair and equal distribution of social and economic resources. Enns and Sinacore (2005) suggested that distributive justice within education implies that all pupils are equally and fully included within a good-quality education system. The second dimension of social justice, which Fraser termed recognition, aims for a society were differences are celebrated, and assimilation to a dominant
ethnic, social or cultural group is no longer a requirement for equal respect (Fraser 2009). When translating this dimension to education, Enns and Sinacore (2005) underlined the need to reconsider the structure of education systems in which children are educated. The third dimension of social justice, political representation, aims for a society where equality is laid down in formal jurisdiction and in the rules of decision-making within all layers of governance. This legal framework defines ‘who is included and who is excluded from the circle of those entitled to a just distribution and reciprocal recognition’ (Fraser 2005: 75). Along these lines, Enns and Sinacore (2005) emphasized that unequal power relations within the education system should be addressed to ensure equal representation. In the following section, I will extend this notion of social justice within society and the education system to the pedagogical level.

2.4. Social justice pedagogy

The concept of social justice may not only serve as a valuable perspective on how to define and address injustice in society and within education, but following different debates in the literature on more critical forms of pedagogy, may also function as a valuable approach to teaching (Giroux 1992; Davies 2005a). Moreover, teaching for social justice can bring about citizens committed to social justice, which in turn may instigate social justice and peace within the larger society. On the other hand, a lack of social justice within the teaching-learning process might help to bring about social injustice or conflicts within the larger society.

It is precisely for this reason that critics (Will 2006; Mac Donald 1998; Stern 2009) argued that social justice in education is too much concerned with progressive and political ideas to the detriment of genuine knowledge. However, Giroux (2010) passionately conveyed in his speech that schools are political because ‘they decide, they intervene, they direct, they form, they produce, they engage, they set the setting for how students understand themselves, their relationship to other people and the future’ (Giroux 2010: 46 min). In agreement with Giroux, Tawil and Harley (2004) argued that “apolitical” education, defined by the Western EFA discourse, has largely failed to acknowledge that ethnic conflict, inherently tangible in any education practice, may shape education policy formation. With these authors, I believe that education in Sri Lanka cannot be viewed in isolation from its post-conflict context and hence is innately political.

To refute the “knowledge critique” of SJP, a research by Cochran-Smith et al. (2009a) concluded that student teachers trained in SJP focused on teaching content and skills, but at the same time included all pupils, by consciously considering their ethnic backgrounds. Also, as the Sri Lankan author Balasooriya (unpublished paper) remarked, ‘any lesson can be presented through the
peace approach with full justice to the subject contents and the objectives’ (7). Therefore, I am of the opinion that a greater emphasis on social justice within the classroom is essential to improve the prospects for interethnic peace. Hence, this section explores the theories related to SJP to reveal how teachers may teach for social justice and create a growing understanding of interethnic peace in the classroom. Table 2 gives an overview of the main criteria for SJP, as identified in the literature.

<table>
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<th>Table 2. Criteria for social justice pedagogy (SJP)</th>
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<td>2. Mutual understanding:</td>
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<td>3. Inner peace:</td>
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<td>4. Peace with nature:</td>
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<td>5. Civic consciousness:</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Integrative and whole-school approach:</td>
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<td>7. Democratic and peaceful teacher:</td>
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Giroux (1992) underlined the concept of critical reflection and argued the need for open and honest classroom conditions, where teachers and pupils can reflect critically on the concept of knowledge, how it is formed and changed by the interaction between the self, the other and the larger context. According to Bar-Tal (2002), this contributes to a realistic worldview. Furthermore, Giroux (1992) argued that pupils should be given texts that both affirm and question their own complex histories in relation to the histories of other groups in society. Davies (2005a) stressed the specific need to critically discuss conflict in school and accordingly defined ten teaching approaches,
ranging from a hate curriculum to encouraging pupils to actively challenge violence (see Figure 1). Furthermore, Howard (2003), in line with Cochran-Smith et al (2009b), suggested that, especially in the wake of ethnic conflict, teacher training should encourage teachers to critically reflect on the taboo topic of ethnicity within the classroom and should make teachers aware of which ethnic aspects they take into account or ignore to avoid reductive or stereotypical practices.

**Figure 1. Ten approaches to teaching about conflict**

![Diagram](image-url)

Weldon (2010) argued that in countries emerging from ethnic conflict critical reflection is needed to build *mutual understanding* between opposing ethnic groups, which might be linked to Fraser’s (2009) notion of recognition. From a postcolonial perspective, Said (2000) argued that teachers need to encourage pupils to challenge their stereotypical belief of the “other”, by teaching them that their ethnic identity is not set in stone, but rather is a socially constructed concept that can be shaped and changed over time. In teaching about other ethnicities he stressed the need to focus on the margins, where there is space for similarities, instead of emphasizing the differences. In this respect, Giroux (1992) referred to “border pedagogy”, which encourages pupils to re-territorialize their own ethnic borders to include, rather than to exclude the other, what Amartya Sen defined as the embracing of multiple and hybrid identities (UNESCO 2011). In the Sri Lankan context, Balasooriya (unpublished paper) argued that ‘one of the primary functions of peace education is to broaden the vision of pupils [as] narrow cultural, ethnic, religious, political and parochial views divide mankind leading to war’ (6).

Balasooriya (unpublished paper) divided peace education in three dimensions: social peace, *inner peace* and *peace with nature*. Whereas the above paragraph touched upon social peace, the dimensions of inner peace and peace with nature seem absent in the wider debate on SJP, but seem
to be highly relevant dimensions in Sri Lanka. Balasooriya defined inner peace as ‘harmony and peace with oneself, good health, absence of inner conflicts, joy, sense of freedom, insight, spiritual peace, feelings of kindness, compassion and content and appreciation of art’ (4). He argued that pupils need to be at peace with themselves in order to be peaceful towards others. The fourth dimension, peace with nature, implies that all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or religious group, should cooperate to preserve the natural resources and the environment.

The fifth criterion of SJP, civic consciousness, encourages pupils to develop certain idealism about a future community and aims to build “civic courage” to extend social justice within the classroom to the larger realms of society (Davies 2005a; Giroux 1992: 18). Thus, the teacher should convey democratic values, human rights, civic duties and justice and should discuss current social, economic and political issues that affect the country in a child-sensitive manner, contrary to traditional education that keeps children in ignorance (Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Giroux 1992; Bretheron et al 2003). To build civic courage, Balasooriya (2007) suggested for schools to organize community-building programs. The inclusion of the wider community might not only broaden the reach of social justice, but will most likely also add to its success (Bretheron et al 2003), as effective education reform requires a similar change in society. Otherwise, the school curriculum will oppose what children experience in daily life (Perera 2004). This notion also implies that SJP should adopt an integrative and whole-school approach, which means that each subject and the whole school should pursue social justice and peace (Lopes Cardozo 2008; Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Kodituwakku 2006).

Finally, as previously mentioned teachers fulfil an indispensable role in SJP. The teacher functions as an important role model for peaceful behaviour and the interaction between the teacher and the classroom forms an essential learning opportunity for pupils (Bretheron 2003; Balasooriya, unpublished paper). Furthermore, teachers should adopt a democratic role within the classroom. The Brazilian pedagogue Freire (1974) cautioned that authoritarian teachers, who simply implant their own ideas in pupils, might promote a dangerous one-sided perspective and discourage pupils to develop a critical consciousness or “conscientização”. Instead, a liberating and trusted classroom atmosphere is required, where democratic teachers support pupils to critically engage in the classroom dialogue (Howard 2003; Freire 1974; Shor 1993; Giroux 1992; Lopes Cardozo 2008; Bretheron et al 2003). Thus, SJP commonly encourages a learner-centred, participatory and activity-based teaching-learning approach. As SJP is founded on the assumption that ‘there are a set of skills, values and behaviours that are best ‘caught’, and not ‘taught” (Colenso 2005: 416), teachers should introduce games, role-play and group activities, to develop qualities of creativity, cooperation and assertiveness in pupils (Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Balasooriya, 2007; Lopes Cardozo 2008;

According to Giroux (2009), teachers should be perceived as “transformative intellectuals” who speak out against social injustice and create conditions where students can develop the language and values of a democratic and social just society (37). The next section will further explore who these teachers are and will identify their strategic actions within the context of the education governance framework, which might either facilitate or hinder the potential of teachers to act as agents of social justice (Hay 2002).

**2.5. The dialectical relationship between teachers and education governance**

Defining teachers is a challenging task, as teachers are no static or isolated actors, but instead are heterogeneous and changing human beings, who navigate within a dynamic environment (Weldon 2010). According to the Strategic-Relational Approach (SRA) of Jessop (Hay 2002) there exists a dialectical relationship between agency, referring to the ability of a person to act intentionally based on autonomy and free choice, and structure, referring to the environment wherein the actor moves, which, based on the nature of social and political institutions, shows some consistency over time. As both exist in relation to each other, their interaction cannot be viewed as the sum of agential and structural factors viewed in isolation. The “strategic actor” behaves intentionally based on an analysis of the surrounding environment, while a “strategically selective context” implies that each environment favours certain strategies over others (Hay 2002: 128).

Applying the SRA to my research, the teacher can be viewed as a “strategic actor” embedded in an environment, which might facilitate or hinder the strategies of teachers (Lopes Cardozo 2009: 412; Vongalis-Macrow 2007). Drawing on a study of teachers in the Republic of Benin, Welmond (2002) emphasized that education policies and governance figure prominently in the environment of teachers. Although, due to the confined space of the classroom the government can seldom exercise full control over teachers, behind the classroom doors the practice of teachers is shaped by the demands of education objectives defined by the ideologies and politics of the state. In addition, both the teacher and education governance are influenced by the broader societal, cultural and historical context of the country, while at the same time this broader context is affected by education governance and teachers. In the following two sections, I will give more insight into teachers as strategic agents and education governance as the strategically selective context of teachers. Although both concepts are dialectically related, for analytical purposes I will discuss both separately.
**Teachers as strategic agents**

Hay (2002) argued that the choice of strategies depends on aspiration, reflective ability on previous actions, and the capacity to select the best strategies.

Along these dimensions, the strategies teachers pursue might depend on how they view their own role in the classroom and the school, which in part will be influenced by the wider political and cultural context that delineates the role teachers ought to assume. Teacher commitment might also influence aspiration. According to Welmond (2002) teachers might have a vocational commitment to educate pupils for the creation of a better society, a professional commitment to teach their specialized subject, or a “last resort” commitment to escape poverty. In addition, teacher aspiration tends to be influenced by external motivating factors, such as teacher salary, employment security, future career perspectives and living and working conditions (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007). Characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic situation and personal experience of teachers might also define the strategies teachers pursue (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009; Lortie 1975).

Second, the reflective ability of teachers seems important within a post-conflict country, such as Sri Lanka, as teachers should critically reflect on how the ethnic conflict has shaped their personal and professional identities. Drawing on a study of the South African academic Weldon (2010), nationwide ethnic division might be reflected in teacher identity, as teachers often had to choose a certain position within the conflict. To be agents of change, teachers should deal with their traumatic past and, referring back to SJP, should critically reflect on how they view themselves in relation to the “other”, construct hybrid identities and become border crossers. Third, the capacity of teachers to select the best strategies might be linked to their professional capabilities, which, according to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) are based on their subject-matter, pedagogical and didactical knowledge.

**Strategically selective context of teachers**

However, teachers do not act in isolation, as their strategic actions are facilitated or impeded by a strategically selective context. Following Archer (1995), Vongalis-Macrow (2007) divided teacher agency into authority, obligations and autonomy. Whereas authority, which refers to the freedom of teachers to practice their profession, and obligations are in large part defined by the wider education governance framework, teacher autonomy refers to the ability of teachers to follow their own strategies, and make their voice heard, for instance through collective action in teacher unions.
My understanding of education governance follows the work of Hirst and Thompson (1999) who defined governance as the control of activities towards a desired outcome, not just by the state, but ‘by a wide variety of public and private, state and non-state, national and international institutions and practices’ (269). Education governance influences teachers’ strategies by setting certain obligations, referring to the role teachers ought to assume within the classroom, which curricula and textbooks they have to follow and how they are trained (Welmond 2002; Vongalis-Macrow 2007; O’Sullivan 2002; Weldon 2010). On the one hand, this governance framework might facilitate the practice of teachers. For instance, Weldon (2010) referred to the success of the “Facing the past” initiative in post-apartheid South Africa, where teachers from opposing ethnic groups were brought together to share their stories. On the other hand, the education governance might also limit teachers’ practice. Based on her study on Namibia, O’Sullivan argued that too high expectations of education reform, which do not take into account the realities within which teachers work, their so-called “classrooms realities”, tend to result in failure (222). Vongalis-Macrow (2007) and Welmond (2002) related this mismatch to the growing neoliberal influence on local education policies. For instance, strict exam criteria, adopted to give school children the relevant knowledge to compete in the neoliberal system, tend to create a competitive atmosphere in schools and privilege subjects, such as math and science, over more locally relevant subjects (Vongalis-Macrow 2007). This leaves less room for other objectives of education, such as social justice and peace.

The increasing control on teachers, on what they teach and how they teach it, has led to global resistance and crisis in the teaching profession. Teachers are increasingly adapted to education reform, which best fits the needs of schools in order to meet the demands of future employment, rather than the other way around (Vongalis-Macrow 2007; Giroux 2009; O’Sullivan 2002). Thus, against the background of reductionist education reform, Vongalis-Macrow (2007) argued to understand teachers as ‘critical, complex and troublesome’ agents who reconstruct and re-territorialize the fragmented and residual parts of their agency (430).

2.6. Operationalization of main concepts

The conceptual scheme displayed in Figure 2 is based on the SRA, described in section 2.5., and visualizes the theoretical concepts that have guided my research.

Based on the theoretical framework, the two main concepts of my research are social justice pedagogy (SJP) and teacher agency. These concepts are influenced by the global context, illustrated in the outer square in Figure 2, and the context of Sri Lanka, displayed in the middle square. Socio-economic development, past ethnic conflict and multiple ethnicities and religions mark Sri Lanka. The
concept SJP is displayed in the upper part of the central square, which means that the concept influences all elements within the square. SJP, described in section 2.4, helped me to theoretically evaluate the content of the education policies, and the perceptions and actions of the education governance actors and formal secondary school teachers.

The second concept, teacher agency, is displayed in the lower part of the central square, which, in line with the SRA, is the result of the dialectical interplay between the strategically selective context, displayed in the left white square, and the strategic agent, displayed in the right white square. The strategically selective context is in part defined by the peace education policies, in particular the national policy on ESCP, which in turn influence (indicated by the arrow) the education governance actors’ understanding, the perceived teacher role, the teacher training and the perceived
challenges and requirements concerning peace education. Chapter 5 and 6 will describe and theoretically analyse, by means of SJP, this strategically selective context. The strategic agents in my research are the formal secondary school teachers. The arrows that connect the right and the left white squares indicate the dialectical relationship between the context and the agent, which defines how teachers have been trained, understand and practice, perceive their own role, commitment and motivation, and identify the challenges and requirements regarding peace education. Chapter 7 will describe these perceptions and actions of formal secondary school teachers and use the criteria of SJP to analyse their perceptions and actions conform the literature.

Finally, the conclusion brings together the context and the agent to define the concept of teacher agency for peace, and analyse it using the criteria of SJP. This concept of agency is based on the strategic calculation of the formal secondary school teachers on how to move within the larger strategically selective context defined by education policies and governance actors in post-conflict Sri Lanka. In other words, the conclusion aims to incorporate all the data chapters. However, before arriving at the data chapters, the next chapter will describe how I progressed from the theoretical framework to my research practice, by discussing my research methodology, research methods, scope and locations, manner of data analysis, limitations, research challenges and ethical considerations.

‘A multicultural society is just like a fruit salad. All the fruits taste different and have different colours. The more fruits there are in the salad, the more beautiful and tasty the salad will be’
Female pupil from grade ten in a Sinhala-medium school
Chapter 3. Research methodology

3.1. Methodological approach

To define my methodology, it is essential that the basic assumptions about knowledge and how to obtain it are made explicit, as these assumptions might frame the research and may considerably influence the findings and conclusions. In this section the basic assumptions will be defined by my ontological and epistemological stance, which together will inform the methodology and methods used (Sumner and Tribe 2008: 55).

My ontological and epistemological stance closely relate to the reflexive research methodology, described by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009). In line with their reasoning, I believe that there exists an unstable relationship between on the one hand some reality which is “out there” and on the other hand the rhetoric nature of our knowledge of that reality. Moreover, this instability presumes a notion of reconstruction, implying that social reality can never exist external from the research population and the researcher. In other words, people are co-producers of their own social reality, rather than independent objects (Bryman 2004).

In line with my reflexive ontological and epistemological stance, the emphasis of my research has been on qualitative research methods. The flexible and unstructured character of qualitative methods and its emphasis on context and process make it a valuable research approach within the field of development studies (Bryman 2004). Contrary to more quantitative methods, qualitative methods ‘start from the perceptions and actions of the subjects being studied’ (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: 7). In this fashion, the rather unstructured nature of my interviews and focus group discussions allowed me to explore the meaning the education governance actors and teachers assigned to peace, based on their own experience within the broader context of post-conflict Sri Lanka, rather than imposing my own predefined thoughts, making each encounter unique. Moreover, due to the rather sensitive topic of my research, the use of qualitative methods allowed me to approach the topic with more care and flexibility.

Furthermore, the reflexive methodology allowed me to use theory abductive, which ‘starts from an empirical basis, just like induction, but does not reject theoretical preconceptions and is in that respect closer to deduction’ (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: 4; O’Reilly 2005). Along these lines, theory served as an insightful inspiration to unravel patterns in the field, but did not obstruct the empirical data to speak for itself. By constantly alternating between theory and empirics, both were effectively ‘reinterpreted in the light of each other’ (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: 277).
Moreover, drawing on the belief that people are co-producers of their social reality, I acknowledge that as a researcher, my theoretical assumptions, my manner of data collection, the questions I posed and my interpretations have guided the research and could hardly avoid either reproducing or challenging the existing social and political context. Especially in the post-conflict context of Sri Lanka, this challenge of neutrality is of great importance, and bears important ethical considerations, which I will discuss at the end of this chapter (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). Thus, during my field work and analysis, I have attempted to continually reflect on how my presence and beliefs influenced the research. Furthermore, the choice of which data to include and exclude and the use of language in my final thesis might not reflect the empirical data collected. To in part address this issue, I challenged myself to be both critical and creative during the analysis and writing process, by looking at the data from different angles (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009).

Thus, by taking a reflexive stance the importance of my research has shifted from merely collecting and analysing empirical data towards, as far as possible, considering ‘the perceptual, cognitive, theoretical, linguistic, (inter)textual, political and cultural circumstances’, which constitute the background of and influence my perceptions as a researcher (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: 6). In brief, by adopting a reflexive methodological approach I have encouraged myself towards critical reflection and awareness during the entire research process.

3.2. Research methods, scope and locations

The SRA, explained in my theoretical framework, portrayed agency as the interplay between the strategic actor and the strategically selective context (Hay 2002). Following this divide, the unit of analysis within my research is twofold. On the one hand, I studied the education policies and governance actors, which together form the strategically selective context. On the other hand, I explored the formal secondary school teachers, which constitute the strategic actors. These units of analysis together inform my research question on teacher agency.

For the selection of my respondents I used purposive sampling, which implies that I explicitly decided the relevant actors to include in my research in order to answer the research question and increase variety (Bryman 2004). To get in contact with my respondents, I made effective use of the so-called snowball method, building on the few contacts I had before leaving for Sri Lanka and on people I met during my stay. In general, the people in Sri Lanka were extremely open, kind and willing to arrange contacts and help me further in my research.

As mentioned above, based on my reflexive methodology the emphasis of my research has been on qualitative research methods. In line with Bryman (2004), I combined more than one
research method and source of data to triangulate my research findings. My first and foremost research method was conducting semi-structured, in-depth and open-ended interviews. An advantage of this flexible form of interviewing is that it puts the emphasis on ‘how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events’ (Bryman 2004: 438). Other qualitative methods I used to triangulate the interview findings were focus group discussions, (participatory) observations and document analysis. A small quantitative survey served to create a background profile of the teachers. Appendix 1 presents a complete and detailed overview of my research activities listed according to date. The next section will give a short impression per unit of analysis.

3.3. Data collection

At the education governance level, I collected the education policies, of which the Sri Lankan national policy on ESCP seemed to be the most relevant policy document. With regard to the education governance actors, I was able to conduct 22 semi-structured interviews with 19 actors engaged in peace education. Furthermore, to strengthen my interview data, I observed and participated in three teacher training programs and two interethnic school exchange programs. In Chapter 6 (Section 6.1.) more detailed information will be given. Moreover, I attended the Sri Lanka Roundtable “Sri Lanka in the World; the World in Sri Lanka”, held in Zurich on the 23rd and 24th of November 2011, bringing together researchers from Sri Lanka and all over the world engaged in research on Sri Lanka. This roundtable gave me deeper insight into the current post-conflict challenges of the country.

To explore the teachers as strategic actors, I visited formal secondary schools in different locations of the country to gather data, which might closers approach the social reality of Sri Lanka. Due to certain research challenges, which I will discuss at the end of this chapter, I changed my initial plan to study four schools as in-depth case studies to a broader exploratory approach. In total, I conducted 38 semi-structured interviews (and surveys ¹) with formal secondary school teachers from eleven secondary schools. From these eleven schools, I was able to visit and observe six secondary schools located in different Education Zones ²: Colombo and Negombo (Western province), Maho (North-Western Province), Galle (Southern Province) and Trincomalee (Eastern province). Seven teacher interviews took place outside school premises, which were located in the Education Zones of Jaffna (Northern Province), Kurunegala (North-Western Province) and Pottuvil (Eastern Province). Each school was marked by different characteristics ranging from National to Provincial ³, large to small, urban to rural, Sinhala-medium to Tamil-medium, mixed-gender to single-gender and with

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¹ Appendix 2 presents the teacher survey
² Sri Lanka is divided into nine Provinces and 95 Education Zones (Website MoE)
³ Schools in Sri Lanka are either National or Provincial schools. National schools are managed by the national MoE, whereas provincial schools are managed by the provincial education offices.
Buddhism, Hinduism, Roman-Catholic or Islam as main religion. In addition, one school was awarded the label of “Peace School”. Appendix 3 gives an elaborate overview of the school characteristics, whereas Appendix 4 presents the teacher characteristics.

To triangulate my teacher findings, I conducted interviews with six school principals, a choice that was instigated by a research paper on child-sensitive good practices in Sri Lankan schools, which underlined that the principal fulfils an important role within peaceful school management (Kodituwakku 2006). In addition, I observed ten lessons and one morning assembly and organized an additional eight focus group discussions with secondary school pupils from different grades, discussing their perceptions on the meaning of peace and on the practice of this topic within school. In the last phase of my field study I was able to conduct a focus group discussion with 21 in-service teachers following a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) at the University of Colombo (UoC). During my field work I always carried a notebook with me, which allowed me to write down any valuable information coming up during informal conversations and daily activities.
3.4. Data analysis

My data analysis is based on transcriptions and research notes. During and after each interview I made elaborate notes. Nearly half of the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder. As soon as possible after the interview I worked out the research notes, but always the same day. All interviews were also transcribed. The observational data was written down by using an observation form and by means of elaborate notes. During the focus group discussions, I summarized on the blackboard the topics and perceptions mentioned during the discussion, always consulting with the participants if what I wrote down correctly reflected what they had said. During the entire research, I maintained an elaborate Excel overview of my research activities and the actors I had spoken to.

The analysis of the written data, collected from interviews, observations, focus group discussions, field work notes and documentation has been qualitatively analyzed, using the data analysis software Dedoose. With the help of this program, I have coded and categorized the main themes. By using the “Analyse” function of Dedoose the relationship between the different codes could be visualized to better understand my data. Moreover, I used the “Excerpts” function in Dedoose to link the codes and categories back to the original data material, which could be used as quotes in my final thesis. The small quantitative survey I entered in the statistical program SPSS and basic functions were used to generate a table of the teacher characteristics. To guarantee anonymity of my respondents, referencing to specific interviews is done by “(letter: number)”.

3.5. Limitations, research challenges and ethical considerations

Due to the limited time frame and qualitative character of my research, the findings cannot and should not be generalized to the entire country. Instead, this research should be seen as a mere exploration of some main perceptions, actions and challenges present in Sri Lanka.

Before leaving for Sri Lanka, I had developed a comprehensive research proposal, writing down some main research challenges I could encounter in the field. Most of these challenges have remained the same. The first challenge was the limited time frame, as three months for a field research is rather short. Despite this narrow time frame, I am quite satisfied with the data I was able to collect, in large part due to the kindness and helpfulness of the Sri Lankan people I met. The second challenge was linked to language, as I do not speak Tamil or Sinhalese and not all of the teachers had sufficient command of the English language. In these instances, the English teacher of the school would serve as a translator. However, this extra link, which could bear hidden power

\[4\text{ Where } G = \text{Governance actor}, T = \text{Teacher}, P = \text{Principal}, S = \text{Student or pupil}, O = \text{classroom Observation, } U = \text{UoC, and the number is the line number within Dedoose.}\]
relations, between the researcher and the researched might have given room for bias. Moreover, my poor local language proficiency confined my knowledge on daily Sri Lankan life and culture.

A third challenge was my role as a Western researcher in relation to my research population, which might be influenced by power differentials (Scheyvens et al. 2003). Moreover, the UN accusations against the Sri Lankan government of war crimes and the belief shared by some that the West is supporting the LTTE, sometimes complicated my position as a Western researcher. I attempted to address this challenge by explaining to my respondents that I was a Master student from the Netherlands doing a small research for my Master thesis. My appearance, being a not-so-tall and relatively young woman, might have helped in gaining the trust of my respondents. However, textbox 1 shows that this was not always as easy.

**Textbox 1. Example of the sensitive context for a researcher**

One example, which changed the in-depth character of my research in schools to a more exploratory nature, was the difficulty in getting permission to visit schools. In total, this took me more than a month and created quite some stress. From the MoE, I was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the Ministry of Defence, repeating this loop twice. Finally, I was sent within the MoE to the Secretary Minister of Education, who after a rather challenging conversation supported me to visit schools. As one education governance actor explained to me during a phone conversation, this difficulty in getting the permission reflects the sensitive nature of post-conflict Sri Lanka.

A new challenge, which emerged while in the field, was that I could not reach my local supervisor. Therefore, I found a professor at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies who was so kind to give me some academic guidance during my field work. For instance, he checked my survey on culture sensitivity, as I was unsure whether I could ask my respondents about their ethnic background, an insecurity that he took away. Another challenge and at the same time ethical issue was the sensitive topic of my research within the delicate context of post-conflict Sri Lanka. In line with the reflexive methodology, Goodhand (2000) stressed that in a (post-) conflict country a researcher can never be politically neutral and hence, should always assess how the research might influence structures or systems driving conflict or affect the coping strategies and safety of a community. In line with Goodhand, who underlined the importance to consider ‘which voices are heard and whose knowledge counts’ (12), I included respondents from all ethnic groups and religions. Moreover, I asked each participant for informed consent and I guaranteed confidentiality, anonymity and privacy of all my respondents, unless they stated otherwise. With Goodhand, I believe that these ethical considerations are even more pressing in a post-conflict setting.
Chapter 4. Context of post-conflict Sri Lanka

This chapter briefly describes the contextual characteristics of Sri Lanka, which are most relevant to my research and aims to illustrate how we can understand the historical, political, socio-economic and educational context of post-conflict Sri Lanka. The chapter will start with a small note on the history, followed by an historical and political analysis of the conflict and the current socio-economic and political post-conflict context. The chapter ends by giving more insight into the general education system of Sri Lanka.

4.1. A changing landscape: from conflict to post-conflict

Around the fifth century B.C. the majority of the Sinhalese, most likely coming from Northern India, settled in the small pearl-shaped island within the Indian Ocean, located south of India. Buddhism arrived in the third century B.C. and became an important aspect of Sinhala culture. Around the same time, the first Tamil migrants settled in the North and East of the country. From the 16th century onwards the island has been consecutively occupied by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, of which British colonial rule has been the most pervasive. The British colonizers brought Indian Tamils to the central highlands for coffee and tea production, a group that is culturally distinct from the Sri Lankan Tamils (Richardson 2005). In 1948 the island, then called Ceylon, became independent and was named Sri Lanka. The vast diversity of people, dressed in every imaginable colour, mirrors the variety of beautiful landscapes. Against the backdrop of this diverse beauty, the country has been marked by violent conflict for more than a quarter century. From 1983 to 2009 two opposing powerful entities, the government and the LTTE, determined the landscape of violent warfare. In addition, as Orjuela (2010) remarked, power dynamics at different levels in society, ranging from groups to individuals, have shaped the conflict and the living circumstances of the people involved 5.

Historical analysis of the violent conflict in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan conflict, which lasted almost 26 years, between the government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers, has mostly been portrayed as an “ethnic” power conflict (Orjuela 2010). However, in addition to ethnicity, Balasooriya et al (2004) and Richardson (2005) argued that different causes have been at play, referring to historical, economic, social and political roots of the conflict.

5 Refer to Foucault (2000) for elaborate theoretical insight into identity and power dynamics.
The ‘ethnic’ depiction can be traced back to the 17th century, when Dutch and British colonial rule turned ethnicity into a separating base for economic and political representation, seemingly privileging the Tamil minority at the expense of the Sinhalese majority (Rajasingham-Senanayake 2011; Höglund and Orjuela 2011a). When Sri Lanka gained independence from the British in 1948, Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism, which might be linked to Sinhala mythology ⁶, grew strongly and elicited a process of “Sinhalisation” (Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Orjuela 2010; Wickremeratne 2006). Gradually, politics became separated along ethnic lines and the formal state apparatus more and more represented the Sinhala-Buddhist (Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Wickremeratne 2006). The Sinhala-Only Act of 1956, which made Sinhala the official language in Sri Lanka, the resettlement of Sinhalese landless in Tamil-dominated regions and the restriction of university entrance for Tamil students ⁷, may be the most prominent examples (Spencer 2010; Höglund and Orjuela 2011a; Jeyaratnam Wilson 2000). Other issues were the unremedied structural weaknesses of the post-colonial economy, the continued colonial-era exploitation by indigenous political leaders, and the introduction of free market reforms and structural adjustment programs (from 1977 onwards), which led to widening of inequalities, social disorder and corruption (Richardson 2005).

Altogether, these factors created disillusionment regarding better jobs and a better life, especially among the Sri Lankan youth and gave rise to militant youth movements at both sides of the ethnic divide. The LTTE, established in 1976 to address the Tamil grievances and to create an independent Tamil state in the North-East of the island, became the best known (Richardson 2005; Perera 1997; Jeyaratnam Wilson 2000). In 1983, ethnic tensions between the Sinhalese-dominated government and the LTTE escalated into violent conflict. Moreover, in 1988 the Sinhala political youth movement, Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), called for greater employment and equality, which was a resurgence of a similar insurrection in 1971. Although the Sinhalese insurrection was contained by the government in 1989, killing around 40,000 youth, the Tamil unrest remained for more than a quarter century (Balasooriya 2007; Little 2011).

**The current post-conflict socio-economic and political context of Sri Lanka**

In May 2009, after almost 26 years of on-and-off civil warfare, the government of Sri Lanka proclaimed it had defeated the LTTE (DeVotta 2010). This “victory over terrorism”, as the Sri Lankan government and the local and international community label the LTTE, was celebrated by many.

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⁶ The Dutugemunu legend, which claims that the Sinhalese are the real Sri Lankans, tells about the epic war between the Sinhalese king Dutugemunu and the Tamil king Elāra, which was fought to restore Sinhala-Buddhist domination over the Tamil Hindu. This opposes the Vijaya saga that the origin of Sri Lanka was based on the settlement of different migrant groups (Social Scientists Association 1985, in Wickremeratne 2006).

⁷ By the Standardization Act and District Quota system introduced between 1972 and 1978.
However, it was also a moment of mourning, as the last phase of the war counted many civilian causalities (Höglund and Orjuela 2011b).

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka counts a population estimated at 20.5 million (CBSL 2011). The course of the peace process has been in the hands of the so-called democracy, since 2005 under the presidency of Mahinda Rajapaksa of the leading political party, the United People’s Freedom Alliance (Rampton 2011). In Sri Lanka, the executive president has considerable power over the democratic state, which has been further widened by the 18th Amendment of the constitution enacted in September 2010. Nevertheless, the current presidency is highly popular and the majority supports his extensive power, which is deemed necessary to bring about economic growth after 26 years of stagnant wartime development (TISL 2010).

Sri Lanka is considered to be a developing country, ranking 91st on the Human Development Index with a score of 0.658 (CBSL 2011: UNDP website). In 2009 the country had a per capita income of US$ 2,053 and a growth rate of 3.5 percent per annum, while provisional data for 2010 indicate a per capita income of US$ 2.377 and a growth rate of 8 percent (CBSL 2011). Income distribution remains unequal, with a Gini Coefficient of 0.47 and with 8.9 percent of the population still living below the poverty line (CBSL 2011). However, these calculations exclude Mannar, Mullaithivu and Kilinochchi, the areas most affected by the civil war. Furthermore, the government has actively engaged with the MDG’s, by including them into the ten year development plan ‘Mahinda Chinthana’, which extends from 2006 to 2016 (DCSSL 2008).

Regarding demographic characteristics, multiple ethnicities, religions and languages mark the country. Sinhalese ethnicity represents the majority (74.5 percent), is predominantly Buddhist and lives mainly in the South of the island. The Tamil ethnic group (16.5 percent) is mainly Hindu and can be divided into Sri Lankan Tamils (11.9 percent), who live mainly in the North and East of the island, and Indian Tamils (4.6 percent), who mainly live at the tea estates in the central part of the island. The remainder of the country’s population is Muslim (8.3 percent) or from other ethnic backgrounds (less than one percent) (DCSSL 2001). In addition to Buddhism (69 percent) and Hinduism

8 In Sri Lanka Muslims are perceived as a separate ethnic group.
(fifteen percent) eight percent of the population is Christian or Roman-Catholic and seven percent is Islamic (website Government of Sri Lanka). With regard to language, the Sinhalese speak Sinhala, while the Tamil and Muslim population speak Tamil. According to the 13th Amendment of the Sri Lankan constitution, both languages are recognized as official languages. In addition, English is the official link language between the different communities, but is only spoken by a small percentage of the population (Balasooriya et al 2004; MoE 2008).

Although the president has succeeded in subsiding violence and promoting a fairly flourishing economic development since 2009 (TISL 2010), some incidents indicate that the peace in the country might still be rather fragile (Rampton 2011; Höglund and Orjuela 2011b). At the Sri Lanka Roundtable in November 2011 the concern was raised that the Mahinda government sustains clientelistic politics in favour of the Sinhala-Buddhist majority, morally justified by widespread Sinhala nationalism. Silva referred to the failure of the government to cooperate with the Tamil National Alliance and the Tamil United Liberation Front and the low representation of Tamils and Muslims in the cabinet (respectively three and six percent in 2010) (Sri Lanka Roundtable 2011). The newly released report of Transparency International Sri Lanka (TISL: 2011) underlined that the country remains heavily militarized, while violent attacks on journalists and human rights activists, the silencing of its suspects and close monitoring of NGO and INGO activities tend to threaten freedom of speech (TISL 2011; NPC 2011). Also, public opinion has been divided around the validity of the UN report, released on the 22nd of June 2011, concerning the accusations of human rights violations against the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE.

Against the backdrop of the historical, social and political context of Sri Lanka, the next section will portray the education system in Sri Lanka, from colonial to present times.

### 4.3. Education in Sri Lanka

During colonial rule the British introduced the European education system to Sri Lanka. As the British seemingly favoured the Tamil minority, most missionary schools were established in the North of the island around Jaffna. Therefore, the Tamil population of the North enjoyed higher upward social mobility, nation-wide fulfilling higher political and professional positions than the Sinhalese.

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9 Military presence and employment seems skewed along spatial and ethnic lines. Whereas military presence is more profound in the North, military employment is generally fulfilled by Sinhalese. A young Buddhist man in the Eastern province has a near fifty percent chance of military employment (Venugopal 2009, in Spencer 2011).

10 Whereas demonstrations in the main capital Colombo on the first of May 2011 against the (preliminary) UN report and in favour of the president filled the streets with tens of thousands, the Tamil National Alliance openly stated that the report did reflect the genuine context during the war (Höglund and Orjuela 2011b).
After independence in 1948, education was one of the top priorities of the newly formed government of Sri Lanka and aimed to make school more accessible for the larger population of Sri Lanka by introducing mother tongue education, to replace English-medium. However, this gradually led to an ethnically and religiously segregated school system, wherein different ethnic groups were educated in separate schools in their own language of instruction (MoE 2006), standing far apart from a border pedagogy (Giroux 1992). Some authors feel that this segregated structure has established and maintained misrecognition, contributed to the polarization of society and boosted linguistic nationalism (MoE 2006a; Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Lopes Cardozo 2008; Jeyaratnam Wilson 2000; Bush and Saltarelli 2000).

According to the MDG’s and the EFA targets, formal education in Sri Lanka is well ahead of other developing countries. From independence onwards, education has been tuition-free from primary up until tertiary level and has rather high enrolment rates, 97 percent for primary education and 81 percent for secondary education (Education International 2007). Moreover, the national literacy rate has risen from 40 percent in 1940 to 93 percent in 2005 and the percentage of households where children do not go to school has declined from 68 percent in 1940 to 8 percent in 2004 (MoE 2006a). However, several quality issues have been identified, especially within secondary education, such as the widening mismatch between school and work, the rigidity of the curriculum and ethnic bias in teaching material (Ginige 2002; Colenso 2005). Many argued that the latter fuelled ethnic tensions in the past (Davies 2005; Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Lopes Cardozo 2008). Colenso (2005) noted that current measures of the Sri Lankan government aim to address this bias. Other raised concerns are the unequal distribution of education resources and low representation of ethnic minorities in education institutions (Colenso 2005), which may be linked to Fraser’s (1996, 2005) dimensions of unjust distribution and representation. Also, government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP tends to be low, 2.08 percent in 2009, while provisional data revealed a decrease to 1.86 percent in 2010 (CBSL 2011).

The national education policy falls under authority of the President and is formulated and implemented by the Sri Lankan MoE (MoE website). In 1991, as a response to the JVP insurrection of 1988, the National Education Commission (NEC) was established to advise the President on education policy and to review and analyse such policies (NEC website; Little 2011). Furthermore, the National Institute of Education (NIE) was established in 1985 to give professional training to educational managers, teacher educators and teachers, to design and develop general and teacher education curricula and to conduct research on education (NIE website). Government schools constitute 93 percent of the schools in Sri Lanka, which account for 95 percent of student enrolment, while 7 percent are private schools or state-funded pirivenas (Buddhist schools). From the 1990s
onwards, education has been decentralized to the nine provincial education offices and the 95 education zones. Although most schools are governed by their respective provinces, some schools are still under national governance (MoE 2006b). Table 3 presents the division of schools according to governance and medium of instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Division of schools in Sri Lanka (in numbers)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government (formal) schools (93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinhala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,435</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: adapted from Ministry of Education (2006b: 5)

In 2006, Sri Lanka counted nearly 205,000 teachers, of which 33.5 percent were (post)graduate teachers and trainees, 62.9 percent were trained teachers and 3.4 percent were untrained teachers. The Northern and Eastern provinces counted the largest numbers of untrained teachers, respectively 9.3 and 7.7 percent, which might be linked to the conflict situation (MoE 2006b). Whereas graduate teachers attend university, trained teachers follow a three year pre-service training. In-service teacher training, meant for the continued professional development of teachers, is offered island-wide within regional Teacher Centres (TC), the NIE and the universities.\(^{11}\) Moreover, regional TC’s offer short-term pre-service teacher training for untrained teachers entering the field\(^{(G7, G10)}\). To address existing gaps in the continuing professional development of teachers, distance learning and school-based teacher development are encouraged (Batuwitage 2009). Just as schools, teacher training institutes are mostly segregated along linguistic and ethnic lines, while research in Sri Lankan teacher training institutes showed that structured interethnic contact may reduce ethnocentric mind-sets of teacher trainees (Colenso 2005).

The education system in Sri Lanka counts thirteen grades and is divided into primary, secondary and tertiary level. Children are obliged to follow education from grade one or the age of five up until grade nine or the age of fourteen. After primary school (grade 1 to 5) pupils have to pass the scholarship exam. After going through junior (grade 6 to 9) and senior secondary school (grade

\(^{11}\) In-service teachers can follow a Bachelor in Education, a Postgraduate Diploma in Education or an Additional Language Improvement Course (Sinhala, Tamil, English) within the NIE or regional TC’s. A Master in Education or a Postgraduate Diploma in School Counselling are only offered within the NIE (G7)
10 and 11) pupils have to pass the Ordinary-level exam. Finally, after senior secondary education (grade 12 and 13) pupils are to pass the A-level examination in order to apply for university (MoE 2006a). Around ten percent of the pupils who pass the A-level exams can enter public university. In 2010, only 23,000 of the 160,000 pupils who qualified for university could be admitted (Secretary Minister of Higher Education, GIZ forum). Overall, 34 percent can enter tertiary level courses, offered in 15 universities, 17 National Colleges of Education (NCoE) and 31 Technical Training Colleges (MoE 2006a). As all pupils tend to opt for university, the low percentage being able to continue education after A-level tends to produce “failures” and create high competition in schools, at the detriment of creativity, self-confidence and cooperation (MoE 2008; Perera 2004; Davies 2005; Lopes Cardozo 2008).

Schools in Sri Lanka may be categorized in four types. 1AB schools offer classes from grade 1-13 or 6-13 and O-level and A-level examinations in art, commerce and science. The 1C schools are the same as 1AB schools, but do not offer examinations in science. Type II schools offer classes from grade 1-11 or 6-11 and Type III schools are primary schools (up to grade 5). The latter are not included in my study (MoE 2006a).

The historical, political, socio-economic and educational characteristics of Sri Lanka constitute the background of my research on teacher agency for peace. The next chapter will portray how the peace education policies have been formulated in Sri Lanka to address the negative face of education against the backdrop of the ethnically driven conflict.

‘People who have experienced war, they know the value of peace’
Female pupil from grade ten in a Tamil-medium school
Chapter 5. Strategically selective context
Peace education policies

This chapter will portray how the education policies have touched upon peace education to address its negative face. The chapter aims to answer the following sub-questions:

**Against the background of the post-conflict context of Sri Lanka, how do the education policies aim to create peace through education and how does this relate to SJP? And how do the education policies define the role and in-service training of teachers?**

All children in Sri Lanka have experienced the war in some way or another. The children in the North and East of the country have been most affected by the violent conflict and until two years ago have known nothing but war. Nevertheless, the high military presence, especially in the North of Sri Lanka (Venugopal 2009, in Spencer 2011), might still remind the young of past violence and fear. Although the children in other parts of Sri Lanka might not have directly experienced the war, based on informal conversations with students in Colombo, the (indirect) culture of violence, fear and repression also affected their minds. Moreover, also teachers have been affected by the conflict.

To address collective trauma and conflicting ethnic relations and to encourage peace, Sri Lankan education policies, already during the war, have included notions of peace and social cohesion. The 1997 General Education Reforms underlined the need to integrate values, human and gender rights, national cohesion, environmental protection and language skills in Sinhala, Tamil and English within pre-service and in-service teacher training (Lopes Cardozo 2008). In 2006 the Education Sector Development Framework and Program (ESDFP) identified that schools should promote values, ethics, social cohesion, gender equity and civic consciousness to address civil conflict and ethnic segregation (MoE 2006a). Therefore, the ESDFP suggested the introduction of multi-ethnic schools, bi-lingual education, learning all three languages, interschool cultural and religious festivals and Student Parliament and the development of a comparative religion subject and a civics curriculum. In addition, in line with the theory on SJP, the General Education Reforms of 2007 encouraged a student-centred, experiential and competency-based teaching-learning methodology to replace the traditional authoritarian teaching method (Herath, no date).

However, these policies only dedicated small sections on peace topics, without a proper plan for implementation. Therefore, in 2008 the Social Cohesion and Peace Education Unit (SCPEU) within the MoE of Sri Lanka took the lead in developing a specific National Policy on Education for Social

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12 The ESDFP that will be introduced in 2012 will adopt the same approach.
Cohesion and Peace and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions (national policy on ESCP), which seems to show a deep commitment to the creation of social cohesion and peace through education. The objectives of the policy were fivefold; the innovation of existing strategies, providing coherence and coverage, avoiding duplication and ensuring sustainability in its activities. These objectives seem to be in line with the suggestion of Lopes Cardozo (2008) that coordination through a unified action plan might strengthen peace education initiatives in Sri Lanka.

The formulation of the policy during war time was based on an extensive situation analysis and several workshops and consultation sessions with a large variety of actors from a range of institutions and from all three ethnic backgrounds (MoE 2008; G2: 66-68), which might be linked to Fraser’s (2005) dimension of a just political representation. Based on the question posed during the workshops ‘What kind of children do we want as Sri Lankans?’ the national policy on ESCP identified specific values and attitudes, which school should ideally convey to its pupils (G2: 87-88; MoE 2008), which are presented in Table 4. To ease implementation, the policy identified seven key strategic areas: curriculum, teacher education, second national language (2NL), co-curriculum, whole-school culture, integration models and research (see Figure 3). Moreover, each area is further enriched by examples of activities. As the former director of the SCPEU in charge of the formulation conveyed, ‘the policy should be evidence-based and also implementable and user-friendly and with some clear guidance. It should say some action plan’ (17-19).

The policy proposes in the Curriculum area to strengthen the importance of civic education through the rather new subjects Life Competencies and Civic Education (LCCE) for grade six to nine and Citizenship Education and Governance (CEG) for grade ten and eleven, of which the first subject is a compulsory subject for the examinations (see Appendix 5 for the principal learning competencies of LCCE and CEG). Moreover, the policy underlines the need to develop guidelines on how to

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<th>Table 4. National policy on ESCP</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Desired Sri Lankan Citizen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Critical thinking and problem-solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning to live together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive mindset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Be empathetic and do no harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Be strong in character, honest and direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Resolve interpersonal conflict non-violently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Democratic values, duties and human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Politically enlightened and involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Discover inner peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Care for the planet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Protect Sri Lankan culture</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: based on the national policy on ESCP (MoE 2008: 4-5, 25)*

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13 MoE, NIE, GIZ, UNESCO, NCoE, university professors, provincial education officials, consultants and principals, teachers and students from two Colombo schools.

14 The Teachers’ guide to peace education, written by A.S. Balasooriya, has served as a great inspiration.

15 Formally civic education was taught through the subject social studies, which combined civic and history. Since 2007 history and civic education are separate subjects and civic is taught in the form of LCCE and CG (P1)
integrate peace into every subject, as, in accordance with SJP, an integrative approach will bear greater potential to internalize peace values and attitudes. The policy underlines the responsibility of the Education Publication Department to address bias in the school material. Surprisingly, contrary to the ESDFP, the policy does not specifically mention the development of a comparative religion subject (MoE 2008).

**Figure 3. Conceptual Scheme of the national policy on ESCP**

In the *Teacher Education* area the policy underlines the important role of every teacher in peace education and argues that the teacher should extend their focus beyond the examinations, which tend to undermine cooperation and peace education. To encourage teachers to practice peace education, the policy suggests integrating peace values and attitudes (as outlined in Table 4) through the in-service teacher education curriculum and underlines the important supportive role of principals. Moreover, in line with the theory on SJP, teacher education should encourage teachers to adopt peaceful classroom relations and an inquiry, learner-centred, experiential and participatory teaching-learning approach, which should make learning more joyful and encourage cooperation, critical thinking and inner peace (MoE 2008).
In the area *Second National Language*, the policy aims to encourage the learning of the 2NL, which implies that Sinhalese learn Tamil and Tamils and Muslims learn Sinhala. Therefore, the policy aspires to improve teachers’ skills in the 2NL and English through teacher education (MoE 2008). Furthermore, the area *Co-Curriculum* aims to strengthen and monitor co-curricular activities, such as Student Parliament to promote democratic values and political engagement, and interethnic school exchange programs to increase mutual understanding (MoE 2008). In the area *Integration Models* the policy intends to bring together schools with different ethnicities, religions and socio-economic backgrounds by integration or linking (MoE 2008), which might be associated with Giroux’s (1992) notion of a border pedagogy. Finally, the area *Whole-School Culture* aims to promote peace within the whole school, for instance by a morning assembly or displaying peace mottos, and within the larger community (MoE 2008), which seems in line with the theory on SJP.

The seventh area, *Research*, encircles the six strategic areas explained above and aims to strengthen research on the implementation of peace education by creating a research network and grand fund (MoE 2008). Furthermore, *monitoring and evaluation* should be improved by creating a monitoring and evaluation body under coordination of the SCPEU, which should ideally be linked to the research network proposed above (Moe 2008). At last, under *management and capacity* the policy aims to strengthen the SCPEU within the MoE by forming an advisory board and a coordinating committee to advice and support the unit and to improve implementation by creating 95 zonal implementing committees, which should be given sufficient resources (MoE 2008). The final pages of the policy document outline the demarcation of responsibilities between the institutions and organizations involved in peace education governance, being the MoE, NIE, NCoE, TC, provincial and zonal education institutions, schools and universities, to increase coordination and effectiveness. Finally, NGO’s are to organize their activities through the national policy on ESCP.

Referring back to my theoretical approach of SJP, all criteria seem to be included in the different education policies and specifically in the national policy on ESCP. The latter policy aims to increase critical reflection, mutual understanding, civic consciousness, inner peace and peace with nature and adopts an integrative and whole-school approach. Also, the policy underlines that teacher education should encourage every teacher to teach about peace through the use of experiential, learner-centred and participatory teaching methods and peaceful interaction with pupils. Moreover, the policy adds the protection of Sri Lankan culture to peace education. Although the policies underline critical reflection and interpersonal conflict-resolution, they do not mention reflection on the conflict, whereas the national policy on ESCP (2008) indicates that pupils who were consulted for the policy formulation ‘wanted firstly to know about the causes of national conflict’ (8). With respect to SJP theories, Davies (2005) and Bretheron *et al* (2003) underlined the importance to critically
teach pupils about conflict. Davies (2005) argued that the history curriculum in Sri Lanka has moved from a “hate curriculum” to teaching on “war as routine” (see Figure 1). According to Davies, Sri Lankan pupils are educated about events that took place during the ethnic conflict, but without room for open dialogue and critical reflection on why these events occurred. Moreover, Fabris (unpublished paper) in her research on education and conflict in the Philippines argued that a lack of critical reflection tends to leave pupils vulnerable to the views they overhear at home, in the media or in the wider community, which may be dangerously one-sided or incorrect.

However, it should be kept in mind that the conflict was still on-going at the time the policies were written. In the words of one education governance actor involved in the formulation of the national policy on ESCP ‘there were bombings and people were being killed’ (98-99). However, now the war has ended, it might be valuable to extend the teaching on war as a routine to a more active approach of teaching about conflict (Davies 2005). Referring back to Giroux (1992), to create a socially just mutual understanding, textbooks and teaching should both affirm and question the complex histories of different groups in society. The next chapter will further elaborate on the perceptions and actions of education governance actors involved in peace education.

“We have to cooperative with different cultures in our society, so better if we already learn it during childhood”
Female pupil from grade ten in a Sinhala-medium school

Peace is...’that people live without separation, that they live like birds or doves’
Female pupil in grade seven in a Tamil-medium school
Chapter 6. Strategically selective context
Peace education governance

In the previous chapter, I have portrayed and theoretically analysed the most recent and relevant education policies, which aimed to give more insight into the government approach towards peace education. This chapter presents the perceptions and actions of the different governance actors involved in peace education governance and aims to answer the following sub-questions:

- How do the education governance actors understand peace education?
- How do they define the role of formal secondary school teachers in peace education?
- And how did they implement peace education, more specifically the in-service training of teachers?

To answer these sub-questions, this chapter is divided into five sections. The first section further portrays the education governance actors I interviewed. The second section sheds light on their perception of the content of peace education, whereas the third section will portray their perceived need for peace education. In the fourth section, I will give more insight into their views on the role teachers should adopt in teaching about social cohesion and peace. Finally, to portray the context in which teachers act, the fifth section describes how the education governance actors implement education for social cohesion and peace, with specific emphasis on the awareness and training of in-service teachers. Again, these sections will be analyzed through my theoretical lens of SJP.

6.1. Who are the education governance actors?

This chapter will take the perceptions and actions of several actors into consideration, following the broad definition of governance of Hirst and Thompson (1999). But who are the Sri Lankan education governance actors whom I have interviewed and how are they engaged in peace education? Therefore, this section will discuss the actors and their organizations in more depth.

Within the MoE, the SCPEU, established in 1995, is the primary implementing body of the national policy on ESCP. My research takes in the views of the director of the Unit, who was in function until September 2011, and the former director of the Unit, who was in charge of the formulation of the national policy on ESCP. Moreover, the presentation of the Secretary Minister of Higher Education at the forum “The role of social cohesion in higher education” organized by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), is included. At provincial and zonal level, my research includes the views of a Provincial and Zonal Peace Education Coordinator and a Zonal Peace Education Unit (SCPEU). The SCPEU consisted of five staff members (based on personal observation).
Director, who are, according to the director of the SCPEU, highly dedicated to implement peace through education. To guarantee anonymity I will use the designation “MoE”, when referring to these actors. In addition, I observed (and sometimes participated in) three one-day teacher peace awareness programs and two interethnic school exchange programs.

The NIE, as previously explained, is a governmental organization involved in training, research and curriculum development. My study includes the perceptions of one project officer of the Department of Teacher Empowerment, who is engaged in the professional development of in-service teachers and joint social cohesion programs with GIZ. Moreover, the views of the director of the Faculty of Research, Planning and Development, and of the director and chief project officer of the underlying Department of Research and Development are taken into consideration. Both actors within the Department of Research and Development have been involved in peace-related research. When mentioning these actors in the remainder of the thesis, I will use the label “NIE”.

In addition, my study involved three NGO’s/institutions: GIZ, UNESCO and National Peace Council (NPC). According to UNESCO, ‘UNESCO and GIZ are the two most active partners in peace education in Sri Lanka’ (297). GIZ supports the national policy on ESCP through their program “Education for Social Cohesion”, where my research includes the views of the subject-specialist of Peace and Value Education and the technical advisor of Psycho-Social Care (GIZ 2011). Second, my research takes in the views of the Secretary General of UNESCO, an institution engaged in peace education through their program “Education for Peace and Sustainable Development”, which runs from 2005 till 2015 (UNESCO 2009). Finally, NPC aims to be an impartial NGO in Sri Lanka founded in 1995 to educate, mobilize and advocate with the aim of creating rights conscious citizens and build a political culture conducive for a political solution to the ethnic conflict and thus, to ensure equal opportunities for all ethnic groups in Sri Lanka (NPC website). Their main focus has been on community leaders (teachers, education officials and religious clergy). My study includes the views of the director and a staff member. All these respondents will be labelled as “NGO/institution” within the remainder of the thesis.

Furthermore, as relatively independent actors, my research involves the perceptions of three professors from the University of Kelaniya, the UoC and the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies. Also, the perceptions of two influential Sri Lankan peace education philosophers/experts are

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17 One formal program for aesthetic teachers, one formal program for “peace teachers” who had received previous awareness in peace education, and one informal school-based program for teachers and parents.
18 One five-day formal program organized by the SCPEU (I attended one day) and one two-day informal program organized by a local NGO (I attended both days).
19 Other focus areas of Education for Social Cohesion: Language Education, Disaster Safety Education and Education for Disadvantaged Children and Youth in Post-conflict and Poverty Areas (GIZ 2011)
included. One of these actors is A.S. Balasooriya, who has among other things written the influential *Teachers’ Guide to Peace Education*, published by UNESCO in 2001. To guarantee anonymity I will use the respective names “professor” and “expert” when referring to these actors.

In the remainder of this chapter, the different sections will highlight the different actors’ perceptions and actions regarding the content and importance of peace education, the role of teachers and the implementation and training of teachers.

### 6.2. Perceptions on the content of peace education

The understanding of most Sri Lankan education governance actors I interviewed followed the government approach on peace education, as was explained in the previous chapter. Eight education governance actors 20 were involved in the formulation of the national policy on ESCP, whereas almost all actors had at least seen or possessed a copy of the policy document.

First and foremost, the general consensus among the education governance actors was that peace education implies an attitude change. A mere transmission of facts is not enough to embed peace in the minds of teachers and pupils. To elucidate, one interviewee within a NGO/institution phrased that ‘*peace is all about values, attitudes and behaviours, that is what peace is about. And that is what helps in social cohesion*’ (G4: 46-47). This separates peace education from general secondary school education. Whereas general education is concerned with learning to learn and learning to do, peace education is all about learning to be and learning to live together, where ‘*learning to be is how to harness your inner capacities and learning to live together is to be able to respect the other and respect the environment*’ (G4: 86-87). One peace education expert explained that ‘*peace and value education was developed to address the moral development of the child*’ (G1: 150-151). Referring back to SJP, these notions might be associated with mutual understanding.

Following this notion of learning to be, one NIE staff member conveyed that peace ‘*should not be a rule, it should come from within*’ (G7: 616), which both might be linked to the SJP criterion of inner peace. Seven actors 21 specifically referred to the importance of inner peace in Sri Lankan peace education. In the words of one peace education expert, ‘*inner peace means there is peace within us, then we clear our minds from all the conflicts, when we relax, when we are in the surrounding of silent, beautiful nature, the peace starts activating*’ (G1: 209-211). Among others, Lopes Cardozo (2008) underlined the significance of inner peace in Sri Lankan peace education initiatives and argued

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20 G1 (expert), G2 (MoE), G3-G4 (NGO/institution), G6-G8 (NIE), G10-G12 (professors).
21 G1 (expert), G3-G4 (NGO/institution), G8-G9 (NIE), G12 (professor), G15 (MoE).
its potential to positively influence pupils’ self-image and attitudes towards others (Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Davies, unpublished paper).

Consistent with the understanding of peace as coming from within and encompassing an attitude change, eleven actors underlined the need for a holistic and integrative approach. To be effective, peace should not be taught within a separate subject, but as a concept which cuts across all subjects, where appropriate and possible. Referring back to SJP and to previous research on peace education in Sri Lanka, an integrative approach might carry greater potential to internalize peace concepts (Lopes Cardozo 2008; Balasooriya, unpublished paper). One actor within a NGO/institution underpinned this need for a whole-school approach by adding that ‘if you make peace a separate subject it will not work, because most people regard peace, as something which will not give you a job’ (G4: 68-74).

At the same time, twelve interviewees underlined the importance of specific subjects for peace education. Following the national policy on ESCP, eight interviewees especially referred to the subject LCCE, which is ideally taught as a compulsory subject from grade six to nine. In the words of one respondent within a NGO/institution, ‘they need some kind of competencies to live together in this multicultural society, to have some kind of social cohesion among us’ and learn ‘how to be good citizens’ (G3: 76-77, 90). Some of them also mentioned the subject CEG, which is generally taught in grade ten and eleven, though due to being an optional subject with less emphasis. One actor within the NIE explained that the peace concepts are integrated in the LCCE and CEG curricula along three dimensions ‘the personal peace, the social peace and the environmental peace’, which bear great resemblance to Balasooriya (unpublished paper). These dimensions can be further divided into ten concepts, ‘inner peace, effective communication, empathy, human rights and obligations, cooperation, assertiveness, positive feelings, conflict-resolution, critical thinking’ and as he later added, social cohesion (G9: 155-159). The research ‘Vertical integration of peace concepts’ already identified these concepts within the LCCE and CEG curricula (Keppetigoda and Kodituwakku 2010).

In accordance with the national policy on ESCP, three interviewees argued the importance of learning the 2NL for peace education, whereas seven actors referred to the significance of co-curricular activities. Some examples given were the Student Parliament to instil civic consciousness, interschool competitions to increase opportunities for mutual understanding, or Sramadana (Sinhala word for rendering free labour) to engage pupils in the community. As one peace education

22 G1 (expert), G3-G4 (NGO/institution), G5-G15-G17 (MoE) G7-G8-G9 (NIE), G10-G12 (professors).
23 G1 (expert), G3-G4 (NGO/institution), G6-G8-G9 (NIE), G12 (professor), G17 (MoE).
24 G3 (NGO/institution), G7 (NIE), G10 (professor).
25 G3 (NGO/institution), G5-G15-G16-G17 (MoE), G7-G8 (NIE).
coordinator remarked: ‘We can see Muslim students, Tamil students and Sinhalese students. [...] They can get together and select and organize the [religious or cultural] festivals [...] to understand their experiences, [...] respect their ideas [...] and develop their heart also’ (G16: 196-208).

Moreover, while five interviewees \(^{26}\) conveyed that peace and cohesion concepts are integrated in the religion subject, two education governance actors \(^{27}\) referred to the need for a more comparative religion subject, as the current religion syllabi merely teach pupils about their own religion. As one actor indicated, ‘I am proposing another change in this area of education that is called comparative teaching of religions [...] because it will bring understanding, respect to other’s ideas and religious divisions will be discouraged’ (G1: 500-504). This thought replicates the suggestion made by Perera (2004), who argued that compartmentalized religious education enforces stereotypes and feelings of superiority of the own religion. Finally, one peace education expert \(^{28}\) and MoE respondent \(^{29}\) underlined the importance of theatre and drama to embed concepts of peace and social cohesion in the minds of pupils.

Five actors \(^{28}\) referred to the importance of a peaceful school environment or hidden curriculum, which seems in line with the whole-school approach. In addition to peace education being taught in schools, four actors \(^{29}\) pointed at the need to include the family and wider community, as ‘the seeds of peace must be imbibed at home’, for instance, through school-based community projects (G12: 29). This idea coincides with the suggestion made by Perera (2004) that for education reform to be effective, society should change simultaneously. Otherwise, ‘the programs focused on education will be out of the larger context, and the young participants in these programs would see a great degree of contradiction between what they are told to do and what is practiced in the wider world dominated by parents’ (11). Moreover, four actors \(^{30}\) underlined the importance of making pupils aware about environmental protection and sustainability as part of peace education.

Although the education governance actors talked about conveying peace and related concepts and methods, just as the national policy on ESCP they did not mention teaching about the past conflict as part of peace education, which seems to oppose the theory on SJP that suggests an active challenge to violence and a critical history curriculum (Davies 2005; Giroux 1992). When I asked one peace education expert about this absence, he commented that it was not the intention to bring the ethnic conflict into peace education. ‘My concern was children, whether he is a Sinhalese or

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\(^{26}\) G6-G8 (NIE), G12 (professor), G16-G17 (MoE).

\(^{27}\) G1 (expert), G6 (NIE).

\(^{28}\) G1 (expert), G3 (NGO/institution), G8 (NIE), G12 (professor), G15 (MoE).

\(^{29}\) G1 (expert), G4 (NGO/institution), G12 (professor), G15 (MoE).

\(^{30}\) G1 (expert), G4 (NGO/institution), G14 (expert), G15 (MoE).
a Muslim or a Tamil, should be protected from the infiltration of violence, social violence, that was my goal, so I did not go into politics’ (G1: 145-147). This silencing of the conflict and ‘politics’ in education, as mentioned by the peace education expert quoted above, seems to reflect the lack of open dialogue within the wider Sri Lankan society (Lopes Cardozo 2008) and might be associated to the cultural tendency in Sri Lanka to avoid rather than to face conflict (Davies, unpublished paper; Wickremeratne 2006; Bolz 2002). In the literature on cross-cultural psychology, this tendency to avoid conflict is found within the wider Eastern culture (Leung et al 2010). Leung et al (2010) argued that this avoidance is linked to the desire to maintain, instead of potentially disintegrate relationships, which tends to be important in more hierarchical, collectivist and interdependent societies.

Although the national policy on ESCP underlined critical reflection in the desired Sri Lankan citizen, only one actor, a peace education expert [G14], explicitly referred to the significance of critical thinking in education, whereas another actor [G13] highlighted the contradiction between the concept critical thinking and the hierarchical structure of Sri Lankan society. ‘You critically think, you make your decisions and you pick. But what is considered good in a hierarchical structure is obey your parents, obey your elders. If you tell them on the one hand “obey your parent, obey your elder” and on the other hand tell them “be critical, think, these are your options” […] It opposes each other’ (G11: 171-175). This remark seems to coincide with the finding of Fabris (unpublished paper) in the Philippines that the importance of hierarchy in the Philippine culture, where children are as well ought to respect the views of their parents and elders, tends to undermine critical reflection.

6.3. Perceptions on the need for peace education

Although the national policy on ESCP was formulated during wartime, seven education governance actors 31 explicitly underlined its continuing relevance and believed, in the words of one actor within a NGO/institution, that ‘peace is needed, even in the absence of war’ (G4: 373-374). As one respondent within the MoE explained, Sri Lanka ‘is a multicultural country. Every time we need to give these concepts to children […] because every time these three communities, they are living here, so they have to cope with this. This is what I thought is peace.’ (G2: 171-174). While none of the interviewees denied the importance of peace education, three 32 did convey that the national policy on ESCP needs to be (constantly) ‘revised in the light of timely needs and timely challenges’ (G1: 485). Some current challenges that were identified are psychological problems, drug and alcohol abuse

31 G1 (expert), G2-G15-G17 (MoE), G4-G18 (NGO/institution), G13 (professor).
32 G1 (expert), G2 (MoE), G8 (NIE).
and the high suicide rate among pupils, whereas character and value building, personality development, self-empowerment and creative thinking were identified as present needs (G1: 343-363; G15: 187-194).

Unfortunately, just before I left Sri Lanka in October 2011, one MoE actor pointed to the threatened existence of the SCPEU, the main implementing body of the national policy on ESCP, that has already been reduced in size and importance over the last three years. According to this actor, the MoE was debating whether to close the Unit altogether now the war is over (G2: 167-168). Some informal conversations within the MoE seemed to point to the same direction. As one MoE actor mentioned, higher education officers ‘believe now the war is finished peace is ok. Why are you saying peace education? It is not necessary. Most of our officers say this’ (G15: 169-170). These beliefs might severely endanger the positive face of education and can be placed within the wider discourse around peace governance in Sri Lanka. Whereas some believe that Sri Lanka is already at peace, others define the peace in the country as negative (the absence of violence) and stress the need for more positive notions of peace. It seems the latter belief is needed to encourage peace education.

6.4. Perceptions on the role of teachers in peace education

All education governance actors seemed to agree on the important role of teachers in embedding peace in the minds of pupils in Sri Lanka. As one professor explained, ‘they are the people who can do it, I mean policies can be made, but in the classroom level they have to guide the students, so they have a major role [and] need to think about how to change attitudes’ (G10: 61-62, 65). Or in the words of a peace education expert, ‘the social agent of change in the society is a teacher and the teacher can change everything’ (G14: 59-60). However, referring back to the SRA (Hay 2002), teachers do not act in isolation, but are facilitated or impeded by their broader environment. The same peace education expert, the only one who stressed critical reflection in peace education, argued that teachers should ‘discard habit, break the silence and decolonize the mind’, by which he implied that teachers should realize how their teaching practice reinforces dominant and negative structures within society (G14: 40). This notion might be linked to my theoretical approach of SJP and in specific to Giroux (2009), who defined teachers as “transformative intellectuals”, who ‘must speak out against economic, political and social injustices both within and outside of schools’ (49). Furthermore, three actors explicitly noted that the teacher is a role model for peace. ‘A teacher should not use violence, should develop peaceful attitudes, so that the child can see a model of non-violence, a very peaceful person’ (G1: 195-196). In the same way, Bretheron et al (2003) argued that

33 G1 (expert), G8 (NIE), G12 (professor).
‘the teacher is important as a model of peaceful behaviour and his or her relationship with students is a powerful aspect of the learning process’ (222).

In line with the holistic and integrated understanding of peace education, described in the previous section, one expert commented that ‘every teacher can teach peace’ (G1: 197), or in the words of a MoE actor, ‘while teaching, he can show these concepts, this is kindness, this is love, this is helping someone, this is sympathy’ (G5: 62-64). When I asked how a math teacher can practice peace education, a NGO/institution actor explained: ‘In math you can ask them to calculate the numbers of countries at peace, not having insurrections or war and not having conflicts. And then he (teacher) takes time after that calculation. Children learn, they get to know, what are the countries, give a percentage. Then the teacher will teach them how to calculate the percentage, while teaching about being at peace and sensitize it. That is the holistic integrated method.’ (G4: 336-341). Moreover, two actors underlined that, in the words of one MoE actor, ‘teachers have to prepare their lessons earlier to uncover what the peace concepts are within the class they teach the following day’ (G5: 67-68).

Consistent with the education policies and based on the understanding that peace education implies an attitude change, eight actors underlined the importance of learned-centred, participatory and activity-based teaching. As one expert argued, to be peace teachers, ‘teachers should be facilitators. What is important in the classroom is not teaching, but learning. So the whole thing must be learner-centred, not teacher-centred’ (G1: 249-254). Accordingly, one MoE actor conveyed that through adopting a democratic role and initiating joyful activities teachers can instil peace concepts and attitudes, contrary to the more traditional authoritarian role that only tends to convey peace facts (G15: 93-103). Instead of using the blackboard, teachers have ‘to practice practical, more relational activities how to live with others, how to understand others’ (G17: 236-238). As one actor within the NIE explained, by ‘doing cooperative work in groups [...] automatically they become friends, they have that mutual peer correction and interaction. So by doing that, without developing the other (direct peace education), they develop peace’ (G7: 401-404). This teaching approach seems in line with SJP and can stimulate creativity, critical thinking, assertiveness and cooperation (Lopes Cardozo 2008; Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Bretheron et al 2003).

Four education governance actors underlined the important role teachers should fulfil in co-curricular activities, whereas three emphasized the specific responsibility of the civic education teachers, of the LCCE and CEG subjects, for peace education. In the words of one MoE actor ‘they [LCCE and CEG teachers] are the main peace persons in our system’ (G16: 60).

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34 G1-G14 (expert), G2-G15-G17-F1 (MoE), G3 (NGO/institution), G7 (NIE).
35 G3 (NGO/institution), G5-G16-G17 (MoE).
36 G3 (NGO/institution), G16-G17 (MoE).
6.5. Implementation and training of in-service teachers in peace education

All education governance actors I interviewed seemed highly motivated to implement peace education in Sri Lanka. However, with regard to the actual implementation of peace education, it is impossible to give precise figures, due to the fairly weak evaluation and monitoring of such programs in Sri Lanka \(^{37}\). The general consensus among the respondents was that there is ample room for improvement in peace education enactment. In the words of one, ‘the documentation side is ok, all the circulars are there, but [...] the implementation side is very poor in Sri Lanka’ (G3: 349-350).

In general, the national policy on ESCP seemed to serve as a valuable guide along which many peace education activities have been planned. Although most education governance actors cooperated with each other to a certain extent \(^{38}\), based on my interviews and personal observation, this cooperation could in some instances be further strengthened, which seems in line with a study by Lopes Cardozo (2008), who concluded that the structural lack of coordination between stakeholders involved in Sri Lankan peace education limits its success. For instance, one professor indicated that she had been involved in the formulation of the policy, but that ‘thereafter nothing happened. [...] It (national policy on ESCP) did not come into the university, I got a copy, but that is all’ (G10: 87-88). She remarked that, although the university trains in-service postgraduate teachers, ‘our lecturers were not informed or called for any training’ (G10: 42-43). This finding contradicts the national policy on ESCP, which outlined the inclusion of universities in peace education initiatives. Also, following Fraser’s (2005) dimension of unjust political representation, one NGO actor (G18) questioned whether ‘the government officials, who are mostly Sinhalese, in charge of education, will they be able to come up with a version of history, of conflict resolution, of peace studies that transcends our ethnicities and is fair by both points of view’ (G18: 184-187).

With regard to the general implementation of the national policy on ESCP, one interview within the MoE (G5) revealed that the monitoring and evaluation body, the research network and the structures to strengthen the position of the SCPEU (advisory board, coordinating committee and zonal implementing committees), as proposed in the national policy on ESCP, have not been established yet. Concerning the implementation of peace education at school level, the respondent remarked that ‘all the schools have the [peace] program, but these four are doing well: North-Western province, Uva province, Eastern province, Northern province’ (G5: 181-182).

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\(^{37}\) G3-G4 (NGO/institution), G7 (NIE), G17 (MoE).

\(^{38}\) Peace and Value Education of GIZ technically and financially supported the implementation of the National Policy on ESCP, working together with the MoE (SCPEU and Religious and Value Education Unit) and the NIE (Department of Teacher Empowerment, Institutional Development and Social Sciences). UNESCO technically and financially supported the NIE with the training of pre-service teacher educators and education officials.
With reference to in-service teacher awareness, the SCPEU has appointed and trained eight provincial and 92 zonal peace education coordinators. Ideally, via these coordinators peace education awareness should be given to divisional directors and in-service advisors, who should give the message to principals and in-service teachers. The awareness of the SCPEU aims to cover all activities within the national policy on ESCP, although the interviews seemed to reveal that most emphasis has been given to co-curricular activities. When asked how these coordinators further awareness, one interviewee replied that ‘they (provincial and zonal peace education coordinators) have to select their own ways to give the message to those schools. So we give the message to these coordinators, and they have to use their own methods’ (G5: 147-148). However, one respondent with a NGO/institution underlined the weakness of this structure, when she noted that ‘our [peace education] coordinators, when they visit schools are not paid. [...] That is why they are only going to a limited number of schools’ (G5: 320-330). Thus, the ultimate success of implementation depends on the motivation of provincial and zonal education officials (G5: 183). Indeed, my observation of the teacher peace awareness programs supported this argument that high motivation of local bodies might considerably define the success of implementation. This notion might be linked to a study by Little (2011) on education policy reform in Sri Lanka, who underlined the importance of political will at both national and local levels and conveyed that ‘where national level and local political wills are directed to the same ends in education they can be mutually reinforcing’ (Little 2011: 510).

Concerning the in-service teacher training, one NIE interview (G7) revealed that peace concepts are not yet integrated into the in-service teacher training curricula, but have mostly been included through additional circulars. For instance, the NIE has distributed a circular to in-service teacher educators ‘to practice this peace and value education through co-curricular activities’ within their regional TC’s, in the form of inter-centre workshops, religious practices, and celebration of national festivals (G7: 143-146). As most TC’s are segregated along medium of instruction (except for the Additional Language Improvement Centres), such inter-centre activities offer opportunities for interethnic learning. Along these lines, the NIE has organized a number of integrative TC programs ‘emphasizing on this peace and value education and conflict resolution’ (G7: 203-204). In these programs that usually last several days, in-service teacher students, teacher educators and coordinating officers from different ethnicities share experiences, work together on peace education case studies and participate in physical activities, meditation, cultural nights and drama. To refer to

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39 Student Parliament democratically elects ten Ministers and ten Ministries, who propose school activities, which are to be implemented by the school principal. They have also been held at zonal/provincial level (G5: 244-251). Pals of Two Cities generally refers to a five-day interethnic school exchange camp. The Elephant Pass Railway Station is a program in which Sinhalese pupils donate their pocket money to the rebuilding of the train station, which was ruined during the war and connects the Northern Jaffna Peninsula to the rest of Sri Lanka.

40 A revision of the teacher education curriculum is included within the five-year plan (G7: 590).
Weldon (2010), these integrative programs seem to approach the successful South African ‘Facing the past’ initiative, where teachers of different ethnic groups came together to share their stories. The same NIE actor (G7) added that regional TC’s also organize their own peace education activities, although she noted that she had not much knowledge on these local initiatives.

In addition to these co-curricular activities, one respondent within the NIE (G7) mentioned that the NIE together with GIZ has planned to give practical training in peace and value education to managers and teacher educators of regional TC’s to more effectively convey these concepts to in-service teacher students. However, as a rather small percentage of in-service teachers follow an in-service training, Sri Lanka stresses school-based teacher development, which in essence implies that the principal and teachers share knowledge and support each other (G7: 262-263; Batuwitage 2009). For instance, as one NIE actor remarked, ‘if I practice some very good practice in peace and value education in school, I introduce that to the others’ (G7: 267-268). She conveyed that newly trained teachers (pre-service and in-service) fulfil a vital role in school-based teacher development.

To conclude this chapter, I will briefly answer the sub-questions, analysed through my theoretical lens of SJP. The perceptions of the education governance actors in large part followed the criteria of SJP. One important discrepancy is that SJP emphasizes critical reflection and in specific reflecting on conflict. While the latter was never mentioned, the first was only cited by one peace education expert and seems to contradict hierarchy in Sri Lankan culture. In accordance with SJP, the teachers’ role is highly emphasized, by adopting an integrative approach, by viewing the teacher-pupil interaction as a role model for peace, and by promoting an activity-based, learner-centred and participatory teaching method. Only one expert referred to the transformative role of teachers to challenge society and ensure social justice. The main forms of implementation were the awareness through peace education coordinators, co-curricular and integrative activities within in-service TC’s and training of teacher educators. However, implementation is generally characterized as fairly poor.

Against the backdrop of the education policies and governance framework, which together form the strategically selective context of teachers (Hay 2002), the next chapter will explore the actions and perceptions of formal secondary school teachers. In general, teachers may use the material and methods given by education policies and governance, but may also construct their own strategies (Lopes Cardozo 2008). Drawing on the governance perception that implementation is rather poor, most likely teachers in large part construct their own strategies to peace education within the classroom and the larger school context.

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Footnotes:

41 Based on a rough estimation of an education governance actor there are around 7200 new in-service teacher training enrolments each year, which represents less than five percent of all in-service teachers (G7).

42 UNESCO and GIZ have mainly focused on pre-service teacher training.
Chapter 7. Strategic actor
The formal secondary school teacher

‘Peace can be taught through education. It is necessary to understand the needs and feelings of others regardless of race or religion. The best place where this can be taught is the school and the best person is the teacher!’ (Extra comment on the teacher survey, T31: 21-26).

On a Saturday I was invited by a provincial peace education coordinator to join one of his formal peace awareness programs for so-called “peace teachers”. In the early morning light, after a three hour bus drive I arrived at my destination. When I entered the room where the training would be given, it was coloured by the most beautiful sari’s the female teachers were wearing. In total, more than fifty teachers had come to the voluntary peace program on their free Saturday and many had travelled long distances coming from remote areas within the province. During the program the teachers were given awareness on how to be peace teachers and how to inculcate peace concepts into their subject, their classroom practice, their school and the wider community by means of creative, visual and musical methods and group work. The two peace trainers (G14, G15), who also conducted the program on voluntary basis, underlined the importance of this methodology in conveying the ESCP message. The “peace teachers”, who had received previous training in peace education, seemed highly dedicated to implement the peace program in their respective schools.

This occasion of excellence reveals that peace education knowledge is passed on in Sri Lanka, as least by some dedicated education officials, NGO’s and individuals. This chapter will portray what strategies the teachers adopt within their school and the classroom. Referring to the SRA (Hay 2002), the strategies of teachers are influenced by the wider context, in large part defined by education policies and governance. In the previous chapters I have analysed the post-conflict context of Sri Lanka and the peace education policies and governance. Against the backdrop of this contextual framework, this chapter portrays the perceptions and actions of formal secondary school teachers with regard to peace education and aims to answer the following sub-questions:

How have the teacher respondents (in-service formal secondary school teachers) been made aware or trained in peace education? How do they understand and practice peace education? How do they perceive their own role, commitment and motivation with regard to peace education? And what are the challenges and requirements of the peace education practice put forward by the teacher respondents (and the education governance actors)?

To answer the sub-questions, this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section further describes the characteristics of the teachers whom I have interviewed in my research. The second
section outlines the received peace education training of the teacher respondents. In the third section, I will outline the perceptions of teachers’ understanding of the need, content and practice of peace education. This section will also portray the general teacher commitment and the teacher role and motivation for peace education. The fourth and final section will describe the main challenges and requirements of peace education put forward by the teachers (and the governance actors) and hence, will serve as a useful bridge between the data chapters and the conclusion, where I will answer the research question on teacher agency. Throughout the chapter, the interviews with principals, the classroom observations and the focus group discussions with pupils and with in-service teachers in the UoC are used to strengthen, contextualize and enrich the findings from the teacher interviews.

7.1. Who are the teacher respondents?

Appendix 4 gives an overview of the teacher characteristics per teacher respondent. When referring to teacher (numbers) in the remainder of the thesis, the matching teacher characteristics can be found in this Appendix, in which the school numbers might direct the reader further to the matching school characteristics in Appendix 3. This section will highlight the main features.

With regard to ethnic division, 21 teachers (55.3 percent) were Sinhalese, 15 teachers (39.4 percent) were Tamil, while 2 teachers (5.3 percent) were Muslim. Connecting the ethnic background to religion, the Sinhalese teachers were all Buddhist and all Muslim teachers were Islamic, while the Tamil teachers were either Hindu (23.7 percent) or Christian (15.8 percent). Moreover, the majority of the teachers (65.8 percent) included in my study were female. The teacher respondents had varying years of teaching experience. Whereas the least experienced teacher had been teaching for less than one year, the most experienced had been teaching for already 36 years. Table 5 displays the teaching experience of the teacher respondents.

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With regard to the specific subjects, fifty percent of the teachers taught more than one subject in school. Referring back to the policy and governance context, the subjects LCCE/CEG, 2NL (Sinhala or Tamil), English and religion were perceived as important for peace education. Therefore,

43 In Sri Lanka Muslims are regarded as a separate ethnic group.
my research included six LCCE/CEG teachers, two 2NL teachers (one Sinhala and one Tamil), ten English teachers, and two religion teachers (one Buddhist and one Hindu). Furthermore, drawing on the policy and governance context, two teacher respondents were in charge of peace-related co-curricular activities, while more teachers every so often participated in these activities. Following my theoretical approach of SJP, which valued the history subject (Davies 2005; Giroux 1992), my study included six history teachers. Based on the integrative and holistic approach, outlined in SJP and the policy and governance framework, the teacher respondents also included teachers in math, science, physics, mother tongue language, biology, accounting and IT. One student counsellor was included.

Due to the highly segregated school system in Sri Lanka, it is rare for teachers to teach in a school marked by a different ethnicity and medium of instruction than their own ethnic background and mother tongue. Nevertheless, I was able to interview two teachers who were Sinhala-Buddhist, but taught in a Tamil-Hindu school.

When looking at the general training the teacher respondents had enjoyed, all teachers indicated that they had received subject-wise training somewhere in the course of their teaching career. Whereas some teachers were trained before entering the teaching profession, the majority of the teachers had received subject-wise training at a later moment in their career. Moreover, most teachers indicated that they had received a number of subject-wise seminars, usually to update the teaching knowledge after a curriculum revision.

7.2. How have the teacher respondents been trained in peace education?

With regard to specific training in peace education, only four teachers (10.5 percent) indicated that they had received at least one peace education seminar. Important to note is that these four teachers were located in the same province. Whereas one teacher (T38) participated in the peace education program described in the introduction of this chapter, three other teachers followed a peace education awareness program, which was conducted by the same governance actor (G15) at their school.

The remainder of the teachers indicated that they had not received any training in peace education and more than one third of the teachers explicitly underlined the need for training, compared to only two teachers (T28, T29) who rejected this need. For instance, when I asked a Sinhalese teacher in the subjects LCCE, geography and English whether she had received peace education

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44 T2, T3, T4, T38.
45 T2, T3, T4.
46 T1, T10, T11, T13, T14, T16, T18, T20, T21, T22, T26, T30, T37.
training, she replied, ‘no, unfortunately not! [...] so far we haven’t got anything, any training regarding this subject, regarding social cohesion and peace’ (T20: 145-146). On the other hand, within two national schools I visited in Colombo, the school principals mentioned that they had participated in an extensive training program in peace education, although they were one of the few principals invited island-wide (P3).

More than one fifth of the teachers 47 explicitly indicated during the interviews that they were unaware of any peace education government program, although based on personal observation this number might be somewhat higher. For instance, one Tamil mother tongue teacher conveyed that, although she underlined the necessity of peace education, ‘peace education is not in the government syllabus’ (T5: 44). On the other hand, one Sinhalese teacher in LCCE and history explicitly mentioned that ‘this government is very actively involved in this peace program. Earlier we could not see this kind of textbook or program [LCCE]. This government wants to improve this peace program’ (T1: 122-125). These quotations seem to reflect some ambivalence. Although neither of the teachers had received training in peace education, the second teacher did indicate that he “trained” himself in peace-related topics. Due to the lack of teacher training in peace education, teachers’ understanding and practice of peace education might considerably differ and depend on their own motivation to acquire knowledge on the topic. The next sections will portray formal secondary school teachers’ perceptions of the need, content and teaching practice of peace education.

7.3. Perceptions & reflection on the need, content and practice of peace education

Consistent with the peace education governance framework, more than two years after the war, half of the teachers 48 explicitly underlined the continuing need for peace education, as can be exemplified by an interview dialogue with a Sinhalese English teacher:

Respondent:  After the war we pay more attention on peace education in this school [...] 
Interviewer:  And why after the war more? 
Respondent:  Because we believe that the reason for the war is the lack of mutual understanding, I think. So as teachers we try to give them mutual understanding and peace education and they can respect and learn about other races and religions. So I think peace education is a good solution for the war and other things, for the problems. 
(T2: 249-256).

In line with this quotation, the general consensus among the teacher respondents is that peace education aims to increase mutual understanding between the different ethnic and religious groups

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48 T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T8, T13, T14, T17, T19, T20, T21, T22, T26, T31, T35, T37, T38.
in society. For instance, a Tamil teacher explained that peace education is needed to address misunderstanding that exists between the different ethnic groups (T13). Or in the words of a Muslim student counsellor, ‘peace education we need in our country, because several nations live in our country [...] and we should understand how to live peacefully all together’ (T38:28-33). This finding might be associated with the wider policy and governance framework and the theory on SJP.

Regarding their teaching practice, twelve teachers referred to the use of learner-centred, cooperative and activity-based group work, in accordance with SJP and the policy and governance context. One Muslim English teacher gave a brief idea of his teaching practice by explaining that he started the lesson by asking his pupils ‘what is peace? What are the benefits that we can get from peace? And what are the disadvantages?’ (123-124). He continued that in this manner ‘the students understand about the peace and they will start to [...] give their own ideas and from that I will initiate] group activities and group discussion’ (T37: 124-127). In an interview with three teachers in a Sinhala rural school, two teachers explained the learning potential of activity-based group work:

Teacher 2: In the classroom learning also, we have groups and they have unity in their groups.
Interviewer: So they are working in small groups?
Teacher 4: Not only [between] races, in between boys and girls also we have created a very good peace. They help each other.

(T2, T4: 63-67)

The teachers also had appointed classroom mediators who were given the task to solve problems among fellow pupils peacefully. Besides mingling classroom groups according to ethnicity and gender, six teachers indicated that they made use of mixed groups with pupils from different religions, wealth and ability levels to encourage understanding and cooperation in the classroom. During a focus group discussion with pupils from grade ten in a Sinhala-medium school, one pupil mentioned that respecting other religions within her classroom and working together in groups encourages peace, while another pupil remarked: ‘[learn to] work with groups in the classroom, then in the family, then in the society, then in the nation, then in the whole world’ (S4: 53-54).

The notion of mingling groups as a manner to encourage social cohesion might also be extended to the pupil-teacher relation. A Sinhalese teacher within a Tamil school remarked that during her lessons, especially the Sinhala language class, apart from explaining the Sinhala culture and language she always inquired about the culture and religion of her Tamil pupils, looking for similarities between both, which seems to resemble Said (2000) who argued to focus on the margins of similarity between different ethnic groups in society.

49 T1, T2, T3, T4, T10, T12, T13, T16, T17, T19, T20, T37.
50 T2, T3, T4, T10, T13, T19.
By the same token, some teachers explicitly noted that different ethnic groups and religions in school might increase the opportunity for mutual understanding, which is encouraged by the national policy on ESCP through the integration and linking of schools. However, ethnically and religiously integrated schools are still the exception in Sri Lanka (Davies, unpublished paper). In the schools included in my study, the degree of ethnic and religious integration was very low and all schools were marked by one dominant ethnic group and religion. Whereas Tamil and Muslim or Sinhalese and Muslim were to a small extent taught together, the combination of Sinhalese and Tamil was unusual. Only one Sinhala-medium school included two Tamil pupils. A Sinhalese teacher remarked about the benefits of multiple ethnicities within school, ‘when there are certain functions, we ask them (Muslim students) to speak about their religion and their culture, then our Sinhalese students learn these things. In the classroom also, they can do this’ (T2: 57-59). At a later point in the interview he noted that ‘if there are students with different races it may be somewhat easier to teach them peace education. [...] In our area most of the students are Sinhalese, some Muslim students are there. [...] [However] if there are Tamil students here, it may be a good opportunity for the students’ (T2: 226-232). This finding seems to reflect the remark made by Giroux (1992) that opportunities for pupils from different and opposing groups to study together (border pedagogy) stimulate peace.

Following the policy and governance context, most often teachers indicated that peace education can best be practiced through certain subjects. Accordingly, eleven teachers and focus group discussions with pupils and with teachers in the UoC, underlined the importance of the subjects LCCE and CEG. For instance, as a Sinhalese CEG teacher said, ‘in civics we have to talk more and more about peace, the organizations related to peace, and the current practice and acts of the government in the peace process’ (T18: 48-50). A Tamil LCCE teacher referred to the importance of her subject to inculcate positive attitudes and convey knowledge about the democratic system, the constitution, the multicultural society and the duties of pupils in school and of citizens in the larger society, which according to her ‘are all needed for a peaceful life’ (T32: 55). Concerning the objective of LCCE/CEG, one Tamil teacher remarked, ‘we are planting the thoughts, they have to realize it, memorizing is not the aim, we have to bring changes in their behaviours, changes in their attitudes’ (T32: 60-62). Following this objective, several LCCE/CEG classroom observations showed lively role plays on how to solve interpersonal conflicts peacefully. With reference to SJP, these aspects might instil civic consciousness and pave the way for increased mutual understanding (Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Giroux 1992).

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51 T1, T2, T3, T4.  
52 T1, T2, T6, T8, T9, T16, T17, T18, T20, T30, T32.
In line with the policy and governance framework, ten teachers noticed the significance of the 2NL for peace education. One 2NL language teacher mentioned that ‘people should learn the other’s language, than most of the problems can be solved more easily. Problems in our country especially, because we don’t understand each other’ (T7: 40-42). During a classroom observation, a Sinhalese CEG teacher conveyed the same message to his grade 10 pupils, ‘weak communication between groups like ours, is a root cause of the conflict’ (O1: 18-19). Referring to the literature, lack of effective communication between different groups in society tends to increase fear and stereotyping towards the other, a phenomenon that Giroux (1992) called “othering”. Therefore, as another manner to overcome the communication gap, five teachers emphasized the importance of English as a linking language. For instance, one Tamil science teacher noted that ‘by practicing bilingualism in proper manner I hope we can achieve peace in the future’ (T33: 24-26).

Five teachers believed that peace education can be taught through the English textbook. For instance, a Muslim English teacher explained that the English syllabus includes multicultural classroom activities, where pupils through role play or drama have to adopt another ethnicity or religion than their own. Also, he remarked that the English syllabus tells stories about the cooperation between Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims during the pre-war area. A focus group discussion with pupils from grade ten in a Sinhala-medium school supported this finding that the English textbook teaches about peace.

Two history teachers made the same remark about the value of history for peace education, conveying that good cooperation in history can serve as a valuable lesson for the future. In this respect, six teachers underlined the relevance of history. When asked to grade ten pupils in a Sinhala-medium school how they learned about peace, they remarked the history class. As example they gave the motto ‘all for one and one for all’ of the cooperative movement in England in the history textbook, which according to one pupil meant that ‘we should remove all the borders around us, respect other religions and cultures’ (S4: 33-34). Remarkably, neither the education policies, nor the governance actors specifically mentioned the history subject as a manner to convey peace.

Based on the pupil focus group discussions and teacher interviews, the history curriculum does not touch upon the history of conflict in Sri Lanka. When I asked a Sinhalese pupil whether they learned about the past conflict in the history subject, she replied that it was not needed, ‘we know, we experienced it’ (S1: 13). Likewise, a Tamil teacher noted that there is no point in talking about

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53 T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T20, T27, T34, T35, T36
54 T13, T20, T33, T34, T37.
55 T3, T16, T20, T31, T37.
56 T2, T3, T8, T16, T17, T32.
the war, the fighting or the past violence, the main focus in education should be on peace and good attitudes. This belief seemed to prevail among the teachers and might be linked to the previous quotation of one peace education expert (G1), which said that war should not come into peace education. Two teacher interviews (T6, T7) and several informal conversations with teachers and governance actors disclosed that some teachers might feel that solving the ethnic problem is the responsibility of political leaders. The literature also referred to this tendency in Sri Lanka to delegate conflict solving to the political arena, rather than to the average citizen (Davies, unpublished paper; Wickremeratne 2006). Only one Sinhalese teacher (T1) explicitly mentioned that he would like to show his pupils the war area, which he considered an important aspect of peace education. As previously mentioned, according to the literature on SJP this absence of critical reflection on the conflict fails to empower pupils to create their own critical and well-informed perception. Instead, it might encourage pupils to passively adopt potentially biased information from the media or their wider community (Fabris, unpublished paper).

In line with the perceptions of several education governance actors, five teachers perceived religion as a subject that touches upon peace concepts. For instance, the Tamil religion teacher (T12) referred to inner peace, discipline, good personality and cooperation within the Hindu syllabus, while another Tamil teacher conveyed that ‘in our school, religion is taking a main role in peace, every religion tells about peace and harmony’ (T32: 98-99). On the other hand, the Sinhalese religion teacher (T23) did not perceive the Buddhist syllabus as contributing to mutual understanding, as she noted that a comparative perspective is lacking in all religion curricula. This notion coincides with the suggestion within the ESDFP and the remark by two education governance actors (G1, G6) that a more comparative religion education is needed to increase mutual understanding.

Finally, consistent with the understanding of two education governance actors (G14, G15), two teachers referred to art and drama as a manner to inculcate peace in the minds of pupils. For instance, a Tamil art teacher conveyed that art ‘can prepare their minds for non-violence’ and can create a language through pictures, which everyone can understand (T11: 21). A Tamil drama teacher mentioned that ‘before performing, we want to clear their minds. This is important because students come from different backgrounds (poor versus rich)’ (T34: 26-27). Therefore, he started his lesson with yoga exercises to create inner peace, which according to Balasooriya (unpublished paper) is an important aspect of peace education in Sri Lanka. Referring back to the introduction of this chapter, the teacher peace awareness program also made use of drama and theatre to convey peace.

57 T2, T8, T12, T29, T32.
When extending peace beyond the syllabus, eighteen teachers 58 believed that co-curricular activities are part of peace education, which seems in line with the governance perception. The interviews and observations revealed the practice of several co-curricular activities, which seem to contribute to SJP. For instance, interschool language or sports competitions and the celebration of Sinhala and Hindu New Year to bring together pupils from various ethnicities; the Student Parliament to increase pupils’ duty-mindedness, democratic values and self-confidence; the morning assembly to convey moral and peaceful notes; and Sramadana 59 to engage pupils in voluntary community work. A film shown by three teachers 60 of a rural Sinhala-medium school, pictured their morning assembly, which was announced in all three languages by teachers dressed in various traditional ethnic costumes and showed pupils performing a self-created drama on mutual understanding. Although this activity seemed to be a genuine effort towards peace, without interethnic contact, the rather folkloric character of the activity tends to emphasize differences between the ethnic groups, which, drawing on Said (2000), might be less desirable in achieving interethnic understanding.

Eleven teachers 61 seemed to understand peace education as the formation of a peaceful classroom and school environment, which might be linked to the whole-school approach and peaceful classroom interaction put forward by the policy and governance context and SJP. The teachers gave as examples: the freedom of pupils to practice their own religion within school, the freedom to ask questions when in doubt, the sensitization of the teacher to the specific needs of each pupil, the equal treatment of pupils and the solving of conflict in the classroom. As a Tamil mother tongue teacher remarked, ‘in the class we are teaching about peace education, but at [a] small-level, not at country-level. We are guiding and advising students when they have a conflict in the classroom. [When] one student fights with another student, we say that they should not fight and behave cooperatively and encourage friendship’ (T5: 54-57). Or ‘as teacher we have to be sensitive: What is lacking? What do they (her pupils) want? What is the problem? Going to that personally and try to help them. In our small way, how we could help’ (T13: 108-111). My school observations also revealed that all schools were well kept and beautified by plants and flowers, although the lack of space in two urban schools seemed to be a challenge.

During an interview with three teachers in a provincial Sinhala-medium school, one teacher put forward that a peaceful school environment is conducive for a good school conduct and teaching-learning environment. ‘If there are problems and troubles among the students, it is somewhat difficult to conduct the school. [Therefore,] peace education is also important for the school [...]’

58 T2, T3, T4, T5, T8, T12, T13, T16, T17, T18, T19, T22, T29, T32, T33, T34, T35, T36.
59 Sinhala word for rendering free labour.
60 T2, T3, T4.
61 T2, T3, T4, T5, T8, T13, T14, T20, T34, T35, T36.
management and to create a good teaching-learning environment’ (T2: 271-275). The same teachers mentioned unity and peace between teachers as an important feature of a peaceful school environment. This notion is supported by the literature on peace education in Sri Lanka, in specific by the research of dr. Kodituwakku (2006) and Lopes Cardozo (2008). Moreover, some interviews and observations in an urban school seemed to reveal that tensions between teachers and between teachers and the principal tended to undermine the peaceful school atmosphere.

Textbox 2 displays how the teacher respondents were generally committed to the teaching profession and shows how they perceived it as their role to teach for peace, which seems to bear great resemblance with their understanding and practice of peace education, described above. Although most teachers were committed to the teaching job and saw peace education as part of their teacher role, their motivation to peace education might be undermined by several challenges.

**Textbox 2. General teacher commitment, perceptions on teacher role, and teacher motivation**

Around 75 percent of the teachers indicated to have a high teacher commitment (either a vocational or professional commitment) which might be linked to the finding that teaching is a respected and noble job in Sri Lanka.

Around 75 percent of the teacher respondents perceived peace education as part of their teaching role:
- Twelve teachers through adopting an activity-based, learner-centred and participatory teaching method.
- Eleven teachers through creating a peaceful classroom and/or school environment.
- All teachers of the subjects LCCE/CEG, 2NL, art, drama, co-curricular activities.
- Seven out of the ten English teachers through English as a link language or subject.
- No teachers of the subjects science, math, physics, accounting, biology, mother tongue language and IT.
- One out of two religion teachers not through the religion subject, due to lack of comparative perspective.
- Three out of five history teachers not through the history subject, due to the ethnically biased syllabus.

Teacher motivation to practice peace education might be undermined by a number of challenges:
- Poor teacher salary, due to which most teachers have to give extra tuition classes.
- Lack of incentives (promotion) and future career perspectives for teachers.
- Poor school facilities (lack of visual aids and multimedia, lack of space and overcrowded classrooms), which tend to undermine teachers’ practice of learner-centred, activity-based and cooperative methods.

Let me conclude this section by briefly answering the first three sub-questions and by analysing them using SJP. Comparing the teacher role with the policy, governance and theoretical framework, it seems that teachers’ perceptions do not follow an integrative approach that peace can be taught in every subject. On the other hand, in accordance with the policy and governance context
and SJP, Textbox 2 reveals that peaceful pupil-teacher interaction, peace through certain subjects and learner-centred and activity-based group work were perceived as part of the peace education teacher role by three-quarters of the teachers. Regarding teachers’ understanding and practice of peace education, most aspects resembled the national policy on ESCP and SJP, even though only few had received awareness in peace education. However, none of the teacher respondents mentioned critical reflection as part of peace education. As put forward in the previous chapter, the hierarchical structure of Sri Lankan culture seems to oppose critical thinking. In the schools I visited, hierarchy seemed to be evident in the high respect of pupils towards their teachers, which might be illustrated by the Buddhist custom for pupils to kiss the feet of their teachers before leaving the classroom. Hence, for a pupil to oppose the views of an older person, his or her teacher, will contradict this hierarchical connotation. Furthermore, none of the teachers referred to community engagement or environmental protection as part of peace education, while these were mentioned within the national policy on ESCP and by several governance actors as important aspects.

Certain challenges were raised in Textbox 2 and throughout the different data chapters, of which some deserve some further attention. Therefore, the next section will visualize all the challenges and requirements of peace education put forward by the formal secondary school teachers and the education governance actors and will describe some at more length. These challenges to a certain extent determine the agency of teachers to act as agents of peace. Therefore, the next section might be seen as a useful bridge between the data chapters and the conclusion, where I will answer the research question on teacher agency for peace.

‘The teacher gives guidance to live in peace’
Female pupil from grade 7 in a Tamil-medium school
### 7.4. Challenges and requirements of peace education

Table 6 visualizes the main challenges and requirements that came up during the interviews with the formal secondary school teachers and the education governance actors. Some challenges, which have not been discussed earlier, will be described at more length in this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges and requirements</th>
<th>Context Policies and governance</th>
<th>Agent Teachers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The belief that peace education is not needed</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak implementing structure and position of SCPEU</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exclusion of universities from peace education initiatives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unjust (majority) representation in education institutions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unequal distribution of education resources (national/provincial)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of education funds</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political influence in teacher appointment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of peace education teacher training and skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor teacher salary and incentives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor school facilities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunity for teachers to give their voice</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnically and religiously segregated education system</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language barrier</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full curriculum and evaluation reporting (full workload for teachers)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam-oriented and competitive education system</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace education mainly limited to optional subjects</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally exclusive teaching material (history subject)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of comparative religion subject</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural tendency to avoid critical reflection (on past conflict)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History subject does not address the past conflict</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowered moral and respect of pupils towards teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace education needs to tackle present needs (policy revision)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First and foremost, the remark of one Tamil teacher that peace education is not needed, a challenge which was also evident at the governance level, might undermine peace education. As the Tamil English teacher said, ‘since we do not have children from other ethnic backgrounds in this school, we do not need to teach about how to deal with differences between ethnic groups. Such problems we do not have in this school’ (T15: 53-55). To this argument she added that ‘the country is also peaceful now’ (T15: 58). In the same manner, one respondent of the NIE raised the challenge that ‘the teacher may feel that, why should we teach peace, now the war is over?’ (G8: 392).

Some current challenges that peace education should ideally address, put forward by ten education staff members (teachers and principals)\(^{62}\) were psychological issues among pupils, family problems, weakening of traditional Sinhala and Tamil culture, lowered morals, reduced respect of pupils towards teachers and increased violence in school. These issues show some resemblance with the perception of education governance actors, who mentioned psychological problems, drug abuse and high suicide rate as present-day objectives of peace education. The issues were imputed to a number of possible causes, being the ethnically driven war, the taboo of divorce in traditional Sri Lankan culture, the rise of violent Indian movies and the modern, predominantly Western influence through internet and mobile phones. One Tamil teacher in a Colombo school said that ‘students easily get frightened due to the war situation [...] as the war severely affected our minds, teachers also were affected’ (T14: 35-38). Another example comes from Northern Sri Lanka, where an interview with three teachers revealed that pupils increasingly threaten and disrespect teachers, which was confirmed during the focus group discussion in the UoC by one teacher from the North.

Ethnic bias within the curriculum is another concern, raised by three history teachers\(^{63}\) and supported by one NGO/institution actor (G18). For instance, as one Sinhalese history teacher remarked ‘especially our history belongs to Buddhism and Sinhala culture. [Therefore,] sometimes we criticize them (Muslim pupils) badly in our history’ (T26: 67-68). In the words of a Tamil history teacher, ‘both communities identity should be mentioned equally. However, the current curriculum teaches history mainly from the Sinhala perspective, [and tells] little about Tamil history’ (T6: 40-42). Both teachers expressed the worry that the excluded groups, respectively Muslim and Tamil pupils, sometimes feel discouraged to study the history subject. Both Tamil teachers noted that, due to the full curriculum, they have hardly any time to include notions of Tamil history in their lessons. Drawing on the literature on peace education in Sri Lanka, several authors stressed that culturally exclusive textbooks limit critical reflection and the development of a realistic worldview (Lopes Cardozo 2008; Davies 2005; Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Colenso 2005). This notion might also apply to the segregated

\(^{62}\) T14, T17, T21, T22, T34, T35, T36, DP1, P2, P6.

\(^{63}\) T6, T9, T26.
A teacher in the UoC noted, ‘I have knowledge about some Buddhist schools, they won’t allow Muslim or Tamil students, considering peace and cohesion, these are problems’ (U: 136-138).

Drawing on the classification of teacher motivation of Bennell and Akyeampong (2007), poor teacher salary, lack of teacher incentives and career perspectives and poor school facilities can undermine teacher motivation. Due to poor teacher salary Sri Lankan teachers are often forced to give extra tuition classes, at the cost of their family life or (extra-curricular) school activities. A principal of a Tamil-medium school remarked, ‘many teachers teach in tuition class very well, but they can’t work in school, they are resting in the school’ (P3: 134-135), a finding supported by Perera (2004). Concerning teacher incentives and career perspectives, one Sinhalese teacher noted, ‘in our profession there are no good targets given, which means no promotions, [and] salary [remains] the same’. As he said, ‘please give us targets’ (T26: 49-50). This challenge was supported by one NGO/institution actor. Furthermore, teachers referred to the lack of multimedia and visual aids, open or overcrowded classrooms and lack of space. One Sinhala-medium school I visited counted 1500 male pupils, without a playground or proper staff room. These poor facilities tend to prevent teachers from using activity- and learner-centred group work. A teacher in the UoC explained: ‘when it comes to secondary education [...] though we promote activity-based, student-centred [teaching], we don’t have the facilities. [Therefore,] certain practical subjects are just taught as classroom subjects, so they (pupils) are not given the [peace] experience, that is the problem’ (U1: 299-302).

Eleven education governance actors, fifteen teachers and the teachers within the UoC referred to the competitive and exam-oriented education system, which was also underlined in the study of Lopes Cardozo (2008) on peace education in Sri Lanka. Due to the limited number of universities, one NIE actor explained that ‘competition is there, so that will affect peace harmony within children and the teachers’ (G8: 395-396). As Sri Lankan society tends to aim for university entrance, everybody is focused on the examinations, at the detriment of peace education initiatives. One MoE official described, ‘when senior officials go to school, they inquire about the results, so therefore teachers are mainly focusing on exam subject-matter, so they pay less interest in peace education’ (G5: 78-80). Peace education, practiced through the subjects CEG, art, drama and co-curricular activities, remains optional and excluded from the exams. Although the national policy on ESCP indicated that LCCE should be a compulsory subject for the examinations, not all teacher interviews seemed to support this notion. In the words of a LCCE teacher, ‘this (LCCE) is not an exam

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64 T1, T18, T19, T26, T34, T35, T36, T37, T38, U1.
65 T1, T9, T12, T13, T18, T20, T24, T26, T28, T29, T30, T35, T36, T37, U1.
66 G1, G3, G5, G8, G12, G13, G14, G15, G16, G17, G18.
67 T6, T8, T13, T14, T16, T20, T22, T23, T26, T31, T32, T33, T34, T35, T36.
68 The main subjects for the exams are math, science, religion, English, mother tongue language and history.
subject’ (T32: 67). Perera (2004) argued that exam-oriented education in Sri Lanka tends to create failures, violence, psychological issues and suicide among pupils. Also, Perera (2004) argued that pupils need to attend tuition classes, which deprives them of their free time to explore their own personal interests. These concerns were also raised by governance actors and teachers.

In line with the curriculum being competitive and exam-oriented, it tends to be very heavy and full, which disempowers teachers to practice peace education. One MoE actor noted, ‘our teachers have no time to merge those [peace] concepts, they just teach the subject’ (G5: 140-141), a notion that seemed to be supported by twelve teacher interviews, the UoC focus group discussion and my classroom observations. Some of the teachers also pointed at the large number of government evaluation forms, which have to be completed after each class. In the words of a Tamil English teacher: ‘It is simply coming, and working, working, working. I think very soon we will end up in asylums, if it goes on like this. But the education authorities do not care, they are only dictating, we are not even given a chance to voice our opinion. Sometimes when they come, I really feel like standing up and telling them, we are not machines, we are human beings’ (T13: 258-262). These teacher constraints tend to resemble the work of Vongalis-Macrow (2007) and Giroux (2009) on the global crisis in the teaching profession, as a response to reductionist education policies, which reduce teachers ‘to the status of specialized technicians within the school bureaucracy’ (Giroux 2009: 47).

These challenges (summarized in Table 6) tend to undermine teachers’ agency for peace in Sri Lanka. The final chapter, the conclusion, aims to answer the research question on teacher agency for peace by looking at the dialectical interplay between the peace education policy and governance framework within post-conflict Sri Lanka and the peace education perceptions and practice of formal secondary school teachers, and will analyse this relationship through my theoretical lens of SJP.

‘Peace is not only about unity, peace is internal, it is about feelings’
Female pupil from grade thirteen in a Tamil-medium school

Chapter 8. Conclusions and recommendations

How can the agency, including the dialectical interplay between context and agent, of formal secondary school teachers for peace education in post-conflict Sri Lanka be understood, and can it be analysed through the theoretical lens of Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP)?

This final chapter of my thesis answers the research question, by integrating and connecting the information presented in the different data chapters. The second part of this chapter gives a critical analysis of peace education in Sri Lanka through a social justice lens, but at the same time will critically approach this theoretical perspective. In general, it seems of great importance to take into account the cultural characteristics of Sri Lanka to analyse the success of peace education initiatives and the ensuing agency of teachers. In the final section of my thesis, I will suggest some recommendations for further peace education initiatives in Sri Lanka.

8.1. Conclusions on formal secondary school teacher agency for peace education

More than two years after the ethnically driven war the peace in the country still seems of rather fragile and ambivalent nature. Already during the conflict, peace education was introduced in Sri Lanka to combat the conflict and work towards a more positive peace. The formulation of a specific peace education policy in 2008 might be regarded as a great step forward. Various actors and ethnicities were included in the formulation process, which might be associated with Fraser’s (2005) dimension of a just political representation. The policy outlined ten characteristics for a peaceful person, delineated seven key strategic areas, enriched by examples of activities, and demarcated the responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved. Although these notions look very promising, based on the perceptions of peace education governance actors, the teachers are the ultimate agents of peace. Following the SRA (Hay 2002), teacher agency is defined by the dialectical relationship between the context (peace education policies and governance) and the agent (formal secondary school teachers). Whereas the previous chapters, described these fields separately, this section aims to discuss the dialectical relationship between both, which is displayed in Figure 4.

Looking at Figure 4, the left part explains the factors that seem to facilitate teacher agency for peace, while the right part names the factors that seem to impede the agency of teachers to practice peace education. First and foremost, the majority of both the governance actors engaged in peace education and the formal secondary school teachers emphasized the continuing need for peace education in post-conflict Sri Lanka. However, the disturbing finding that some teachers and
some officials within the MoE did not seem to support this need, which might be associated with the larger discourse around the status of peace in Sri Lanka (negative versus positive understanding), might undermine peace education initiatives both at the governance and school level. The discussion whether to close the SCPEU, the main implementing body of the national policy on ESCP, is one prominent example. This ambivalence might severely constrain the agency of those peace education governance actors and teachers who are motivated to teach for peace.

The finding that the contextual (policy and governance) and agential (teacher) understanding of peace education seems to show considerable resemblance tends to facilitate the agency of teachers. However, whereas the policy and governance level underlined the need for a holistic and integrated approach, environmental protection and the engagement of the community in peace
education, these connotations seemed absent in the teacher understanding and might undermine both teacher agency and the potential reach of peace education initiatives. This ambivalence in understanding might be associated with the rather weak implementation at the governance level. Despite the high motivation of most governance actors engaged in peace education, several challenges tend to undermine effective implementation: the lack of education funds, rather weak position of the SCPEU, poor implementing structure (from the MoE to schools), poor monitoring and evaluation, and less than perfect coordination between the different actors involved. Consequently, the vast majority of formal secondary school teachers are not made aware of peace education, which tends to abate their ability to act as agents of change.

Therefore, at the time of my field research, motivated teachers were most often obliged to construct their own strategies if they wished to embed peace in the minds of their pupils. Indeed, three-quarters of the teachers perceived it as their role to teach about peace within the classroom or the school, either through their subject, a peaceful interaction with their pupils, or by means of learner-centred and activity-based group work. These notions seem to coincide with the governance understanding of the role teachers ought to assume in peace education. However, in contrast to the holistic and integrative approach put forward by governance actors, implying that every teacher can integrate peace in his or her subject, not all subject teachers shared this belief. For instance, teachers of the main examination subjects math, science, physics and mother tongue language did not view their subjects as suitable for peace education. Hence, these teachers most likely will not actively invent strategies on how to teach peace through their subject. The suggestion within the policy document to develop teacher guidelines on how to integrate peace in every subject, which has not yet been developed, might help to address this limitation.

In general, most teachers seemed to be committed to their teaching job, either vocationally or professionally, which might be associated to the finding that the teaching profession is a highly respected and noble job (or service) in Sri Lankan society. Focussing on peace education in specific, during my field research the peace education activities of some highly dedicated governance actors and teachers tended to result in occasions of excellence: interethnic school exchange camps during the school vacation; teachers travelling long distances to attend a voluntary peace education training on their free Saturday; education governance actors conducting peace education awareness programs in their weekends; beautiful school environments; morning assemblies; and, at the classroom level, role plays, drama performances and wall papers about mutual understanding and interpersonal conflict-resolution.
On the other hand, almost all teachers and governance actors indicated that certain challenges tended to constrain the practice of peace education. For instance, the mainly segregated education system, referring to both schools and teacher training institutes, the lack of a comparative religion syllabus and the culturally exclusive history curriculum are notions which tend to undermine the ability of teachers to encourage interethnic peace, and referring to Fraser (1996, 2005, 2009), endanger the social justice dimension of recognition. With regard to Fraser’s other dimensions of social justice (fair political representation and equal distribution) the rather low political representation of minority ethnic groups in Sri Lankan education institutions and the perceived unequal distribution of education resources among national and provincial schools, tend to oppose social justice within the education system, and possibly within the larger realms of Sri Lankan society (Lopes Cardozo and May 2009; Lopes Cardozo 2008; MoE 2006a; Jeyaratnam Wilson 2000; Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Colenso 2005; Stewart 2004; Perera 2004).

Low teacher salary, a lack of incentives and future career perspectives, and poor facilities within schools seemed to undermine teacher motivation, at least to a certain extent and for some teachers. Additional concerns often raised were the overcrowded classrooms, the time spend on government evaluation reporting, the exam-oriented and competitive education system in Sri Lanka, and the full and heavy curriculum, which together seem to constrain the time and motivation of teachers to discuss peace concepts within the classroom and to adopt a learner-centred and experiential teaching approach. Moreover, the heavy workload tends to endanger their inner peace.

The increasing pressure on teachers, together with their inability to voice their opinion and concerns to higher education officials, might be placed within the global tendency of reductionist education policies that disempower teachers (Giroux 2009: 47; Vongalis-Macrow 2007). As Giroux (2009) remarked, teachers are increasingly perceived as “specialized technicians”, who are to practice their profession as dictated by education policies, which tends to undermine the transformative capacity of teachers, or in other words, to be agents of peace. Hence, in post-conflict Sri Lanka these worrisome notions might considerably confine the agency of formal secondary school teachers to practice peace education and prepare the next generation for a peaceful living together.

8.2. Concluding reflections on Sri Lankan peace education versus SJP

In this section I would like to come back to the theoretical framework of SJP, which I have used throughout the chapters to critically analyse the peace education initiatives. The criteria of mutual understanding, inner peace, whole-school approach and democratic and peaceful teacher role seemed to coincide with the understanding of peace education in Sri Lanka, while the notions of
peace with nature and an integrative approach were only tangible at the policy and governance level. There are also some important differences, which merit further attention.

On the one hand, my research added one notion to SJP, which seemed a fairly important characteristic of peace education in Sri Lanka: the protection of traditional Sri Lankan culture. On the other hand, there was one salient criterion of SJP, which was not or was only barely mentioned during my field work: critical reflection in general, and in specific on the past conflict. In Sri Lanka the history subject does not touch upon the past conflict and my research indicates that there tends to be no desire to include this violent phase of Sri Lankan history into the curriculum, which reflects the silencing of the conflict within the wider society (Lopes Cardozo 2008). However, as Fabris (unpublished paper) argued in her recent work on education and conflict in the Philippines, if pupils are not critically taught about past conflict, their understanding will be merely based on the information they obtain from home, their community and the media. Due to the rather ambivalent public opinion in Sri Lanka concerning the conflict and the current peace process and the strict media control pupils in Sri Lanka might fall prey to biased and one-sided perspectives. If pupils are taught in school about the conflict from several perspectives, this might encourage a more critical and mutually understanding perspective.

Moreover, although peace education policies in Sri Lanka underline critical reflection, during my research at the governance and school level, critical reflection did not come up as an important aspect of peace education. Although authors writing about SJP emphasized the importance of critical reflection (Giroux 1992; Davies 2005a; Bar-Tal 2002; Weldon 2010; Balasooriya, unpublished paper; Lopes Cardozo 2008; Bretheron et al 2003), within the hierarchical structure of Sri Lankan culture, where one should respect the older in society, it might be less appropriate.

Questioning the teacher’s message seems to conflict with Sri Lankan culture, and if pupils do learn in school to think critically, this ability might clash with the wider hierarchical structure of Sri Lankan society. As Perera (2004) argued, education reform in Sri Lanka will not be effective if it contradicts society, which seems even more true when considering that protection of traditional Sri Lankan culture forms part of peace education in Sri Lanka. The problematic contradiction between critical thinking and the importance of cultural hierarchy (evident in the national policy on ESCP) again seems to coincide with the research of Fabris (unpublished) in the Philippines, which might indicate that critical reflection in general, and in specific about conflict, contradicts the broader Eastern culture (Leung et al 2010).

This salient difference between SJP and peace education in Sri Lanka that emerged from my research, implies that a social justice lens does not entirely fit the Sri Lankan context. Maybe a
theoretical approach to peace education, which more closely suits the Sri Lankan or Eastern culture, is needed. Leung et al (2010) concluded about conflict-solving strategies in hierarchical and interdependent societies that conflict-avoidance correlates positively with the importance of maintaining harmonious relationships (or preventing to disrupt the social system). However, Bolz (2002) questioned the value of conflict-avoidance in Sri Lanka. He argued that due to conflict-avoidance and the hierarchical structure of society, where decision-making is in the hands of parents, adolescents do not learn how to independently deal with conflict and psychological issues and tend to turn the aggression towards themselves, or turn to drugs or alcohol. Bolz argued that, together with the high prevalence of post-traumatic stress due to the past conflict and the high exam pressure coming from the education system, these factors might explain the extremely high suicide rate in Sri Lanka, especially among the youth. These findings suggest that a more active approach to conflict-solving and encouraging critical reflection and assertiveness among pupils in Sri Lanka might be desirable.

How Sri Lankan peace education could approach critical thinking and active conflict-solving in a more culturally appropriate way, might be an interesting field for further research. Inspired by the work of Novelli and Cardozo (2008), in the increasingly globalised world order where cultures might both be reinforced and reshaped, such a research should adopt a critical research agenda that takes into account the local and global cultural dynamics and interrelations.

8.3. Recommendations

Psychological issues, the high suicide rate and increasing drug and alcohol abuse were also put forward by some peace education governance actors and teachers as current challenges that need to be addressed by peace education. Therefore, following the suggestion of some peace education governance actors, I would like to argue that the national policy on ESCP might need revision to better address these (post-) conflict challenges. For teachers to better handle the psychological issues of their pupils, the inclusion of more notions on (psychological) pupil guidance and constructive problem-solving within the policy and within peace education teacher training seems valuable.

Secondly, I would like to argue the importance of addressing the exam-oriented and competitive education system, which might not only diminish psychological issues among pupils (Perera 2004; Bolz 2002), but may also give teachers more freedom in their teaching profession, or in other words increase their agency to act as agents of peace. In line with Giroux (2009), a less exam-oriented education system will weaken the current depiction of the teacher role as a “specialized technician” and instead will empower teachers to be “transformative intellectuals” in building peace.
in education. In this respect, I would like to further encourage the current efforts of the MoE to increase the opportunities for tertiary education, relieving the current pressure on the examinations, and to improve the connection between school and work. Especially so, because ‘works on political violence offer evidence that education promotes violence when the expectations of the educated are unmet’ (Lange 2011: 11), which seems to reflect Sri Lankan history, where dissatisfied and unemployed youth most likely played a conducive role in the initiation of the long-during conflict (Little 2011).

Drawing on the suggestions of several education governance actors, increased evaluation and monitoring of peace education at the school level, instead of merely evaluating exam results, might stimulate teachers to include more notions of peace education in their practice. How such a monitoring and evaluation system of peace education should preferably look like in the Sri Lankan context, could be a desired field for further research. Also, as more than one-third of teachers indicated that they wished peace education teacher training, more emphasis should be placed on teacher training in peace education, which ideally should take into account the above identified gaps in understanding between the policy and governance context and teachers. Especially I would like to argue the importance to further encourage ethnic integration within teacher training and schools.

My thesis put forward the voice of some teachers regarding peace education. However, I would like to argue that for peace education to be more effective, governance actors engaged in peace education should give more voice to teachers and seriously take into account their opinions and suggestions, as they are the ultimate implementing agents.

Many lauded steps have been taken in Sri Lanka to implement peace within formal secondary schools and some excellent practices can be identified. This is illustrated by the quotes of pupils, which reveal that the notion of “peace” is alive in Sri Lankan secondary schools. It seems imperative to carry through these efforts to further adjust the peace education initiatives to the current (post-) conflict challenges and to empower and facilitate those important agents of the peace education process, the formal secondary school teachers.
Bibliography


Fabris, A. (unpublished paper) *Education in the Mindanao Conflict – Promoting Peace*, Graduate School of Social Sciences, University of Amsterdam.


**Internet sources (websites)**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research method</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>3rd of August 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Interview</td>
<td>NPC, Staff member</td>
<td>3rd of August 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Interview</td>
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<td>4th of August 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Interview</td>
<td>School 1: Teacher 1</td>
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<td>GIZ, FLICT: The role of higher education in social cohesion. Speaker: Secretary Minister of Higher Education</td>
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<td>School 3: LCCE lesson, grade 8</td>
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<td>Focus group discussion</td>
<td>School 3: Pupils, grade 10</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>Observation</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>School 3: Tamil lesson, grade 8</td>
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<td>67</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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</table>
Appendix 2. Teacher survey

Number respondent:                      Date:

To answer the multiple-choice questions please mark the square: ☒

About you:

Home (birth) town: .................................................................

Place of Residence: .................................................................

Age:

- □ 15-20
- □ 21-25
- □ 26-30
- □ 31-35
- □ 36-40
- □ 41-45
- □ 46-50
- □ 51-55
- □ 56-60
- □ 61-65
- □ 65+

Gender:

- □ Female
- □ Male

Ethnic background:

- □ Tamil
- □ Sinhalese
- □ Muslim
- □ Other (please indicate): ....................................................

Religion:

- □ Islam
- □ Buddhism
- □ Hinduism
- □ R.C. (Roman Catholic)
- □ N.R.C. (Non-Roman Catholic)
- □ Other (please indicate): ....................................................

Completed Education: .................................................................

....................................................................................................

....................................................................................................
About your own teaching experience:

How long have you been teaching in total? ................................................ Years

How long have you been teaching in this school? ..................................... Years

Did you have any previous teaching experience, before you came to this school? Please explain:
............................................................................................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................................................................................

What are the subject(s) and grades you teach?
............................................................................................................................................................................................

Extra Comments:

Here you are free to write any extra thoughts, feelings, challenges or needs regarding social cohesion and peace within education
............................................................................................................................................................................................
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I would like to sincerely thank you for your participation!
## Appendix 3. School characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools visited</th>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Urban-Rural</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Religious division (estimation)</th>
<th>Ethnic division (estimation)</th>
<th>Boys-Girls</th>
<th>Nr. of pupils</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>Majority R.C.</td>
<td>99% Sinhalese</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>Type II</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>98% Buddhist 1% R.C. 1% Islam</td>
<td>99% Sinhalese 1% Muslim</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1C</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>95% Hindu 3,5% R.C. / N.R.C. 1,5% Islam</td>
<td>98,5% Tamil 1,5% Muslim</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>1AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>99% Buddhist 1% R.C. / N.R.C. / Islam</td>
<td>99% Sinhalese 1% Muslim</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>1AB</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>90% Buddhist 10% Islam</td>
<td>90% Sinhalese 10% Muslim</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1AB</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>60% R.C. /NRC 35% Hindu 5% Islam</td>
<td>95% Tamil 5% Muslim</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>1AB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Schools of teachers I interviewed outside school premises**

| 7               | Provincial | Urban       | Tamil  | Majority RC                   | 100% Tamil                  | Mixed      | 1000          | 1C    |
| 8               | Provincial | Rural       | Tamil  | Majority Hindu                | 100% Tamil                  | Mixed      | 400           | Type II |
| 9               | Provincial | Rural       | Tamil  | Majority Hindu                | 100% Tamil                  | Mixed      | 300           | Type II |
| 10              | Provincial | Urban       | Tamil  | 95% Islam 5% Hindu            | 95% Muslim 5% Tamil         | Mixed      | 2000          | 1AB   |
| 11              | Provincial | Urban       | Tamil  | 95% Islam 5% Hindu            | 95% Muslim 5% Tamil         | Mixed      | 1700          | 1AB   |

*Note: Locations of the schools are not shown to guarantee anonymity of the participating schools, principals, teachers and pupils.*
## Appendix 4. Teacher characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Years teaching</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
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<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
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<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>31-35</td>
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<td>Buddhist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamil language</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>41-45</td>
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<td>Tamil</td>
<td>Hindu</td>
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<td>Science/health/biology/Sinhala as 2nd language</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>Hindu</td>
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<tr>
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## Appendix 5. Principal learning competencies
### LCCE and CEG

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<th>Principal learning competencies</th>
<th>Life Competencies and Civic Education (grade six to nine)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Life Competencies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Civic Education</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts with self-understanding</td>
<td>Lives co-operatively in a plural society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts with a good plan and organization</td>
<td>Protects human qualities and social morals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faces emotions effectively</td>
<td>Behaves as a disciplined and law-abiding citizen in the society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts with empathy and behaves morally</td>
<td>Acts in mutual co-operation in personal and social activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respects leadership/forms leadership qualities</td>
<td>Explains systems of government in Sri Lanka and the world</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts successfully amidst diversities</td>
<td>Contributes to the development of a democratic society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts with positive attitudes</td>
<td>Analyses critically life situations and events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts creatively in life situations and events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibits good interpersonal relationships</td>
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<td>Involves in effective communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solves problems effectively and creatively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takes effective decisions</td>
<td>Participates actively in disaster resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solves conflicts peacefully</td>
<td>Enters the world of work</td>
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### Citizenship Education and Governance (grade ten and eleven)

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<tr>
<td>Understands structures and concepts of government in light of the meaning and importance of democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands concepts of decentralization and devolution of power to achieve governmental goals nation-wide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands the multicultural society and how such societies can develop in the interests of all citizens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands economic systems and relations, with special reference to Sri Lanka</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands conflicts that may arise and the importance of peaceful conflict-resolution in democratic societies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands the basics of law, the juridical system and its importance for a society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands the different layers of government, from national, provincial to local government bodies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands human rights, gender rights and duties essential for ensuring those rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands environment problems and the need for environmental protection to ensure sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands the position of Sri Lanka within international relations and its importance for development</td>
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