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Beyond peace education: rethinking the pedagogical contributions of teachers to positive peace in conflict-affected Sierra Leone.

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aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
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ten overstaan van een door het College voor Promoties ingestelde
commissie, in het openbaar te verdedigen
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door Sean Higgins
geboren te Stoke-on-Trent

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Faculteit der Maatschappij- en Gedragswetenschappen

Summary English (Summary in Dutch follows below)

This thesis focuses on the contribution of teachers to building "positive peace" in conflict affected Sierra Leone. This term, drawn from the writing of Galtung, refers to a conceptualisation of peace promotion which address the structural social, political and economic drivers of conflict and may be distinguished from a negative peace in which conflict affected communities experience only an absence of physical violence. The title of the thesis foregounds a key dimension of the approach taken which is to rethink and perhaps re-envision the pedagogical roles of teachers beyond that ascribed to them within peace education curriculum associated in particular with transforming the personal behaviours and attitudes of conflict affected populations.

The research has several points of departure. It emerges from the longstanding professional experiences of the writer as a teacher in challenging contexts of deprivation in England and also in conflict affected Sierra Leone which serves as the context of the research. It responds to a range of knowledge gaps highlighted in recent literature on the role of education in peacebuilding, in particular lack of research on teacher's daily lives, challenges and pedagogical strategies and views about their roles in building transformative peace that addresses structural drivers of conflict. This dearth of evidence co-exists with utopian expectations of teachers as pivotal, redemptive actors in relation to promoting peace.

Firstly, the research provides a critical overview of the extent to which educational interventions by international aid agencies have contributed to sustainable peace in Sierra Leone since the official ending of its conflict in 2002. This situates efforts to support teachers within the broader field of education and peacebuilding interventionism in Sierra Leone, and focuses not only on teachers but youth, gender injustice and educational governance.

Secondly, the research critically interrogates how the pedagogical and professional roles of Sierra Leonean teachers and the conflict-affected communities they serve are framed in a peace education curriculum developed by UNICEF for Sierra Leonean teachers and their communities. As noted above, this is particularly appropriate for a critical case study given its status as an exemplary educational intervention promoted and circulated by global aid agencies in conflict-affected contexts.

Thirdly, the research includes case studies of the informal educational projects of two Sierra Leonean community-based NGOs who have formed partnerships with teachers working in government schools to support their pedagogical practices and relationships in relation to conflict mitigation and peace promotion. By highlighting models of pedagogical practices and relationships emergent from local civil society actors they provide a counterpoint to the earlier analysis of peace education. In so doing, they align with the broad concerns of the research not only to offer critique but also to re-envision teachers' pedagogical practices for promoting conflict amelioration and peace.

Fourthly, in a final case study the research uses photo-elicitation to understand how teachers experience conditions of precarity in a particular conflict-affected eastern region of Sierra Leone, Kono, and how these experiences intersect with their pedagogical practices and agency for conflict mitigation.

These various components contribute to the broad logic of inquiry which progressively drills down from the global framings of Sierra Leonean teachers in peace education curriculum developed by international aid agencies to community models of peace promoting pedagogy and thence to teacher's micro practices and experiences. The research narrative in turn aims to speak back to the global level by considering what new knowledges and insights are revealed that might enhance policy and programming that supports teachers' roles as peace promoters in Sierra Leone and other conflict-

affected contexts. Hence the title of the thesis: **Beyond peace education: rethinking the pedagogical contributions of teachers to positive peace in conflict-affected Sierra Leone.**

This research found that despite the reputation of conflict-affected Sierra Leone as a success story, the educational interventions of international aid agencies have failed to transform the education system into one that could support a process of sustainable peacebuilding or what Galtung refers to as 'positive peace' (1976) in which structural and historical drivers of conflict and grievance are addressed. This failure is symptomatic of the broader failure of the global agenda of liberal peacebuilding interventionism. In privileging security and the integration of Sierra Leone into the global marketplace over social services reform, the provision of health and education, poverty reduction, and addressing the country's huge geographical and social inequalities, the UN peacebuilding architecture has failed to address the factors, both national and global, that contributed to the country's civil conflict. This has left the majority of the population in provincial and rural areas outside the capital, including teachers, in a state of daily immiseration.

Educational interventions in Sierra Leone managed by international aid agencies in relation to youth, gender equity and teachers are notable for their generic, technical, prescriptive and top down character; and their derivation from an international menu of reforms circulating between aid agencies and rolled out to conflict-affected contexts and demographics regardless of the distinctiveness of their conflict drivers. Hence, this research finds a disjunction between education's transformatory potential and the narrow framing of education policy and programming within the global agendas of international aid organisations committed to the liberal peacebuilding model.

The opening case study of the research focused on a peace education curriculum called Emerging Issues, which was developed between 2007 and 2008 by UNICEF for teachers in Sierra Leone. Following a dominant model of this educational intervention by international aid agencies in conflict-affected societies the curriculum emphasized the need for attitudinal and behavioural change by Sierra Leoneans. The research applied a cultural political economy approach, an interdisciplinary theoretical current that extends traditional concerns of political economy with power and institutions to show their interaction with cultural processes of meaning-making.

Findings demonstrate that this curriculum despite its benign reputation, might not be as positive, neutral or benign as usually projected. Instead, it promotes a form of pacification derived from a decontextualized curriculum that treats victims as guilty and in need of attitudinal and behavioural change, whilst avoiding engagement with the structural and geopolitical drivers that underpin many contemporary conflicts. This essentially individualises and psychologises peace promotion, locating conflict resolution only in the minds and emotions of people rather than in relation to their political, economic, social and cultural needs and materialities; or in other words, structural drivers of grievance.

As a counterpoint to peace education, the research took as a case study the pedagogical practices and positioning of teachers in School Mining Clubs (SMCs) resulting from partnerships between five schools affected by the operation of extractive mining by international companies in the region and a local civil society organisation, the Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) working with communities affected by the extractive operations of global mining companies in Kono in the east of the country. Through a study of the imaginaries and enactments of teachers' pedagogical roles and relationships the research demonstrates how, why and in what forms pedagogy may be mobilised to address perceived and experienced structural injustices faced by pupils, their families and communities in a conflict- affected context. These findings provide a counter point to peace education, indicating how pedagogical practices and relationships may respond to the situated daily realities of

pupils and their communities. In so doing, they contribute to greater understanding of a context-specific model of teacher agency, rooted in the local and global challenges faced by pupils and their communities.

Through another in-depth case study, the research investigated the work of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone which aim to support teachers in drawing on local practices, rituals and symbols. This case study therefore offers a second counterexample to the model of peace education outlined above, highlighting how pedagogy may draw creatively as well as critically on local cultural resources in developing teachers' and pupils' agency for reconciliation and conflict amelioration.

The research found that teachers respond to local culture in multiple, sometimes contradictory ways and that local indigenous culture was not understood as something static but malleable and to be repurposed as well as valorised and recognised as an important resource for peace promotion. Teachers' responses ranged from celebration of indigenous practices as pedagogical resources for conflict resolution that resonate with their pupils and communities to critique of their oppressive gender norms and inability to address structural drivers of conflict.

The final case study of the research responded to the knowledge gaps highlighted in recent research into the peace promoting agency of teachers in conflict-affected contexts. These have underscored a lack of context-specific attention to their emotional responses to the conditions of extreme precarity driving grievances which they experience on a daily basis. This is particularly true of the framings of teachers' agency within the interventions and polices of international aid agencies. The case study addressed this knowledge gap by using photo-elicitation, a research method known to be particularly generative in exploring the feelings of informants whose life experiences are frequently marginalised within dominant framings of their agency. It combined this with Butler's recent conceptualisation of resistance to conditions of precarity as inhering in the experience of vulnerability to them.

The findings demonstrated how the affective responses of 7 teachers to the sites and situations they identify with conflict underpins their pedagogical and professional interventions to ameliorate and address such situations and imagine alternatives to the status quo. The research found that teachers draw on their emotional, embodied experiences of precarity and vulnerability in their microenvironments in and out of school as resources for pedagogical strategies and actions that address drivers of grievances and conflict; and thereby navigate resistance to perceived and experienced social injustices. In doing so this case study demonstrates the hitherto unrealised potential of a theoretically informed application of photo-elicitation to enhance understanding of the peace promoting agency of teachers living and working in conflict-affected contexts.

Extrapolating from the above findings, this research generates nine key messages that respond to its overarching focus on how teachers' contribution to the promotion of peace may be rethought and re-envisioned beyond the parameters of peace education, construed as personalised attitudinal and behavioural change in conflict-affected contexts. They have epistemological, ontological, methodological as well as policy related dimensions. Following the insights of Bonaventura de Sousa Santos (2005) they are framed as spotlighting absences in current knowledge production as well as opening up "emergences" that may foster new insights and points of departure for further research. They include:

1. Recognition of teacher's mobilisation of an ecology of knowledges in their pedagogical practices and relationships to navigate conflict and build sustainable peace.
2. Recognition of their navigation of an ecology of spaces, networks and environments in peace related pedagogical practices.
3. Recognition of their mobilisation of a range of emotions as vehicles for their pedagogical roles in conflict amelioration.
4. Recognition of the contingent, uncertain impact of teacher's micro level actions outside of linear temporalities within which transitions from conflict to peace are conceptualised.
5. Recognition of teachers pedagogical practices for social justice defined and constrained by global structural drivers of grievance and conflict, namely economic, political and cultural processes.
6. Recognition of the relevance of ontological issues in understanding the production of subjectivities by peace-related pedagogical practices.
7. Recognition of the analytical and explanatory strengths of a cultural political economy approach, where this is construed as an evolving, contested and trans-disciplinary mode of inquiry that contains the potential for theoretical bricolage to explore the implications of bringing the cultural, political and economic into relation.
8. Recognition of the possibilities of methodological bricolage and post-qualitative approaches, including visual methodologies, which align with the complex theorisations of the social foregrounded in cultural political economy.
9. Policy implications of all the above in so far as they provide theoretically informed and policy relevant knowledge production about teachers in conflict situations that may inform context-responsive, teacher relevant interventions that go beyond technical and generic prescriptions with a travelling menu circulated by international aid agencies.

Samenvatting

Deze dissertatie focust op de bijdrage van docenten aan de opbouw van "positieve vrede" in het conflict in Sierra Leone. Deze term, ontleend aan de geschriften van Galtung, verwijst naar een conceptualisering van vredesbevordering met het oog op de structurele sociale, politieke en economische drijfveren van het conflict en onderscheidt zich van een negatieve vrede waarin de door het conflict getroffen gemeenschappen alleen de afwezigheid van fysiek geweld ervaren. De titel van de dissertatie markeert een belangrijke dimensie van de gevolgde aanpak, namelijk het heroverwegen en wellicht herijken van de pedagogische rol van docenten, die verder gaat dan de pedagogische rol die hun wordt toegekend in het kader van de vredeseducatie en die met name verband houdt met een verandering van het persoonlijke gedrag en de houding van de door het conflict getroffen bevolkingsgroepen.

Het onderzoek heeft verschillende uitgangspunten. Het is het gevolg van de jarenlange professionele ervaringen van de schrijver als docent in een problematische context van armoede in Engeland en ook in de door conflicten getroffen Sierra Leone, de context van dit onderzoek. Het beantwoordt aan een reeks kennishiaten die in de recente literatuur over de rol van onderwijs in vredesopbouw onder de aandacht worden gebracht, vooral het gebrek aan onderzoek naar het dagelijks leven van docenten, de uitdagingen en pedagogische strategieën en opvattingen over hun rol in de opbouw van een transformatieve vrede die structurele drijfveren van conflicten aanpakt. Dit gebrek aan feitenmateriaal gaat samen met utopische verwachtingen van docenten als centrale, verlossende actoren bij het bevorderen van vrede.

Ten eerste geeft het onderzoek een kritisch overzicht van de mate waarin onderwijsinterventies door internationale hulporganisaties hebben bijgedragen aan duurzame vrede in Sierra Leone sinds de officiële beëindiging van het conflict in 2002. Dit situeert de inspanningen om docenten te ondersteunen binnen het bredere veld van onderwijs en interventies omwille van vredesopbouw in Sierra Leone en richt zich niet alleen op docenten, maar ook op jongeren, ongelijkheid tussen mannen en vrouwen en onderwijsbeleid.

Ten tweede stelt het onderzoek kritische vragen bij hoe de pedagogische en professionele rol van de docenten in Sierra Leone en de door het conflict getroffen gemeenschappen die zij dienen, worden ingezet in een leerplan voor vredeseducatie dat door UNICEF is ontwikkeld voor docenten in Sierra Leone en hun gemeenschappen. Zoals hierboven aangegeven, is dit bijzonder geschikt voor een kritische casestudy, gezien de status ervan als een voorbeeldige educatieve interventie die wordt gepromoot en verspreid door wereldwijde hulporganisaties in door conflicten getroffen contexten.

Ten derde bevat het onderzoek casestudy's van de informele onderwijsprojecten van twee in Sierra Leone gevestigde NGO's die partnerschappen hebben gesloten met leraren die op overheidsscholen werken ter ondersteuning van hun pedagogische praktijken en relaties met betrekking tot conflictbeheersing en vredesbevordering. Door de nadruk te leggen op modellen van pedagogische praktijken en relaties van lokale actoren uit het maatschappelijk middenveld, bieden zij een tegenwicht tegen de eerdere analyse van vredeseducatie. Op die manier sluiten ze aan bij de brede zorgen van het onderzoek om niet alleen kritiek te leveren, maar ook om de pedagogische praktijken van de docenten ter bevordering van conflictverbetering en vrede opnieuw in kaart te brengen.

Ten vierde maakt het onderzoek in een laatste casestudy gebruik van foto-elicitatie om te begrijpen hoe leerkrachten de precaire omstandigheden in een door conflict getroffen oostelijke regio van Sierra Leone, Kono, ervaren en hoe deze ervaringen in verband staan met hun pedagogische praktijken en de organisatie voor conflictoplossing.

Deze verschillende componenten dragen bij aan de brede onderzoekslogica die geleidelijk beweegt van de globale framing van de Sierra Leonese docenten in het leerplan voor vredeseducatie, ontwikkeld door internationale hulporganisaties, naar gemeenschapsmodellen voor vredespedagogie en vandaar naar de micropraktijken en -ervaringen van de docenten. Het onderzoeksverhaal is op zijn beurt bedoeld om op mondiaal niveau te interacteren, door na te denken over de nieuwe kennis en inzichten die aan het licht komen en die het beleid en de programmering kunnen verbeteren die de rol van de docenten als vredespromotors in Sierra Leone en andere door conflicten geteisterde contexten ondersteunen. Vandaar de titel van het proefschrift **Voorbij vredeseducatie: heroverweging van de pedagogische bijdragen van docenten aan positieve vrede in het door conflicten geteisterde Sierra Leone.**

Uit dit onderzoek bleek dat ondanks de reputatie van het door conflicten getroffen Sierra Leone als een succesverhaal, de onderwijsinterventies van internationale hulporganisaties er niet in geslaagd zijn om het onderwijssysteem om te vormen tot een systeem dat een proces van duurzame vredesopbouw kan ondersteunen. Of wat Galtung 'positieve vrede' (1976) noemt, een proces waarin structurele en historische drijfveren van conflict en wrok aan de orde worden gesteld. Dit falen is symptomatisch voor het bredere falen van de wereldwijde aanpak van liberaal vredesopbouwend interventionisme. Door de veiligheid en de integratie van Sierra Leone op de wereldmarkt te verkiezen boven de hervorming van de sociale diensten, het verlenen van gezondheidszorg en onderwijs, de armoedebestrijding en de aanpak van de enorme geografische en sociale ongelijkheden van het land, is de structuur van de VN-vredesopbouw er niet in geslaagd de factoren, zowel op nationaal als op mondiaal niveau, die hebben bijgedragen aan het burgerconflict in het land, aan te pakken. Hierdoor is de meerderheid van de bevolking in de provinciale en landelijke gebieden buiten de hoofdstad, met inbegrip van de docenten, in een toestand van dagelijkse verpaupering terechtgekomen.

De onderwijsinterventies in Sierra Leone die door internationale hulp organisaties worden geleid ten aanzien van jongeren, gendergelijkheid en docenten vallen op door hun algemene, technische, normatieve en top-down karakter. Ze komen voort uit een internationaal menu van hervormingen die tussen de hulporganisaties circuleren en die worden uitgerold in de contexten en de demografie die door het conflict worden beïnvloed, ongeacht het specifieke karakter van hoe de conflicten worden veroorzaakt. Vandaar dat dit onderzoek een kloof herkent tussen het hervormingspotentieel van het onderwijs en de smalle framing van het onderwijsbeleid en de onderwijsprogrammering binnen de wereldwijde aanpak van internationale hulporganisaties die zich inzetten voor het liberale vredesopbouwmodel.

De eerste casestudy van het onderzoek richtte zich op een curriculum voor vredeseducatie genaamd Emerging Issues, dat tussen 2007 en 2008 door UNICEF werd ontwikkeld voor docenten in Sierra Leone. In navolging van een dominant model van deze onderwijsinterventie door internationale hulporganisaties in door conflicten getroffen samenlevingen benadrukte het curriculum de noodzaak van een verandering van attitude en gedrag bij de Sierra Leonese bevolking. Het onderzoek paste een culturele politieke economische benadering toe, een interdisciplinaire theoretische stroming die de traditionele zorgen van de politieke economie uitbreidt met macht en instellingen om hun interactie met culturele processen van betekenisgeving te laten zien.

De bevindingen tonen aan dat dit curriculum, ondanks zijn minzame reputatie, misschien niet zo positief, neutraal of minzaam is als gewoonlijk wordt afgeschilderd. In plaats daarvan bevordert het een vorm van pacificatie die is afgeleid van een gedecontextualiseerd curriculum dat slachtoffers als schuldig behandelt en behoefte heeft aan attitude- en gedragsverandering, terwijl het betrokkenheid bij de structurele en geopolitieke drijfveren, die aan de basis liggen van veel hedendaagse conflicten, vermijdt. Dit individualiseert en psychologiseert in wezen de vredesbevordering, waarbij het oplossen

van conflicten alleen in de hoofden en emoties van de mensen wordt gezocht en niet in relatie tot hun politieke, economische, sociale en culturele behoeften en materialiteiten; of met andere woorden, structurele drijfveren van wrok en conflict.

Als tegenwicht voor vredeseducatie nam het onderzoek als casestudy de pedagogische praktijken en de positionering van leerkrachten in *School Mining Clubs* (SMC's) als resultaat van partnerschappen tussen vijf scholen die getroffen zijn door de exploitatie van de mijnbouwindustrie door internationale bedrijven in de regio en een lokale maatschappelijke organisatie, de Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), die werkt met gemeenschappen die getroffen zijn door de winningsactiviteiten van wereldwijde mijnbouwbedrijven in Kono in het oosten van het land. Door middel van een onderzoek naar de verbeeldingskracht en de handelingen van de pedagogische rollen en relaties van de docenten toont het onderzoek aan hoe, waarom en in welke vormen pedagogische strategieën kunnen worden gemobiliseerd om vermeende en ervaren structurele onrechtvaardigheden waarmee leerlingen, hun families en gemeenschappen in een conflictcontext te maken krijgen, aan te pakken. Deze bevindingen vormen een tegenwicht tegen vredeseducatie en geven aan hoe pedagogische praktijken en relaties kunnen inspelen op de dagelijkse realiteit van leerlingen en hun gemeenschappen. Op die manier dragen ze bij tot een beter begrip van een context-specifiek model van een docentenorganisatie, geworteld in de lokale en globale uitdagingen waarmee de leerlingen en hun gemeenschappen geconfronteerd worden.

Door middel van een andere uitgebreide casestudy werd het werk onderzocht van *Fambul Tok Peace Clubs* in het door conflicten getroffen Sierra Leone, die tot doel hebben de docenten te ondersteunen bij het gebruik maken van lokale praktijken, rituelen en symbolen. Deze casestudy biedt daarom een tweede tegenvoorbeeld van het hierboven geschetste model van vredeseducatie en benadrukt hoe de pedagogie zowel creatief als kritisch gebruik kan maken van lokale culturele middelen bij de ontwikkeling van het organisatie van docenten en leerlingen voor verzoening en conflictvermindering.

Uit het onderzoek bleek dat docenten op meerdere, soms tegenstrijdige manieren reageren op de lokale cultuur en dat de lokale inheemse cultuur niet werd opgevat als iets statisch maar kneedbaars en dat die werd herbestemd, gewaardeerd en erkend als een belangrijk hulpmiddel voor vredesbevordering. De reacties van de docenten varieerden van de viering van inheemse rituelen als pedagogische middelen voor het oplossen van conflicten die weerklank vinden bij hun leerlingen en gemeenschappen, tot kritiek op onderdrukkende gendernormen en het onvermogen om structurele oorzaken van conflicten aan te pakken.

De laatste casestudy van het onderzoek was een reactie op de kennishiaten die in het recente onderzoek naar het vredesbevorderende docentenorganisatie in door conflicten getroffen contexten aan het licht zijn gekomen. Deze onderstrepen een gebrek aan contextspecifieke aandacht voor de emotionele reacties op de omstandigheden van extreme armoede die hen dagelijks in de problemen brengt. Dit geldt in het bijzonder voor de kaders van de docentenorganisatie binnen de interventies en het beleid van internationale hulporganisaties. De casestudy ging in op deze kenniskloof door gebruik te maken van foto-elicitatie, een onderzoeksmethode waarvan bekend is dat ze bijzonder productief is in het onderzoeken van de gevoelens van informanten van wie levenservaringen vaak worden gemarginaliseerd binnen de dominante kaders van hun organisatie. Dit werd gecombineerd met Butler's recente conceptualisering van het verzet tegen precaire omstandigheden die voor hen verbonden zijn met de ervaring van kwetsbaarheid.

De bevindingen toonden aan hoe de affectieve reacties van 7 docenten op de locaties en situaties die zij identificeren met conflict hun pedagogische en professionele interventies onderbouwen om dergelijke situaties te verbeteren en aan te pakken en alternatieven voor de status-quo te bedenken.

Het onderzoek toonde aan dat docenten hun emotionele, geïntegreerde ervaringen van armoede en kwetsbaarheid in hun micro-omgeving in en buiten de school gebruiken als middelen voor pedagogische strategieën en acties die de drijfveren van grieven en conflicten aanpakken; en zo weerstand tegen vermeende en ervaren sociale onrechtvaardigheid wegnemen. Daarmee laat deze casestudy het tot nu toe niet gerealiseerde potentieel zien van een theoretisch geïnformeerde toepassing van foto-elicitatie om het begrip van de vredesbevorderende docentenorganisatie die in een door conflicten getroffen context leven en werken, te vergroten.

Door extrapolatie van bovenstaande bevindingen levert dit onderzoek negen kernboodschappen op die een antwoord bieden op de overkoepelende focus op de manier waarop de bijdrage van leerkrachten aan de vredesbevordering kan worden heroverwogen en opnieuw bekeken buiten de parameters van vredeseducatie, geïnterpreteerd als een gepersonaliseerde attitude- en gedragsverandering in door conflicten geteisterde contexten. Ze hebben zowel epistemologische, ontologische, methodologische als beleidsgerelateerde dimensies. In navolging van de inzichten van Bonaventura de Sousa Santos (2005) worden ze geframed als schijnwerpers op de hiaten in de huidige kennisproductie, en als "noodsituaties" die nieuwe inzichten en aanknopingspunten voor verder onderzoek kunnen bieden. Zij omvatten:

1. erkenning dat docenten een ecologie van kennis kunnen mobiliseren in hun pedagogische praktijken en relaties om zo door conflicten te laveren en om duurzame vrede op te bouwen.
2. erkenning van hun navigatie van een ecologie van ruimtes, netwerken en omgevingen in vredesgerelateerde pedagogische praktijken.
3. erkenning van hun mobilisatie van een reeks emoties als medium voor hun pedagogische rol in conflictverbetering.
4. erkenning van de contingente, onzekere impact van de acties van de docent op microniveau buiten de lineaire tijdelijkheden waarin de overgang van conflict naar vrede wordt geconceptualiseerd.
5. erkenning van de pedagogische praktijken van docenten voor sociale rechtvaardigheid die gedefinieerd en beperkt worden door globale structurele drijfveren van grieven en conflicten, met name economische, politieke en culturele processen.
6. erkenning van de relevantie van ontologische kwesties voor het begrijpen van de creatie van subjectiviteiten door vredesgerelateerde pedagogische praktijken.
7. erkenning van de analytische en verklarende kracht van een cultureel-politieke economische benadering, waar deze wordt opgevat als een evoluerende, omstreden en transdisciplinaire onderzoekswijze die het potentieel bevat voor theoretische assemblage om de implicaties van het in relatie brengen van de culturele, politieke en economische aspecten te onderzoeken.
8. erkenning van de mogelijkheden van methodologische assemblage en postkwalitatieve benaderingen, met inbegrip van visuele methodologieën, die aansluiten bij de complexe theorieën van de sociale voorgrond in de culturele politieke economie.

9. Beleidsimplicaties van al het bovenstaande voor zover zij theoretisch geïnformeerde en beleidsrelevante kennisproductie over docenten in conflictsituaties bieden die kunnen leiden tot contextgerelateerde, voor docenten relevante interventies die verder gaan dan technische en algemene voorschriften met een rondreizend menu dat door internationale hulporganisaties wordt verspreid.

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Publications

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Novelli, M. and Higgins, S., (2017). The violence of peace and the role of education: insights from Sierra Leone. *Compare*, 47, 32-45 ... 103

Chapter 2

Higgins, S., (2020). Rethinking Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Approach. *Comparative Education Review*, Featured Article, February 2020. ... 123

Chapter 3

Higgins, S. and Novelli, M., (2018). The Potential and Pitfalls of Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Analysis of the Emerging Issues Teacher Education Curriculum in Sierra Leone. *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, 6(1), 29-53. 143

Chapter 4

Higgins, S., (2018). School mining clubs in Kono, Sierra Leone: the practices and imaginaries of a pedagogy of protest against social injustice in a conflict-affected context. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 16(4), 478-493. 167

Chapter 5

Higgins, S., (2019). Culturally responsive peacebuilding pedagogy: a case study of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 0(0), 1-19. 189

Chapter 6

Higgins, S., (2019). "This is of concern to me really…"; Using photo elicitation to understand the vulnerability and resistance of teachers to drivers of conflict in Kono, Sierra Leone. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education*, Forthcoming. 207

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Introduction

1. Introduction

At the core of the issues explored in this thesis is a paradox. On the one hand, much is expected of teachers in contributing to sustainable peace in conflict-affected contexts in the policies, programming and curriculum interventions of international aid agencies. On the other hand, there is currently a dearth of evidence of their experiences, voices, viewpoints and concerns, not least in relation to their pedagogical practices and relationships within such challenging environments. So teachers are heralded as heroes on the front lines of conflict transformation (UNESCO, 2011, 92); as healers and nurturers in their classrooms (International Rescue Committee, 2006, 6); as agents of a return of normalcy (UNESCO, 2001); as resilient actors in difficult circumstances (Shah et al, 2019); as the professional group whose work is unique in symbolising peace dividends after conflict; (McCandless, 2012); as constituting the largest cadre of paid civil servants, thus dominating public expenditure budgets (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013, 10); as pivotal actors in the creation of a social infrastructure for peacebuilding (Lederach, 2010, 37-61); as 'the single most important factor in mediating the curriculum and its values' (Smith, 2005); and as 'the most critical resource in education reconstruction' (World Bank, 2005, 49). Reiterating this weight of expectation, the UNESCO report on Armed Conflict and Education (2011, 92) concluded unequivocally that 'teachers count'.

Thus, accoladed as pivotal actors in the promotion of peace in conflict-affected societies, teachers are hyper visible as subjects and targets of educational interventions in these contexts. In relation to their expected peace promoting roles, they are also responsibilised with delivering a diverse array of curriculum initiatives. These include lifeskills, citizenship, health, human rights, and social justice curriculum and most commonly and of particular relevance for this thesis, peace education (UNESCO, 2011, 240). While well intentioned, however, such expectations in effect position them as implementers, albeit unheard and largely unknown, of what many consider as an overly ambitious (Novelli and Sayed 2016, 16; Sayed and Ahmed, 2015, 29) and unrealistic global international menu of fast travelling generic policy solutions (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014). As noted in a recent synthesis report on the role of teachers in peacebuilding in five conflict-affected contexts 'such an ambitious variety of responsibilities runs the real risk of overstating the potential of schools and their teachers to effect broader social transformation' (Sayed and Novelli 2016, 23).

Co-existing with these expectations, there remains a dearth of evidence on how teachers themselves understand, experience and enact their agency, pedagogical and personal, in contributing to peace promoting processes in the micro-contexts of their classrooms and conflict-affected communities

(Shepler, 2011, 199; VSO 2002, 2008; UNESCO, 2012, 3; Buckler, 2011; Sayed and Novelli, 2016; Horner et al., 2015). We have little knowledge of their situated and lived daily challenges and realities, how they feel or what matters to them. (Sayed and Novelli, 2016, 50). Van Ommering (2017, 104) has recently highlighted this knowledge gap, noting that 'very little is known about the actual experiences of teachers in such situations, or the strategies they employ to generate conducive learning environments'. Likewise, Horner et al. (2015, 13) in a literature review on the role of teachers in peacebuilding conclude that the evidence base 'specifically relating to teachers and peacebuilding was limited'. In addition, the review critiques the dominance of a truncated understanding of teachers as agents of peace promotion that brackets off their pedagogical practices as teachers from the specific contexts in which they live and work. Hence the 'underdevelopment of holistic explorations that combine teacher issues and peacebuilding together' (Horner et al., 2015, 13). Such skewed analysis arguably depoliticises teachers and forecloses attention to their positioning with cultural and political economy dynamics of conflict at multiple scales; in particular their daily navigation of conflict drivers in the communities they serve resulting from macro-level processes of global capitalism and the ongoing legacies of imperialism in post-colonial contexts. As Novelli (2016) has shown, both are contributors to rampant social inequalities, processes of precaritisation and experiences of social injustices that drive grievances in conflict-affected contexts.

Compounding the paradox of utopian expectations co-existing with knowledge gaps and silences is the wide circulation of a deficit and homogenising view of teachers. This represents them as lazy and irresponsible; in other words, as the problem rather than the solution to peace building challenges (Horner et al., 2015). Such approaches transfer to understandings of teachers in conflict-affected environments what has come to be known as a 'discourse of derision' within current global policymaking on teacher governance (Robertson, 2012b, 591; Verger and Altinyelken, 2013). For instance, on the front cover of one of the World Bank's policy briefings on accountability (Bruns et al., 2011), there is a picture of a teacher who is asleep, sandals off, with outstretched legs (Robertson, 2012b). The specific context of this classroom is not identified but its lack of materials and resources, the absence even of a blackboard as well as its poor physical infrastructure are typical of the bleak environments teachers face in developing countries and conflict-affected contexts (UNESCO, 2011). That teachers are the 'main culprit[s] failing children and their learning' in these settings is the message (Robertson, 2012b).

Such deficit constructions of teachers are also the result of a failure to valorise the pedagogical processes through which they exercise agency in relation to peace promotion. Thus, in Learning to Realise Education's Promise, the recent World Bank (2018a) policy statement on education, teachers form part of an apocalyptic framing of education in developing and conflict-affected contexts as part of a 'crisis' of learning'. This construction implicitly problematises their agency not only as deficient

but also irrelevant. Hence Sriprakash et al. (2019, 11) draw attention to the 'functionalist rationalities' of the report's language of learning which is construed as a matter of inputs, outcomes and metrics. 'We are told in a statement, that all but dismisses the expertise of educators at the chalk face: to take learning seriously, start by measuring it' (World Bank, 2018b, 57 quoted in Spriprakash et al., 2019, 9). This approach reduces teachers' agency and the pedagogical processes they oversee to components of educational processes conceived in a social, political and paradoxically a teacher-free vacuum. Scholars have noted that concepts have a performative effect not only in referring to aspects of the social world but also in constituting 'that which they enunciate' (Butler, 1993, 217). Given the epistemic authority of the World Bank in agenda setting within global educational discourse (Zapp, 2017; Mundy and Verger, 2015) its dissemination of such reductive representations of teachers, however partial and unevidenced, massively skews our understanding, privileging denigration over valorisation and understanding.

This approach also forecloses engagement with teachers' views, viewpoints and knowledges. Hence, the voices of teachers are strikingly absent from the World Bank's report. Verger et al. (2014) have highlighted the inadequacies of its mechanisms of consultation with external actors including teachers. This inattention to the very actors heralded as pivotal for peace promotion extends to their deliberate marginalisation from the development of policies and programmes in conflict-affected contexts. Thus Vongalis Macrow (2006) highlights the exclusion of teachers by international NGOs, donors and policy makers managing educational reconstruction in post-conflict Iraq. She concluded that 'the local teachers and their cultural and educational expertise were overshadowed by the 'neutral' politics of reconstruction' (ibid, 99). Hence, 'educators are key actors in the symbolic theatre of policy but that real educational change is left in the hands of others' (ibid, 107). While teachers are construed as pivotal actors in peace promotion then, they are simultaneously denied a meaningful presence in the processes of developing educational interventions.

Within representations of teachers' professional and pedagogical roles in peace promotion, therefore, there is a striking and contradictory co-existence of idealisation and ignorance, hyperbole and occlusion, praise and blame, invisibility and hyper-visibility, massive levels of responsibilisation of teachers alongside disengagement from teachers lived realities and contexts. These contradictions raise several issues and questions which are addressed and explored in this thesis. Firstly, they invite attention to a fundamental ontological question of how and why teachers are construed and constituted in particular ways as individual and collective human subjects working in challenging contexts in the absence of evidence about and from them. What apprehensions of the social world are teachers being fitted into? What assumptions about the nature of the human and the social underpin these framings and where do they originate?

Secondly, the contradictory representations of teachers in conflict affected contexts also raises the epistemological issue of whose and what knowledges are privileged and at the same time marginalised in such framings of teachers and why? Why do such paradoxes exist in research and practice in the field of education and peacebuilding? Whose agendas and interests do they serve? How and why does the social and institutional infrastructure of education and development reproduce them without scrutiny? These questions invite attention to how the parameters within which knowledge is produced about teachers can be re-thought and what epistemic and heuristic resources may be mobilised to do so. In other words, how can we better understand the agency of teachers to go beyond the projections, assumptions and prescriptions, whether overly positive and utopian or overly negative and judgemental? How can we better root their pedagogical and professional agency for conflict amelioration in the particular context-specific challenges they face within their classrooms and communities? How can we connect such understandings of micro level pedagogical practices to the global and macro level social, cultural and economic processes that shape and constrain them, directly and indirectly? What forms of knowledge production may close the gap between rhetoric and reality in relation to explaining and elucidating teacher's pedagogical agency for peace promotion?

Third, methodological challenges follow. Through what data gathering methods can we know more about how teachers themselves feel, experience and perceive their contributions to sustainable peace in conflict-affected contexts outside of top down, prescriptive expectations? How can we uncover how they understand their pedagogical roles and contributions in navigating conflict drivers and promoting peace in the contexts of their classrooms and communities? What are the strengths and weaknesses of conventional qualitative methods in realising these goals?

Fourth, and informing these first three dimensions, there is an ethical obligation to problematise whose power and interests are served by the contradictions and exclusions. This underscores the relevance of what the post-colonial thinker Bonaventura de Sousa Santos has termed 'cognitive justice'. This concept invites attention to analysis and explanation of the 'silences' and erasures in the production of knowledge. These are arguably not only epistemic matters but are forms of social injustice in themselves (de Sousa Santos, 2014). Recovering and valorising the insights and experiences of teachers into peace promoting pedagogical practises in their conflict-affected contexts thus invites an ethical research praxis as outlined by Haraway (1988). This obligates the researcher to reconfigure power asymmetries of knowledge production in order to recover and to valorise the 'situated and embodied knowledges' of 'subjugated standpoints' (ibid, 583, 584) or the 'privilege of the partial perspective' (ibid, 575). Such an approach would seek to interrogate implicit 'presumptions of objectivity in knowledge claims' (Taylor, 2017, 13). In the case of teachers, this would mean research that problematises the certainties of praise and blame in the policy rhetoric noted above;

and through listening to them, as the experts on their environments, aspire to a more immanent and grounded form of knowledge production.

Fifth, this approach entails a critical agenda as set out in the pioneering paper by Novelli and Lopes Cardozo (2008). Following the insights of Cox, they emphasised the importance of research that scrutinises the status quo in order to re-envision alternatives, to consider how things 'might be'. Hence attention to epistemological, ontological, methodological and ethical issues not only aims to problematise the framings of teachers and the 'conditions for knowing and knowledge' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 5) about them. It also seeks to recover overlooked knowledges and practices that may open up new horizons of action and possibilities through which to understand as well as to rethink and re-envision how teachers' pedagogical practices and relationships might contribute to sustainable peace promotion. In this way 'critique is the basis for social change' (ibid, 15). This criticality is important, given the influence of an 'industry' of professional development 'experts' (Kothari, 2005, 425) on the agendas of donors and policymakers. Lacking context specific knowledges of conflict-affected contexts but nevertheless presuming to offer reliable 'expertise', their authority arguably works to 'limit the effectiveness of critical voices' (ibid, 425).

Following Sayer's (2009) framing of the goals of research in social science a critical research agenda obligates an evaluative exposure of 'avoidable suffering' (ibid, 267) and a 'normative stance on human flourishing or well-being' (ibid). As Robertson and Dale (2015, 5) have pointed out, the intellectual obligation to critique needs to take seriously Sayer's challenge to be 'critical of contemporary economy, culture and society' (2009). In a compelling paper Who's Afraid of Critical Social Science (2009) Sayer expresses regret at the tendency for critique to 'turn inwards' and 'to the ways of thinking available to the researcher him or herself' (ibid, 779). This may result in a focus on 'denaturalising discourses or exposing contradictions only' (ibid), a process of discursive problematisation without ethical or political direction and without providing any normative or evaluative commentary that may result in social transformation. This retreat from the normative in social science is indebted to Foucault's notion that 'the role of the intellectual is not to tell others what to do' (1997, quoted in Sayer, 2009, 779). However, Sayer points out that 'while reflexivity might certainly be considered an intellectual virtue, it amounts to a highly limited notion of critique' (Sayer, 2009, 779). This insight seems particularly apt when what is at stake is a systemic failure to engage with the experiences of teachers in challenging contexts of suffering and precarity. Hence this research seeks to blend reflexivity with solidarity and a commitment to real world transformation of practices in the tradition of scholarly activism (Macdonald and Young, 2018).

Finally, this research seeks to mobilise the virtues which MacFarlane (2009) has identified as hallmarks of doing academic research with integrity. He names these as courage, respectfulness,

resoluteness, sincerity, humility and reflexivity. These are all necessary ethical prerequisites of an approach that problematises the gaps and contradictions inherent in the framings of teachers by powerful international development institutions as well as strives to find meaningful alternatives. Hence its emergence from a principled as well as affective and emotional concern to speak 'truth to power'.

This thesis concretises these broad questions and issues in relation to the pedagogical contribution of teachers to peace promotion in conflict-affected Sierra Leone (Keen, 2005) and in particular in its eastern region of Kono. This is notable as the epicentre of its 10 year long conflict (1992-2002) and an area where chronic levels of poverty and resentment at the operations of international diamond mining companies continue to drive grievance and conflict in the communities served by teachers.
The research strands and published outcomes respond directly to the paradox outlined above and the related knowledge gaps it highlights. In particular, their underlying logic is informed by the obligation to rethink and re-envision the contribution of Sierra Leonean teachers to peace promotion outside of the contradictions of global policy and programming; and in particular to interrogate the framings of teachers within one of the dominant curriculum interventions in conflict-affected contexts, peace education.

This overarching goal breaks down into several avenues of inquiry. Firstly, the research provides a critical overview of the extent to which educational interventions by international aid agencies have contributed to sustainable peace in Sierra Leone since the official ending of its conflict in 2002. This situates efforts to support teachers within the broader field of education and peacebuilding interventionism in Sierra Leone, and focuses not only on teachers but youth, gender injustice and educational governance.

Secondly, the research critically interrogates how the pedagogical and professional roles of Sierra Leonean teachers and the conflict-affected communities they serve are framed in a peace education curriculum developed by UNICEF for Sierra Leonean teachers and their communities. As noted above, this is particularly appropriate for a critical case study given its status as an exemplary educational intervention promoted and circulated by global aid agencies in conflict-affected contexts.

Thirdly, the research includes case studies of the informal educational projects of two Sierra Leonean community-based NGOs who have formed partnerships with teachers working in government schools to support their pedagogical practices and relationships in relation to conflict mitigation and peace promotion. By highlighting models of pedagogical practices and relationships emergent from local civil society actors they provide a counterpoint to the analysis of peace education. In so doing, they align with the broad concerns of the research not only to offer critique but also to re-envision teachers'

pedagogical practices for promoting conflict amelioration and peace. Fourthly, in a final case study the research uses photo-elicitation to understand how teachers experience conditions of precarity in a particular conflict-affected eastern region of Sierra Leone, Kono, and how these experiences intersect with their pedagogical practices and agency for conflict mitigation.

These various components contribute to the broad logic of inquiry which progressively drills down from the global framings of Sierra Leonean teachers in peace education curriculum developed by international aid agencies to community models of peace promoting pedagogy and thence to teacher's micro practices and experiences. The research narrative in turn aims to speak back to the global level by considering what new knowledges and insights are revealed that might enhance policy and programming that supports teachers' roles as peace promoters in Sierra Leone and other conflict-affected contexts. Hence the title of the thesis: **Beyond peace education: rethinking the pedagogical contributions of teachers to positive peace in conflict-affected Sierra Leone.**

Research outputs for this PhD included several single and co-authored publications as shown in the table below. These have been published or are forthcoming in several high impact journals aligned with diverse research priorities. These include education and globalisation (publication 4), research methodologies (6), theoretically informed research in comparative education (3), internationally significant perspectives in the sociology of education (5) and inter-disciplinary research related to peacebuilding (3).

Title and authorship	Publication	Chapter/Pages
1. Novelli, M., Higgins, S., Ugur, M. and Valiente, O., (2014). The Political Economy of Education Systems in Conflict-affected Contexts. **Co-author**	London: Department for International Development (DFID)	Not included-
2. Novelli, M. and Higgins, S. (2017). The violence of peace and the role of education: insights from Sierra Leone. **Shared Authorship**	*Compare*, *47*, 32-45.	**1** 103-122
3. Higgins, S., & Novelli, M (2020). Rethinking Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Approach. **First Author**	*Comparative Education Review*, Featured Article, February 2020.	**2** 123-142
4. Higgins, S. and Novelli, M., (2018). The Potential and Pitfalls of Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Analysis of the Emerging Issues Teacher Education Curriculum in Sierra Leone. **First Author**	*Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, *6*(1), 29-53.	**3** 143-166
5. Higgins, S., (2018). School mining clubs in Kono, Sierra Leone: the practices and imaginaries of a pedagogy of protest against social injustice in a conflict-affected context. **Sole authorship**	*Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *16*(4), 478-493.	**4** 167-188
6. Higgins, S., (2019). Culturally responsive peacebuilding pedagogy: a case study of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone. **Sole Authorship**	*International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *0*(0), 1-19.	**5** 189-206
7. Higgins, S., (2019). "This is of concern to me really…"; Using photo elicitation to understand the vulnerability	*International Journal of Research and*	**6** 207-226

	and resistance of teachers to drivers of conflict in Kono, Sierra Leone. **Sole Authorship**	*Methods in Education*, Forthcoming.	

Figure 1 Publcations

The majority are academic publications. They evince collaborative scholarship as well as 'single authored publications', which, despite that branding, crucially depended on the insights of networks of supportive scholars. They also include the Executive Summary of a literature review (1) commissioned by the UK Department for International Development aimed at 'donors, education advisers and agencies, development practitioners and Ministry of Education policy makers working in conflict-affected contexts' (Novelli et al., 2014, 1).

The outputs of the research thus addressed a range of audiences or institutionalised publics within the professional field and practice of education, conflict and development in and beyond the academy. Their diverse readership is significant given the much commented upon need to bridge the researcher-practitioner divide that currently undermines the prospect of leveraging academic knowledge about education and conflict resolution to enhance programmes and policymaking (Leander and Weaver, 2019; Paulson, 2019). This underlying attention to the need to communicate research to multiple audiences is aligned with calls for what have been termed 'assemblages' of knowledges on conflict amelioration that straddle the 'lateral' divide between the academy and the field of policy/practice (Leander and Weaver, 2019). However, while the research for this thesis straddles the worlds of policy and practice as well as academic research, the text of this PhD by article only includes the academic publications noted in figure 1 (2-6) for reasons of succinctness and readability.

Following University of Amsterdam guidelines for a PhD by article (Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research, 2018, 56-58) this introduction clarifies how these publications connect as well as the research imaginary underpinning them. In other words, it demonstrates the emergence of the research issues from my prior professional experience as a teacher in England and Sierra Leone, as well as the empirical, theoretical and methodological considerations which have contributed to the delineation of its precise focus and parameters. Reflecting on why and how these have been formative within the research journey aligns with England's insight (1994, 82) that academic research is as much about a process as an outcome. The introduction does not therefore reproduce the content of the published papers. It rather provides a commentary that weaves the papers together as component parts of a larger research narrative to enhance the reader's meaningful engagement with its outcomes and their inter-connections. In doing so, it is hoped that it will open up their production as parts of an iterative and reflexive process that is 'dynamic, contingent, dialogic and context specific' (Dunne et al., 2005, 166).

The following sections therefore address diverse dimensions of the research journey namely:

Section	Theme	Pages
2	Reflecting on my **positionality in the research** (**Roots and Routes**) and in particular the emergence of the research priorities from my longstanding professional praxis as a teacher in England and in Sierra Leone.	10-20
3	Situating the research in relation to **Knowledge gaps** within diverse fields of inquiry.	21-33
4	Identifying its **policy relevance** for the field and practice of Education and Peacebuilding, including the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.	34-37
5	Highlighting **recent scholarship** on which the research builds.	38-42
6	Summarising recent insights from diverse disciplines on the **research context, conflict-affected Sierra Leone**.	43-49
7	Outlining and explaining **the research questions** which emerge as entry points into the issues identified in 1-5.	50-53
8	Explaining the rationale and relevance of **theoretical and methodological approaches** deployed to understand and answer these questions; and how the research approach is situated within and seeks to contribute to particular theoretical debates in relation to education and peacebuilding.	54-58
9	Explaining the shifting methodological focus of the research papers.	59-72
10	Summarising the **data gathering** stages and strategies and methods used.	73-79
11	Reflecting **on the ethical considerations** and challenges at different points in the research.	80-87

Figure 2 Themes of the Introduction

2. Routes and Roots

Drawing attention to the socially situated nature of knowledge production in qualitative research Dunne, Pryor and Yates (2005, 132) have noted that 'the researcher is a part of not apart from, the research process'. In other words, as Denzin put it, 'interpretive research begins and ends with the biography and self of the researcher' (1986, 12). Elucidating the inevitable embeddedness of all qualitative research in such personal positioning is associated with the notion of researcher reflexivity. This is defined as 'an awareness of the ways in which the researcher as an individual with a particular social identity and background has an impact on the research process' (Robson, 2002, 22). This section therefore seeks to explain how the focus of this thesis is emergent directly from my reflections on 30 years of experience as a teacher committed to mobilising education for social justice in diverse spaces of learning in England and in conflict-affected Sierra Leone.

My experience has involved a range of teaching roles as a teacher, teacher leader, teacher trainer in formal schooling environments as well as a community and adult education outreach worker between 1988 and 2008. It has involved a range of educational contexts including inner city London schools, rural schools in England, as well as a charity secondary school in Freetown, Sierra Leone and government schools in Kono in the eastern region of Sierra Leone. It has meant teaching a range of pupil constituencies, some living in contexts of severe levels of deprivation and precarity both in England and in Sierra Leone, as well as others more privileged in terms of their socio-economic background and expectations of education.

In the following sections I draw on Tripp's notion of 'critical incidents' (1993) to identify experiences within this professional trajectory which have been formative in shaping the research priorities. These are defined as professional experiences that are especially significant in triggering reflection and self-critique and which may lead to a re-envisioning of practice. I have identified eight such experiences. While located in very different contexts of schooling, these critical incidents or experiences all demonstrate in diverse ways the embryonic origins of the overarching concern of the research; that is the intersection or tensions between the potential of teachers to be agents of social justice and peace promotion in the communities where they live and work and the framings of their pedagogical practice in curriculum regulation and prescription, at national and global levels. All the incidents, in different ways, have thrown into relief these disjunctions, heightening my commitment to a research paradigm that Lather has described as 'research as praxis'; in other words, research that is 'explicitly committed to critiquing the status quo and building a more just society' (Lather, 1986, 258).

While it may seem surprising to refer to experiences as a teacher in England and therefore the global north as formative for research on a conflict-affected context in the global south, my professional

experience in both contexts has alerted me to the interconnections between them. In both contexts, teachers are serving communities who have been precaritised by interconnected global forces, in particular neoliberal economic policies and the operations of late 20th century capitalism. Bringing these experiences together is therefore aligned with Santos's (2014) and other scholars' (Maxwell, 2008) caution against the construction of an artificial binarism between the global north and south within development research and practice. Hence Santos calls for the 'south' to be used as metaphor to evoke those population groups effected by the 'systemic and unjust human suffering caused by global capitalism and colonialism' (ibid, 134). The south is thus to be found in the north and vice versa. Straddling both zones, my experience as a teacher speaks to these insights. It also underscores the benefits of widening the geographical parameters of the field of international education and development in order to better understand the work of teachers engaging with issues of social injustice that result from interconnected global socio-economic processes.

In the following account I show how each critical incident contributed to the formulation of this research namely: by triggering reflexivity on the ways in which curriculum prescriptions may constrain teachers' agency to contribute to social justice; by prompting initial reading to help me think about tensions and contradictions and challenges; by initiating an enduring attachment to the insights of particular scholars; by generating a determination to avoid a deficit understanding of teachers' roles and contributions; and finally by shaping my approach to understanding how teachers' pedagogical practices and relationships may contribute to improving the lives of their pupils.

2.1. The banning of the promotion of homosexuality in English Schools, 1988-2003

I trained as a secondary school history teacher in 1988, starting teaching in the same year. This was the year in which the then Tory Government under Thatcher passed Section 28 of the Local Government Act, repealed in 2003. This banned teachers from intentionally promoting homosexuality in the curricula of any maintained school as a 'pretended family relationship'. This was the first moment in my professional career when I became aware of the way in which policy framings of teachers could constrain their potential to act as agents of social justice. Here was legislation mandating the parameters of school curriculum which closed off the possibilities of teachers supporting the particular needs of LGBT youth facing daily prejudice, bullying, discrimination with damaging and long-term consequences for their mental and emotional health.

This experience heightened my awareness of the power of school curriculum to distort teacher subjectivity and narrowly define what is conceivable or thinkable in classrooms, with implications for their ability to exercise agency in relation to the social justice concerns that mattered to them. In making sense of this positioning, the work of Apple (2004) and Giroux (1988) on the ideological nature

of curriculum, its status as a vehicle for exclusionary interests and knowledges that damage and injure was particularly resonant. These have remained inspirational thinkers throughout the research process.

2.2. Teaching history in England under a National Curriculum, 1988-2007

My awareness of the constraints imposed by curriculum prescription on teachers' agency for social justice were also heightened by coming into teaching in the year of the introduction of the National Curriculum in England in 1988. This was brought in by the government to prescribe what teachers were expected to teach in English schools. It was well known as an attempt to inhibit teacher autonomy (Ball, 2003), but also served a highly regulatory function well captured in the title of Ball's book The Teacher's Soul and the Terrors of Performativity (2003). The curriculum promoted by members of the government emphasised history teaching as a patriotic endeavour which explicitly glorified Britain, inducted pupils into British traditions and values, with an emphasis on British political history, heroes and heroines. I was acutely aware of the huge gulf between this content and the experiences and histories of the pupils and their families in the multi-ethnic inner-city south London school where I taught, in which students originated from fifty nine countries and spoke more than thirty nine languages.

This experience also prompted my awareness of the possibilities of resisting prescribed pedagogical models. Hence, I became involved in an alternative school's curriculum history project (Dawson, 1989) which emphasised pupils understanding not only of one patriotic narrative but various interpretations of history and the importance not only of studying the powerful but also the marginalised. In reflecting on how teachers might mobilise pedagogical models that go against the official grain, the work of Apple (1993) who has highlighted teachers' micro-political resistance to policy prescription was exciting and exhilarating.

2.3. Teacher governance in England, 1988-2007

My career in England saw a massive increase in state interference in the curriculum and regulation of teachers. Hence, as a senior teacher I was tasked with making teachers accountable through endless lesson observations and in particular setting performance targets that audited teachers' work by reference to generic teacher standards of professionalism. All these were part of what has been called the 'new managerialism' in education.

This experience constitutes a critical event for this research in the sense that I became aware of how pressure to abide by these external prescriptions of teacher behaviour skewed professional practice away from what mattered to me and many other teachers. I sensed that many, myself included, were

being deskilled, and depoliticised, our commitments to a link between education and broader moral and political goals and concerns effectively neutralised. Within these accountability systems, imposed rather than the product of consultation and negotiation, the complex, emotional and values-driven labour of teacher pedagogy seemed to be disembedded from the social, political and economic processes impacting on the lives, hopes and aspirations of the young people they were serving. Teaching in a challenging school in a deprived area of south London rendered this disjunction a daily, palpable reality.

Reading out of such professional angst made the insights of Bernstein (1996) on trends in governance of teachers resonant and relevant. In particular, the sheer despair myself and other teachers felt at being distracted from our social concerns with the difficult lives faced by students in south London by trainings on government mandated skills and competencies given by 'consultants' who had no experience of our school or its community made Bernstein's critique of the 'totally pedagogised society' (ibid, 72) and its impact on teachers particularly illuminating. By this he refers to a cultural imperative that obligates workers, including teachers, to feel responsible to be continually trained to improve their skills, an imperative aligned with the short term and shifting needs of flexible capitalism (Bonal and Rambla, 2003). Bernstein's salutary insight was that the constant obligation to show a disposition to 'trainability' 'erodes commitment, dedications, coherent time and is therefore socially empty' (2001, 11; quoted in Bonal and Rambla, 2003, 175). Given my professional angst, Bernstein's last two words were particularly striking; in particular their focus on the displacement or hollowing out of the social vision and commitments of teachers to improve the lives of pupils that inspired us to come to school each day.

Trying to make sense of my professional despair also led me to the work of Susan Robertson who has remained an inspirational thinker throughout and became formative for the direction and parameters of this research. Her scholarship on the impact of shifting modes of teacher governance on teachers' professional and pedagogical identities and in particular the proliferation of accountability and standards policies between the 1960s and 1990s was particularly apposite. Her point that 'teachers are now visible in the form of attention being paid to teacher policies. But they are notably invisible as individuals with desires and passions to make a difference in the lives of students' (2012b, 602-603) spoke directly to me and the experiences of other teachers I worked with.

Moreover, in drawing attention to the failure of policymakers to consult teachers her analysis of the power relationships at stake in such forms of teacher management was salutary. 'Despite familiar words, like 'teacher professionalism' and 'teacher learning,' she writes, 'the teachers who stand in front of classes are absent from the ranks of conference goers, summit attendees, and video scorers of classroom teaching, materializing global teacher governance' (ibid).

2.4. Creating a Lifeskills curriculum for students in an inner-city South London school, 2007-2012

Through other critical incidents, I also became aware that teachers could resist such regulation and develop grassroots alternative practices that re-habilitated their social vision of learning. As Assistant Head in charge of whole school curriculum issues, in a deprived area of South London my task was to organise a lifeskills and citizenship education to meet the needs of pupils in a secondary school for 11-16 year olds in Lambeth. The school catered for students from a wide range of backgrounds including White British, Caribbean, African, and White and Black Caribbean. They lived in an area, which in economic terms, can be described as disadvantaged, with high poverty rates, as well as high rates of infant mortality and premature mortality, homelessness, and youth unemployment.

During a meeting with senior teachers to discuss the possibilities of using the national curriculum on citizenship and related textbooks, I became aware of the limitations of their content in meeting the particular needs of our school intake. It was noticeable that the books presented an essentially white version of English society, focusing on Parliament, the monarchy and an uncritical representation of colonialism and the British empire. There was little attempt to represent or historicise the diversity of English society. There were no role models of citizenship activity from ethnic minority communities. Nor did the content connect with the lives of our youngsters, who as young citizens frequently faced daily material hardship, lived in environments where their safety was threatened by drug gangs and violent crime, and were often cynical and disillusioned about the 'English establishment' including the monarchy and the police.

The headteacher thus decided that we should create our own citizenship education curriculum and tasked me with organising consultations with parents, teachers and the school students themselves to identify what mattered in the lives of these young people and how the knowledge and skills in a citizenship education and lifeskills course could meet their needs. We ended up writing a curriculum which is still in place today. This curriculum included a range of topics and issues relevant to our youngsters, but which had been ignored in the textbooks.

This was a critical event in the sense that I realised that despite an exclusionary curriculum, teachers responding to grassroots needs could subvert dominant framings of their pedagogical practice and create alternative models that were more locally responsive. Moreover, Giroux's (1988) insights into the work of teachers as 'transformative intellectuals who combine scholarly reflection and practice in the service of educating students' (ibid, 122) were helpful in making sense of this curriculum development. This was a process in which the political would be re-inscribed in pedagogy where regulation would leave a vacuum of social thinking. 'For teachers to engage in a debate about schooling', Giroux argues, 'it is necessary that a theoretical perspective be developed' (ibid, 122)

which makes ‘the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical. . . by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle to define meaning and a struggle over power relations’ (ibid, 127). This intersection between pedagogical practices and the potential for social transformation to better the lives of students and society has been an abiding concern of my practice as a teacher and infuses this research on teachers’ contribution to peace in Sierra Leone.

2.5. Volunteer teacher in a secondary school in Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2007-2012

As Assistant Headteacher in a south London school, I became involved in developing school links with a school in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This was set up by an English charity and was the only free secondary school in the country. It targeted the very poor youth who were unable to pay for entrance into government schools. Many had been child soldiers, a tangible reminder that this school was in a conflict-affected context still dealing with the traumatic legacy of a brutal decade long conflict between 1992 and 2002. It employed local Sierra Leonean teachers and trained some pupils also to become teachers. It offered the curriculum run in all government schools, based on the syllabuses of the West African Examinations Council.

Developing these links provided an opportunity for our students in South London, many of whom were of Sierra Leonean descent, to become more informed about the challenges pupils of a similar age faced in another challenging environment which was also conflict-affected. However, in relation to my own professional trajectory, this experience sparked my interest in the role of education and teachers in meeting the needs of conflict-affected young people and their communities. One initial year of volunteering at the school in Freetown led me to decide to quit my job in England, resulting in 5 years living and working as a teacher in Sierra Leone (SL), between 2007 and 2012.

One of my key roles was teaching History, Literature in English and Politics. I worked with the local Sierra Leonean teachers to prepare teaching and learning materials for these subjects. This gave me hands on experience of the curriculum which Sierra Leonean teachers had to implement. I became acutely aware of the continuing legacy of colonial framings of curriculum content in a country colonised by England in 1808. One memorable example was the expectation that Sierra Leonean youngsters would learn by heart a poem, Daffodils, by a 19th century English poet. This was about a flower they had no experience of.

Of particular relevance as a critical event was my involvement in the well-intentioned concern of this English charity to move teachers away from what was perceived as their practice of teacher led and didactic approaches to more ‘learner-centred’ practices that stressed the active participation of their students. The emphasis was on more group activities, less teacher talk and more pupil talk. This was

aligned with the educational interventions of of UNICEF and other international aid agencies working in the country such as the International Rescue Committee. However, I began to realise the weaknesses of this prescriptive approach. Firstly, teachers continued to teach in the ways which were familiar to them from long experience. While using the rhetoric of child-centred learning in describing their practice, and even organising their pupils in groups, they continued to dominate lessons and saw themselves as transmitters of important information, as did their students.

Second, I realised that in imposing this model of the way to teach the charity, despite good educational intentions, was undermining some of the key strengths which these teachers brought to their work, in particular their ability to hold a class through telling stories and narratives. This evidently worked for them in an environment with no resources or textbooks such that the teacher constituted a key source of knowledge for these pupils and appreciated as such. Moreover, I realised that such teacher practice was culturally aligned with the 'oral sagesse' which characterises modes of communication in West Africa according to thinkers such as de Sousa Santos (2005). This concept evokes the wisdom associated with oral communication in the socio-cultural values and practices of the region.

This experience of teacher training attuned me to the dangers of generic curriculum models, promoted as panaceas, in bypassing the local knowledges and expertise teachers bring to their work as well as the socio-cultural contexts of their practice. Reading further on attempts to implement learner-centred pedagogy in Africa and the work of Altinyelken (2010), Schweisfurth (2015) and Tabulawa (2003) made me realise how educational interventions promoting this pedagogical model form part of a travelling global policy. Hence, Altinyelken (2018) has noted how this has resulted in a 'converging pedagogy in the global south' (ibid, 2009) which has been largely unsuccessful in changing teacher practices in Africa because it has ignored the contingent and situated nature of all pedagogical practice. This research draws directly on these insights.

2.6. Talking with Sierra Leonean teachers, 2007-2012

My sense of the disjunctions between prescriptive pedagogical models in the interventions of aid agencies and the lived contexts and local knowledges of teachers was also heighted by the many opportunities I had to speak at length to Sierra Leonean teachers. These conversations or chats took place in school, in their homes, under trees and in communal social spaces. I got to know teachers in Freetown, the capital city; in Port Loko a more rural area on the outskirts of the capital; and in Kono in the easts of the country where I ended up doing the bulk of the research. This experience amounted to a prolonged 'immersion' in the field, a process of 'hanging out' with teachers on a daily basis which enabled me not only to build close friendships, but to gain a greater understanding of their everyday realities.

Various matters kept cropping up in conversations with these teachers. One was their daily worries about making ends meet, about feeding themselves and their families in the absence of regular pay each month or indeed no pay at all. Another was their constant state of mourning and grief, for young friends, relatives, colleagues and pupils who had died as a result of unknown diseases and who had been unable to afford or gain access to a doctor or health care. In dealing with these challenges, these teachers had little faith in the state or national elites to make a difference to their lives. They were also critical and cynical about international agencies operative in the country, including the institutions of transitional justice such as the Special Court or aid agencies such as UNICEF.

Hearing their daily struggles over the very basics of life – food, health, security, the future – as well as their concerns for the lives of their pupil and the relentless death and mourning rituals made me realise the analytical usefulness of Mbembe's notion of the 'necropolitical' (2003, 11) as a way of understanding the personal and pedagogical challenges they faced. This notion extends Foucault's framing of the regulatory exercise of power over people's lives evoked in the term 'biopolitical' to recognise that this process involves the power of institutions and agents at multiple scales to secure life or death itself. Thus, his conceptualisation of the suffering of some populations who are consigned to live in a permanent state of near death as a regulatory effect of political decisions and power relationships over 'who may live and who may die' (ibid, 11) seems particularly apt in the Sierra Leonean context. These teachers' lives and pedagogical practices, relationships and aspirations took place and were indeed, 'situated' within this daily 'necropolitical' experience. While I have not drawn on this concept in this research, the process of reflecting on its relevance alerted me to the explanatory usefulness of theoretical concepts to open up and clarify empirical challenges of understanding the situated nature of teachers' pedagogical practices.

These hours I spent with Sierra Leonean teachers constitute a critical incident in the sense that I learned how they and their communities actually experience peace and conflict on the ground, in their environments, in and outside of their classrooms. Conversations that seamlessly connected their challenges as teachers with their broader struggles made me aware of the explanatory weaknesses of bracketing off their professional and pedagogical roles from their responses to the social, political and economic dynamics that conditioned and constrained their lives, at the national and international scale. The value of multi-scalar analysis also came into sharp relief as they interlaced references to local challenges of dire poverty and unemployment with frustration at international peace related interventions which had allegedly done little to relieve them. That these responses were highly emotional also made me attentive to the affective dimensions of teachers' sense of their professional and pedagogical roles in a context in which such roles were inseparable from the emotions of grief, hope, and anger. Through these interactions I recognised the value of de Sousa Santos's injunction

to researchers from the global north to 'listen to the south' (2014) something which has been absolutely formative throughout this research.

2.7. Community Outreach teacher for the Special Court in Sierra Leone, 2008-2010

While working as a teacher in Sierra Leone, I also gained experience of educational activities outside of formal provision while volunteering in the outreach education section of the Special Court. This was set up by the international community together with the Sierra Leonean state to try those most guilty of war crimes during the country's decade long conflict, 1992-2002. As such it was a significant institution in the transitional justice processes associated with peacebuilding. The community outreach section in which I worked was set up to educate Sierra Leoneans about the purposes of the court. Its staff, including former teachers, would travel to hard to reach rural communities to provide information, answer questions and engage in discussion. In particular, this meant explaining the court's legal imperative to bringing the most perpetrators of crimes against humanity during the conflict to account.

This was a critical incident because it alerted me to a divergence between western legalistic understandings of criminal justice and local cultural attitudes and expectations for peace. What was notable was the widespread cynicism about the Special Court amongst rural Sierra Leoneans. Many felt that the huge amounts of money invested by the international community was wasted and should have been directed to improving social services and access to education for the majority poor population of the country. Many did not understand why there was a need for a legal procedure to try and to punish individual war criminals as they felt that all Sierra Leoneans had been involved in the atrocities of the conflict, either as victims or perpetrators. Many said that the court was trying their heroes and was as such highly controversial. This experience led me to read Culture under Cross Examination, International Justice and the Special Court for Sierra Leone by Kelsall (2009). Its suggestion that international mechanisms for justice were out of tune with local cultural attitudes, confirmed my own awareness from working in local communities around the country as an educator for the court. This experience underpins the methodological importance I attach in this research to investigating cultural factors to enable a grounded understanding of Sierra Leonean teachers' promotion of peace in their communities.

2.8. The Grenfell Tower fire in South London, 4th June 2017.

The final critical incident happened not prior to but while undertaking this research. This was the tragedy of Grenfell Tower, a residential tower block housing poor families, which caught fire in South London in 2017. This led to the deaths of at least 80 residents and left many homeless and displaced. Headlines in newspapers drew attention to the failure of the local council to ensure proper safe

cladding because of cuts to their budgets for social welfare spending (Grenfell Action Group, 2017). Hence, the tragedy was seen by many as symptomatic of state indifference to the lives of the poor and in particular the result of neoliberal policies of cutbacks in state support for social welfare including fire services (Doward, 2017).

Of particular relevance were reports of the responses of teachers who worked in the secondary school nearby and taught children of the affected families. They included: attending the scene of the fire blaze within hours at 3am in the morning; supporting students to take exams the following day; creating makeshift school office and exam halls; distributing food and clothes; organising counselling support for parents and staff and students; taking assemblies to unite the school community in mourning; and galvanising the school ethos and culture to restore normality and generating hope for the future. Reports also stressed the emotional labour on teachers of seeing their school communities through the crisis. A report (Weale, 2017) entitled Headteacher hails pupils who took exams as Grenfell Tower Burned noted that his comments that 'for every student, parent and teacher… there's no right or wrong way of feeling. All emotions are valid'. Teachers' exhaustion and tiredness as well their 'guts and bravery' (Dickens, 2017) and the role of schools as beacons of hope in a shattered community were also foregrounded.

While taking place in a deprived part of London rather than conflict-affected Sierra Leone, this event was a critical incident in making me aware of the impact of neoliberal policies in creating situations of precarity with tragic consequences for populations not only in the global south but also in the north; and teachers struggles to meet the diverse needs of pupils from such communities. In doing so, teachers mobilised a sense of solidarity with them, outrage at their suffering, and leveraged a range of emotions. These responses confirm what Connell has recognised to be the 'emotional aspects of teachers' labour process' (2009, 221) as a constitutive dimension of their responses to social injustices. This insight is further explored and instantiated in this research.

2.9. Conclusions: Towards 'activist educational research'

This section has highlighted the multiple professional experiences out of which the issues of this research have emerged and the reflections and reading they initiated. These are the roots and the routes that constitute my positionality which is thereby avowedly 'partial, locatable and critical' (Harraway, 1988, 54). However, at its core is a passionate commitment to developing a social justice-oriented research strategy which exploits the synergies between scholarship and practice (Cox, 2015, 34). This is aligned with the goals of ''activist educational research' that supports the documentation and transformation of systems of oppression' (Nguyen, 2019, 1). Hence, this is a form of knowledge production about teachers that aligns with the notion of practitioner research in which scholarship and

praxis are understood as co-constitutive in generating ‘scholarship linked to real world practices of radical transformation, liberation or emancipation’ (Macdonald and Young, 2018). In this case, the link between the former and the latter resides in what Andrew Sayer (2011) recently reflecting on the need for social science to retrieve its ethical dimension, has termed ‘matters of concern’. He writes that ‘people’s relationship to the world is one of concern’, arguing that political economy analysis has tended to disregard this ‘evaluative character of everyday life’, thus producing an ‘alienated and alienating view’. (ibid, 2). Hence, ‘values, feelings and emotions’ in relation to human flourishing and suffering, and ‘the importance people attach to dignity’ need to be taken seriously in social science (ibid, 4). Sayer’s understanding of the ethical obligation of research to disclose suffering and offer critical evaluation speaks directly to the goals of this research, and their emergence from my practice as teacher.

The next section demonstrates the complementary location of this thesis as a response to some of the knowledge gaps and conceptual limitations highlighted by scholars in the field of education and conflict and more broadly of peacebuilding interventionism.

3. Knowledge Gaps

This research also responds to knowledge gaps in the broad field of education and conflict. This is a plural area of knowledge production. It includes research on the role of education in peace promotion; the largely policy driven field exploring the links between education, conflict and humanitarian disasters which emerged in the 1990s; as well as the larger field of work on international modes of peacebuilding interventionism known as liberal peacebuilding. The research focus on the pedagogical practices, relationships and positioning of teachers in relation to conflict amelioration in the conflict-affected context of Sierra Leone intersects with all these sub-fields. The following review identifies the knowledge gaps, under-researched issues, explanatory challenges and conceptual critiques which have shaped the parameters and priorities of this thesis. .

3.1. The lived realities of teachers in conflict-affected contexts

Firstly, this research responds to a recognised paucity of evidence about the lived realities of teachers in conflict-affected contexts, the challenges they face, their perceptions of peace promotion, their navigation of conflict dynamics and how all these intersect with their pedagogical practices and relationships in the micro contexts of their work. Buckler has noted that 'while there is much to be found in the literature about rural teaching environments, there is very little written about teachers' perceptions of how these environments impact on teaching and learning' (Buckler, 2011, 2). Likewise, Shepler has observed that 'more research is needed to adequately identify and respond to teachers' needs in a variety of post-conflict settings' (Shepler, 2011, 199). That 'little information is available about teachers in post-conflict environments' (ibid) is reiterated in a recent literature review of educational provision in 5 conflict-affected contexts (Horner et al., 2015). This concluded that 'the literature specifically relating to teachers and peacebuilding is limited' (ibid, 7). Moreover, the review noted that 'it is difficult to isolate literature on teachers who are usually implied rather than addressed specifically' (ibid).

Recent research on the political economy of educational interventions in conflict-affected contexts (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014, 3/5), has indicated how the educational agenda setting processes of donors and global actors works against an in-depth, situated engagement with the micro-contexts of teachers' work. It concluded that there is a disconnection between a generic globally structured educational agenda designed by powerful donors and global actors and the on the ground realities, needs and priorities of faced by less powerful, often unheard local actors such as teachers. Such a disconnect jeopardizes the impact and success of educational interventions that take root in complex and challenging contexts in which conflict drivers intersect with political economy and cultural dynamics. This report underscores the need for building a stronger evidence base about teachers' lived realities as they navigate such contexts in order to enable interventions to properly support them

in their expected roles as contributors to sustainable peace. Of particular relevance are the consequences of the resulting generic curriculum interventions such as peace education. Noting the tendency of such curriculum to privilege *a priori* prescriptions rather than tailored attention to the socio-economic and political particularities of conflict-affected contexts in which teachers live and work, Novelli and Sayed argue that that 'teacher interventions need to be developed from local and national contexts not imported and adapted'(2016, 34).

3.2. Teachers pedagogical practices in conflict-affected contexts

Second there is a dearth of evidence about micro pedagogical practices of teachers in relation to conflict dynamics they and their pupils and their communities face. Hence Gill and Niens point to a need to discover more about 'pedagogical strategies oriented to peacebuilding in post conflict and divided societies' (2014, 15). Likewise, Novelli and Sayed have recently foregrounded the need to develop a more nuanced contextualised understanding of 'what pedagogical processes are needed in schools to generate the kind of quality learning that is able to effect social solidarity and change in particular structural contexts' (2016, 24). Research aligned to probing such processes may therefore yield 'radical conceptions of teacher agency for peacebuilding and social cohesion that move beyond teachers respecting each other and learners but also encompass strategies in and through teaching which confront the historic inequities and drivers of conflict' (ibid, 14).

This absence of attention to teachers' pedagogical practices is reflective of a broader absence of engagement in this area of educational provision by policymakers in the field and practice of education and development (Schweisfurth 2015, Alexander, 2015). Hence Schweisfurth has noted a 'lack of critical engagement with pedagogy at an international level' (2015, 261), and consequently a 'silence about pedagogy among agenda setters in the post-2015 discussions' (ibid). This vacuum of understanding has 'allowed" the policy space 'to be filled with ready-made prescriptions from a range of agencies concerned with classroom practice in low income countries' (ibid).

Of particular relevance is the instrumentalisation of teachers in conflict-affected countries as implementers of peace education. Such approaches replicate attempts to implement learner centred teaching in such contexts that deny the 'contingent' and context specific nature of pedagogy. Hence Altinyelken has warned of the dangers of a 'converging pedagogy in the global south', the product of a 'one size fits all approach' that is untrue to the nature of teaching and learning as 'contextualised activities' (2018, 227) While applicable to all contexts of learning, this insight is particularly relevant to understanding teachers' work in conflict-affected situations where such 'contextualised activities' frequently involve their navigation of complex, multifaceted drivers of conflict.

Alexander highlights the wider implications for knowledge production on teachers and educational provision that results from this systemic neglect of pedagogy. Noting the 'missing GMR ingredient' (2015, 250) he warns of the dangers of missing 'what is truly transformative in teaching and learning'(ibid) by an overconcern with measurable inputs and outputs in the EFA goals. Commenting on knowledge generation in the field of education research as represented by Global Monitoring Reports published by UNESCO, he notes the lack of citations on pedagogy even in a report on Teaching and Learning (ibid, 255). He writes that the reports are dominated by 'teacher supply, training and retention, and a much larger proportion still are macro-level national or cross—national studies of education policies…' (ibid). Hence 'the preferred evidence is top down. It reflects the world, the preoccupations, the priorities and experiences of policymakers rather than those of teachers and children'(ibid).

3.3. Teacher voices and viewpoints

Thirdly, and connected to this lack of a holistic, conflict sensitive understanding of teachers' pedagogical practices, scholars have noted an absence of attention to their voices and viewpoints in the top down approaches of international aid agencies (Van Ommering, 2017; Vongalis-Macrow, 2006; VSO, 2002, 2008). Indeed, some research suggests that the contributions of teachers' expertise, knowledges and insights are deliberately marginalised in the development of policy and programming in conflict-affected contexts, exclusions that emerge from power asymmetries between international and local actors. Thus, within the process of educational rebuilding in Iraq, Vongalis-Macrow (2006) concluded that 'educators are key actors in the symbolic theatre of policy but that real educational change is left in the hands of others' (ibid, 107). Other research suggests that teachers are eager to communicate their perspectives but feel frustrated that their viewpoints are rarely sought or welcomed (VSO 2002, 2008). Such exclusions may implicitly carry to conflict affected contexts a deficit understanding of teachers as unable to reflect on their pedagogical practices which has been noted by some scholars (Akyeampong et al., 2006) of teacher interventions in developing country contexts more generally. Likewise, the absence of attention to peace and social cohesion in teachers' professional development more broadly (Novelli and Sayed, 2016) implicitly devalues the significance of their views on micro-practices of pedagogy that may support peace promotion.

This lack of engagement with the views and voices of teachers leaves a major gap at the very heart of understanding of how education may contribute to peace promotion. Hence, despite the calls noted above for a more radical understanding of their pedagogical practices and relationships that would illuminate their peacebuilding role in addressing the structural and historical inequities that drive conflict (Novelli and Sayed, 2016) we currently have little context specific evidence of how teachers feel in relation to those very issues. Teacher agency in relation to peacebuilding has been defined as

'their ability to think, feel and act to promote values and attitudes that offer a basis for transforming conflict itself' (Novelli and Smith 2011, 7). Yet we have little knowledge of these components nor the interconnections between them as experienced and lived out by teachers.

3.4. Making connections between peace promoting pedagogies and conflict-affected contexts

The absence of evidence on the one hand of the lived experiences of teachers, their navigation of conflict dynamics and peace promotion in and out of school; and on the other of their pedagogical practices and relationships means that there is an inability to connect them or to analyse their intersections. Hence Horner et al. point out that there is an 'underdevelopment of holistic explorations that combine teacher issues and peacebuilding together' (2015, 8). In turn, this forecloses the possibility of explanations that reveal the relationship between teachers' pedagogical practices and their roles and potential to support pupils and communities to navigate and ameliorate the structural drivers of conflict in their communities as called for by Novelli and Sayed (2016) above.

3.5. Critiques of framings of teachers' pedagogical agency

Lack of a contextualised understanding of teachers' contribution to peace promotion is compounded by the limitations of the conceptual framings and parameters through which their agency is defined and represented in policy and programming by international aid agencies. This section highlights five framings of teachers that encourage a highly partial and limited view of teachers' pedagogical agency for social justice.

Firstly, scholars have drawn attention to the narrowly 'logistical' approaches to teachers within policymaking. These homogenise teachers as inputs into processes of educational reconstruction after conflict, whose significance lies in filling gaps in teacher supply (Spink, 2005, 204; Buckler, 2011). Their emphasis on improving teacher numbers within a quantitative approach render invisible more complex understandings of their experience of professional and pedagogical agency.

Secondly, scholars have critiqued the positioning of teachers as human capital, for its narrow understanding of teacher agency in reductive and functionalist terms as promoters of work-related skills in their pupils. For instance, Ginsburg (2012) argues that the education strategies, policies and programmes of the World Bank offer a highly reductive perspective that commodifies teachers by reducing them to 'human capital (or) resources rather than… human beings' (ibid, 84) who 'are in need of support in their potential to be inquirers and learners' (ibid). Likewise, (Novelli and Sayed 2016, 15) call for the 'overly human capital driven logics of much teacher policy reform agendas to be replaced by a more 'holistic' approach that would recognise teachers' multiple potential to contribute

to both societal peace and development' (ibid, 15). Understood only as 'carriers of capital', teachers' roles in relation to 'solidarity, culture, social justice, tolerance and wisdom' (Novelli, 2016, 853) are neglected and ignored. Such approaches effectively depoliticise teachers, evacuating them of their values, emotions or reflexivity which may be mobilised in pedagogical practices to achieve such goals.

Thirdly, the positioning of teachers within the priorities of 'school development discourse' (Sayed and Novelli, 2016, 24) has been critiqued for the narrowly managerialist understanding of teachers as components of educational agendas that prioritise outputs, effectiveness and efficiency. Such approaches neglect the challenge to develop 'a contextualised and clear understanding of what pedagogical processes are needed in schools to generate the kind of quality learning that is able to effect social solidarity and change in particular structural contexts' (Sayed and Badroodien, 2016, 12).

Fourthly, Larsen (2010) has drawn attention to the mobilisation of a discourse of teacher centrality within policy rhetoric that hails teachers as heroic agents of social transformation in conflict-affected and other contexts. This discourse, she argues, tends to foreground teaching rather than the teacher, and for all its apparent recognition of the significance of individual teachers in effect reduces them to the performance of discrete and decontextualized skills and competencies. In such framings 'the idea of the teacher who thinks critically and feels strongly about the social contexts of education and acts as an advocate for social change or social justice is absent' (Larsen, 2010, 219).

Fifthly, scholars have highlighted neglect of the affective dimensions of teachers' agency (Sayed and Novelli, 2016,15). Hence the conclusion that 'it is imperative that the affective turn in education discourses is solidified and privileged (ibid). Given the increasing recognition of emotions as a key motivator of the exercise of teacher's agency in relation to social injustices and the promotion of conflict amelioration (Zembylas, 2016), this neglect leaves a crucial dimension of their contributions to peace promotion underexplored.

3.6. Critiques of teacher Education and professional development in conflict-affected contexts

International aid agencies working to enhance teacher education interventions in conflict-affected context have highlighted a need to build a stronger and contextualised evidence base on the challenges faced by teachers; and the role of professional development interventions in supporting them with requisite knowledge and skills (Save the Children, 2012; UNESCO, 2012). This knowledge gap is also evident in the academic literature. Horner et al. conclude that there is 'very little on teacher education in relation to peacebuilding' (2015, 44). Moreover, they note 'the limited literature' on 'teacher education which specifically discussed it in relation to peacebuilding and or conflict'. Highlighting its generic approach, they also noted that this 'rarely contributed knowledge or

understanding that went beyond what was already considered in the more general literature about teacher education' (ibid).

This lack of context-specificity is evident in the generic prescriptions for teacher education content in the guidance notes of international aid organisations such as the INEE. Hence its 'long list of content for teacher education' (INEE, 2013; 30, quoted in Horner et al., 45) includes 'pedagogical confidence, subject knowledge (human rights, conflict dynamics) and social skills (identify issues, non-violent alternatives)' (ibid). These it is argued will enable teachers to contribute to a 'a more peaceful, respectful, civically minded population' (ibid). However, such guidance remains at a high level of generality, requiring in depth empirical evidence of how teachers may draw on this content in their particular contexts of practice.

Greater conflict responsiveness has implications for reforming the content of teacher education. Scholars have highlighted the often implicit rather than explicit attention to issues of peace and conflict in teacher education programmes (Novelli and Sayed, 2016, 81; Westbrook et al., 2013, 29). Hence Sayed and Novelli call for an 'explicit focus on peacebuilding and social cohesion in teacher professional development' (2016, 81). This would involve equipping teachers not only with knowledges from psychology to enable them to address mental and emotional healing processes with their pupils. It would also necessitate their engagement with other disciplines such as history and politics to support them in reflecting on how their pedagogical strategies and relationships may contribute to enabling their pupils to navigate structural drivers of grievance that have political, economic and cultural dimensions. Moon also argues that teacher education should widen the conceptualisation of pedagogic practices to encompass teachers views on 'community and values' and 'moral and social advancement' (2013, 17), in other words their sense of themselves as agents of social change. He notes the paradox that while 'concern with the ways in which education in general and pedagogic practice in particular can serve the cause of social justice' (ibid) resonates with the vast majority of the world's teachers in low income countries, 'training and education rarely if ever engages teachers on such issues' (ibid). Such insights foreground an urgent need to engage with teachers views and experiences of the particular material constraints and contexts of their work.

Calls for teacher education curricula to engage more explicitly with conflict-affected contexts also highlight the need for cultural sensitivity in order to avoid a technical approach to developing pedagogical skills and strategies at the expense of understanding local approaches to peace promotion (Hardman et al., 2011). For instance, the Muster report concluded that 'there is an urgent need here for both research and curriculum development to bring theories developed elsewhere into dialogue with local cultural practices and the students' experiences of growing up' (Lewin and Stuart, 2003, xv).

3.7. Inattention to the pedagogical possibilities of non-formal education interventions

The case studies in this research takes the opportunity to investigate pedagogical practices related to conflict amelioration emergent from non-formal, community rooted initiatives. This responds directly to the recognition that there is currently an absence of scholarly attention to pedagogical practices for peace promotion which are being developed outside of formal learning environments (Shah, 2015) in conflict-affected contexts, for instance in informal and non-formal learning spaces generated by civil society organisations. As Datzberger has pointed out 'the role that non formal education can play in fostering processes of social transformation and positive peace remains heavily under-researched… which is counter-intuitive given that a significant amount of NFE is carried out in conflict-affected and fragile environments'(2017, 328). Likewise, Pherali has noted that 'teaching and learning about peace should be a core component of the school curriculum, but should not be restricted to formal educational settings, instead it should be equally championed through non-formal educational programmes, public debates and civil society activities'(2019, 13).

Such comments point to a need to explore educational activities outside the formal system which may offer alternative knowledges and skills through which teachers may contribute to peace promotion. While their limitations and flaws are well known (Shlomo and Schmida, 2009) their neglect undermines knowledge building of models of pedagogical practices that may contribute to sustainable peace promotion that structural address drivers of conflict. Indeed, in his study 'Learning Activism: the Intellectual life of Contemporary Social Movements' Choudry (2015) emphasises the richness of knowledge generation about learning and pedagogical practices which is emergent from the social struggles of civil society movements in conflict-affected contexts and is rooted in grassroots experiences of social injustices driving conflict. Such knowledge, operating beyond the parameters of formal education systems he argues is insufficiently recognised or valorised by scholars working on education and social justice. Hence there is a need to retrieve the 'insights , ideas and visions produced in the course of people collectively trying to change things and reflecting on their experiences, the knowledge about systems of power and exploitation developed as people find themselves in confrontations with states and capital in the process of fighting injustice' (ibid, xii).

3.8. Critiques of international peacebuilding interventionism

This research also responds to gaps and critiques emergent within the broader field of knowledge production on the dominant form of international peacebuilding interventionism known as liberal peacebuilding. Indeed, Sierra Leone is one of many country contexts, including Bosnia, Liberia, El Salvador and Timor Leste where this model of peacebuilding interventionism has been applied (Richmond, 2009). However, scholars have highlighted its privileging of issues of securitisation, the integration of conflict-affected contexts into the global marketplace, its collusion with the inequities

generated by the operations of global capitalism, its transmission of a particular model of liberal democracy and its elitist, state-centric, top–down character, associating peace narrowly with state-building (Richmond, and Franks 2009, Richmond 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013).

Of relevance for the focus of this thesis on Sierra Leonean teachers is Richmond's conclusion that 'the most significant limitation has been its many failures in engaging with local actors' (Richmond, 2011, 3) and that 'its focus has been on security and institutions, rather than developing an engagement with the everyday life of post-conflict citizens' (ibid, 16). Such exclusions have had implications for achieving long term transformation of conflict-affected societies. Hence, 'development or peace support interventions that are restricted to the capital city or national elites have little chance of becoming sustained' (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013, 775). Moreover, the contextual and cultural contexts within which locals exercise agency are marginalised within an approach that conceives of the peacekeeping operations as 'technical' or non-ideological exercises in conflict management. The consequence of such assumptions is a negative, acultural and apolitical understanding of the local as lacking in 'capacity', underlined by an implicit judgementalism that juxtaposes western liberalism against others who are identified as ''barbaric' against the liberal norm'. (Richmond, 2011, 60). In relation to conflict-affected Sierra Leone, this has arguably resulted in a failure to respond to 'local priorities' for building peace (Cubitt, 2012, 169).

3.9. The turn to the local in peacebuilding

Consequently, a 'critical agenda for peace' (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013, 763) has emerged, that seeks to retrieve, revalorise and reclaim the agency of the 'local'. This forms part of a broader 'resurgence of international interest in indigenous approaches to peacemaking, peacebuilding and reconciliation' (Mac Ginty, 2011, 47); or in other words a desire to engage with the 'local' (Richmond, 2009), those grassroots communities who have hitherto been ignored or marginalised by international policymakers and programmers within the global peacebuilding architecture. It is associated in particular with the formulation by scholars of peacebuilding interventionism of a 'post-liberal peace' (ibid). The focus of this research on the roles of teachers in peace promotion responds directly to this reorientation of interest in local peace promoting agency and is informed by its epistemological and methodological priorities.

Within this agenda, the local is defined not in a territorial way (Mac Ginty, 2015) but following the insights of Massey on the social and relational production of space, 'in terms of activity, networks and relationships'(ibid, 840); in other words as a verb rather than as a noun or description of a place. Moreover, these networks of social practices are to be understood not in binary opposition to but as connected transnationally and transversally to the global (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013). Hence

engagement with the local will reveal what Brauchler and Naucke term the ‘creativity and resolution finding ability of local actors’(2017, 429) in relation to conflict amelioration and peace promotion which should be ‘recognised, respected and supported’ (ibid). Within the writings of Lederach, a key promoter of the local turn in peace, local agency rather than western knowledge was the key to peace promotion (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013, 763; Chandler, 2013). Hence his statement that ‘the greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture’ (Lederach, 1997, 94), thus explicitly rejecting the elite and state-centricity of peace promotion associated with liberal peacebuilding interventionism.

Scholars have highlighted various conceptual, epistemological and methodological consequences of the reorientation of attention to the local. Firstly, its approach foregrounds peace promotion as a grassroots and bottom up activity (Richmond, 2009), widening understanding of peace beyond state and institution building. This re-orientation of analytical focus amounts to a shifting of the power relationships within knowledge production on peace promotion, thus foregrounding a ‘subaltern view of peace’ (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013, 764).

Second, because of attention to the context specificity of all peace promoting networks and relationships, the turn to the local represents a challenge to what Mac Ginty and Richmond have termed the ‘standardisation’ and ‘isomorphism’ of peacebuilding interventions which is demonstrated in the ‘spread of technocracy, the professionalisation of staff’, and the promotion of ‘best practice and the spread of common conflict analysis frameworks’ (ibid, 777). Attention to the situated peace promoting creativity of local actors counters the flattening out of ‘location-specific particularities’ and the resulting ‘universalising’ tendency in liberal peacebuilding (Richmond, 2009).

Thirdly, engagement with the local entails engaging with and listening to those whose voices have been marginalised from framings of peace promotion. From a post-colonial perspective, this means ‘engaging with those who cannot speak’ (Spivak, 1998) but whose insights and views may modify (Richmond, 2009) international paradigms, literally re-wording and reworking the meaning of peace.

Fourth, engagement with the local would entail spotlighting the exercise of peace promoting agency within conditions of pervasive hardship and chronic personal insecurity. Thus it would offer an everyday perspective of ‘what both conflict and peace mean in each context’(ibid, 331), and how ‘individual agency negotiates around violence, structural and overt, around material issues, or indeed deploys and co-opts these on a daily basis in such environments’ (ibid). These material issues may include what Roberts has noted is the ‘war aggravated poverty that strips clothing from peoples backs, destroys their shelter and excludes from their lives basic nutrition, jobs and access to clean water’

(2011, 411), circumstances which are ‘unfamiliar to most international policymakers in the field of peacebuilding’ (ibid).

Fifth, revealing the contingency and uncertainties of the negotiation of structural violence in conflict-affected contexts, such insights may challenge ‘linear understandings of peace’ (Chandler, 2013, 17) that assume that the promotion of security and markets will lead unproblematically to sustainable peace. Finally, it would reveal the ‘resistance’ of the local to international blueprints and panaceas.

The turn to the local as a site of positive peace promoting agency has also highlighted attention to the significance as well as symbolism of research methods in relation to peace studies. In particular, scholars have noted a need for not only a paradigm breakthrough in terms of how peace is conceived and framed but also a methodological breakthrough (Eckl, 2008) to support research agendas which will enable the local to be ‘seen’ (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013, 774) and understood. Thus, according to Richmond, a reorientation to the local would entail a ‘contextualised’ and ‘empathetic’ approach, alert to diversity of context and addressing issues of ‘the requirements of a peaceful everyday life in post-conflict transitions’ (2009, 331). In particular, scholars have stressed the relevance of two concepts, that of ‘empathy’ (Gilligan, 1982) and the ‘everyday’ (de Certeau, 1984). As defined by Sylvester, empathy in research occurs when ‘one listens seriously to the concerns, fears and agendas of those one is unaccustomed to heeding when building social theory, taking on board rather than dismissing, finding in the concerns of others borderlands of one’s own concerns and fears’(1994, 331). The everyday, drawing from the work of de Certeau (1984), and focusing on the day to day agency and experiences of local actors in conflict-affected contexts would include issues of ‘identity, custom, culture, needs, rights, [and] welfare’ (Richmond, 2009, 331). Both these conceptual lenses widen the parameters of peace promotion to engage with the everyday lives of conflict-affected communities, understood as embodied and emotional as having ‘social, economic, political and cultural connotations’ (ibid).

In stressing the local and the everyday as the locus of attention, scholars have also foregrounded the relevance to peace research of ‘long term fieldwork in a specific locality’ (Brauchler and Naucke, 2017, 424), and in particular the insights generated by the disciplines of ethnography and anthropology. Thus Millar (2018b) writes of the ‘underappreciated benefits of long term fieldwork’ in building up understanding of local experiences of peace in Sierra Leone, one unmediated by the scripts and eyes of policymakers and programmes who live outside of and apart from the context, or at least experience the conflict-affected context through short term engagement.

However, scholars have also drawn attention to the limits of the local turn, warning against the dangers of essentialising, romanticising or sentimentalising the local (Mac Ginty and Richmond,

2013). In engaging with teachers as local actors, this research is also concerned 'not to romanticise all things local' (ibid, 770) or sentimentalise or essentialise the local or to create a false binarism between the local and the global (Paffenholz, 2015). Moreover, Chandler (2013) cautions against expecting too much from the peace promoting efforts of local spaces. Of particular relevance he stresses the dangers of 'locating the problems or barriers to peace and development at the cognitive or ideational level rather than considering the barriers of economic and social context' (ibid, 17).

3.10. Conclusions: research challenges and opportunities

The knowledge gaps and critiques discussed above, while emerging from distinct areas of knowledge production, all converge on necessity of particular strands of inquiry that have shaped this research. Firstly, the research challenge they invite is to provide empirical context-specific understanding of teachers' daily lived realities and pedagogical practices and relationships for peace promotion in conflict-affected contexts; and above all, to listen to teachers, and empathise with their concerns and experiences. There is a related conceptual imperative to interrogate and critique the framings of teachers in the curriculum prescriptions and policies of international aid agencies. Both these challenges, empirical and conceptual, point to the need for a research imaginary that recognises and valorises without sentimentalising local actors, thereby shifting the power asymmetry in knowledge production away from western generic prescription to local situated agency, knowledges and insights, including the knowledges generated by civil society actors and non-formal educational initiatives.

Secondly, the current knowledge gaps and conceptual limitations in the field indicates the continued relevance of the pioneering critique of knowledge production in the field of education and peacebuilding set out by Novelli and Lopes Cardozo (2008) over a decade ago. Thus, in disembedding teachers and their pedagogy from the wider contexts of structural conflict drivers, and the dynamics which originate at multiple scales, local, national and international, the current state of knowledge production is undermined by 'educationism'. As noted by Dale (2005) this means understanding educational practices through a narrowly technical lens in which explanation is reducible only to what happens in classrooms. Moreover, in failing to probe the micro contexts of pedagogical/professional and practices within communities that lie below the level of nation state, knowledge of teachers does not go beyond statism or the restriction of the unit of analysis to the nation state (Dale, 2005). Furthermore, in the expectation that teachers in conflict-affected contexts will mediate a generic menu of curriculum formats such as peace education without regard to their views or feelings about their content, or context-specific analysis of drivers of conflict, teachers are implicated in the 'problem solving' (Novelli and Lopes Cardozo, 2008, 482) agendas of international aid agencies, donors and policymakers who dominate the research agenda.

In conjunction with the critiques of liberal peacebuilding, this review has also highlighted the 'disciplinary parochialism' of current understanding of teachers' professional practice and the agency of other local actors in conflict-affected contexts. Too often based on narrow, top down framings that eschew, almost despise, engagement with the 'local', such approaches fail to 'actively seek out insights from a range of other disciplines' (ibid, 483). This might involve drawing the insights of anthropologists, ethnographers, political scientists, historians as well as critical theorists who question the underpinning ontological and epistemological assumptions driving the agendas of donors and policymakers as this research seeks to do.

Thirdly, the knowledge gaps outlined above highlight the need to extend the critical research agenda for the study of education and conflict outlined by Novelli and Lopes Cardozo to address the particular gaps and silences in relation to the intersection of education with local spaces and agency for peace promotion. In particular, the imperative to locate education's contributions to peace promoting processes within multi-scalar cultural, political and economic processes, needs to be extended to incorporate micro-level dimensions of the exercise of local agency; in other words the feelings, the imagination, and somatic dimensions of the experiences of local actors such as teachers as they navigate conflict-affected contexts in and through education. Arguably, this is particularly relevant to explaining and understanding teachers' pedagogical practices for peace promotion. As micro-social practices, albeit with multiple, multi-scalar determinations, they present inter-personal and intra-personal explanatory challenges that are distinct from explaining the contributions to peace other areas of education provision, such as teacher governance and global and national policy agendas. This research therefore seeks to draw on the epistemological and methodological implications of the reorientation to the local.

Finally, the knowledge gaps cited above point to systemic flaws in processes of knowledge production which the research agenda of this thesis seeks to expose and challenge. That Novelli and Lopes Cardozo's critical agenda of 2008 remains so relevant is a case in point. Indeed, Goetze (2019) in a recent paper with the salutary title 'Learning in Peacebuilding – Mission Impossible?' draws attention to the existence of a social infrastructure that distorts knowledge production and undermines a process of institutional learning and critique. Goetze writes that 'peacebuilding can be understood as a socio-professional field in which education and professional careers condition the legitimacy to author new or critical insights. Hence peacebuilding privileges knowledge that has been produced and is diffused in OECD-country research and academic institutions and the business world. Hence, 'local knowledge is disparaged, and hence, unlikely to be promoted' (2019, 340). Likewise, Kothari points out that 'what counts as professional expertise in development is not primarily founded on in depth geographic knowledge about other places and people but is located in technical know how' (Kothari, 2005, 430). Moreover, Winthrop and Matsui (2013) in their history of the emergent field of

education and have noted how the ‘internally focused work’ of key multi-lateral institutions such as the Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) emphasised the production of ‘shared assumptions, standards and tools’ (2013,14) for ‘usability by field practitioners’ (ibid, 18). However, they point out that these were produced with little examination of the ‘political nature of education’ (ibid), thus operationalising an essentially educationist and technical approach to education intervention in conflict-affected contexts. Together the dominance of experts and expertise, institutional cultures and agendas, and a largely self-serving industry of peacebuilding actors delimits thinking and practice on the role of education in peace promotion. Focusing on a critical interrogation of peace education curriculum, and seeking to reveal locally generated pedagogies, at this particular juncture, the research imaginary of this thesis therefore responds, not only to the evident knowledge gaps but the social and institutional processes underpinning them.

4. Policy Relevance

While mindful that this more critical approach, does not offer 'easy policy solutions' (Novelli et al., 2014, 18) this section discusses the timeliness of this research in relation to three key issues that are particularly relevant to policy agendas within the field of practice of education and conflict at this particular juncture.

4.1. Advocacy for education

Firstly, clarifying a 'New Agenda for Education in Fragile States', Winthrop and Matsui (2013, 1) highlight a need to 'take stock' of the strengths and weaknesses of educational interventions implemented by donors and international aid agencies since 'the emergence of a specialised field of practice and research into education and peacebuilding in the 1990s' (ibid). They argue that such a process of revision, critique and possibly re-envisioning of the role of education is particularly timely given the current opportunities for unprecedented collaboration between security, humanitarian and education actors. This represents a new opportunity for educationists to contribute meaningfully to this wider global conversation, making the case for the transformative potential of education in conflict affected situations.

In order to build on the 'increased level of awareness' of the power of education 'among senior policymakers' within the UN peacebuilding architecture (ibid, 22) Winthrop and Matsui emphasise the importance of providing robust and rigorous qualitative evidence of not only in terms of access to learning but also what happens in classrooms. Hence, they note that a current knowledge gap in the field of education and fragility is the 'limited attention to quality' (ibid) in educational provision. This goes beyond access to learning in conflict-affected contexts or the provision of opportunities to develop 'foundational skills such as literacy and numeracy' (ibid). It needs to address 'social and emotional competencies [which are] high priorities' (ibid, 22) for conflict-affected communities to achieve sustainable peace. Such evidence would demonstrate the roles of teachers in conflict amelioration and sustainable peace promotion in the micro spaces of their pedagogical practices and relationships in conflict-affected contexts. Moreover, as Bajaj (2019) has recently noted, marshalling evidence 'grounded in local knowledges and to expanding sites and opportunities for transformative education for social change'(ibid, 69) is important as a form of advocacy and persuasion in order to access funding streams given that key agencies, such as 'DFID, USAID, Dubai Cares etc continue to concentrate necessarily on education in conflict and emergency contexts' (ibid).

This research is aligned with these various calls for policy related research and advocacy to promote and widen understanding of the contribution of teachers to peace promotion. Indeed, Chapter 1 presents the Executive Summary of a literature review that responds to the 'strong recognition of the

important role that political economy analysis plays in better understanding the obstacles to achieving global agendas for education, particularly in conflict-affected settings' (Novelli et al., 2014,1). It concludes that 'the framing of educational interventions in narrowly educationist technical terms that bypass the cultural, political, religious and social contexts of implementation can undermine effectiveness in achieving sustainable peacebuilding aims,and may jeopardise the capacity of education to contribute to peacebuilding' (ibid, 5). This insight in the opening publication of the thesis underscores its policy related point of departure and its origin in policy relevant knowledge gaps that reveal both theoretical and empirical challenges.

4.2. The Sustainable Development Goals

Secondly, this research also responds to issues raised by responses to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular their explicit commitment to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, within the broader concern for 'sustainable development' and social justice (United Nations, 2019). As noted by Sayed and Ahmed (2015), this significantly expands the vision of education offered within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Of particular relevance is the expansive vision of education in SDG4 which goes beyond the earlier focus of the MDGs on access and enrolment rates to emphasise that 'all learners' should acquire the 'knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development' (United Nations, 2019). This attention to the role of education in promoting peace and non-violence is welcome (Sayed and Ahmed, 2015).

However, scholars have also noted that the 'focus of this target remains reduced and ambiguous. By lumping these very diverse objectives into one target it is unclear how they will be incorporate into a classroom setting, or an education system' (Brisset and Mitter, 2017, 197). Hence a need for research which will concretise how this might be done within particular conflict-affected contexts. As Sayed and Ahmed note, 'the post-2015 agenda, whilst containing a welcome target on teachers, needs to pay more attention to teacher pedagogy' such that 'quality' should be understood as a 'dynamic, process oriented social justice endeavour to give effect to a holistic and comprehensive approach'(2015, 337). Moreover, the apparent failure to consult teachers widely on the implementation of Goal 4 (Jackson, 2018, 11; King and Palmer, 2013) typifies a continuing disregard for the views and experiences of those at the chalk face of teaching and learning, necessitating research which takes their views and feelings seriously. The Sustainable Development Goals thus appear to continue that marginalisation of teachers and their pedagogical practices noted earlier as a feature of the global policy agenda for education and development.

Other scholars have highlighted the contradictions within the SDG goals between an emphasis on environmental sustainability, social justice and poverty reduction and a highly pro-growth economic agenda that is collusive with an environmentally extractive capitalism (Silova, Komatsu and Rappleye 2018, 3). Hence Brisset and Mitter (2017) warn of a residual functionalist approach to education in the SDGs. These are opposed to more transformative approaches which 'conceives the main purpose of education as addressing the inequalities and injustices that are embedded in the larger society' (Maclure et al., 2009, 367, quoted in Brisset and Mitter 2017, 185). Likewise, Jackson notes that 'while SDG4 advocates a human rights basis for its targets, the purpose of education is still seen in human capital terms'(2018, 12),. Moreover, Silova, Komatsu and Rappleye (2018) have highlighted the absence of attention to local and indigenous knowledges and social activism in the commitment of the SDGs to environmental sustainability. They underscore the need to recognise the 'role of culture, including the concept of self (e.g. independent or interdependent self) which may affect the likelihood that people mobilise for pro-environmental actions' (ibid, 4). This research speaks directly to these issues. Hence its concern for a culturally attuned focus on the pedagogical roles and community-rooted relationships of teachers in processes of navigating conflict in an area of Sierra Leone, Kono, in which environmental degradation and pollution resulting from the operations of international diamond mining companies are generating widespread community frustrations and resentment.

4.3. A Shared Language of Peacebuilding

Scholars (Pherali, 2019; Paulson, 2019) commenting on the sometimes-problematic relationships between research and practice in the field of education and peacebuilding have stressed the need for a shared language which would overcome their current 'siloisation'. This means that education-oriented agencies and practitioners tend to work in isolation from specialists in peacebuilding praxis and in particular UN peacebuilding missions (Novelli, 2011). Hence while the former tends to lack knowledge of conflict drivers and are thereby ill equipped to tailor education interventions to addressing them, the latter frequently have little knowledge of education, thus foreclosing opportunities to ensure that their efforts intersect with educational processes. This results in missed opportunities for 'integrating insights from the two sectors, with potentially mutually beneficial outcomes' (ibid, 14). Thus, education specialists in Sierra Leone tend to draw on 'a generic understanding of the positive role of education in all its forms human rights discourse or a well-developed discourse around peace education' (ibid, 14). Hence there is a need to go beyond reductionist approaches to education's role in peacebuilding (Novelli, 2016, 6) to pinpoint how education might contribute to conflict amelioration through programming that is 'based on high quality political economy and conflict analysis and that is sensitive to the conflict dynamics of local contexts' (Novelli, 2011, 7).

Bringing these knowledges together poses different challenges depending on the particular area of educational provision that intersects with peacebuilding processes. For instance, understanding the contributions to peace promotion of teacher governance and policy related issues presents a different epistemic challenge from engaging with teacher's micro-level professional and pedagogical practices which is the over-arching focus of this research. In particular this necessitates bringing into relation the highly specific language of pedagogical practices, with conceptualisations of macro level structural, political, economic and social injustices that drive conflict. While the former focuses on learning activities, teacher and pupils talk, values and relationships together with their affective, cognitive and embodied, imaginative dimensions, the latter draws on a very different language of political economy that foregrounds material issues of politics and economics and the power relationships operative within them. Bringing these languages together to enable nuanced explanations of the significance of pedagogy in conflict amelioration processes is a key concern of this research.

4.4. Integrating Teachers and Pedagogical Practices into Policy and Programming Logics

A recent report on teacher policy in Sierra Leone concludes that 'more needs to be done to ensure that issues related to teachers and teacher training are better integrated into the overall logic of educational interventions in conflict and post-conflict environments. This also merits further research and investigation to inform international policymaking' (Novelli, 2011, 60). This research responds precisely to this invitation for greater connectivity and coherence. In particular it seeks to provide an evidence base that will provide greater context specific understanding of their daily challenges, as well as the grassroots knowledges and insights they already deploy when navigating drivers of conflict in the communities in which they live and work. This embedded, experiential knowledge, or the social and cultural capital of teachers is currently missing in teacher education programmes managed by international aid agencies and needs to be leveraged in order to enhance the contribution of teacher education in peace promotion.

5. Building on Recent Research

This section highlights three bodies of scholarship which have been important in formulating the focus of this research. These have all, in different ways, sought to address some of the gaps and limitations within knowledge production on teachers in conflict-affected contexts. This research responds to the issues and challenges this scholarship has highlighted in an unresolved and ongoing field of knowledge production.

5.1. The Education and Peacebuilding Research Consortium, 2014-18

A recent study of the contribution of education to peacebuilding in four conflict-affected contexts – Uganda, Pakistan, Myanmar and South Africa (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith, 2015, 2017) by a Research Consortium involving scholars at the universities of Amsterdam, Sussex and Ulster as well as local research partners has sought to go beyond generic equations of education provision with peacebuilding. In particular, it has sharpened understanding of the location of educational processes, including teachers' pedagogical practices and relationships, within social, economic, political and cultural dynamics that spawn grievance leading to conflict; and which conversely, if addressed may contribute to building sustainable peace and overcome the legacies of conflict. In doing so, its approach integrates Fraser's (1995, 2005, 2009) conceptualisation of structural processes of social justice within conditions of inequality and precaritisation generated by global capitalism (Novelli et al., 2019). Hence in the Consortium's research outputs, educational systems and forms of provision in conflict-affected contexts, including the contributions of teachers (Sayed and Novelli, 2016), are evaluated in relation to their role in contributing to processes of redistribution of resources or addressing economic inequities; processes of representation or addressing inequities within political participation; and processes of recognition or failures to recognise cultural identities. In addition to Fraser's 3-dimension disaggregation of social justice the Research Consortium added a further social process relevant to conflict-affected contexts, that of reconciliation or healing to address fractured relationships and memories of a painful and traumatic past (Hamber, 2007, 2009).

The concern of this research, to show how pedagogical practices intersect with cultural, social, economic and political processes of social justice, is aligned with the Research Consortium's approach which has explicitly sought to show how they operate 'in and through education' (Novelli et al., 2015, 15). Moreover, the unequivocally normative underpinnings of its approach constitute a theorised response to the tendency to reduce education to functionalist and technical interventions discussed at the start of this introduction. Indeed, the Research Consortium's uncompromising concern to link education to the moral and political challenges of social transformation are salutary at a time when many scholars have warned of the erasure of those very concerns within development studies. Thus Schuurman for instance, has noted their marginalisation has resulted from the triumph

of ‘neoliberal thinking’ which has spawned a largely technocratic and economically reductionist approach ‘making it increasingly difficult to maintain a critical research tradition’(2009, 832; quoted in Chouliaraki, 2013, 8).

However, the Research Consortium has also indicated the ‘developing nature’ of its framework as ‘theory building in progress’ that depends on further ‘empirical fieldwork and findings’. Hence its approach to ‘theory making’ as a ‘non-static process’ (Novelli et al., 2015, 18). A recent review of its outputs notes that its formulators ‘hope it is treated as a starting point for critical reflection rather than a normative and simplistic endpoint’ (Novelli et al., 2019, 74). The challenge therefore remains for the ‘skill of researchers [to] determine whether its application is open enough to capture the complex interactions between the different Rs and that the research is grounded in sufficient depth and knowledge of the particular historical, political, economic, social and cultural conditions of the research context’ (ibid, 74).

This research responds directly to this empirical as well as theoretical challenge. In relation to the former, it extends the Research Consortium’s focus on issues of teacher governance, professional development, curriculum and textbooks (Sayed and Novelli, 2016) to their pedagogical practices and relationships at a micro-level while maintaining its expansive and critical conceptualisation of the contribution of education to peace promotion. Its empirical focus responds to the recent ‘critical lens’ on the 4 Rs, offered by Pherali and Turner (2018) who note that ‘education and peacebuilding models such as the 4Rs can do little in the absence of critical consciousness and transformative political action from the grassroots’ (ibid, 586). This would entail attention to their feelings, mentality and imaginaries of social change held by local actors, including teachers. Hence this research offers micro level studies of how conflict-affected communities, including their teachers, perceive and mobilise education to navigate their experiences of misjustices of representation, recognition, redistribution and reconciliation affecting their lives.

Moreover, this research seeks to contribute to ‘theory making’ that builds on the use of Fraser’s model of social justice by taking into account not only its strengths but its limitations as a vehicle for theorising the relation between education and social justice processes in conflict-affected contexts. In particular, critiques have highlighted the tendency of the 4Rs to foreground macro level social processes that under-estimate local micro practices. Thus, in a compelling review of Fraser’s Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World 2009 (Israel, 2010) points out that her conceptualisation of social justice responds primarily to processes of globalisation resulting from the influence and actions of multi-national corporations and the operations of global capitalism. Hence her foregrounding of macro-level ‘transnational processes and institutions [rather than] everyday practices of people in local settings’ (ibid, 711). Hence her concern to reimagine the ‘scales of justice’

and to locate them with a 'scaling up' to a transnational scale. However, understanding how teacher pedagogy may contribute to social justice also necessitates scaling downwards to understand how the processes of the 'Rs' infuse teacher practices and relationships with pupils in particular localised settings. The micro-level case studies of this research, and the theoretical approaches they mobilise seek to respond to this challenge. In doing so they contribute to the process of 'theory making' to build on and take forward the insights of the Research Consortium.

5.2. Empirical case studies of teachers' pedagogical agency

This research also builds on recent empirical studies of scholars who have sought to provide more context specific insights into the situated agency of teachers in conflict-affected contexts (Van Ommering, 2017; Shah and Lopes Cardozo, 2014; Lopes Cardozo and Hoeks, 2014; Lopes Cardozo and Shah, 2016). Thus Lopes Cardozo and Shah have analysed the conflicted position of teachers in Aceh's independence struggle, showing how 'teachers sense of agency during this period was deeply conditioned by the economic/material, political and socio-cultural condition at that time – conditions and experiences which today have bearing on a place for teachers in the post-conflict peacebuilding process occurring in the province'(2016, 331). Other studies have spotlighted diverse features of their agency in conflict-affected contexts including the factors impacting on their deployment (Brandt, 2019) as well as their exercise of professional and pedagogic identities (Adebeyo, 2019; Agbaria and Pinson, 2019) and their daily personal struggles (Van Ommering, 2017) This research also builds on a range of studies that have opened up the blackbox of teachers experiences and imaginaries in relation to contributing to peace in conflict-affected contexts. These include papers focusing on: the pedagogical strategies used by Arab teachers in Israel to mediate citizenship education and how they 'perceive their socio political reality' (Agbaria and Pinson, 2019, 391); how teachers in post conflict and post-Ebola Liberia feel themselves as 'second parents, humanitarians, town criers, guardians, and psychologists' (Adebeyo, 2019, 8); and the meanings which attach to education in the Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank (Pherali and Turner, 2018).

5.3. Transformative and critical peace education

The research also builds on work on recent scholarship on peace education that critically interrogates its claims and aspirations to contribute to promoting sustainable peace in conflict-affected contexts (Bajaj, 2019). In particular they highlight the failure of mainstream psychologised approaches to address the structural drivers of grievance that cause conflict. As Bajaj has pointed out, alternative more 'critical' versions particular 'considers the ways in which human agency dynamically interacts with structures and forms of violence; and in turn, contemplates the potential for educational spaces – formal and informal – to be sites of individual and collective transformation' (Bajaj, 2008, 2015).

Such approaches have sought to enhance theoretical and conceptual reflection in the field in order to 'better align the promise of education for peace and greater justice [with] more effective tools for inquiry and practice' (Bajaj, 2019, 69). They also invite research that illuminates possibilities of forms of peace education that address inequities resulting from neoliberal global capitalism, legacies of colonialism, and systemic racism and sexism.

Various empirical case studies within this more critical mode overlap with the concerns of this thesis to critique peace education in Sierra Leone as well as to explore and re-envision alternative pedagogical models. Hence Lopes Cardozo's (2008) paper intriguingly entitled 'Sri Lanka: In peace or in pieces: a critical approach to peace education in Sri Lanka' locates teachers' implementation of this curriculum in specific structural challenges such as segregated schooling that constrain its potential to contribute to sustainable peace. More recently, a dissertation (Vlad, 2018) on critical peace pedagogies at museums in Canada and North America devoted to human rights shows how informal forms of peace education may address 'structural questions and expose systemic unbalances' (ibid, ii) which affect the lives of marginalised, impoverished and disenfranchised African American and indigenous Canadians. While focusing on the global north, it highlights the possibilities of peace education in informal spaces equipping diverse audiences to navigate and challenge the pernicious effects of the 'socio-economic inequities' (ibid, 7) resulting from legacies of colonialism, systemic racism and neoliberal global capitalism. Furthermore, its attention to pedagogical models that address the affective nature of socio-economic and political struggle through 'participative visceral experiences [that] bypass the intellect' (ibid, iii) and rational processes dominant in Freirean pedagogies is also relevant to this thesis's concern to probe the affective nature of pedagogies for social justice.

Moreover, Zanoni's study (2018) of peace education in Kenya, looks at disjunctions between its conceptualisation at the national level and the spaces of transformative peace education at local levels of school practice. The latter rather than the former 'invite students to activate their innate agency for individual and collective positive social change' (ibid, ii). Highlighting the diverse interests and knowledges being mobilised within different models of peace education, Zanoni's research also presages the interest of this thesis in understanding this curriculum as a product of a politics of knowledge production in Sierra Leone. All these recent studies contribute to what Bajaj calls the 'ongoing global conversation on peace education' (2019, 65) which this thesis builds on.

5.4. Critical Pedagogy and its critics

In its approach to the intersection between pedagogical practices and social justice in a conflict-affected context, this research also draws on the insights of a cluster of thinkers within the field of

critical pedagogy (Gottesman, 2016, 74-93; Giroux, 1988; Giroux, Freire and MacLaren, 1988; Apple, 2004; McLaren and Kincheloe, 2007; Freire, 2006). Their studies focus on contexts of schooling in the United States as well as Latin America, rather than conflict-affected contexts of sub-Saharan Africa. However, they have all emphasised the inherently political nature of the curriculum and pedagogical practices and their entanglements with power relations. They have also underscored their potential to engineer educational experiences that may trigger processes of social critique, and in turn activism for personal and societal transformation in contexts of injustice (Gottesman, 2016). Whether implicating pedagogical practices in projects of humanisation, social critique or personal and collective hope, all these conceptualisations underline the potential connectedness of the micro practices of teacher pedagogy with politicised aspirations and activism for societal change.

While working with these insights, this paper is also mindful of critiques and limitations of the model of critical pedagogy developed in the work of Freire. In particular scholars have its 'rationalist' (Ellsworth, 1989, 297) assumptions and a related failure to engage sufficiently with the affective and embodied dimensions of the experiences of learners. Moreover, the dangers of installing the teacher as the 'arbiter' of 'empowerment and dialogue' and as the vehicle of a 'universalised conception of reason' have also been highlighted (Gottesman, 2016, 101). Also, of relevance are problematisations of some versions of critical pedagogy foregrounding human rights education. These have been critiqued for their collusion with processes of capitalist globalisation by privileging political and civic empowerment over collective socio-economic well-being (Evans and Ayers, 2006). Furthermore, their embeddedness in Enlightenment assumptions of the rights bearing subject (Zembylas, 2016), with its inherent individualism, may occlude recognition of alternative ontologies that stress human interdependency and the ongoing and uncertain formation of the subject as an effect of power.

5.5. Conclusions

This review has indicated how this research's attention to teachers and social justice in a conflict-affected setting may be situated within larger and unresolved issues about how best to theorise, understand and engage with curriculum and pedagogies aiming at social transformation. Its theoretical and methodological orientations, and the resulting publications all seek to contribute to this contested field of inquiry.

6. Understanding the Sierra Leonean Conflict-Affected Context

Sierra Leone is an appropriate conflict-affected context for research given its reputation as a success story of liberal peacebuilding international interventionism (Smith Ellison, 2014). This has resulted in its status as a donor darling, with 'all major donors backing the country's second poverty reduction strategy, 2008-2012' (UNESCO, 2011, 232). Indeed, financial investment in the country has been taken as exemplary value for money. In particular international funding to Sierra Leone has been celebrated as a demonstration a uniquely successful paradigm that evinces 'donor commitment to long term reconstruction' (ibid) within a 'policy framework' extending from immediate short-term security interventions and humanitarian aid to long term development assistance.

Yet questions remain in relation to the contribution of education to peacebuilding within donor supported interventions. Thus, a recent study of 5 education programmes developed and managed by international aid agencies in the post-conflict period found that 'these education projects do not differ hugely from 'business as usual'' (Smith Ellison, 2014, 203) development programmes. These interventions did not focus on teachers or curriculum issues as is the focus of this thesis, but rather on skills training for ex combatants, basic education provision, classroom reconstruction, and gender inequalities. However, Smith Ellison found that there was a lack of 'thoughtful consideration' of what a shift to 'education programmes as peacebuilding initiatives' (ibid, 203) means in practice. This would mean 'putting conflict sensitivity at the heart of programming' (ibid); drawing not so much on international agendas as 'local knowledge'; and recognising that a shift to peacebuilding means engaging with the 'realm of the political' (ibid). This research responds to these challenges.

The conflict-affected context of Sierra Leone is characterised in the published paper cited in Chapter 2 of the thesis. Hence this section does not seek to reproduce that material. Rather the following sections highlight recent scholarship on Sierra Leone from diverse disciplinary lenses which have yielded insights that are relevant to the subsequent analysis of peace education curriculum and pedagogical practices. This approach recognises that the notion of context is a mediated social reality and that diverse approaches spotlight some aspects and miss others. Hence the relevance of avoiding disciplinary parochialism (Dale, 2000). The following discussion therefore draws on insights from critical discourse analysis, political science, anthropology, sociology and cultural studies. These have all nuanced understanding of a complex conflict-affected context too easily problematised in negative and homogenising terms within the field of peacebuilding interventionism (Duffield, 2001).

6.1. Western imaginaries of conflict-affected Sierra Leone; insights from discourse analysis

Since 1990, Sierra Leone has been presented and re-presented in western media and film as a place of grotesque and irrational suffering and unredeemable conflict. Films such as Blood Diamonds have underscored the association of the Sierra Leonean conflict with horrific atrocities, including mutilation, sexual violence and the use of child soldiers (Onuzulike, 2015). Hence Mitton has written of the demeaning descriptions of culturally specific savagery and African ‘‘hearts of darkness’ notions which have permeated much of the analysis of the violence of the Sierra Leone civil war to the detriment of our understanding’ (2012, 105). Likewise, scholars of conflict in Africa have explained the Sierra Leonean case as a descent into a primordial and irrational behaviours, analogous to irrational crime and banditry. Thus Kaplan (1994), in a now famous paper entitled ‘The Coming Anarchy: how scarcity, crime, overpopulation and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet’ argues that the Sierra Leonean conflict was the result of ‘social breakdown’ caused by ‘population pressure and environmental collapse’ (quoted in Richards, 1996, xv). Similarly, the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court which tried war criminals noted that that ‘conflicts in these dark corners are evolving into uncivilised events. They appear to be less political and are more criminal in origin and scope’ (Crane, 2005, 4). Furthermore, ‘Fertilized by greed and corruption, what grows out of these regions in the world are terror, war crimes and crimes against humanity’ (ibid). Finally, Tony Blair, former prime minister of the UK has described Africa in 2001 as a ‘scar on the conscience of the world’ (quoted in Blair, 2001 quoted in Abrahamsen, 2005, 55), noting that the repercussions of its conflicts could threaten the safety and stability of the west. Hence Sierra Leone as well as other conflict-affected nations in Africa including the DRC, Liberia, Sudan were represented as ‘failed states’ who threaten the ‘order of our own societies’ (Blair, 2001, quoted in Abrahamsen, 2005, 65).

The wording of these various mediations of conflict-affected Sierra Leone are notable for essentialising the nation and its demographic as a land of savagery, irrationality and hopelessness, associated in particular with poverty, over population and the inherent propensity of its population to engage in barbarism and anarchy. They amount to a pervasive and pathologizing social imaginary of the country and its people. Hence one anthropologist summarises these framings as the ‘new barbarism’ thesis (Richards, 1996, xv). They are notable for reviving colonial stereotypes of Africa (Anders, 2011), and in particular stressing factors internal to the continent and its peoples as explanations for its condition, thus ignoring extraneous factors, including colonialism and its legacies, as well as global capitalism, both of which have and continue to drive grievance and conflict (Abrahamsen, 2005). Moreover, Richards has pointed out that negative and homogenising representations tend to ‘disregard the complexity of historical and sociological detail’ (2005, xi) when explaining and interpreting Sierra Leone, its conflict, peoples and history. In relation to the drivers of conflict, they pay ‘scant regard to the insurgents own claims concerning the purpose of their

movement, that they took up arms to fight for multi-party democracy and against state corruption' (ibid, vxi), as well as for improved access to social services, including education.

Notwithstanding their partiality, these negative and nihilistic projections of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans have entered into the foreign and domestic as well as the development policy agendas of western states. For instance, in the paper Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitisation and Fear, Abrahamsen (2005) has shown how they underpin policies that construe the African continent as a threat to global security and peaceas well as the social order of western states, requiring internationally engineered processes of regulation and securitisation.

These insights into the ways in which Sierra Leone and its conflict-affected people have been represented are important in highlighting the representative deficit which academic research is thus obligated to counter and correct. In particular therefore, the challenge is to see beyond the emotive and negative imaginaries and to engage with the material social, cultural economic, political and economic drivers of conflict and peace which they overlook.

6.2. Sierra Leone's political culture and the legacy of colonialism: insights from Political Science

Secondly, in the field of political science, Datzberger (2014) critiques the efforts of the international development donor community to impose onto Sierra Leone, a model of an active civil society functioning that is essentially western and based on a 'liberal ideal', but that does not recognise the specificity of Sierra Leonean traditions and its political culture. She writes that 'participatory approaches to democracy are repeatedly challenged by a persisting urban-rural divide as well as socially entrenched forms of neopatrimonialism, elite loyalism and tribalism' (ibid, 3). Moreover, 'the effects of colonialism [are] still reflected in the current monopolisation of wealth and power among a few elites next to a vast majority living in abject poverty' (ibid). This is particularly relevant for the approach of this thesis which seeks to show how far curricula such as peace education, as well as more grassroots pedagogical practices, are intersecting with local political cultures and dynamics within a context-responsive approach.

Of relevance is Datzberger's use of the insights of Mamdami, (1996) and Ekeh (1975), who have drawn attention to plural understandings and enactments of citizenship which are the legacy of colonialism and still operative in post-colonial contexts such as Sierra Leone. In particular, Ekeh's essay 'Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa; A Theoretical Statement' (1975) argues that colonialism resulted in the construction of two discrete publics, which he terms the 'primordial' and the 'civic'. The former refers to a pre-colonial societal order and related values, traditions and belief systems, in other words the framework of customary practices in which the majority of subjects lived

their lives. The latter refers to the social order introduced by colonial administration. Ekeh argues that both these publics co-exist in post-colonial contexts within a 'bifurcated state' (ibid). Within such bifurcations, 'colonial ideologies of legitimation denigrated African societies and cultures and glorified European colonial rule, while African bourgeois ideologies of legitimation accepted colonial ideas and principles to justify the leadership of the elites in the fight against colonialism and the inheritance of the postcolonial state' (Mentan 2010, 187). The title of Mandami's text, 'Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism' (1996) refers to these distinct identities and in particular the demographic division and social hierarchy they produced.

Datzberger argues that the 'bifurcated state' is very much alive in Sierra Leone (2014, see also Ferme, 1998). However, a failure to recognise this aspect of the country's political culture has undermined the impact and relevance of interventions of international aid agencies intending to support the creation of civil society. This is due to their ignoring the persistence of patrimonial relationships and clientelism that continue to mediate state-society relationships in the country. These insights are relevant for this research's goal to understand how pedagogical practices may be mobilised to provide young people with skills and knowledges that relate to these specific contextual challenges; in particular those rooted in the political culture faced by young people but which are ignored in the more generic peace education and human rights curriculum of global aid agencies.

Also of relevance, is Datzberger's reference to the work of a local NGO Fambul Tok which offers an example of a peace related project which demonstrates a more culturally sensitive approach with greater local ownership and legitimacy than the civil society projects discussed above. In drawing on locally rooted cultural practices of peace promotion, Datzberger notes that Fambul Tok has become a 'widely praised example of how peacebuilding and reconciliation and social cohesion can be locally nurtured and somewhat owned' (2014, 53). The partnerships which this local NGO developed with teachers formed a key case study in this research and the resulting culturally attuned pedagogical models of peace promotion which they generated are the subject of Chapter 6.

6.3. Rituals and Practices of Everyday Life: insights from anthropology

Thirdly, the insights of anthropologists and ethnographers who have revealed the cultural practices, attitudes, rituals within which Sierra Leonean communities understand and practice peace promotion have also been important in developing the focus of this research. In particular, they have demonstrated the richness of local peace practices as sites of agency that lie outside of the conflict resolution paradigms of the west and have been largely ignored by liberal peacebuilding interventionism. Asserting that 'rescuing peacebuilding from neoliberal epistemological frameworks requires an anthropological and ethnographic sensibility' (Richmond, 2018, 221) Richmond has

underlined the unique explanatory power of this discipline to illuminate the 'web of meaning' (2011, 45) from which politics and peace emerge. Likewise, Richards has highlighted the distinctive contribution of ethnography to understanding the transition of societies from conflict to peace by 'careful analysis of what people do and how they do it' (Richards, 2005,11). This enables an epistemological process that counters the negative assumptions of peacebuilding interventionism by its concern to 'ring fence the spaces in which local social creativity flourishes' (ibid, 11). Millar has shown how such anthropological insights challenge the power asymmetry within knowledge production in the field of peacebuilding. In a recent paper entitled 'Decentring the intervention experts; ethnographic peace research and policy engagement' (2018a) he argues that the insights derived from long term field study are likely to achieve greater understanding of 'local drivers and everyday experiences of peace' that go beyond the 'exogenously conceived and technocratic nature' (ibid, 259) of many peace interventions. Outlining an 'ethnographic approach to peacebuilding' (Millar, 2014, 2) he emphasises a need for to understand what 'local people experience when the international community attempts to build peace' (ibid); and how projects for 'healing, reconciliation, peace, democracy and justice' are experienced by people on the ground (ibid).

A spate of ethnographic studies has revealed a conflict-affected society that is far more nuanced that that projected in the imaginaries above. For instance, in a paper entitled Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions: insights from Sierra Leone, Shaw (2005) critiques the deployment of Western conceptions of 'therapeutic truth telling' (ibid, 1) in such institutions of transitional justice which she characterises as 'international conflict resolution first aid kits'(ibid). These ignored 'local strategies of recovery and re-integration' (ibid). Likewise, Millar's (2011a) study of the responses of local people in the northern Sierra Leonean city of Makeni has indicated that far from being a healing process, it was conceived as a form of provocation. This response was based on local expectations that their testimonies would result in socio-economic support, expectations that projected the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) institution as 'patrons' within a complex cultural system of patron-client relationships. More recently, anthropologist Paul Richards (2016) in a book with the salutary title 'How a People's Science helped to end an epidemic', has demonstrated how international aid agencies and humanitarian policy makers and practitioners ignored community rooted local practices in their responses to the Ebola epidemic. The result was to foreclose opportunities to draw on local knowledges and rituals which ultimately proved crucial in ending its spread. Finally, Ibrahim and Shepler (2011), introducing a special issue on 'everyday life in postwar Sierra Leone' have noted that micro level studies of the 'everyday lives' of Sierra Leoneans, including their 'food, music, religion, forms of livelihood, dress,' (ibid, v) provide the too often neglected 'prism' for understanding the socio-cultural transformations in the aftermath of Sierra Leone's civil conflict and yielding insights into the daily realities of a population 'grappling with everyday existence' (ibid).

This focus of anthropologists on 'people's lived experiences' is thus a necessary corrective to the tendency of studies of post war societies to be state-centric, thus missing the places and spaces where 'reconciliation and social reconstruction really take place' (ibid). All these studies have generated insights into Sierra Leonean's experiences and knowledges of peace that are bypassed by international interventions. They invite research that applies an anthropological lens to educational practices in order to explore their interconnections with teachers' pedagogical agency in relation to promoting peace.

6.4. Changing inter-generational relationships; insights from sociology

Fourth, within the field of sociology, the work of Boersch-Supan (2012) has drawn attention to the shifting nature of inter-generational relationships in conflict-affected Sierra Leone since peace was officially declared in 2002. She shows how the conflict was a 'revolt of youth' against 'exclusionary patrimonial politics and gerontocratic dominance and exploitation' (ibid, 25). However, youth experiences of the conflict catalysed 'changes in power asymmetries between age groups' (ibid). While 'social hierarchies of a male, gerontocratic and patrimonial system governing economic social and political life endure in the post-conflict phase',(ibid), Boersch-Supan finds that Sierra Leonean youth are increasingly predisposed to questioning inter-generational norms and 'demanding changes to the generational contract' (ibid). Hence, they are creating spaces for contestation and negotiation, opening up new sources of initiative outside of gerontocratic systems. By demonstrating a society in flux, in which social norms framing youth agency are changing, these insights challenge the static and negative imaginaries of the Sierra Leonean demographic. In relation to the concerns of this thesis they invite attention to how teachers' pedagogical strategies for peace promotion intersect with these shifting socio-cultural norms.

6.5. The 'local' turn in education and peace building: insights from critical qualitative ethnography

This study also builds on applications of the local turn in studies of post-conflict peacebuilding discussed earlier to education in Sierra Leone. For instance, the recent paper by Shepler and Williams (2017) on teachers' views on using their classrooms as a space to discuss the nation's conflict explicitly seeks to compensate for a prior lack of research engagement with their grassroots experiences. Shepler and Williams therefore prioritise interviews with secondary school teachers in rural and urban areas as a means to better understand 'teachers' own perspectives' (ibid, 420). This enables a more bottom up approach than that provided by 'researchers, policy-makers and policy advocates' (ibid) who have tended to focus on 'top down initiatives' (ibid), failing to 'investigate what goes on in classrooms' (ibid, 435) or to ask 'what teachers think should or could be done in classrooms' (ibid). Their study found that teachers working in government schools, while wanting to

discuss the conflict and its repercussions and to contribute to peace promotion, also felt constrained by pressures to cover the examination curriculum and lack of instructional materials, and support from the state.

Shepler and Williams' methodological approach and findings have informed the conceptualisation and priorities of this research. In particular, by bringing to the foreground the neglected perspectives of teachers' experience their method is aligned with the social justice and emancipatory approach of critical ethnography (May, 1997). Of relevance is their finding that non-formal educational initiatives, such as Fambul Tok, held particular promise in providing opportunities for teachers to realise their potential as agents of peace promotion and conflict amelioration and hence required further research and understanding (Shepler and Williams, 2017, 436). The case studies offered in Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis directly respond to this knowledge gap.

6.6. Conclusions

These inter-disciplinary insights into conflict-affected Sierra Leone reveal a far more nuanced picture than the essentialising and wholly negative projections of the imaginaries of the country and its people noted at the start. Of relevance for this research's concern with the role of education in peace promotion are their insights into a society undergoing complex social change namely; the persistence of legacies of history and colonialism within its political culture; and the richness and creativity of local cultural knowledges and expertise which have been overlooked by international interventions. Understanding conflict-affected Sierra Leone through these various disciplinary lenses therefore opens up possibilities for exploring how the pedagogical work of teachers in contributing to conflict amelioration may intersect with these dynamics an important goal of this research. In mobilising disciplinary pluralism, this research is aligned with the process of 'deparochialising the research imagination' called for by Appadurai (2001).

7. Research Questions

As suggested by the title of this thesis, this research aims firstly to interrogate the positioning of Sierra Leonean teachers and conflict-affected communities within generic models of peace education circulating across conflict-affected contexts by international aid agencies; secondly to explore alternative models of their pedagogical practices and agency available in the neglected informal education initiatives of local NGOs; and thirdly to probe teachers' knowledges and experiences and peace promoting activities in the micro-contexts of their schools and communities.

These broad goals emerge from the paradox outlined at the start of this introduction. In relation to the conflict-affected context of Sierra Leone and the contribution of teachers to promoting peace, they probe and problematise its contradictions between rhetorical and utopian expectations of teachers as agents of peace promotion and a pervasive lack of context-responsive knowledge of their daily lived experiences and challenges. Moreover, the research aims to demonstrate how these experiences intersect with their pedagogical imaginaries, practices and relationships in relation to conflict amelioration.

This research agenda breaks down into 6 sub questions which are set out in the table below. They spotlight different dimensions of the overarching issues, provide entry points into exploring them and establish the research strands which have led to the published outcomes. The table therefore summarises the analytical and empirical focus of each sub question and identifies the Chapter containing the publication outcomes which answers it.

Questions	Focus	Outcome
1. How and to what extent have educational interventions of international agencies contributed to the promotion of sustainable peace in conflict-affected Sierra Leone, 2002-2018?	Setting the context The agendas, priorities and impact of peacebuilding and educational interventions in conflict-affected Sierra Leone.	Chapter 1 pp. 103-122
2. How does peace education frame the contribution of teachers and education provision more broadly to conflict amelioration in Sierra Leone and what light does this theoretically informed analysis throw on the interests, power relationships and agendas they serve?	Critical Analysis of a peace education curriculum drawing on the theoretical tools of cultural political economy.	Chapters 2/3 pp. 123-166
3. What pedagogical practices, values and relationships for peace promotion are enacted by teachers in School Mining Clubs resulting from partnerships with the Network Movement for Justice and Development and how do these frame the contribution of teachers to sustainable peace promotion? What are	Case studies of the professional and pedagogical positioning of teachers by the Network Movement for Justice and Development, a local NGO working with communities affected by mining in the Kono region.	Chapter 4 pp.167-188

	the local, national and global factors shaping and constraining them?		
4.	What pedagogical practices, values and relationships for peace promotion are enacted by teachers in the Fambul Tok Peace Clubs resulting from partnerships with Fambul Tok and how do these frame the contribution of teachers to sustainable peace promotion?	Case study of the professional and pedagogical positioning of teachers by Fambul Tok a local NGO drawing on local cultural resources for peace promotion	Chapter 5 pp. 189-206
5.	How do teachers in Kono, Sierra Leone perceive and experience their pedagogical values practices and relationships in relation to conflict mitigation and peace promotion and what theoretical and methodological resources may be used to explore this?	Case study using photo-elicitation of teachers' views, experiences of conflict navigation and their perception of their exercise of pedagogical agency in response.	Chapter 6 pp.207-226
6.	In the light of answers to the above research questions, how may teachers' pedagogical contributions to peace promotion in SL be re-envisioned and what theoretical resources and methodological approaches may be useful in achieving this?	Synthesis, enabling reflection on how insights from questions 2,3 and 4 can speak back to a re-thinking of the framings explored in question 1, and what theoretical approaches may be best equipped to do so.	Conclusions pp.227-249
7.	What are the implications of findings from questions1-4 for policy and programming to better enhance and support the contribution of teachers to sustainable peace promotion in Sierra Leone and elsewhere?	Contribution of the research to knowledge production in the field of education and peacebuilding; theoretical, empirical, policy related directions for further research resulting.	Conclusions pp.227-249

Figure 3 Research sub questions

7.1. Rationale and Logic

These research questions represent several underlying logics of inquiry and are products of a 'reflective and interrogative process' (Agee, 2009, 431). Firstly, they represent what Kross and Guist (2019) following Agee (2009) has described as an 'inverted pyramid'. Hence question 1 (Chapter 2) provides an initial context-setting entry point, focusing broadly on the impact of international peacebuilding and educational interventions in conflict-affected Sierra Leone. This provides the contextual grounding for the narrower focus of subsequent questions on a particular peace education curriculum developed by an international aid agency (question 2, Chapters 3 and 4) and finally on the pedagogical practices and relationships emergent from the initiatives of local NGOs and from teachers themselves (questions 3,4, and 5, Chapters 5,6,7). In this way the order of the questions aims to generate a dynamic process of cumulative, multi-scalar knowledge production.

Second, the research questions seek to conceptualise the research so as to avoid the limitations of uncritical educational research as outlined by Novelli and Lopes Cardozo (2008). Thus, they avoid methodological nationalism by directing attention to multiple scales of analysis (Dale, 2000, 2005). They drill downwards from a global and national state-centric scale (questions 1 and 2) focusing on the framing of teachers within a travelling generic education policy to local scales (questions 3-5)

which illuminate teacher pedagogy and practices emergent from communities and NGOs operating in Kono, in the east of the Sierra Leone, epicentre of its conflict and the centre of its diamond mining industry. This multi-scalarity – and in particular, attention to the global as well as the local – therefore avoids methodological nationalism or what Dale (2005) has noted is a tendency to frame educational politics at the level of the nation state. This constitutes a particular error within a post-conflict context characterised by marked regional diversity and in which the experience of conflict was highly distinct – even views about when the war started are region-specific (Keen, 2005). Furthermore, attention to the educational partnerships of local NGOs and civil society organisations (questions 3-5) avoids the methodological statism that has narrowed the field of research vision in peacebuilding generally and education in particular. The research also avoids methodological individualism by conceptualising teachers not only as individuals but as collective groups, particularly important given what is the collaborative nature of teachers' professionalism, often missed in their representation as heroic individuals as noted in the policy rhetoric of some international aid organisations.

Thirdly, the questions respond directly to the knowledge gaps and conceptual limitations of current understandings of teachers' contribution to peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts outlined earlier. Hence the theoretically informed interrogation of a peace education curriculum (questions 2 and 3) aims to problematise the dominance of such curriculum in framing the expectations and responsibilities of teachers in conflict-affected contexts. The attention to local NGOs and their roles in knowledge production and insights into pedagogy in questions 4-6 responds to the failure to engage with non-formal educational initiatives and their possibilities for bringing alternative knowledges to understand and enrich awareness of the potential of teachers' pedagogical practices. Indeed, as noted earlier, both NGOs which form the subjects of the research questions have been praised by scholars (Datzberger 2014; Shepler & Williams, 2017) for offering locally generated approaches to peacebuilding missed within international development agencies committed to liberal peacebuilding as noted earlier.

The engagement with teachers' experiences, voices and viewpoints on their pedagogical practices through an innovative methodology in question 5 offers a corrective to their striking absence within research and practice in the field of education and peacebuilding. Finally, , the sharp focus of the research on pedagogical practices as situated and context-responsive socially embedded activities seeks to do justice to their complexity; in other words, to their 'deep well' (Schweisfurth 2015, 261) of discourse and framings, values as well as practices and their interactions noted by Schweisfurth. Privileging these, the research runs counter to the 'organisations concerned with global governance' (ibid) who have tended to keep this 'deep well of pedagogy at a distance' (ibid).

Overall then, the driving logic of questions 1- 5 responds to the imperative to go beyond treating local actors as subjects and objects of initiatives developed without consultation with them which have been noted in the critiques of liberal peacebuilding interventionism. This means recognising them as agential through a more empathetic understanding of their everyday navigation of conflict dynamics and structural drivers of grievance as well as their mobilisation of indigenous knowledges and insights. Hence research questions 3 and 4 directly address these issues. In this way, the research questions respond to the 'local turn' in the broader field of research into peacebuilding interventionism in conflict-affected contexts outlined earlier. However, by seeking to reveal the global determinants of teachers' situated agency for peace promotion the research approach of this thesis, through the questions that it asks, is aligned with a commitment not to not to essentialise the local or to artificially binarise the local and the global (Paffenholz, 2015).

The concluding questions 6 and 7 are summative. They clarify the implications of the collected insights generated by for rethinking and re-envisioning both peace education curriculum and teachers' pedagogical practices and relationships in relation to peace promotion and conflict amelioration. In doing so they highlight the theoretical and empirical contributions to these overarching goals which are made by this research, addressing issues of epistemology and methodology as well as contributing to knowledge generation. They also clarify their relevance for policy and programming to support teachers in the field of education and peacebuilding practice. In this way, these final questions complete the research circle by reflecting on how the attempts to mobilise research to address some of the lacuna or in the words of de Sousa Santos (2004) the 'absences' in knowledge production about teachers in conflict-affected contexts may not only result in greater epistemic and therefore social justice; but may also contribute to enhancing meaningful support for teachers contribution to peace promotion by international development agencies that goes beyond romanticism and hyperbole.

8. Theoretical orientations

8.1. Introduction

Dunne et al. write that 'good research is not just a question of the application of theory to data but is an act of theorisation in itself' (2005, 166). This insight recognises that theorising demarcates the particular parameters of the subjects of educational research. It is thereby a boundary marking process which problematises how objects of knowledge are constituted and understood. Hence, Edwards has noted that 'theory is a material and materialising practice' (2009, 146) that brings into view and being, defines and delineates its objects of study. Likewise, Robertson and Dale recognise that 'theories structure the problematique' (2015, 3). This process inevitably means that all forms of theorisation are ultimately unresolved and partial in the sense that in structuring the 'problematique', some aspects of the social are foregrounded and illuminated and others cast into the explanatory shadows.

There is also an emancipatory and critical dimension to the theorising process. As Maclure has noted 'the value of theory lies in its power to get in the way: to offend and interrupt. We need to block the reproduction of the bleeding obvious, and thereby, hopefully, open up new possibilities for thinking and doing' (2010, 277). As observed by Jackson and Mazzei, without taking seriously the epistemological and ontological orientations that both ground and limit us, 'research can become little more than a focus on method, rather than a troubling of both what counts as knowledge and reality; and how such knowledge and reality are produced'(2018, 720). Hence the process of theorisation questions 'what counts as knowledge, what counts as 'real' in educational settings, and who has the authority to determine this' (ibid). Given the 'taken for grantedness' of unevidenced and rhetorical, as well as contradictory framings of teachers' roles in conflict amelioration, this research imperative is particularly appropriate. The process of theorising thus serves to open up such representations as the product of processes of epistemological materialisation that invite scrutiny and problematisation.

Following these insights, this section offers an account of the theoretical journey informing this research. In particular it explains its mobilisation of theoretical approaches which have served as materialising practices in so far as they have illuminated and offered entry points into the research questions guiding the thesis. These focus firstly on understanding how peace education curriculum frames teachers and the Sierra Leonean conflict-affected demographic and secondly on the models of pedagogical practices and relationships developed by grassroots NGOs and teachers. Telling this theoretical story is therefore underpinned by a view of research as a 'dynamic' and 'constantly shifting' activity that necessitates 'new theoretical insights and different theoretical resources that shift the gaze' (Dunne et al., 2005, 166).

8.2. The purpose and significance of theory

The following narrative is informed by several broad insights into the role and function of nature of theorisation and methodology in the social sciences and in particular educational research. Firstly, the act of theorising may be understood as a process of abstracting from the complexity of the social which involves 'boundary drawing practices' (Barad, 2007, 140). As noted above, this recognises that all theoretical perspectives foreground and delineate a particular aspect of the social that participate in 'reconfiguring the world' and therefore 'come to matter'. This boundary making practice also generates an 'excluded realm that doesn't matter' (Barad, 2007, 140, quoted in Crossouard and Pryor, 2012, 252). This view therefore resists the binarism of educational theorising as associated with ideas in contrast to professional practice deemed concrete and material, highlighting how theory is generative of our perceptions of the social and therefore itself 'material and materialising' (Barad, 2007, 5). This insight is particularly resonant in relation to my own dual positioning as a practitioner as well as researcher.

Secondly, the notion of theorisation as a boundary making practice also serves as a reminder that all theoretical conceptualisations of the social offer us a partial rather than exhaustive light on social reality. These spotlight and foreground particular dimensions, making some features intelligible and occluding or erasing others. Given the complex challenges in understanding and probing how teachers are framed and represented in relation to peace promotion and in turn how they enact such goals in their situated, embodied, affective pedagogical practices and relationships, it is thus unlikely that any one mode of theorisation will wholly satisfy the resulting explanatory challenges. The approach adopted in this research recognises a need to resist a totalising approach to theoretical application and the tendency in the academy to occupy a single position.

Thirdly, the insights of Cox on the contingency of theoretical endeavour are also relevant. He has reminded us that 'theory is always for someone and for some purpose' (Cox and Sinclair, 1996, 87). This also underscores the partiality of all theory by drawing attention to its contingent, situated and ultimately 'biased' (Moolakkattu, 2009, 439) nature. That 'there is no theory of universal validity' (Schouten, 2009, 5) means that theory building is always instrumental and purposive, motivated by particular goals rather than disinterested; as such it is always a 'part of history' (ibid). Hence, the use of theoretical insights invites attention to limitations as well as strengths and a degree of humility that recognises their ultimately unresolved status. This has led some scholars to stress the need for 'bridge building' (Fraser, 1989, 12) between theories in a process that may combine their analytical strengths. The approach taken in this research and outlined in the following reflections is aligned with this theoretical pragmatism.

Fourthly, and relatedly, the process of theorising that underpins this research is situated within and cuts across Cox's distinction between 'critical' and 'problem solving theory'. Thus, Cox notes that problem solving theory 'takes the world as it finds it, with prevailing social and power relationship and the institutions into which they are organised as the given framework for action' (Cox and Sinclair, 1996, 87). By contrast critical theory is 'directed towards an appraisal of the very framework for action, the problematic which problem-solving theory accepts as its parameters' (ibid, 88). Such an approach therefore disrupts the prevailing 'common sense' about 'reality that can endure for a very long time' (Schouten, 2009, 2).

Delineating the objects and goals of this research has involved both a problem solving and a critical approach. On the one hand, the former's concern with circumscribing particular aspects of the social as the locus of problematisation underscores its empirical focus. Thus, the framings of teachers and the needs of conflict-affected communities in peace education curriculum developed by international aid agencies are circumscribed as 'problems' needing interrogation. Within the logic of the research, these framings are contrasted with pedagogical practices and relationships emergent from alternative indigenous community understandings of conflict amelioration. On the other hand, the research locates both peace education and indigenous pedagogical practices within wider cultural, political and economic dynamics at multiple scales and highlights tensions and contradictions between the prescriptions of the international and grassroots practices. In so doing, the research participates in the goals of re-envisioning the possibilities of teachers as agents of peace promotion. It is thus aligned with Robertson and Dale's emphasis on '*critique* as a basis for social change' (2015, 5); and a related process of revealing 'contradictions' (Robertson, 2008, 14) in order to develop an understanding of what 'ought to be'. (ibid).

Finally, by recognising the views, voices and peacebuilding imaginaries of teachers and civil society actors in Sierra Leone as participants in the processes of theorising the role of education in peace promotion, this research mobilises an expansive understanding of the significance of theory. This foregrounds theory making as a process of democratising knowledge production. Hence Butler has written that 'theory is an activity that does not remain restricted to the academy. It takes place every time a possibility is imagined, a collective self-reflection takes place, a dispute over values, priorities, and language emerges. I believe there is an important value in overcoming the fear of immanent critique and to maintaining the democratic value of producing a movement that can contain, without domesticating, conflicting interpretations on fundamental issues' (2004,175-6). This invites recognition of the activity of theorisation as profoundly societal, located and situational, exoteric rather than esoteric, collective rather than individualistic. Given the dominance of prescriptive and top down notions of peace promotion and the resulting concerns of this research to valorise marginalised Sierra

Leonean voices and experiences, those of teachers and their partners in civil society, this understanding of the theoretical mission is particularly relevant.

8.3. Theory in the field of Education and Peacebuilding: resistance, challenges and opportunities

In the field of education and peacebuilding, scholars have noted a persistent resistance to theorisation. This is in part due to the dominance of an agenda for research set by donors and policy makers whose overarching concern is to find quick and results driven solutions to perceived problems and a consequent lack of engagement with theoretical ideas (Novelli & Lopes-Cardozo, 2008, 482). That the field of practice of education and peacebuilding continues to eschew theoretical analysis is evident from the conclusions of a recent paper analysing the work of the Global Partnership for Education and the deliberations within UN organisations underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals. This finds that these fields of development practice and policymaking are 'evidence hungry, theory light' (Paulson, 2019, 33).

Such a resistance to theorisation has also been noted by critics of liberal peacebuilding interventionism. Thus, Richmond has highlighted the need to go beyond the 'modernization-oriented, problem-solving, institutional and governmental forms' (2009, 326). More theoretically informed research would therefore entail more empathetic approaches to understanding the needs and priorities of conflict-affected demographics that would 'reach beyond rational and even normative epistemologies in developing forms of peace' (Richmond, 2009, 326; Sylvester, 1994). Of particular relevance to this research, he writes that a more theorised approach would help to make sense of the ways 'people make their lives as best they can, manipulating with whatever tools and tactics are at their disposal the surrounding natural, social economic and political structures, local and global, that empower or constrain their lived lives'(Roberts, 2011, 89). Such insights make clear what is at stake in the lack of theorisation. Not only is explanation and analysis superficial and top down, but there is a failure to engage with the realities of human suffering and agency, arguably undermining the impact and effectiveness of policies and programmes that purport to mobilise education to address them.
However, the theoretical concerns of this thesis respond to what Matsui and Winthrop (2013) have noted a greater theoretical openness at this particular juncture in the evolution of the field of education and conflict. In particular they draw attention to the willingness of actors in its diverse areas of practice including the education, security, humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) sectors, to collaborate with each other to deepen understanding of the potential of education to contribute to the well-being of demographics affected by conflict. Theoretically informed research leveraged with and responding to concerns of policy makers thus constitutes a key component of what Matsui & Winthrop (ibid) construe as a 'new agenda for education in fragile states'. This would be integral to knowledge production for 'maximizing education's contribution to the development and well-being of people living

in these contexts' (ibid,1). This research responds directly to these promising shifts in the institutional culture of education and conflict, one which as Pherali (2019, 8) has recently pointed out, construe the need for "practical solutions" as not antithetical to but requiring theoretically informed analysis.

8.4. Theoretical Bricolage and its relevance

In a recent survey of current debates in the field of education and conflict Pherali concludes that 'educational experiences in conflict-affected settings are too diverse and multidimensional to be presented as a single view' (2019, 7). This complexity poses challenges for theoretical reflection and in particular for theorisation that encompasses what Pherali terms are the two levels of educational interventions for promoting peace in conflict-affected societies. These include the possibility on the one hand that 'education should rupture societal conditions that reproduce structural violence and systemic inequalities' (ibid, 12-13); and on the other to exploit the possibilities of 'education's role in promoting the culture of peace in societies that inherit legacies of violent conflict' (ibid). As a field of analysis that encompasses both these conceptualisations of the role of education, theorisation therefore needs to engage with the processes, macro, meso and micro, which they entail. This means engaging with very different aspects of the social that encompass both broader social, political and economic systems and processes as well as micro level subjective experiences which include the inter and intra-personal realms of the imagination, feeling and embodied experience.

In responding to these complexities, the approach taken in this research draws on the concept of 'theoretical bricolage' (Kincheloe, 2001, 2005; Kincheloe et al., 2011; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). This is predicated on the view of theory as always and inherently offering partial and contingent lenses on to the social world. In particular 'bricolage' aims to combine the strengths of diverse theoretical approaches for their analytical and explanatory power in providing a 'more nuanced and complex understanding of a phenomenon' (Kortegast and van der Toorn, 2018, 271) and thus 'a new rigor in qualitative research' (Kincheloe, 2001, 679). This involves drawing on multiple frames of theoretical reference with diverse ontological, epistemological and disciplinary starting points as a means to explain a complex educational phenomenon.

Building such eclecticism places emphasis on the identity of the researcher as 'bricoleur', actively constituting the object of study within a 'complex framework' (Kincheloe, 2005, 323), or locating it within 'multiple contexts' (ibid, 328). The process of materialising the object of explanation necessarily involves the adoption of multiple logics and perspectives that extend beyond 'monological forms of knowledge' (ibid, 326) offered by any single theoretical lens. As such bricolage yields explanations that highlight 'webs of relationships' rather than 'simply things in themselves' (ibid, 324). For Kincheloe, this process would avoid theoretical dogmatism and involve potentially 'unresolved

contradictions' (ibid, 327), even undermining theoretical coherence or resolution. However, such a lack of theoretical finality should be embraced rather than rejected as intrinsic to knowledge production. In other words, resistance to theoretical closure may be construed as a process that eschews dogmatism, 'final truths' or totalising explanations; and which contains the constant possibility of 'speaking back to' (ibid) or revising theoretical paradigms. Given the complexity of the field of education other scholars have advocated a recourse to theoretical bricolage. Thus Tickly (2015) noted that the field 'ought to embrace epistemological pluralism, drawing critically on cross cultural, inter-disciplinary methods of enquiry' (ibid, 237).

The diverse knowledge gaps, conceptual and empirical to which this research responds and the multi-faceted nature of the explanatory challenges in the broader field of education and conflict render 'theoretical bricolage' a compelling framing for their theorisation. Hence, this research seeks to interrogate diverse aspects of the social, its discursive and material dimensions at multiple scales. These include: a focus on teachers' emotions, viewpoints and experiences; the problematisation of the framings of conflict-affected societies and the role of teachers in peace education; the location of teachers' pedagogical agency in relation to local, national and global dynamics; and the situated nature of their pedagogical practices and relationships. So, the mobilisation of theory in this research is required to interrogate a travelling peace education curriculum, the effect of global policy agendas while also doing justice to the context specific, grounded and experiential activities and concerns of teachers in their classrooms. These objects of research include subjective experiences as well as social structures and power relationships at multiple scales. The following sections trace the iterative decisions of this research which have contributed to the theoretical bricolage it mobilises in order to engage with these shifting and elusive dimensions of the social.

9. Building a Theoretical Framework

9.1. Conceptualising pedagogical practices

The research takes Alexander's expansive conceptualisation of pedagogy as the starting point for theoretical reflection. This enables a situated understanding of teachers' pedagogical practices and relationships in conflict-affected contexts. He claims that pedagogy is 'the act of teaching' – understood together with 'purposes, values, ideas, assumptions, theories and beliefs that inform, shape and seek to justify it' (Alexander, 2008b, 75). This view seeks to avoid a narrowly technical view of the actions of teachers which detaches them from their situated nature, in other words their grounding in larger cultural, political and social processes and their significance within a wider sphere of 'morally purposeful activity'. (ibid, 47) In particular Alexander emphases the emergence of pedagogy from 'culture' or 'the web of values… ideas, institutions and processes which inform, shape and explain a society's views of education, teaching and learning' (ibid, 49). Pedagogical practices

are also locatable in relation to the ontological foundation in conceptions of the self –'what it is to be a person, an individual relating to others and the wider society' (ibid). A situated understanding of pedagogy also requires a historicising approach that locates the meanings of particular practices in relation to prior traditions of teaching and learning (ibid, 49) and the 'sedimented values and habits of a nation's history' (ibid, 22).

Of particular interest is the central place of the content and dynamics of classroom talk within Alexander's characterisation of embedded pedagogical practice (Alexander, 2008a). He emphasises the significance of the verbal and affective interactions between teachers and pupils and between pupils through which both construct shared meanings that are constitutive not only of their subject knowledge but their responses to the political, economic, social and cultural dimensions of their environment, as well as their relationships with adults and other children. As such, classroom talk both mediates this wider context and also has a formative role to play in their identity development, and sense of self and self-worth.

Also of importance in situating teachers' pedagogical practices, is the attention Alexander gives to values. He notes that 'values, then, spill out untidily at every point in the analysis of pedagogy, and it is one of the abiding weaknesses of much mainstream research on teaching, including the rare accounts that appear in the comparative education literature, that it tends to play down their significance in shaping and explaining observable practice' (Alexander, 2001, 517). Arguably, this bracketing of pedagogy from values is a major explanatory weakness when understanding teachers' roles in conflict-affected settings which are frequently sites of strong and passionate views on conflict drivers and peace promotion.

In addition, the research also draws on Connell's characterisation of the pedagogical work of teachers. This added another layer to the dimensions noted by Alexander by drawing attention to its significance as a form of 'embodied labour' (Connell, 2009, 220). This highlights the somatic and affective nature of pedagogical practices as activities involving physical presence and emotional exchange such that 'energy, movement, expression and fatigue all matter' (ibid). In conflict-affected communities in which teachers face dire conditions of precarity and hardship (Mbayo, 2010) this grounding of professional practice is particularly relevant.

Various theoretical questions emerge from this conceptualisation of pedagogy as a profoundly situated activity at the interface of values and meaning making, classroom talk and relationships, as well as socio-economic, political and cultural determinations. How may teachers' micro-level practices in relation to peace promotion be understood in relation to the macro level structuring contexts that shape and constrain them? How can explanations connect teachers' lived, affective and embodied

experiences of conflicts with their pedagogical values, relationships and practices as they teach in conflict-affected communities? What are the strengths and limitations of theoretical approaches that may be mobilised to achieve these epistemological goals? The following sections explain the theoretical choices made in this research that respond to these particular challenges.

9.2. Towards a cultural political economy approach

In seeking a theoretical paradigm that offers explanatory leverage in relation to these questions, this research draws on the heuristic tools of cultural political economy (hereafter CPE) as developed by the work of Sum and Jessop (2013) and as applied to the field of education (Robertson and Dale, 2015; Novelli el al., 2015, 2017; Novelli and Sayed, 2016; Lopes Cardozo and Shah, 2016; Shah and Lopes Cardozo, 2016). This is an emerging and still developing transdisciplinary approach to social explanation. It constitutes a response to the 'cultural turn' in economic and political studies and social theory more broadly. It is concerned to develop and enhance the explanatory and interpretative power of traditional concerns of critical political economy analysis of the social. Hence it seeks to integrate analytical attention to the materialities of economic and political dynamics with the realm of the cultural. This is understood as semiotic processes of inter-subjective sense and meaning making. Bringing all three dimensions of the social together, namely the political, the cultural and the economic, it therefore seeks to correct the epistemological distortion created by the marginalisation or erasure of the cultural within conventional political economy explanations.

However, in integrating these, the goal is not to add culture as an epiphenomenal factor. The aim of CPE is to recognise its constitutive significance as fundamental to social explanation (Sum and Jessop, 2013). This key insight is predicated on the approach's fundamental ontological starting point that posits the meaningful nature of political economy (ibid). Likewise, Robertson and Dale have noted the danger to be avoided is that a cultural analysis is simply added to political economy, 'rather than each of the three concepts being challenged to think differently as a result of their conversation with each other' (2015, 154).

Three particular dimensions of the explanatory power of cultural political economy are of relevance. Firstly, the concern to integrate the cultural into political economy explanation - 'put culture in its place' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, viii) within political economy - is also underpinned in part by a recognition that 'orthodox political economy tends to offer impoverished accounts…of how subjects and subjectivities are formed' (ibid, 176). The orientation to the 'cultural' is thus in part underpinned by a concern to enrich analysis of subjectivity or individual agency within explanations of the social while retaining the concern of political economy analysis with the constitutive role of the interconnected materialities of economics and politics (ibid).

Secondly this paradigm seeks as Jessop has noted to overcome the limitations of overly constructivist and overly structural approaches to the social world. Hence Jessop has emphasised that a cultural political economy approach navigates between the extremes of a 'structuralist Scylla and a constructivist Charybdis' (ibid, 22) to ensure that explanations are adequate at the level of meaning as well as material causality. In this way a CPE approach 'seeks to overcome tensions between critical poststructuralist and critical historical materialist approaches prevalent in the literature on globalisation and to bring the cultural, the political and the economic into dialogue with each other without any fixed or *a priori* prioritisation' (Novelli, 2016, 849).

Thirdly, CPE has been understood as a heuristic for analysing the social world that in integrating the semiotic and non-semiotic, blends the insights into social explanation of Foucault, Gramsci and Marx. Hence a CPE analysis of the social puts into productive relation Gramsci's work on the role of language in sense and meaning making and in mediating hegemony (ibid) with Foucault's work on power-knowledge relations and the discursive and performative effects of techniques of governance through which subjects and identities are produced. These are integrated with the traditional concerns of Marxian political economy with the 'materialities' (ibid, 205) of politics and economics. Put simply, combining these various approaches helps social scientists to answer why and how questions within a coherent theoretical framework (ibid). As Marsden has noted, 'Foucault can tell us how but cannot tell us why; Marx tells us why but cannot tell us how.' (1999, 135; quoted in Sum and Jessop 2013, 207)

Finally, the logic of social explanation articulated within a CPE approach is aligned with a commitment to the critique of ideology and domination, within a relational approach that asks whose interests and powers are served by the privileging or hegemonic nature of some meaning making systems and construals and their performative effects on social actions and practices over others (Sum and Jessop, 2013).

9.3. The analytical and explanatory strengths of CPE

CPE offers various explanatory strengths for the purposes of mobilising theory to interrogate how conflict-affected societies and the peace promoting roles of teachers are framed in peace education curriculum; and to understand and explain how they enact and imagine pedagogical practices and relationships in relation to conflict amelioration in a particular conflict-affected context. First when applied to education as a social practice, a cultural political economy approach foregrounds the need go beyond a technical and narrowly educationist framings of educational practices; and to locate educational practices in their intersections with cultural political and economic dynamics operating at multiple scales. 'Our main argument' note Robertson and Dale 'is that the dominant theoretical

accounts of the globalisation of education tend to focus on particular elements of the education ensemble, for instance the cultural to the exclusion of the political and economic, or vice versa. In doing so, they offer a partial reading of the structures, institutions, and practices of the much broader and more nuanced conception of the education ensemble, and therefore of the full complexity of its forms, scope and outcomes' (2015, 3). Hence CPE's theorisation of education addresses the pitfalls noted earlier in Section 2 on current knowledge gaps and conceptual limitations in the field of education and peacebuilding research. In particular it avoids the narrow analytical and explanatory lenses of methodological educationism, statism and nationalism and offers a framework for understanding pedagogical practices within the multiple political, cultural, economic and social processes within which they are embedded at multiple scales within an integrated explanation.

Second, a CPE approach foregrounds the power relationships operating within these multi-scalar determinations. Thus, a key analytical question hinges on whose interests and powers are served by the privileging or hegemonic nature of some meaning making systems over others (Sum and Jessop, 2013). That a CPE approach aims to denaturalise and repoliticise taken for granted or dominant assumptions is an important aspect of its theoretical armoury for this research, especially given the wide circulation of unevidenced framings of teacher agency within and between powerful international aid organisations through travelling curriculum such as peace education.

Third, a CPE approach (Robertson, 2006) aligns with de Sousa Santos's (2003) notion of a 'sociology of absences' which aims to achieve epistemic and therefore social justice by revealing knowledges and expertise that are ignored or marginalised by the dominance of the powerful actors within the global institutional architecture of education policy and programming. In valorising the knowledges and expertise, voices and imaginaries of local teachers and civil society actors, this research is aligned with precisely this imperative.

Fourth, a CPE approach clarifies the methodological challenge of relating micro social practices at multiple scales. This is particularly important in view of the need to connect pedagogical practices and values with values, interests, power relationships and multiple cultural, political and economic dynamics in a complex conflict-affected context, following the expansive conceptualisation of pedagogy offered by Alexander and Connell. Robertson and Dale highlight an analytical need to shift the spotlight back and forth between, on the one hand the categories that order their understandings, experiences and practices, their 'ways of seeing, experiencing and reflecting on the world' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 153), and on the other the 'the structuring mechanisms' (ibid) that condition and constrain them.

Fifthly, as noted above, Robertson and Dale have pointed out that CPE brings together concepts – culture, political, economic – whose meaning is separately contested (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 150), thus forcing a rethinking of each as they are brought into dialogue with each other. Denaturalising these taken for granted categories, Robertson and Dale highlight an analytical need to avoid reifying the 'economy' as the supranational operation of profit making capitalism; or to conflate 'politics' with nation- state-centricity; or 'culture' with 'western modernity' (ibid, 153). Such an approach opens up the possibilities for nuanced, context responsive interpretation of the values, actions and practices of teachers in a conflict-affected environment that may defy or fall outside of these traditional analytical parameters. Hence in relation to this research, a CPE approach explicitly eschews an uncritical privileging or reification of the ECONOMY as the supranational operation of profit-making capitalism. This is particularly resonant given the analytical attention to the emergence of pedagogical practices from local civil society critiques of the suffering caused to local populations as a result of the extractive operations of diamond mining companies; and their displacement of non-market economic activities based on historical traditions of land use for subsistence agriculture. Likewise, in extending understanding of the POLITICAL beyond state-centricity or institutional democracy as construed within liberal peacebuilding, CPE enables an analytical spotlight on teachers' and pupils' navigation of antagonistic patrimonial relationships that many commentators have noted characterise the actual operation of politics and power relationships in Sierra Leone. Finally, by problematising an approach to the CULTURAL that is exclusively associated with Western Modernity, a CPE approach opens up the possibilities for valorising indigenous knowledges and practices associated with peace promotion in Sierra Leone which have been ignored by international aid agencies wishing to circulate generic curriculum such as peace education. In particular, this attention to the cultural means that the values and imaginaries of teachers in local contexts, so important in Alexander's conceptualisation of their pedagogy, may be taken seriously.

Denaturalising dominant categories associated with the political, the cultural and the economic through applying a CPE heuristic, therefore supports the overall logic of this research which offers critique in order to re-envision teachers' contribution to peace promotion. This follows Robertson and Dale who have noted that problematising them as they intersect with education may open up possibilities for recognising alternatives which 'however residualised and invisible' may offer hope for 'reimagining' educational ensembles (2015, 153).

In addition to offering a compelling heuristic for analysis of education, a CPE foregrounds particular conceptual tools as of use in relation to its overarching epistemic project. Thus, Robertson and Dale highlight the explanatory purchase of a view of space, not as an 'undifferentiated backdrop against which social relations take place' (Robertson and Dale, 2008, 28) but, drawing on the work of Massey as 'social relations stretched out'(1994, 2). This construction of space not as a geographically

bounded territory but as socially produced within dynamics at multiple scales is aligned with calls for greater recognition and understanding of the 'local' in the critiques of peacebuilding interventionism noted earlier. As noted earlier, this approach also underscores an analytical need to avoid binarizing the global and the local but to trace their interconnections to avoid 'spatial fetishism' (Massey, 1994, 2, quoted in Robertson and Dale, 2008, 28).

9.4. CPE as a contested theoretical paradigm

CPE is not intended to be a resolved grand theory awaiting doctrinaire or mechanical application (Robertson and Dale, 2015). Rather it is to be understood as a heuristic offering analytical possibilities that require careful tailoring to particular explanatory challenges. Thus, Robertson and Dale write that 'we believe it is not possible to develop *a* single cultural political economy, as such, as if in some grand synthesis. Rather, philosophical decisions need to be made about how we understand the cultural, political and economic' (ibid, 6). Hence, pulling the cultural, political and economic together within a CPE approach is the beginning of the task, rather than the endpoint. Each component has multiple definitions and interpretations and may be linked in diverse and complex ways. The following reflections highlight the contested issues that have arisen between scholars aligning with CPE and which have influenced the boundary making theoretical decisions made in the course of this research. Of particular importance is a divergence over the meanings of the notion of the 'cultural'. Robertson and Dale (2015) have convincingly argued that the association of the cultural with the semiotic or discourse in the conceptualisation of CPE by Jessop closes of the possibility of understanding the ontological dimension of feelings, the affective, the embodied and can be overly schematic and reductive. They write that Jessop's analytic work (see Jessop, 2004; Jessop and Oosterlynck, 2008) 'centres on the production of discourses' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 154). We have little sense of how these processes articulate with the cultural in terms of social practices, experiences, feelings, and forms of reflexivity (ibid, 2015). This arguably reduces the potential of the cultural dimension to address issues of identity and embodied experience that go beyond discourse. Hence, she calls for a generous expansive understanding of the cultural that explores not only processes of meaning making but 'the business of making selves…how worlds, meanings and consciousness are formed' (Robertson, 2012a, 3). Thus, 'to speak of culture is also to speak of the ways in which we live and experience our condition through categories, classifications and frameworks for action which shape the possibilities for reflexivity and social practice' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 154). Given the concern of this research to avoid bracketing off peace promoting pedagogies from teachers' values, knowledges and the subjective experiences of conflict that may shape and constrain them, this expansive understanding of the cultural is important.

On the other hand, scholars have also noted the dangers within a CPE project of analytical attention to the cultural displacing engagement with or rupturing explanatory links with the materialities of political economy. Hence Staricco notes how 'culturalism' while directing attention to 'cultural phenomena that used to be of little interest to political economists' (2017,33), may, by giving pre-eminence to meaning making, render 'structural conditions a secondary aspect of reality' (ibid). This may 'undermine the importance of their objective nature and the effects and causalities they produce independently of their interpretation' (ibid, 34). Such warnings reiterate critiques of the tendency of post-modernism to foreground the discursive and the cultural at the expense of material political and economic conditions.

This danger of privileging one dimension of the CPE project over another, or seeing one as derivative and the other as primary, has implications for how social justice and injustice is understood and conceptualised. This dimension of the contested nature of CPE as a heuristic for social analysis is particularly relevant given recent research into education and conflict (Novelli et al., 2017). As noted earlier, this has adopted a critical, theoretically informed approach to understanding the role of education in sustainable peacebuilding that advocates a normative commitment to the role of education in building peace with social justice. Diverging understandings of how CPE may be mobilised to understand social injustices are illustrated in the debate between social theorists and philosophers Butler (1997) and Fraser (1997) on the significance of the cultural dimensions within analysis. Both theorists are committed to articulating and understanding the social injustices emergent from global capitalism and using social theory to do so. Both are concerned to find ways of, as Fraser noted, bringing the best insights of both the post-Marxist traditions as well as the insights of post-structuralism, a key formative challenge for social theory to which CPE has responded. However, their interchange highlights the conceptual challenges for the analytical process of bringing culture into relation with the political and the economic in diagnosing social injustices.

In her essay 'Merely Cultural', Butler recognises the dangers of a culturalist orientation to identity foreclosing attention to the material effects of global capitalism and producing explanations that are limited by their particularism and are neglectful of the 'inter-relatedness of social and economic conditions' (Butler, 1997, 265). Hence the accusation that 'poststructuralism has thwarted Marxism' (ibid). However, she also critiques Fraser's exposition of the different forms of injustice as recognition (cultural) redistribution (economic) and representation (political) that arguably may construe aspects of the cultural as a less important dimension of social injustice or as derivative from the alleged primacy of the economic. Hence Butler's title, Merely Cultural. Rejecting this view, Butler recalls that the original formulation of a critique of political economy by Engels and Marx incorporated the cultural alongside the material as inseparable, such that the 'mode of production' needed to include 'forms of association as well' (ibid, 271), and definitions of personhood, including heterosexuality and the

family. Hence recognition of the cultural, and the issues of individual identity are not autonomous from or subordinate to materialist considerations but are always analytically inseparable.

Responding, Fraser points out that her framework for understanding social justice involves a 'normative distinction between injustices of distribution and injustice of recognition (1997, 141). However, ' far from derogating the latter as 'merely cultural', she writes, 'the point is to conceptualise two equally primary, serious and real kinds of harm that any morally defensible social order must eradicate' (ibid). While the cultural is thus deemed to be as significant as the economic in explanations of social injustice, Fraser points out that misrecognition, which is a 'status injury' is 'analytically distinct from and conceptually irreducible to the injustice of maldistribution, although it may be accompanied by the latter' (ibid). Furthermore, Fraser justifies the need for integrated theorisation of social justice, given the pitfalls of foregrounding identity issues in which social justice is 'decoupled from the project of economic transformation and distributive justice' (2005, 69). In a move that overlaps with Butler's insistence on the inseparability of the categories of the cultural and the economic, Fraser advocates a 'perspectival dualism' that 'reveals the hidden connections between them' (ibid, 148). Hence, she writes, 'the point is to use the distinction against the grain, making visible and subject to critique, both the cultural subtexts of apparently economic processes and the economic subtexts of apparently cultural processes' (ibid).

The different but also in some respects, complementary approaches of Fraser and Butler in construing the significance of the cultural highlight the diverse interpretative paths which a CPE project which retains emancipatory and transformatory goals may take. Within these possibilities, the approach taken in this research responds to the analytical imperative to offer explanations that mobilise both the richness of notions of subjectivity emergent from culturalist explanation without loss of engagement with the materialities and power relations of political economy. This version of the CPE project aligns with both thinkers who articulate their commitment to retrieving what Fraser has termed the 'genuinely valuable strands of the neo-Marxian critique of capitalism and to integrate them with the most insightful strands of post-Marxian thinking' (1997, 149). In its mobilisation of CPE therefore, this research espouses the theoretical eclecticism advocated by Sayer (2004) and in turn Dale (2015), who argues that the 'cultural' and the 'structural' need not be seen as 'mutually exclusive alternatives in the sense of having to 'pick sides', as so often appears to be the case in social science, but rather as not only mutually compatible but also mutually productive' (Dale, 2015, 356).

The following section briefly outlines how each published paper of this research navigates the possibilities of mobilising a broadly CPE approach in the light of its contested meaning as a heuristic tool for social analysis. In other words, it clarifies how the research, in addressing diverse empirical problematiques, has deployed diverse applications of a CPE approach. These mobilise different

aspects of its theoretical apparatus and configurations of its connections between the cultural, the political and the economic. As such they draw on CPE in different ways, exploiting its possibilities and potential within the boundary making process of theorising the social. In other words, they all offer different ways of putting culture in its place in political economy (Sum and Jessop, 2013) to enhance understanding of the contributions of teachers and peace education to the promotion of sustainable peace in Sierra Leone.

9.5. Theory making in the research outcomes, Chapters 2-5

The publications cited in Chapters 2 (Higgins & Novelli, 2018) and 3 (Higgins & Novelli, 2020) draw on the conceptualisation of CPE as a coarticulation and interaction of the semiotic and the structural to analyse, and problematize, the content of a peace education curriculum and its framings of the Sierra Leonean conflict-affected community and the contributions of teachers to promoting peace. In particular they apply a key ontological insight of CPE that 'the world is too complex to be grasped in all its complexity in real time (or ever) [such] that individual and social agents are obligated to processes of meaning making that involve the reduction of complexity'(Sum and Jessop, 2013, 3). The application of this version of CPE to a particular peace education curriculum interrogates what is rendered invisible within the social imaginary of the Sierra Leonean conflict-affected community which it communicates. In particular it critiques the curriculum's promotion of a psychologising and pathologising construction of conflict-affected societies and teachers' contributions to peace within them. This narrows the capacity of teachers and education more broadly to address structural drivers of conflict. The application of theoretical reflection in both papers is highly schematic, following precisely the cultural political economy research agenda outlined by Sum and Jessop (2013, 196-230).

The publication cited in Chapter 4 (Higgins, 2018) shifts the analytical focus away from the role of peace education curriculum in framing the needs of a conflict-affected community and the role of teachers. In doing so it also shifts the problematique requiring a theoretically informed analysis to focus on the very different empirical challenge understanding and explaining teachers' micro level pedagogical practices and the values driving them in relation to the cultural, political and economic dynamics that shape and constrain them at multiple scales. These include community responses to the operations of international diamond mining companies, a form of extractive global capitalism, and in particular their resulting experiences of suffering and deprivation. While using the semiotic notion of social imaginaries to understand the context-responsive affective and imaginative roots of teachers' pedagogical practices, the paper's exploration of the co-articulation of the semiotic and the structural shifts towards a more Robertsonian understanding of the intersections between CPE. In particular it

seeks to do justice to culture, not only as a matter of semiotic framings of the social but of 'social practices, experiences, feelings and forms of reflexivity' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 6).

The paper cited in Chapter 5 (Higgins, 2019) further explores the meaning of the cultural in relation to political economy dynamics shaping pedagogical practices for peace promotion. It does so by investigating the intersection of pedagogical practices with indigenous Sierra Leonean beliefs and practises. In this way, following Robertson's caution that the meanings of each of the components of CPE are separately contested, the research pursues an anthropological notion of culture as ritual and meaning making systems in order to understand how teachers may contribute to peace promotion. Moreover, this paper takes the CPE project in a more explicitly post-colonial direction, following the insights of de Sousa Santos (2014) by foregrounding its epistemological power to reveal knowledges and experiences hitherto absent within dominant western-centric framings of teachers' contributions to peace promotion.

Together these papers present diverse responses to the explanatory challenges of a CPE approach to social analysis. Thus, the varying applications of CPE result from the different nature of the explananda in each paper. They indicate a progression from a semiotic and highly thematic use of a Jessop based CPE, to an approach that recognises that the integration of the cultural into analysis of pedagogical practices rather than curriculum formulations, requires theorised attention to the affective, the imagination and the embodied. Problematizing the framings of teachers in a peace education curriculum thus requires a different configuration of the cultural, the political and the economic from engaging with pedagogical practices and enactments as emergent from grassroots communities and NGOs working in the field of conflict amelioration. The publications are thus outcomes of a theoretically informed research process which amount to an iterative series of boundary making practices that exploit the explanatory potential, concepts and tools of the CPE paradigm in different ways.

9.6. Turning to Butler's ontology of the subject in Chapter 6

However, as noted, all theories offer partial lenses in the sense that theorisation is a process of boundary making in which some aspects of the social are foregrounded and others inevitably occluded. In the case of this research as outlined above, the application of a CPE theorisation in Chapters 3-5 enabled both critique and interrogation of top down curriculum framings and also understanding of peace promoting pedagogical practices and relationships grounded in the daily lived realities faced by teachers and their communities.

What remained under-explored was analytical attention to the constitutive importance of teachers' affective, experiential and embodied experience of social injustices in generating their pedagogical practices and self-understandings as agents of the promotion of peace. While deploying the notion of social imaginaries to understand teachers' location of their professional agency within a vision of the role of education in contributing to peace, the explanations offered still perhaps retained the legacy of the figure of the teacher as a rational sovereign subject strategizing to mobilise pedagogy for peace. This arguably under-recognises and under-estimates the affective and experiential drivers of pedagogical agency and its rootedness in matters of 'concern' (Sayer, 2011).

This analysis to some extent is aligned with Jessop's own critique of CPE's inattention to the non-rational dimensions of agency. Hence in an interview he calls for overly rational conceptualisations of agency to be complemented by the insights of 'ethnomethodology, the sociology of everyday life and the sociology of emotions' (Ji and Kytir, 2009, *unpaginated*) which would probe the non-rational drivers of agency within a more holistic approach. Moreover, the orientation to the 'local' in critiques of international peacebuilding interventionism noted earlier specifically invite a more 'empathetic' approach in understanding local actors navigation of daily structural violence, one which would avoid reducing their agency to the exercise of rational instrumentalism (Richmond, 2009, 326).

Recognition of these limitations in the process of theorising led this research to the additional mobilisation of the insights of Butler (2016) into the origins of resistance to social injustices. Butler's key claim is the constitutive role, as the locus of protest and resistance, of the experience and articulation of vulnerability, understood as a relational and socially produced experience of precaritisation. This results from social, political, economic and cultural processes and their intersections. Hence, she notes that 'vulnerability, understood as a deliberate exposure to power, is a part of the very meaning of political resistance as an embodied enactment' (ibid, 12). Thus, 'exposure to power' is both 'perilous and enabling' (ibid, 1). This ontology of the subject who resists social injustice shifts the locus of the exercise of agency away from a sovereign rational subject, thereby challenging the commonplace assumptions of the sovereign individual subject of neoliberal ideology (Butler et al., 2016) in which resistance is taken to be the opposite of vulnerability, an opposition frequently also gendered. Moreover, in recognising the 'role of vulnerability in strategies of resistance' (ibid, 6) Butler's ontological window connects rather than separates the realm of the political with affective and embodied experience.

Hence, the final paper of this thesis in Chapter 6 (Higgins, forthcoming) draws on Butler's ontology of the subject to understand how teachers exercise professional and pedagogical agency in relation to conflict drivers they face in their daily lived experience. It explores how teachers' affective and embodied experience of vulnerability to precarity driving conflict in Kono Sierra Leone shapes and

constrains their pedagogical activities and relationships in both navigating and challenging them with their pupils. Deploying Butler's notion of vulnerability in resistance offered an entry point into exploring the situated affective, embodied and experiential roots of teachers' pedagogical relationships and practices. This conceptual apparatus and in particular its framing of the subject therefore enabled a widening of the parameters of understanding teachers' responses to social injustices driving conflict to recognise the constitutive role of these multiple dimensions of their lived experiences and pedagogical practices. Drawing on the notion of vulnerability in resistance also enabled this wider understanding to be achieved without sacrificing attention to the material political and economic dynamics constraining and shaping teachers' agency. Leveraging this theoretical apparatus therefore enabled the research during the later stages of its iteration to respond directly to the invitation for work on peacebuilding to be more empathetic and to 'reach beyond rational and even normative epistemologies in developing forms of peace' (Richmond, 2009, 326).

9.7. Conclusions

This section has shown how this research responds to the explanatory possibilities of a CPE theoretical paradigm while also recognising that this apparatus is also contested and evolving. In doing so, the overview of the processes of boundary making through theorisation has demonstrated how a CPE paradigm may be used in diverse ways, foregrounding diverse strengths within its analytical and explanatory armoury. Hence the discussion of individual papers has shown different ways of understanding the co-articulation of the cultural with political economy dynamics to explain peace education curriculum and the pedagogical practices and relationships oriented to conflict amelioration emergent from teachers' partnerships with local NGOs.

This theoretical journey has entailed particular methodological consequences. As Dunne et al. have noted, 'methodology is dynamic, contingent, dialogic, and context specific' (2005, 166). This approach therefore resists the reduction of methodology to data gathering methods or procedures in a narrowly technical sense, locating methods as the result of prior assumptions about what counts as knowledge, or in reality, the social. Therefore, the significance of methodology lies not only in choices of data gathering methods but results from consideration of what is at stake in the research process, including the 'orientation of the researcher towards the research process and all that is implicated by that' (ibid, 164). These include various considerations which are tied to theoretical positioning and include; ontological premises about the nature of the social and the human; epistemological assumptions about how and what we can know; as well as macro and micropolitical issues which are associated with power relations and dynamics at multiple scales; as well as choices about appropriate methods for generating data.

These different dimensions of methodology have been visualised (ibid, 167) as an elastic plane as shown in figure 4

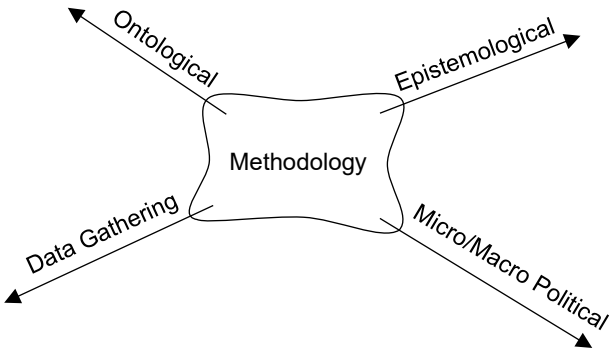

Figure 4 Elastic plane

This evokes a methodology as a space in which they are constantly navigated as the researcher engages with particular research challenges and defines and redefines the problematique to be explained. The diagrams in the Appendix (pages 256-251) summarise the 'elastic plane' of methodology which was mobilised for the research leading to each publication. In so doing they serve to clarify for the reader the methodological implications and diverse scales of analysis resulting from the theoretical orientations and reorientations outlined above.

10. Data Gathering Strategies

The following chart summarises the 7 data gathering phases that have contributed directly and indirectly to the research strands and published papers, together with the particular research focus and methods used in each phase.

Stage	Focus and timings	Methods
1	Several years immersion living and working with teachers in SL in Freetown and Port Loko, 2005-2010.	Immersion in context Volunteer teacher - participant observation in schools for conflict-affected young people from poorest backgrounds unable to pay for government schools. Shifting from outsider to insider positioning and 'in between'. Listening to teachers in capital and outside in regions. Local engagement
2	Conflict Analysis Report on Sierra Leone 2012	Document analysis; Ministry of Education; UNICEF education policy. Nationwide participatory workshops with 137 diverse stakeholders to engage their viewpoints on how education may contribute to peacebuilding and conflict amelioration. Interviews with 137 individuals. Interviews with stakeholders around the country regions and Freetown Northern, Southern and Eastern region including Kono.
3	Rigorous Literature Review: Political Economy of Education in Conflict-affected Contexts	In depth analysis of 43 studies from academic literature on the political economy of education systems in diverse conflict-affected contexts.
4	Framings of teachers in Peace Education Curriculum cultural political economy analysis (Chapter 2/3)	Discourse analysis of curriculum texts, applying a cultural political economy approach Interviews with College Lecturers (6) Unicef Staff (5) National and International Consultants (2) individuals from the Ministry of Education (3): 16 in all January-July 2012.
5	School Mining Clubs Kono (Chapter 3) Pre and post-Ebola outbreak Jan-March 2014 Nov—Dec 2016	Interviews (in-depth and follow up) with: 5 male teachers in 5 government schools in partnership with Network Movement for Justice and Development 5 staff members of NGO Network Movement for Justice and Development in Kono 3 with NMJD donors, Oxfam-Ibis based in Kono 1 with Oxfam-Ibis head office in Denmark 10 hours of recordings of SMC activities in schools made by NMJD staff 2 hours of recordings of pupils' participation in radio presentations Literature review of policy documents of NMJD and Oxfam-Ibis
6	Fambul Tok (Chapter 4)	Interviews (in depth and follow up) with 5 male teachers in 5 faith government schools in the Kono region Interviews with Director of Fambul Tok in Sierra Leone 3 Field Staff Education Partnerships Interview with sponsor of Fambul Tok in US

		Participant Observation of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs (under mango trees, presentations of drama to communities by school) Participant Observation of site visit to spaces where bones of dead during conflict were thrown
7	Vulnerability and Resistance (Chapter 5). Jan-April 2014 October-December 2016	Photo elicitation interviews (x2) with 20 secondary school teachers in Kono in 5 schools 3 urban and 2 rural faith based, government, Christian and Muslim schools

Figure 5 Data gathering phases

10.1. Methods

Without seeking to reproduce the detailed discussion of data gathering methods described in each paper the following reflections highlight the key considerations shaping their choice and value in conducting this research. In particular it indicates how the individual methods complement each other within the broader logic of inquiry, and also how they align with the theoretical concerns outline above. Giving some sense of the range and diversity of methods used in this research, they constitute a 'bricolage' of qualitative research methods that aligns with the theoretical approach.

10.2. Case study

Firstly, given the goal of the research to generate in depth rich data to inform theoretical reflection, case study (Flyvbjerg, 2001) was deemed a particularly appropriate and generative method. The published papers present a series of case studies which illuminate and answer the research questions. These include: a critical analysis of a peace education curriculum; an analysis of the pedagogical practices resulting from the partnership between teachers in Kono and a local NGO working on behalf of communities affected by international diamond mining industries; an analysis of the pedagogical practices resulting from partnerships between teachers and an NGO promoting community rooted peacebuilding using indigenous rituals and practices; and a study of the responses of a group of teachers to drivers of grievance and conflict in their communities. Within the typologies of case study outlined by Thomas and Myers (2015) all are explanatory and revelatory in the sense that they are particular bounded examples that offer in-depth insights into particular issues and questions.

The conceptualisation of case study in this research also draws on Burawoy's account of the extended case method (1998, 2009). This foregrounds the significance of case studies' ability to elucidate connections between the micro processes of everyday life and macro global forces (2009, xii). This was particularly relevant, given the underlying commitment to a multi-scalar cultural political economy approach to understanding education and peace promotion and the complex role of teachers in navigating conflict amelioration in the school and community contexts of their pedagogical practices.

10.3. Critical discourse analysis

Fairclough (2001) has noted how the summoning of realities through words is never a disinterested or neutral matter. The unevidenced, conflicted and binary framings of teachers in conflict-affected contexts noted at the start of this thesis is a case in point. Hence the crucial role of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a key research method in this research, which enables these representations to be critically interrogated. As explained by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) this is a method that foregrounds analysis of how the social is worded. This critical focus on the discursive dimension of the social is predicated on the insight that 'language and other forms of semiosis are constitutive elements of social practices' (ibid, 4) both shaping and shaped by them. Moreover, critical discourse analysis is also concerned with linking the discursive with power relations and the operation of political and cultural interests and agendas. Explanations of the discursive therefore go beyond seeing language as a direct mirror onto social reality, but rather highlight its performative role in producing individual and collective behaviours, thereby contributing to social formation. Also of relevance is the contribution of critical analysis of the discursive to the transformative goals of a social science in so far as it may produce awareness of 'what is and how it has come to be and what it might become on the basis of which people may be able to make and remake their lives' (ibid).

Critical Discourse Analysis has been an important methodological tool throughout this research. In particular, it is used in the papers (Chapters 3 &4, Higgins & Novelli, 2018, 2020) that problematize and subject to critical scrutiny rather than accepting as entirely benign the assumptions and content of internationally circulating peace education curriculum. However in understanding how the promotion of peace may be rethought and re-envisaged CDA has also been used to analyse the educational, social and cultural imaginaries of Sierra Leonean teachers and the staff of NGOs, local, national and international seeking to use education to promote peace (Chapters 5, 6 & 7); verbal interactions between pupils and teachers in taped lessons in School Mining Clubs (Chapter 5) ; the contributions of pupils to radio programmes about the impact of international diamond mining companies on their lives and schooling (Chapter 5) ; and community views of local rituals and their significance in promoting sustainable peace (Chapter 7). In so doing, CDA was harnessed to unravel, understand and bring into relation diverse discursive vantage points on teacher pedagogy and practices for peace.

However, Chouliaraki and Fairclough also caution against reducing social life to discourse. Hence the discursive is to be understood as one of many dimensions of the social; 'the economic, social and cultural changes taking place in late modernity exist as discourses as well as processes that are taking place outside discourses' (ibid, 6). Likewise, Harvey (1996) locates the discursive within a

dialectical view of social processes in which discourse is one moment among six intersecting moments. These include; power, social relations, material practices, institutions and rituals and beliefs and values. This approach to social analysis is in line with the broad Cultural Political Economy approach of this research which is concerned with unravelling the relationship between the discursive or the cultural and other dimensions of the social world. Hence, the research also draws on other methods that offer entry points into these other moments. These include interviews, participant observations, and photo-elicitation discussed below. These participatory and interactive methods of data gathering all created opportunities for extending analysis of how the discursive intersects with power relations, material experiences and cultural, political and economic processes; and thus, for deepening understanding of teacher's pedagogical practices for peace promotion.

10.4. Interviews

The research involved 241 interviews in all. This method is well known as an 'adaptable and powerful method' (Dunne et al., 2005, 27) which provides opportunities for the voices of individuals not heard and thereby for 'alternative accounts of the social world to be legitimated through research' (ibid). As such, this constituted an important method that was congruent with the broader goals and theoretical positioning of the research in seeking to retrieve and valorise the views and voices of teachers.

Interviews engaged research participants who were situated at multiple scales, thus aligning with a CPE commitment to multi-scalar analysis and an analytical imperative to bring into relation multiple perspectives. The majority were undertaken at the local scale with teachers and civil society actors in conflict-affected Kono in the east of the country. However, interviews also took place at the national and international scales. These engaged Directors of Sierra Leonean NGOs, the Ministry of Education and lecturers in Colleges of Teacher Education; and also informants from NGOs in the US (Fambul Tok) and Sweden (Ibis) who were supporting the work of local NGOs in Sierra Leone.

Not only the numbers and scale but the nature of the interviews was important. Given the overarching goal of the research to exploit the potential of this method for in depth learning about the 'lives, feelings and experiences' (Gubrium et al., 2012, 20) of teachers, most were in-depth and usually involved follow up meetings. The metaphor of the researcher as traveller rather than as miner (Dunne et al., 2005, 33) is most appropriate to characterise the approach to using interviews as a data gathering method. This underscores the exploratory, non-linear, contingent and context specific nature of the interaction between researcher and research participant and the status of the interview as a form of joint production of knowledge and insight. All interviews were dialogic and open-ended. In particular they avoided standardised formats or unduly formalised sets of questions. Such a framing of the

interview would have been culturally inappropriate, given the orality of local rural culture in Sierra Leone (Richards, 2016).

It was also important to ensure that they took place in spaces in which all informants felt at ease; in other words, the onus was on me to 'walk' to the people being interviewed (Flick, 2018, 3). Interviews took place in school grounds, sometimes in informal community spaces where teachers congregated after school, sometimes in their homes when they were also busy with their families. This flexibility was appropriate to the volatile, and unpredictable nature of the conflict-affected environments in which the participants lived. Very rarely were interviews conducted with teachers on their own as others, usually other teachers as well as family and friends, wanted to join in the conversations. Moreover, interviews often resulted spontaneously rather than being pre-arranged, the result of simply 'hanging out' with teachers. They involved very short as well as much longer interactions. In this way, the meetings and chats with these teachers were not a superimposed social practice but emergent and immanent from local socialising practices and situations. In all these ways, the interviewing process was aligned with what Burawoy has termed 'methodological situationism' rather than 'methodological individualism' (2009, 36). This groundedness also enabled a spontaneity, yielding what Duffield has called 'unscripted conversations' (2007,233-234).

Perhaps the most important purpose of the interviews in this research was to achieve the empathetic understanding of the everyday experiences of teachers and other local actors as they navigated their conflict-affected context. This entailed exploiting the 'malleable' (Dunne et al., 2005, 28) nature of this data gathering tool. In particular, foregrounding its possibilities for initiating 'conversational processes' that were likely to generate 'empathetic co-operation' (Sylvester, 1994, 317). Hence, interviewing was a vehicle through which to 'take on board the struggles of others by listening to what they have to say in a conversational style that does not push, direct, or break' through to a 'linear progression which gives on the comforting illusion that one knows where one goes' (Ferguson, 1993, 154 quoted in Sylvester, 1994, 326).

10.5. Participant Observation

Interview data was also complemented by participant observations or 'being there' (Dunne et al., 2005, 71). This was a particularly important in being able to understand pedagogical activities and relationships in their situated, embodied, affective and inter-relational character as conceptualised by Alexander (2008a, b). Given the analytical focus of research question 4 on teachers' mobilisation of local cultural rituals and symbolism, being able to be present when pupils presented dramas to their local communities or met under so called 'peace trees' was particularly generative.

10.6. Shifting from normative to post-qualitative approaches including photo elicitation

The normative qualitative methods as described above proved appropriate and generative data gathering strategies for answering research questions 1-4. However, research question 5 (published outcome cited in Chapter 6, Higgins 2020) was distinct in inviting firstly attention to teachers' feelings and embodied experiences of conflict drivers in the environments of their schools and communities and secondly to how these intersected with their pedagogical practices and relationships. These experiences were in part shaped by a changing physical environment marked by land degradation and pollution caused by international diamond mining companies. They also involved teachers' navigation of waterlogged school grounds and classroom walls with cracks caused by land blasting. A data gathering strategy was required that would open up these experiences to recognition, visibility and probing, to do justice to their multi-dimensional and tangible nature.

This particular research challenge led to the use of what has come to be known as a 'post-qualitative' methodology (Taylor, 2017; St. Pierre, 2014, 2019) As outlined by Maclure (2011, 2016; see also St. Pierre, 2011), this approach challenges some of the assumptions of mainstream qualitative inquiry; and in particular 'decentres the belief in reason and progress, unmediated access to truth, and the agency of the centred humanist self (Maclure, 2011, 997). Its analytical concern to explore how humans interact with the physical environment has arisen from a critique of the linguistic turn because of its emphasis on the constitutive role of discourse and language at the expense of nature and matter. Hence, this de-centring of the rational human being also recognises the agency of the other-than-human and more than-human bodies, objects, things and matter with which we (humans) share the world" (Taylor, 2017, 313). Moreover, in eschewing anthropocentrism, post-qualitative approaches widen understanding of human agency beyond the 'rational Cartesian knowing subject' (Taylor, 2017, 313) to draw attention to a more experientially embedded 'knowing in being'. (ibid).

The data gathering approach described in Chapter 6 therefore drew on these insights and in particular used photo-elicitation as a form of data gathering that answered the particular research challenge outlined above. This is a data gathering method in which participants take photographs of things that matter to them which are then used as the basis of a conversation or dialogue during interviews. The method's well-known ability to elicit the emotions of participants, to shift the power relationships between researcher and participants and its capacity to spotlight the latter's affective and embodied relationship to their material environment all rendered this method appropriate to the final post-qualitative research goal.

10.7. Conclusions

The diversity but also the complementarity of the data gathering methods used in this research constitute a methodological bricolage that aligns with the theoretical orientations outlined earlier. All methods operationalise at the level of data collection the broad concerns of a CPE approach to explore how cultural or systems of meaning making may intersect with political economy dynamics, both in framings of teachers' contribution to peace promotion in peace education curriculum as well as their grassroots pedagogical practices in partnerships with local civil society actors. In their shift to post-qualitative methods they also operationalise at the level of data gathering the theorised shift to an ontology of the subject as affective rather than wholly rational. In this way, they perform in the field the theoretical journey underpinning the research and in particular its shifting empirical boundaries.

11. Ethical Considerations

11.1. Introduction

While coming at the end of this introduction, arguably ethical considerations and challenges are more appropriately positioned at the start. Thus, Robinson-Pant and Singal note that 'issues of ethics should be seen as integral to the whole research process, rather than adopting a 'bolt on' approach (2013, 444). Indeed, in many ways this research has been initiated and infused by ethical considerations. Hence the initial motivation emerged from practice as a teacher committed to social justice and a 'concern' (Sayer, 2008) to retrieve teachers' voices, experiences and agency.

However, while framed by these ethical imperatives, fieldwork has also involved navigating distinctive ethical challenges which have emerged from its location in a conflict-affected context. All social science research involves ethical considerations in so far as it involves engaging with people and developing relationships between the researcher and the researched (Phillips and Schweisfurth, 2008). However, the unique challenges of researching in particular contexts of grievance and conflict have been overlooked (Metro, 2014; Brooten and Metro, 2014; Robinson-Pant and Singal, 2013b). Arguably, their volatility and unpredictability as well as the extreme precaritisation and vulnerability which are frequently experienced by conflict-affected demographics make the process of cultivating ethical relationships for the purposes of research in these environments more complex and uncertain. Hence Campbell (2017) in a recent literature review on the ethics of research has noted that 'these environments present unique challenges to informed consent, risk benefit analysis, researcher security and beneficence' (ibid, 89).

Moreover, there is a growing literature highlighting the limitations of what are deemed the ethical principles and procedures established by research ethics committees in university review boards (Robinson-Pant and Singal, 2013a, 444; White and Fitzgerald, 2010; Sikes, 2013; Honan et al., 2013; Campbell, 2017). Thus, Campbell notes the 'unique challenges' faced by researchers in such environments that require 'more nuanced guidelines and professional training' (2017, 89) than are offered by the narrow focus on particular protocols. These have highlighted their overriding concern with 'research governance and legal protection for researchers and their institutions, sometimes losing sight of the moral dimensions of such debates within legalistic protocols and procedures' (ibid, 444).

Mindful of these critiques, the following reflections aim to contribute to the growing literature on ethical challenges in conflict-affected contexts. It identifies three challenges I faced during and after leaving the field and offers reflections on how I attempted to navigate them. It highlights the situational and cultural issues they raised, their contingent and unresolved nature and consequently the tensions

they produced arising from the disjunctions between the 'ethical environment and ethical standards (Qureshi, 2010, 79). The concluding section reflects more broadly on the principles and assumptions that may usefully inform ethical orientations for researchers not only in the Sierra Leonean but in other conflict-affected contexts.

11.2. Research Fatigue

While all the Sierra Leonean participants in this research willingly gave their time and energy, it was noticeable that some were also frustrated at having to tell their story. This came across in subtle but nevertheless palpable ways. Some pointed out that they were aware of other researchers besides me who were asking similar questions about their lives and had heard of friends being asked such questions. Some when faced with probing questions about their particular experiences of precarity wanted to quickly summarise through the repeated declaration 'we are suffering'. This implied their frustration at having to spell out for me as a researcher what was palpable and obvious to them. Some expressed frustration that their lives had changed little since peace was declared. In particular they expressed resentment at the roles of the international transitional justice mechanisms, in particular the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court. These were both examples for them of internationally led attempts to promote peace that had made little difference to their material lives and concerns for improved social services, health care, education and employment.

While directed to me, these responses fall into a more systemic response to researchers in conflict and developing country contexts known as 'research fatigue' (Clark, 2008). This is a phenomenon that results from the experience of some populations that they are being over-researched (Clark, 2008; Neal et al., 2016). It occurs in countries, increasingly conflict-affected ones, that are singled out for research attention and become targets for increasingly diversified communities of researchers, whether from the academy, aid organisations, Masters and PhD students, or within the growing 'consultancy industry' in international development (Metro, 2019). Hence Sukarieh and Tannock (2013) have reported symptoms of research fatigue amongst informants in refugee camps in Syria. These include cynicism about researchers aims and intentions, about the priorities of the research agendas being more attuned to western concerns than their own daily realities and a sense that they were not benefiting from the research or their exposure to researchers.

It is perhaps not surprising that research fatigue is to be found amongst Sierra Leoneans. As a 'donor darling' (Davies and Klassen, 2019, 244) of international aid organisations responding to conflict, the country has received a large proportion of foreign aid or capital from UN peacebuilding architecture and aid agencies such as the Department for International Development in the UK and US. Accompanying such aid flows the country has also been targeted as a site of peace related research,

not least to provide evidence of the value for money of such assistance. Throughout the research process I was aware of its presence. Indeed, I felt a particular responsibility not to reproduce an academic parallel to the extractive process which the research was uncovering in relation to the operations of diamond mining companies.

Various strategies mattered in my response even if they did not resolve this ethical issue. Firstly, that I had lived and worked in the country as a teacher in the country for 5 years prior to doing any research and had befriended many teachers strengthened my credibility as someone who had a sustained longer term and genuine interest in their well-being. Developing a grounded 'authoritative insider perspective' (Milligan, 2016, 236) through this prior immersion in the field enabled me to develop trust with all participants in the research.

Second, another key strategy was to exercise reciprocity. As noted by Brooten and Metro, 'it is unrealistic to expect participants to give time and energy to researchers, and in some cases to go through considerable inconvenience expecting nothing in return but the abstract satisfaction of having contributed to the advancement of knowledge'(2014, 14). Indeed, the Sierra Leonean teachers who participated in this research were giving their time and energy, despite living lives of exceptional hardship. I was therefore keen to respond to their requests for support in developing curriculum materials to use in their teaching of the examination syllabuses and was thus able to draw on my prior professional experience as a teacher in the country. I was also able to give them texts relevant to their Literature in English and History syllabuses in the subjects of the West African Examinations Council Literature. In a teaching environment where resources, including basic books and materials are non-existent, this made a big difference and was much appreciated. I also made sure that participants were give refreshments and paid for any transport costs they incurred. This material concern was particularly important in the context where many teachers were barely able to meet their basic daily needs, and many had not been paid for some time.

Finally, the use of participatory research methods such as photo-elicitation was a deliberate attempt to shift the power relationships between me and the researcher in the process of knowledge production; and to give them a greater sense of agency such that the informants took active control of the research agenda by highlighting the issues that mattered to them rather than being asked pre-defined questions. That the photo-elicitation involved teacher participants using motorcycles to take images of their environment was a method of data gathering that fostered a 'sociable form of dialogue' (Sinha and Back, 2014) between me and the participants that was led by them. This method aligned therefore with the ethical imperative to research 'with' rather than 'on' informants. Many participants pointed out that they had gained from the opportunity to articulate issues, feelings and things that mattered to them as teachers, even despite sharing distressing experiences of suffering. In this way,

their involvement in the research process arguably had an unintended helpful, even 'therapeutic' outcome (Lakeman et al., 2013).

11.3. Obtaining informed consent

The need to obtain informed consent is a key feature of the ethical requirement of University Review Boards. This usually involves ensuring that participants in research projects read consent forms that explain its goals and purposes and get their written signatures in which they agree to be involved (Metro, 2014).

However, many have noted the cultural problems raised by this process and in particular the assumption that such procedures are applicable or meaningful in developing country or conflict-affected contexts (Robinson-Pant and Singal, 2013a, 443). Ethnographers in particular have been highly critical. While protecting universities from liability, they argue that the processes for obtaining informed consent are in tension with the open-ended, uncertain and informal nature of ethnographic research (Annas, 2006; Katz, 2006). Researchers in volatile and complex conflict-affected contexts have also critiqued their use on similar grounds (Metro, 2014).

These insights resonated with my own experience in Sierra Leone. Firstly, it was not possible, within one document or one interaction, to explain meaningfully to participants the purpose of the research and the research questions; and in particular the nuances of one of its overarching goals to uncover local teachers' viewpoints and experiences on the promotion of peace which had tended to be ignored by policymakers and aid organisations.

Secondly, participants were disinclined to offer signatures and preferred oral confirmation of their participation. This was because of the highly sensitive nature of the topics discussed. These included critiques of the state and the behaviours of local chiefs, as well as of the operations of international diamond mining companies. Indeed, the dialogue Given fears of state reprisals and a pervasive atmosphere of distrust of local and global elites, the procedures for gaining written consent were evidently unresponsive to context and insufficiently culturally attuned. As Metro has noted in relation to another conflict-affected context, Myanmar, 'the consent form was problematic because as in many cultures with a history of state oppression participants have negative associations with signing forms' (Metro, 2014, 176).

Thirdly, it was evident that informants shifted their relationship to the research questions over time and tended to be more communicative with each follow up interview than they had in the initial stages, where reticence and a lack of trust were noticeable. Using informed consent forms in this situation

would have been hugely inappropriate and likely to be counter-productive to the trust building necessary for this particular data gathering process.

Fourthly, the circumstances in which the research was conducted were frequently in tension with the requirement to specify precise times and spaces in which to interview and meet participants in advance on a consent form. My interactions leading to meetings and interviews were highly unpredictable. For instance, they were contingent upon navigating poor road, sometimes impassable road conditions in Kono, rainy season weather. Some were interrupted as teachers had to attend to their 'everyday' challenges in a highly precarious context, not least illness including malaria and an ongoing process of mourning of colleagues, friends, and pupils who had died from unknowable illnesses. The formal procedures associated with consent forms and the individualising processes associated with notions of privacy were therefore misaligned with the sociality and in-situ nature of the relationships I built with my informants; and the physical and social infrastructures that shaped and constrained them.

Finally, the inherent sociality of my interactions with participants in the research was in tension with the individualising nature of the protocols for gaining consent which bracketed the interaction between researcher and researched from their situated context. Teachers were happy to be accompanied by other teachers, their family, children and friends during meetings and interviews, and indeed insisted on their presence. This response reminded me of the relevance to data gathering processes of what Kabeer has noted is the socially embedded notions of personhood in developing country contexts. These meant that 'affinities to family, kinship networks' were 'seen as prior to the individual and constitutive of their entitlements and obligations' such that 'individuality as a way of social being remains a precarious undertaking' (Kabeer, 2002, 14). This mode of sociality renders culturally inappropriate the quasi-contractual relationships assumed between researcher and researched assumed in university ethical protocols (Metro, 2014).

Given these various socio-cultural factors, this research replaced the use of written consent with a continuous process of verbal negotiation and renegotiation which was far more meaningful and appropriate to the context. Moreover, this approach respected the 'oral sagacity' of cultures in the global south where forms of sociality revolve more around status depends on orality rather than written codification. My situation was therefore similar to that noted by Qureshi in Pakistan who suggested that a 'verbal promise carries more weight than written consent' (2010, 86). This insight highlights the ethical challenge of eschewing the assumed hierarchy of written over oral forms of communication in Western culture and the domination of western literary practices over indigenous customs and socialising practices (Robinson-Pant and Singal, 2013a). Recognising these is a key dimension in 'researching ethically across cultures' (Robinson-Pant and Singal, 2013b).

11.4. On leaving the field

Writers increasingly reflect on the ethical challenges faced by academics not only when they are in the field but when they leave and return to the academy (Eckl, 2008; Jesus and Higgs, 2002). For instance, Spooner has highlighted tensions between doing 'responsible scholarship' (2018, 895) and the pressure to speedily enhance academic capital through publications and networking within the 'audit culture' (ibid) and 'publish or perish' (ibid, 902) imperative of contemporary academic institutions now shaped by a 'global neoliberal ethos' (ibid, 895). Likewise, Brown (2015) has noted that the knowledge economy of higher education increasingly mirrors the conditions of the marketplace in which research that focuses on "ethical and political issues of justice" (ibid, 127) is difficult to pursue. is increasingly difficult to pursue. This is because securing income from donors is dependent on compliance with donor requirements that privilege a 'neoliberal rationality' in which the 'economisation of all spheres of life' results in a sole concern with 'problem solving and programme implementation' (ibid). In becoming subservient to such obligations, there is a danger that the academy colludes in suppression of 'deliberation about justice and other common goods; contestation over values and purposes; struggles over power, pursuit of visions for the good of the whole' (ibid). Hence its collusion with the dominance of a social imaginary that serves to 'cauterise democracy's more radical expressions' (ibid,9).

I have been aware of these tensions in the process of writing up publications based on this research. In particular I refer to the need on the one hand to publish and demonstrate outputs while being aware, on the other hand, of wanting to consolidate my solidarity with participants in the research, deepen my thinking and reflexivity as to how best communicate their predicament and above all do justice to the original activist motivations of the research. These pulls operate at different temporalities. Hence the former necessitates fast productivity while the latter invites a slower long-term engagement that lacks quick resolution and is a matter of sustained commitment over the *longue durée*. They are also very different social practices, with the former requiring self-management and an almost ruthless commitment to promoting one's academic capital and networking appropriately while the latter is concerned with a more outward looking process of building connections with those suffering injustices outside of the academy. This process may well have no immediate or measurable gain or benefit. These tensions are addressed in a book with particular resonance, entitled The Slow Professor; Challenging the culture of Speed in the Academy (Berg and Seeber, 2016). Its authors call for a resistance to the speeding up of academic life that has resulted from corporatization and resulted in an imperative for efficiency over reflection and open-ended inquiry.

11.5. Solidarities with research participants

In navigating the ethical challenges raised by the nature of the neoliberalised university I have drawn inspiration from scholars who have highlighted the centrality of social activism and solidarities with those suffering the effects of global capitalism outside of the academy as components of an engaged research imagination (Appadurai, 2001; Burawoy, 2004; Novelli, 2006; Mathers and Novelli, 2007). This modality of activism goes beyond the current trend to show research with impact in universities in the 'new wave' of utilization research (Lather, 2008). This tends to be tied to the acquisition of scholarly capital and has a 'narrow emphasis on the dissemination or translation of research to public spheres' (McKenzie, 2009, 218) leaving out a 'range of more explicitly critical and political research aims and acts' (ibid, 219).

I have sought to give effect to this activist research imaginary by investing in a range of outcomes beyond the published papers required for the PhD. Firstly, I have shared the published findings with the research participants in Sierra Leone. In doing this, I have drawn on existing networks of friendships and relationships developed through the research, not least to ensure that paper copies could reach Kono where photocopying is difficult, electricity infrequent and roads to reach the region very poor. This dissemination process takes the form of ongoing dialogue to consider how the findings and insights from the case studies might strengthen the partnerships of the NGOs and teachers and consolidate the contributions of education to peace promotion. Indeed, there are currently possibilities that the evidence produced about School Mining Clubs and Fambul Tok will strengthen representations by both NGOs involved to the Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone. This may lead to the revision of the formal curriculum to integrate the insights of the case studies into the knowledges, values, learning activities they highlight. as formative for teachers' pedagogical practices in relation to conflict amelioration. Thus, supporting advocacy for changes in pedagogical practices and curriculum content, the dissemination of the insights of this research satisfies the ethical imperative to 'feed into praxis, not just feed off it' (Mason et al., 2013, 255 quoted in Williams and Pierce, 2016, 227).

11.6. Returning to Schools

I have also taken the insights of the research back to the English schools in which I taught prior to undertaking this research. As noted in the opening section on my positionality, one of my responsibilities was head of Humanities which included a brief to oversee citizenship and lifeskills education. I am currently working with teachers in charge of global citizenship education to explore how the findings of the research can feed into their pedagogical strategies for the teaching of global citizenship. This is frequently critiqued for its overly abstract and decontextualized content and its tendency to position western young people as redeemers of a south which is denied agency or actions

in a patronising way. Here the insights of the research into the ways in which young people in Sierra Leone, supported by their teachers, are challenging social injustices driving conflict, including the operations of international diamond mining companies are particularly resonant. Moreover, in countering the tendency in much global citizenship education practice to place the locus of agency in the north, the evidence of young people taking action to promote peace in their schools and communities by drawing on local knowledges is a salutary counterexample.

My interactions with schools, teachers and young people in England have been a particularly important outcome of this research in so far as they consolidate and extend its pedagogical focus by highlighting and exploring implications for the development of pedagogies of social justice in the global north as well as the global south. Indeed, returning to the classrooms in which the initial hunches leading to this research were at first formulated was a fitting outcome to this research. This post-fieldwork experience underscores the temporality of its ethical dimension as part of a cyclical process of return and re-engagement, within an ongoing and unresolved 'concern' (Sayer, 2011) not only for epistemic and pedagogical motivations but also for social justice.

11.7. Concluding reflections: towards an ethical vision for research in conflict-affected contexts

The ethical challenges discussed and the experiences of navigating them suggest the relevance of key ethical principles that may apply particularly to research in a post-colonial conflict-affected context linked to social justice. Firstly, reflections on my experiences in Sierra Leone highlight the limitations of procedural ethics set out by university ethical review committees and the need for more situated responses (Sikes, 2013). Simons and Usher refer to a situated ethics approach as one that is truly 'cross cultural' and 'local and specific to particular practices' (2000, 2).

Second, these experiences foreground the importance of ethics being not a resolved, quasi-contractual document but a process, one of dialogue, interaction and ongoing re-negotiation between researcher, research project parameters and participants. This aligns with the view of White and Fitzgerald (2010) who note that 'ethics should start with a dialogue not as an ethics application' and in doing so make a 'shift from a single bureaucratic moment to open and critical conversation' (White and Fitzgerald, 2010, 284, quoted in Robinson-Pant and Singal, 2013a, 448). This need for dialogue is framed as an expression of ethical concern that would result in a code of ethics within a critical social science that is 'relational, collaborative and less individualistically oriented' (Cannella and Lincoln, 2018, 89).

Third, and related to the importance of ongoing dialogue with informants is the notion of an 'ethics of trust, care, human dignity and social justice' (Tikly and Bond, 2013, 437). Hence in the 'conduct of

research', a dialogal approach 'speaks to the importance of human relationships as the basis for the research process' (ibid). This involves drawing on post-colonial insights (Crossley and Tikly, 2004) that understand dialogue as an opportunity to infuse cross cultural research with an ethical dimension through valorising indigenous knowledges and insights and experiences and thereby contributing to 'an epistemology of the south that can act in the interests of the historically marginalised' (Tikly and Bond, 2013, 437).

Fourth, an ethical perspective should apply at every stage of research within a conflict-affected setting from conceptualisation through to dissemination rather than being perceived as a procedural after-thought. This approach would therefore embrace the centrality of ethics to the goals of social science advocated by Sayer (2009, 2011) and others. According to Cannella and Lincoln this would mean that research 'would always address human suffering and life conditions, align with the politics of the oppressed, and move to reclaim multiple knowledges and ways of being' (2018, 82). It would require a 'radical ethics that is always/already concerned about power and oppression, even as it avoids constructing 'power' as a new truth' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, quoted in Sikes, 2013, 517).

Fifth, an ethical orientation obligates careful strategizing about how to draw on the research to disseminate findings post fieldwork in such a way as to do justice to what McKenzie has termed 'scholarship as intervention' (McKenzie, 2009, 217). Given both the origins of this research in teacher activism for social justice and its context in an area of extractive international diamond mining alongside immense suffering experienced by teachers and their pupils, this responsibility was particularly important. Sharing the findings of the research with teachers and pupils in England, shifting pupils' preconceptions and building 'critical literacy' (de Oliveira Andreotti, 2014, 40) was aligned with what Appadurai has termed the construction of a 'collaborative pedagogical architecture' (2006, quoted in McKenzie, 2009, 221) in which people with different histories and trajectories 'learn to listen, to work alongside and to construct collectively new knowledges, new insights and new solidarities' (Novelli, 2006, 281). Pedagogical practice here, informed by research insights, could contribute to a sociology of emergences as outlined by de Sousa Santos and Rodriguez-Garaviro which means 'amplifying the voice of those who have been victimised' (2005, 2; quoted in Robertson, 2006, 309). Building such links with schools thus enabled this research to go beyond what Choudry has termed the 'self-referential loops of academic scholarship' (2019, 29).

Sixth, achieving the above in the contexts of the field, the academy and beyond, poses multiple challenges to researchers that require a commitment to developing particular personalities, qualities and values. This concern for understanding the ethical dimension of research as essentially an intra- and inter-personal matter of lived experience has prompted MacFarlane to highlight not regulatory procedures or what he terms 'jumping through hoops' (2009, xiii) but rather the uncertain exercise of

six virtues. These include courage, respectfulness, resoluteness sincerity, humility, and reflexivity and form the core argument of his book 'Researching with Integrity'. These virtues seem particularly relevant to navigating the various challenges, physical, emotional and relational, present in a conflict-affected setting.

Perhaps the most import ethical principle to emerge from this research experience is the need to review the ontological assumptions we make about human subjects in the protocols so called 'ethical procedures' such as giving of consent. Thus, Metro has shown (2014) that these rest on an ethical paradigm that assumes 'a Cartesian model of understanding selfhood and human relationships' (ibid, 170). This assumes that all humans are similar cognitively and that all possess an analogous capacity for autonomous decision making. Hence standardised approaches are appropriate within a form of transparent communication that entails the knowability and predictability of the subject giving consent and participating in research. The ethical writings of Habermas (1998, 2000) exemplify this approach 'in which autonomous individuals make rational decisions about how to interact with others based on universal principles such as freedom and democracy' (Metro, 2014, 170). However, as noted above, my experience of living and working in Sierra Leone and of engaging long term with research participants highlighted the limitations of these assumptions and the protocols they have produced

In rethinking such ontological assumptions, I have found the ethical insights of Butler and Levinas particularly helpful and their recent application by Metro (2014) in another conflict-affected context. Both thinkers draw attention to the ethical as a process that emerges not from a faith in the knowability of the other but from its opposite, the unknowability or opacity of the other. In Giving an Account of Oneself Butler (2005) thus argues the ultimate impossibility of ever fully knowing another because of the ultimate mystery of the human subject. This insight becomes the starting point of building an ethical relation construed as an ongoing imperative to engage and re-engage to achieve greater understanding of the other who cannot be known, let alone known in advance. Butler (2005) shows how Levinasian ethics precludes totalising knowledge of the other, suggesting that the question of 'ethics emerges precisely at the limits of our schemes of intelligibility, the site where we ask ourselves what it might mean to continue in a dialogue where no common ground can be assumed' (ibid, 21, quoted in Metro, 2014, 177). This insight foregrounds as core to ethics or being ethical an ongoing and unresolved obligation to continually engage and interact with what is not known to achieve mutual understanding.

This processual view of the ethical eschews the assumptions of consent forms that participants intentions can be absolutely known, their behaviour anticipated, and that their complex subjectivity can be contained and controlled through a bureaucratic process. Butler's insights into the opacity of the subject as the starting point of ethics also have a broader resonance for understanding social science research and achieving ethical outcomes in conflict-affected contexts. Indeed, they speak to

my sense of the incompleteness of this research, and the ongoing need to commit to the ethical process which Butler envisages as one of continually seeking to know and understand the opaque. Perhaps the most important ethical outcome of this research therefore is to return to the field, refine and revisit its questions, consolidate the solidarities that have already emerged, maintain the links with social activism, and further probe the complexities of teachers' contributions to peace in a context that continues to be conflict-affected and in which communities continue to suffer.

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Chapter 1

Novelli, M. and Higgins, S., (2017). The violence of peace and the role of education: insights from Sierra Leone. *Compare*, 47, 32-45.

Abstract

Research on peacebuilding has mushroomed over the last decade and there is a growing interest in the role of education in supporting peacebuilding processes. This paper engages with these debates, UN peacebuilding activities and the location of education initiatives therein, through a case study of Sierra Leone. In the first part, we explore the complex and multi-dimensional nature of violence in post-conflict Sierra Leone. In the second, we critically address the role of education in the conflict and post-conflict period, highlighting education's centrality as a catalyst to conflict, and then reflect on the failure of the post-conflict reconstruction process to adequately transform the education system into one that could support a process of sustainable peacebuilding. Finally, we conclude by exploring the ways that greater investment and focus, both financial and human, in the education sector might, in the long term, better contribute to a sustainable and socially just peace.

Introduction

In a country often hailed as an example of the successes of liberal peacebuilding, the 2014 outbreak of the Ebola virus exposed the chronic weaknesses of Sierra Leonean (SL) social services, the human tragedy of the unmet needs of the population and raised issues that are particularly relevant to the focus of this paper on the violence of peace and the promise of education. While resentment at the state's inability to deliver social services, including health and education, was a key driver of the conflict, 12 years after the Peace Agreement, the inability to contain the virus has highlighted the chronic infrastructural weaknesses and regional inequalities of the country's healthcare provision. Reports of the lack of treatment centres, trained and committed doctors and nurses, basic equipment, resources and expertise to enable epidemiological surveillance all testify to a hugely under-resourced public health system (Amman, 2014; MacDougall, 2014). Moreover, demonstrations of local communities outside hospitals attempting to treat suspected carriers of the disease, attacks on health workers and a widespread refusal to co-operate with available treatment bear witness to a deep-rooted distrust of public service provision. As commentators have noted (Amman, 2014; Shepler, 2014), such responses indicate the persistence of a historically entrenched and pervasive disconnection between the SL state and its citizens.

Highlighting the persistence of pre-conflict structural and societal weaknesses, the Ebola outbreak has also drawn attention to the failures of the international community whose response has been characterised by the head of Medecin Sans Frontier as 'slow, derisory and irresponsible' (Nierle and Jochum, 2014). Such critiques point to a global failure to recognise the scale of the health challenge

and to respond with sufficient speed, cultural sensitivity or awareness of the fragility of local healthcare systems. Reports that the World Health Organisation sent text messages to illiterate citizens in rural West Africa and organised burials without traditional funeral rites (Amman, 2014) underscore this inattention to cultural context. Moreover, within the Western media, decontextualised perceptions of local people's recourse to superstitious beliefs and practices or religious faith as a function of their 'ignorance', rather than as demonstrating a plausible response to their long experience of the failures of state provision (Shepler, 2014), also evince a doctrinaire rather than contextually rooted understanding. The outbreak of Ebola thus reveals multiple dimensions of violence at the heart of peace. It evidences the failures of peacebuilding to repair state-society relations or to address the structural and service-related roots of conflict and alienation. It also exposes misrecognition of local needs and contexts by the international community and spotlights the widespread human misery endured by Sierra Leoneans. These dimensions of violence – and their undercutting of peacebuilding aims in relation to education – are explored in this paper.

Peacebuilding research has mushroomed over the last decade, and produced a rich and varied body of literature that both defends and critiques current theories, models and practices (c.f. Paris, 2004; Richmond, 2012). There is also a growing interest in the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes from academic and practitioner circles at global, regional, national and local levels (c.f. Smith, 2011; Novelli and Smith, 2011). This paper seeks to engage with these debates, UN peacebuilding activities and education initiatives therein, through drawing upon a critical review of the literature on education in SL, including drawing upon our own work carried out since 2010.

In the first part of the article, we want to explore the complex and multi-dimensional nature of violence in post-conflict SL. In this we draw upon a broad definition of violence that incorporates structural, symbolic and cultural aspects to make the case that the type of peace constructed through and by the United Nations (UN) and its international backers, and the respective post-conflict administrations in SL, was a thin form of 'negative peace' (Galtung 1976), which, while ensuring the non-return to major armed conflict, has failed to sufficiently address the underpinning and diverse modes of violence and grievances that underpinned the outbreak of conflict in the 1990s, which, if left unaddressed, are storing up problems for the future. In the second part, we critically address the role of education in the conflict and post-conflict period, highlighting the centrality of education as a catalyst to conflict, and reflect on the failure of the post-conflict reconstruction process to adequately transform the education system into one that could support a process of sustainable peacebuilding. Finally, we conclude by suggesting the need for greater investment and focus in the education sector that is locally grounded and informed and targets the entire education system to address the multiple dimensions of the violence of peace. Prior to this, we begin with a short background to the conflict in SL to better contextualise the subsequent discussion.

Background to the conflict in SL

The war in SL began in 1991 when members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked towns in Kailahun District, near the Liberian border. The RUF claimed its mission was to overthrow the one-party regime of the All People's Congress (APC), in power since 1968, and bring democracy. Some commentators found no coherent cause behind the RUF (Keen, 2005), while others (Richards, 1996) saw its rise as a response by youth (especially rural youth) to the failure of SL society to offer them access to opportunity and social mobility in a society riven with inequalities, patronage and deprivation. Initially, the RUF were pitted against the SL Army (SLA) and soon after the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), known as the kamajors, the latter emerging as a civilian response to the perceived failure of the SLA to mount a robust challenge to the RUF. As the conflict developed, the SLA grew from 3,000 to 14,000 ill-equipped, poorly trained and underpaid soldiers, drawing on the recruitment of local youth. These soldiers often appeared to have little loyalty to the state and became known as 'sobels', soldiers by day and rebels by night, contributing to the general insecurity felt by the population rather than protecting them (Keen, 2005). Similarly, the CDF grew from a set of loosely linked anti-RUF paramilitaries to a fighting force of more than 20,000 members. The RUF's progress was halted in 1995 when the Government of SL hired Executive Outcomes, a South African private security company, to repel the rebels. After a series of aborted peace agreements, a final agreement was reached in January 2002.

While 'peace' has persisted, the war took a heavy toll. Between 50,000 and 75,000 people were killed as a result of the conflict and more than half of the country's population was displaced, either internally or externally (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2004). The UN Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (2010) estimated that the average income was reduced by 50% after 11 years of war. The conflict in SL is internationally renowned for the mass abduction and use of child soldiers, drug use among combatants and the widespread use of rape and sexual violence. Similarly, amputation, as a weapon of war, left thousands without limbs. However, while the amputees represented the most visible victims of the conflict, the psychological scars of the conflict were more widespread and deeper.

Education after war

Education was dramatically affected by the civil war, particularly in the country's rural areas, where it was almost entirely halted. While statistics in SL are often unreliable, it is estimated that up to 70% of the school-aged population had limited or no access to education during the war (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2004), leaving a legacy of a lost generation of non-school-goers. During the conflict, hundreds of schools were severely damaged or destroyed. In Freetown, it was estimated that 70% of schools were destroyed (Women's Commission for Refugee

Women and Children, 2004). Initially, the destruction of educational institutions was concentrated outside of Freetown, but as the conflict entered Freetown, its urban schools were also targeted. Higher Education was not immune to these attacks. Njala University was the target of violence and destruction. Other higher education institutions in Makeni, Port Loko and elsewhere were also closed throughout the conflict (Alghali et al., 2005), with many occupied by the rebels, and then later Economic Community Cease-Fire Monitoring Group soldiers, with devastating effects (Novelli, 2011; Wright, 1997). The World Bank estimated that by 2001, only 13% of SL's schools were usable, 35% required total reconstruction and more than 50% required refurbishment (World Bank, 2007).

Thousands of teachers and children were killed, maimed or displaced and many more were either forcibly or voluntarily recruited into the ranks of the different warring parties (Wright, 1997). The combined effects of more than a decade of war, the psychosocial trauma of victims and perpetrators, the destruction of educational infrastructure and materials, and the displacement of both students and teachers meant that the reconstruction of the education system was a monumental task.

The violence of peace: the security-first approach to peacebuilding and the liberal peace thesis

Post-war reconstruction has been a huge challenge for all involved, with the country devastated by 11 years of war and the resultant human, financial and psychosocial damage. At the end of the war, SL was at the foot of the UNDP's Human Development Index, with social services destroyed, large numbers of the population displaced and infrastructure shattered (World Bank, 2007). This post-war period is seen as a success by many commentators, not least because peace has been maintained, several elections have been held and much infrastructure has been rebuilt (Government of Sierra Leone, 2013). In light of the discrediting and collapse of the RUF as a political force in SL after the war, the APC and the SL People's Party (SLPP) have presided over the post-war political landscape and remained the dominant political forces in the country. In May 2002, President Kabbah, of the SLPP, was re-elected to a five-year term. In 2007, in the second post-war elections, President Ernest Bai Koroma of the APC was elected and in 2012 he was re-elected for a second and final term.

Interview data suggests that both the national Government and the international community in SL saw security as the a priori objective upon which all other processes were constructed in the country in the immediate post-conflict period. One senior representative of a major bilateral donor noted that:

> The security sector starts off early and gets more profile partly because it's more high risk, partly because there are gunmen … the emphasis is different. I think in Sierra Leone in particular we were talking about getting the social sector, the ministries sorted out later, that's for sure. (cited in Novelli, 2011, 14)

A representative of the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) – the biggest single donor in SL – noted that in the immediate post-war period the agency placed:

> … a big emphasis on particularly the military, on the kind of security side but also justice and Magistrate's Courts and so on and prisons. There was an element in there of education and training as there still is with the army, and basic human rights awareness, literacy, that kind of stuff, but by and large the two things have been rather separate. (cited in Novelli, 2011, 14)

While this emphasis on security does not necessarily preclude a focus on redressing the huge geographical and social inequalities, poverty reduction and improving social services, it does, however, emphasise the chronological order of the importance of security versus social reforms. One commentator notes:

> 'Security first' denotes the idea that before one can sustainably engage in development, a basic level of security must be established. A secure environment will ensure that development efforts are less likely to be disrupted or diverted by conflict, and that stability will attract investors who would otherwise be dissuaded by volatility. In this way, security is a precondition of development. (Denney, 2011, 279)

In line with other post-Cold War international interventions, the security-first agenda is closely linked to the implementation of what Paris (2004) calls the 'liberal peace thesis', which prioritises the introduction of liberal democracy and market forces as key drivers of stability once security has been achieved. According to Castañeda (2009), this approach can be conceptualised as 'trickle-down peace', whereby you first aim to obtain a 'negative peace', then democracy, and these two factors will then encourage foreign direct investment, which will then lead to economic growth. However, just as trickle-down economics failed to reach many of the most vulnerable sections of the population in the 1980s, and provided a catalyst to the conflict in SL, so it is not clear that 'trickle-down peace' was a sufficiently robust development model to address the marginalised majority in SL.

Denney (2011) suggests that rather than security and development occurring symbiotically in SL, it increasingly appears that security has not been followed by development, but rather by an uneasy co-existence of security and misery. This minimalist security agenda, followed by the liberal peace thesis, frames much of the international discourse on SL and its reported post-war success, and can help us to understand why investment in social services such as health, education and welfare in UN peacebuilding programmes lag behind those of security and democracy promotion (McCandless,

2011). Only in 2010 did DFID begin to focus on the importance of education and committed £30 million during the subsequent three years (Novelli, 2011).

The privileging of security within the logic of liberal peacebuilding has foreclosed systematic and prompt attention to the nexus between educational inequality and violence that underpinned the outbreak of conflict in SL. Unpacking some of this process leads us to reflect on the way national and international elites conceptualise violence, emphasising visible manifestations of overt violence and obscuring cultural, structural, symbolic and other forms of violence that, while less visible, are often closely linked to the public spectacle of overt armed conflict. As Stewart (2009) notes, vertical inequalities (between individuals) and horizontal inequalities (between groups) often lie at the root of contemporary conflicts. The violence of economic deprivation, racism and prejudice, regional disparities, elitism and corruption can often be found as powerful underpinning catalysts for the manifestation of armed conflicts. Their avoidance leads to international actors targeting symptoms (public expressions of violence) rather than the underpinning causes. Galtung (1969) talked of this in terms of the difference between negative and positive peace, with the former referring to the cessation of armed violence and the latter to addressing the underlying factors that underpinned this outbreak. Galtung emphasised those 'pervasive' forms of violence that are 'built into' structures, institutions, ideologies and histories (Dilts et al., 2012, 191). Aiming to broaden our understanding of the category of violence beyond direct physical violence, Galtung sought to direct attention to inequalities of power, resources and life opportunities that lie beneath the outbreak of armed conflict. As noted recently, one of the strengths of Galtung's categorisation is its opening up of the notion of violence to recognise its multi-dimensionality to include 'poverty, hunger, subordination and social exclusion' (Winter, 2012, 195). Within such a framework, 'Galtung argues that the failure to prevent injury, pain and suffering is as relevant to social and political analysis as is their perpetration' (ibid). This understanding of violence points to the complex ways that injustices and inequalities are linked to the outbreak of armed conflict.

If we judge success in post-conflict reconstruction on the basis of the absence of a return to violence and the establishment of democracy and free markets, then SL is rightly seen as a good case of post-conflict reconstruction. However, if we measure success on the basis of addressing the causes of conflict, restoring justice and addressing inequalities, then perhaps the minimalist security agenda needs to be challenged with a more equity-focused approach. Currently available data on levels of poverty, unemployment and access to healthcare and education underlines the continued existence of widespread human suffering, especially in the provincial and rural areas, as well as the continuation of pre-war regional inequalities in access to social services.

While emphasising the country's economic growth over the decade since the end of the war, the 'Agenda for Prosperity' recently published by the Government of Sierra Leone (2014) acknowledges that 'over half the population live in poverty, 45% of households are food insecure and malnutrition is widespread' (ibid, xvi). Moreover, the report points out that 'social protection services … are fragmented and inadequate in coverage and targeting' (ibid, xvi). Data from the 2011 SL Integrated Household Survey makes clear the uneven geographic distribution of these high levels of poverty with stark contrasts between Freetown and the provinces. The report concludes that 'poverty remains deep in the rural areas, where the average individual in poverty falls short by 21% of their basic needs' (Government of Sierra Leone, 2014, 12). High levels of unemployment and underemployment, especially among youth and women, are also identified as a continuing national challenge. The implications for education of the continuity of pre-war inequalities are evident in the conclusions of the Sierra Leone Education Country Status Report (Government of Sierra Leone, 2013). It notes that while there have been many improvements over the period 2000–2013, for example in primary and secondary school enrolment, the 'distribution of education resources continues to favour the wealthy and children living in urban areas' (ibid, xxxv). These facts and figures have resulted in SL being placed 183rd of 187 countries in the UN Human Development Index (UNDP, 2014).

In relation to the argument of this paper, what this data draws attention to is the failure of the post-conflict period to address some of the key underlying drivers of conflict, especially in relation to the equitable provision of social services. This failure results in part from the rationale and priorities of interventions rooted in the logic of the 'liberal' peacebuilding model. As Cubitt (2012) has pointed out, 'shrinking the state does not conflate well with the enormous challenge of building state capacity to fulfil its core functions, including much needed welfare provision, which remains a serious challenge for peace' (ibid, 113).

In the next section, we explore the education sector and the way education, rather than a vehicle for sustainable peacebuilding, was itself a catalyst to war.

Education as a lever of conflict

Sierra Leone's educational history is firmly rooted in its colonial past. The first examples of Western-style education in sub-Saharan Africa were found in SL with the first school for boys founded in 1845 and the first school for girls in 1849. The first tertiary institution in sub-Saharan Africa, Fourah Bay College, was founded in Freetown in 1827 (Government of Sierra Leone, 2010). This educational legacy was highly elitist and accessible only to a small minority of the population. Even after 1896, when the rest of what is now called SL became a protectorate, the colonial administration was disproportionately concerned with the colony (Freetown) rather than the protectorate (the rest of the

country), driving tensions, including in educational access, between the capital region and the 'up-country' regions (Government of Sierra Leone, 2010). In 1936, more than 50% of children in the colony of Freetown attended school, while less than 3% of those in the protectorate did. By 1954, the number of children in school in the protectorate increased only to 8%, while in Freetown approximately 85% of children attended school (Hilliard, 1957). The Krio-speaking population in Freetown – freed slaves and their descendants – were privileged in educational opportunities and access to jobs from the colonial period onward. Regional disparities in access were still present immediately after the conflict, with Freetown's Western region having a 75% enrolment, the Southern region enrolling 48%, the Eastern region 35% and the Northern region only 25% (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2004).
As Banya (1993) notes:

> The modern education system's development was quite uneven in Sierra Leone. It first developed in and has remained largely confined to, urban centres. Rural areas, where the vast majority of Sierra Leoneans live, were left largely unaffected by the modern education system. This imbalance can be traced to the historical pattern of educational development during British rule…The imbalance between higher education, on the one hand, and secondary and primary schools, on the other, is one of the enduring legacies of British rule… Independence further exacerbated the bias towards higher education as the urban middle and upper classes who had benefitted from the previous system became the political leaders…Despite nearly 30 years of formal independence, the educational system of Sierra Leone has not changed. (ibid, 163)

What we learn from this historical legacy is education's pivotal role in regulating social mobility, and that its uneven and elitist nature clearly served as one of the drivers of the conflict when it broke out in 1991. By the late 1980s, the education system had deteriorated to such an extent that only approximately 400,000 children were enrolled in primary school – approximately 55% of the relevant student cohort (Government of Sierra Leone, 2010; Republic of Sierra Leone, 2001). In many rural areas, schooling had all but collapsed due to austerity measures imposed during the structural adjustment period and the lack of priority placed on education by the Government. Education, rather than a vehicle for developing social cohesion, equity and opportunity, had itself become a key conflict driver.

For many commentators 'the war in Sierra Leone is [was] a tussle for the hearts and minds of young people' (Richards, 1995, 87), with youth exclusion a core conflict driver. War offered an opportunity to reverse entrenched power structures and gave these young people (particularly men) something to do (Keen, 2005; Richards, 1995). Keen (2005) and Richards (1995) highlight young people's anger at educational (and other forms of) exclusion, as well as their great desire to access education and

the opportunities it promised. Interestingly, the call for free education was 'one of the few explicit demands' by the RUF leadership (Wright, 1997), which began to target the highly educated as well as educational institutions as the war began. The RUF's foundational documents, prepared in 1989, make reference to education as a core contributory factor in the country's demise and critiqued its elitist and colonial nature:

> There is a need for a complete overhauling of the present educational system. The prevailing system is a major contributing factor to our current state of industrial and technological backwardness. The educational system was initially a colonial imposition, which did not take into consideration the aspirations and needs of our people. The sole intention was to train passive and obedient Africans to man the colonial state structure. What was expected of any serious-minded African ruling class was to radically alter the inherited educational system immediately after the attainment of independence. In our country, the ruling class simply continued from where the British colonialist left. (RUF, 1989).

The violence of peacebuilding: educational interventions in post-conflict SL

A recent report on the political economy of education systems in conflict-affected contexts highlighted a disjunction between education's transformatory potential and the narrow framing of education policy and programming within the global agendas of international aid organisations committed to the liberal peacebuilding model (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014). As a result of this disjunction, education policy and programmes are often framed within narrow, technical parameters – for instance, access or efficiency – that bypass pivotal peace-related issues in post-conflict societies, including the rectification of social and cultural inequalities and recognition of the identities of marginalised groups. Key education-related drivers of conflict such as economic and political exclusion go unaddressed.

Insights from studies of a variety of educational interventions in SL since the Peace Agreement in 2002 powerfully support these assertions, indicating how well-intentioned global agendas have undermined the potential of education to achieve peacebuilding objectives and contribute to context-responsive social transformation. This section reflects on recent evidence within three key policy areas of post-conflict education programming. The first is gender inequity, the second, the management and deployment of teachers, and the third, youth programming. While not exhaustive, they are offered as illustrative examples of the way education programming often fails to achieve its peacebuilding potential.

Gender inequity

A study of the implementation of policies to rectify gender inequities in SL by Maclure and Denov (2009) notes that policy-making frameworks, both international and national, have been centred on

'reconstruction' and the expansion of girls' access to schooling as a priority of educational reconstruction. The study recognises the success of such initiatives in expanding female enrolment rates; thus between 2001 and 2004, the number of children attending primary school doubled, rising from an estimated 650,000 to 1.3 million, with girls accounting for 45% of all primary school enrolments. However, the prioritisation of access and quantitative targets, including the number of schools built, teachers hired and students enrolled, is, they argue, 'unlikely to foster the rectification of entrenched gender disparities' (ibid, 613). They draw attention to the limitations of such narrowly target-driven educational interventions alone in transforming gender relations, given the persistence of 'deep seated socio-cultural constraints which exist both within education and in the wider social contexts impacting on educational structures and procedures' (ibid).

On the one hand, the study draws attention to the neglect of curricular reforms to integrate domestic violence and discrimination against women, as well as the reform of teacher training, to ensure the promotion of gender equity through classroom teaching and learning. On the other hand, the predominantly patriarchal arrangements that infuse social, economic and political relations throughout SL, as well as continuing widespread violence against women and girls in and outside of classrooms, are emphasised. Moreover, the fragility of SL's economy means a lack of job opportunities for youth, which will impact more negatively on girls than boys 'given the interconnections between the scramble for work and the prevalence of patriarchal power relations' (ibid, 617). By contrast, with the failure of such interventions to inform and equip boys and girls, through education, to challenge deep-rooted patriarchal cultural attitudes and practices, the report also singles out the very different approaches of some local women's organisations – the 50/50 group and the Forum for African Women Educationalists. 'These organisations,' argue Maclure and Denov (2009), 'are focusing on girls' education not as a neutral end in itself, but rather as an integral component of a broad based, politicised struggle to advance the cause of women's participation in all aspects of national life' (ibid, 619). Going beyond a concern with increasing access and enrolment, these groups mobilise girls' education 'to enable women to more effectively confront and contest gendered inequalities and injustices that are embedded in the larger society' (ibid). Positioning the post-war concern of gender equity policy with achieving quantitative targets to enhance girls access to education in relation to a more politicised understanding of the potential of girls education 'as integral to economic and political actions aimed at challenging the hegemony of patriarchy and gendered violence' (ibid), the study draws attention to the weaknesses of an overly technical framing of educational interventions that foreclose their potential to contribute to deep-rooted social change.

Teacher management

Insights from recent studies of the management of teachers – their salaries, working conditions and deployment – reveals a similar post-conflict narrative in which global imperatives – this time neoliberal

macroeconomic policies – trump the possibility of interventions to address structural factors that constrain their potential to contribute to peacebuilding. The pivotal role of teachers in educational reconstruction is widely recognised within national policy and programming. Despite this, 12 years after the Peace Agreement, studies of the morale, motivation and conditions of service of SL teachers paint a depressing picture of daily immiseration. A recent study (Amman and O'Donnell, 2011) concluded that 'on the whole teaching in SL is an unattractive and unappreciated profession with teachers contending with low pay, late pay or … no pay at all', problems that are 'exacerbated for teachers working in the Northern, Southern and Eastern provinces, far from the Freetown area' (Amman and O'Donnell, 2011, 60; see also Turrent, 2012, 7). The problems of low and irregular or late pay are exacerbated by the length of time it takes for teachers to be admitted onto the government payroll so that many work for a year or longer before receiving payment (Harding and Mansaray, 2005). Thompson (2010) notes that while there are over 30,000 teachers on the government payroll, a report released by the SL Teachers Union (SLTU) says up to 2,000 teachers had not received salaries for the previous two years. He reports that in real terms, teacher's pay had fallen by over a half since the mid-1990s, but workloads had increased appreciably. Not surprisingly, the profession is reported to suffer high rates of attrition 'with many teachers leaving after four years' service due to chronic delay or absence of pay and poor working conditions' (Turrent, 2012, 7; Action Aid, 2007; Shepler, 2010).

These studies bear witness to the constraints on teachers' personal and professional agency resulting from their daily exposure to conditions of precarity and vulnerability. Evidence indicating that most arrive at school hungry (Harding and Mansaray, 2005), that their pay, if it arrives, only partially covers household expenditure for food and basic needs, which obliges most to take a second job to make ends meet (Harding and Mansaray, 2005, 7), and that most worry about looking after their families, all underscore the relentless personal hardship attending the daily existence of SL's teachers. 'Teachers are not paid living wages and barely live from one pay check to the next' is the conclusion of a recent report on educational provision in the Kono district (Mbayo, 2010, 14). These constraints also extend into their classroom spaces: the same report notes that a 'lack of adequate infrastructure, furniture and washing facilities was widespread in the 50 primary schools assessed leading to overcrowding of classrooms and safety concerns in some' as was a shortage or more commonly an absence of learning materials and textbooks (ibid, 14,20). Other reports note that classroom overcrowding is commonplace, particularly at the primary school level, with the average teacher-student ratio of one teacher per 66 primary school students (Marphatia, 2009). This grim picture of professional disempowerment and personal vulnerability is confirmed by the SLTU, which reported that 'many teachers are demotivated by low wages or delay/lack of salaries altogether, demoralised by the crowded classrooms and their lack of training or access to professional development opportunities' (cited in Marphatia, 2009, 6).

Alongside insights into the micro realities of teachers' lives, education-sector-wide studies also draw attention to their positioning within systemic educational inequities that serve to perpetrate the very conditions that generated alienation and conflict. A chronic lack of trained and qualified teachers to meet the post-war upsurge in school enrolment, an over reliance on untrained and unqualified 'community' teachers who are not on the government payroll and paid by community handouts/stipends, and a shortage of teachers in rural areas are repeated concerns (Turrent, 2012). The findings of a recent study of educational provision in Kono region, an area that was at the epicentre of the conflict, noted that among teachers 'across the 50 primary schools assessed, only 35% had the required teaching certificate' (Mbayo, 2010, 22).

While the instrumentalization of teachers as peacebuilders is thus undermined by a chronic shortage of teachers as well as poor salaries and working conditions, a report by Action Aid (2007) draws attention to the limitations on the capacity of the national government to address these challenges given its commitment to annual ceilings on the wage bill for public employees set by the International Monetary Fund. Action Aid (2005, 21) reported that in 2005 the government of SL took the decision to decrease the public sector wage bill from 8.4% to 5.8% by 2008 as a result of IMF advice. Although an estimated 8,000 teachers were needed to help the country deal with a massive out-of-school population after the brutal civil war, only 3,000 could be hired in 2004. The country's 2007, 10-year Education Sector Plan is explicit on the reasons for its limited ability to address the teacher shortage:

> The country averages 60 pupils a teacher and 112 pupils per qualified teacher. There is an obvious need to hire more qualified teachers but a ceiling on teacher employment made necessary by the Ministry of Finance and IMF requirements has made that impossible. (cited in Marphatia, 2009, 35)

Evaluating the relationships between the IMF and government ministries of Finance and Education, Youth and Schools and local civil society, Action Aid (2007) also highlighted the lack of consultations or collaborative analysis of the level of the wage ceiling or of the needs of the post-conflict education sector in relation to the recruitment and management of teachers. We may conclude that in the case of teacher numbers and salaries, peacebuilding needs, and their analysis are marginalised by the national government's accommodation to the IMF's macro-economic targets. As a result, 'policies continue to be divorced from the reality on the ground, failing to take into account the persisting teacher shortage and its devastating impact on the quality of education' (ibid, vi). Constrained by priorities defined within global financial imperatives, the SL government's ability to address the precarious conditions in which teachers live and work – thereby enhancing their peacebuilding agency – has been drastically undermined.

Youth

Insights into the current predicament of SL youth also underscore the limitations of interventions framed by the macro-economic and securitisation priorities of liberal peacebuilding. Over a decade ago, SL's Truth and Reconciliation Commission was unequivocal in emphasising the urgent attention needed to be given to the plight of conflict-affected youth: 'Many of the dire conditions that gave rise to the conflict in 1991 remain in 2004,' its report warned, 'as in the late 1980s, many young adults continue to occupy urban ghettoes where they languish in a twilight zone of unemployment and despair' (Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004, 165). Since then, many other commentators (Cubitt, 2011, 2012, 2013; Hanlon, 2005; Peters, 2011) have lamented the persistence into the post-conflict period of the very conditions that generated pre-conflict youth alienation, while also pointing to the collusion of international policy-making in creating such disappointing outcomes. The questions that form the titles of such analyses – for instance, 'Is the International Community helping to create the preconditions for war in SL?' (Hanlon, 2005) and 'Employment in SL: what happened to post-conflict job creation?' (Cubbitt, 2011) – underscore their message of international responsibility and failed expectations. Recent calls for urgent measures to address the economic marginalisation of SL's rural and urban youth suggests that their plight continues to remain essentially unaddressed. A report produced for SL's National Youth Commission (NAYCOM et al., 2012) concludes that 'the high levels of poverty and unemployment and underemployment that characterise more than 70% of the country's population, a large share of whom are youth, call for extraordinary measures to tackle them' (ibid, viii). The report identifies a range of failures of educational provision as contributory factors to the youth crisis, including lack of investment in technical and vocational education, mismatches between secondary and higher education curricula and labour market needs, and low rates of access to and completion of secondary and higher education. It concludes that 'the robust economic growth performance after the civil war was not matched with corresponding increases in remunerative employment opportunities for the country's able-bodied population, worse still for the youth' (ibid, 10).

Analysis of SL's economic trajectory in the post-conflict period links this failure to create viable employment opportunities for youth to the misplaced attempts by the international community to tie aid and debt relief to the government's implementation of processes of economic liberalisation with insufficient regard to local structural challenges (Cubitt, 2011, 2012). Reduction of the role of government in the economy and expansion of the private sector were promoted as 'reforms, which would bring development, growth and jobs' (Cubitt, 2011, 6). However, Cubitt explains how pervasive contextual factors, including lack of financial transparency, inability of the country to attract foreign investment, weak infrastructure, reduced public sector employment and the continuation of patrimonial practices, all undermined the capacity of such expectations to translate into job creation.

‘Given the post-conflict political and cultural context and the many challenges of the post-war environment,’ Cubitt argues, ‘liberalisation was not doable even if it was desirable’ (ibid, 12). The continuing precaritisation of young people in SL suggests that they have become victims not only of conflict but also of the counter-productive insistence by the international community that SL’s post-conflict economic trajectory should follow the liberalising priorities of peacebuilding interventions.

At a more conceptual level, the assumptions within which youth agency is understood within the security/development logic that underpins liberal peacebuilding have proven to be similarly counter-productive. These issues are explored in a recent study of the provision of vocational education and employment opportunities in SL supported by the UN’s Peacebuilding Architecture (PBA) (Enria, 2012). This highlights the ‘stark discrepancies between the exigencies and constraints faced by international organisations and the lives and perspectives of young people on the streets of Freetown’ (ibid, 44). Enria notes how the UN PBA’s rationale for programming framed the ‘youth employment question’ within the statebuilding aims of liberal peacebuilding that conjoined ‘security and socio-economic development’ (ibid, 43). Within this strategy, youth employment and related education and training was represented by policymakers as a vehicle for the pacification of a constituency that presented a threat to the state’s stability, thereby strengthening the SL government and contributing to post-conflict statebuilding (ibid, 48). Indeed, the PBA ‘cast itself as technical supporter of the Sierra Leonean state’ (ibid, 50). However, Enria points out that the consequent stereotyping of unemployed youth as a security risk in the PBA’s policy directives – in line with the securitisation of unemployment – bypassed the precise context and conflict-specific attention to the ‘channels through which unemployment leads to violence’ (ibid, 49). That the resulting Youth Enterprise Development Project offered SL youth the opportunity of participation in a generic micro-finance scheme commonplace in non-conflict scenarios reflected this decontextualized approach.

In stark contrast to the reductive positioning of SL youth as security threats needing work, Enria’s (2012) interviews with long-term unemployed youth in Western Freetown indicate how their economic predicament was inseparable from a highly negative attitude to the post-conflict state based on their ‘experiences of marginalisation from formal state structures and exploitation from informal relations with state officials’ (ibid, 50). For instance, respondents frequently pointed to their exclusion from clientelist networks and their lack of ‘connections’ as well as their criminalisation by figures of authority to explain their unemployment. Their disillusion with the state was further compounded by experiences of being mobilised by politicians for political violence at election times.

Highlighting the disjunction between the perspectives of young Sierra Leoneans and their positioning within UN PBA employment interventions, Enria’s analysis draws attention to two key weaknesses of the conceptual parameters of liberal peacebuilding. Firstly, when youth unemployment is understood

as a security risk, the complexity of their economic plight and its interconnections with a larger sense of alienation from authority and social exclusion are bypassed. The simplistic linking of unemployment and violence results in an impoverished understanding of youth agency detached from the particular cultural political economy contexts in which it is shaped and constrained within SL's post-war, but nevertheless conflict-affected environment. Within this logic, the instrumentalization of youth employment and related educational interventions as a component of statebuilding has resulted in a misrecognition of the complexity and context-specific nature of their needs. Secondly, the analysis draws attention to the limitations of the privileging of formal state structures within the reconstruction priorities of liberal peacebuilding. Such an approach may marginalise grassroots engagement with constituencies such as youth with conflicted relations to state authority, making it difficult to retrieve the 'youth voice' so essential to effective policies and programming on their behalf (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015, 62). Analysis of interventions to support another key conflict-affected constituency, ex-combatants – in particular the disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration processes under the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR) – reveal a similar pattern of misrecognition of context-specific needs and conflict dynamics combined with massive under-investment in requisite financial and human resources. The UN Secretary General warned in 2002 that the programme was short of funds, thus undermining its potential benefits to participants with the result that 'many would return to fighting either in SL or in neighbouring Liberia' (cited in Hanlon, 2005, 466).

Critiques of the failure to properly invest in DDR processes draw attention to the incoherence of 'donors parsimony towards peacebuilding activities … in view of the high sum invested in UNAMSIL [United Nations Mission in SL]' (Porter, 2003 cited in Hanlon, 2005, 466), highlighting precisely that privileging of investment in security over attention to local need that has been a recurring theme of this paper. Indeed, the disconnection of the programme's content from the dynamics of rural conflict experienced by the majority of ex-combatants is underlined by an ethnographic study of their perspective and experiences (Peters, 2011). The programme's orientation to urban employment through its short-term provision of vocational skills training and start-up packages bypassed attention to 'the more general rural crisis for young people in SL' (Peters, 2011, 16). In failing to offer agricultural options as attractive as its urban-related work options, the programme missed an opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing and livelihoods of the vast majority of its participants. Peters concludes that 'the most kind hearted conclusion one can draw from this is that those designing and implementing the project knew rather too little about the realities of rural SL and the rural young people who fought the war' (ibid, 202). In pointing out how the programme's priorities were collusive with the interests of an urban elite, including politicians, with links to global corporate mining projects and little concern to promote agricultural development, this study also confirms the limitations of state-centric

interventions that are liable to elite capture at the expense of meaningful dialogue with the perspectives and contexts of local constituencies, including youth (Novelli et al., 2014).

Conclusion

Reflecting on more than a decade of 'peace' in SL, our analysis suggests that the international community has contributed to the restoration to power of the old order – albeit in a slightly more democratic form – and side-stepped the need for more widespread social transformation. This reflects a narrow conceptualisation of peacebuilding that appears dominant within international policy debates on post-conflict intervention, which reduces the term to a mode of stabilisation and avoids notions of transformation. As a result of the prioritisation of security, democracy and markets, education appears as a marginal component in the overall picture of reconstruction, which is lamentable as education appears to be both at the heart of the core problems of SL society and one of its potential solutions.

While our critique of the peacebuilding model deployed in SL raised the importance of education, our penultimate section highlighted that this is by no means a plea either for a restoration of the old education system, or for the adoption of a generic 'global education menu'. The historical analysis demonstrates how British colonialism produced a highly elitist and geographically uneven education system, which was reproduced by post-colonial national elites. The examples of post-conflict programming offered similarly highlighted the way international agencies reproduce global technical models of education practice and reform and are subject to the broader disciplinary practices of macro-economic reforms, both of which fail to address local realities of social exclusion and inequality and therefore miss the potential for education to contribute to processes of sustainable and socially just peacebuilding. In the cases of teachers, gender inequity and youth constituencies, this review has brought together compelling evidence of the prolonged misrecognition and neglect of the context-specific needs and experiences of key stakeholders within interventions and approaches informed by the priorities – conceptual and processual – of liberal peacebuilding.

In essence, we are pointing towards a two-way disjuncture. On the one hand, the global peacebuilding model is highly un-social, top-down and overly securitised, and fails to address the underlying causes of conflict and sees education as a marginal concern. On the other hand, post-conflict education programming and planning has drawn from a global education menu that is insensitive to conflict, generic and technical, and as a result tends to reproduce, and, by default, work in tandem with, the broader stabilisation agenda, by avoiding a focus on conflict drivers and conflict resolvers.

Education has the potential to play a much greater role in peacebuilding in SL and elsewhere, but it requires that the current model of peacebuilding is challenged and modified for a more sustainable

model that emphasises the long-term transformations necessary for sustainable peacebuilding and balances security concerns with investments in mechanisms that can address underlying structural inequalities that underpin conflicts, and work towards a more socially just education system and society. Central in achieving this is to ground education programming in context and conflict-sensitive analysis that is firmly rooted in dialogue and participation with local and national stakeholders with the aim of retrieving, valorising and reclaiming the agency of these actors to produce more grounded and transformatory solutions. This links closely to what Richmond (2012) has called a ‘post-liberal peacebuilding’ agenda.

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Chapter 2

Higgins, S., (2020). Rethinking Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Approach. *Comparative Education Review*, Featured Article, February 2020.

Abstract

Through a case study of a peace education intervention in postwar Sierra Leone, this article seeks to contribute to the ongoing critique of dominant peace education approaches that seek attitudinal and behavioural change in conflict-affected societies. Specifically, the article interrogates 'Emerging Issues,' a curriculum intervention developed in 2007–8 by UNICEF for teachers in Sierra Leone. It applies the analytical framework of Cultural Political Economy, an interdisciplinary theoretical current that extends traditional concerns of political economy with power and institutions to show their interaction with cultural processes of meaning making. The insights suggest that this approach to peace education might not be as benign as projected. Instead, we assert that it promotes a form of pacification derived from a decontextualized curriculum that treats victims as guilty and in need of attitudinal and behavioural change, while avoiding engagement with the structural and geopolitical drivers that underpin many contemporary conflicts.

While peace education is a diverse and pluralistic field (Salomon, 2009; Bajaj, 2016), this article seeks to contribute to the growing body of recent, theoretically informed critique of one particular dominant approach to peace education. This approach emphasizes the inculcation of attitudinal and behavioural changes in conflict-affected societies. In a seminal work on the contribution of education to 'reshaping the future' of societies during postconflict reconstruction, Buckland (2005) defined the content and goals of this approach. He noted that 'it includes a range of formal and informal educational activities undertaken to promote peace in schools and communities through the inclusion of skills, attitudes and values that promote nonviolent approaches to managing conflict and promoting tolerance and respect for diversity' (ibid, 60). This definition captures the emphasis of such curriculum on promoting personal and interpersonal attitudes and behaviours in conflict-affected communities. These include for instance the ability to solve conflict peacefully, to enable conflicted groups to develop positive and empathetic relationships and where relevant to reduce interethnic prejudice.

Since the 1990s this form of peace education has been widely adopted in diverse conflict-affected contexts by international donors and aid agencies such as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, and INEE (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000, 20; Baxter, 2014). It has attracted widespread endorsement within the global institutional architecture operating in the education sector in conflict-affected contexts (UNESCO, 2011, 245–46). It has also been feted as exemplary by policy makers and practitioners for its contribution to achieving a 'future of peace and hope in refugee communities and post conflict countries around the world' (Baxter and Ikbowa, 2005, 29) in diverse conflict- affected contexts. As such, it has achieved the status of a 'travelling' global education policy (Verger et al.,

2018). However, despite its institutional success, this approach has also been widely critiqued. Empirical research has highlighted, for instance, a lack of evidence regarding its long-term impact (Rosen and Salomon, 2011); its failure to anticipate the resistance of teachers, parents, and communities (Lauritzen, 2016,78); its failure to address structural causes of conflict (Zembylas and Bekerman, 2013); its lack of attention to authoritarian practices within schools (Harber, 2018); and, finally, its overly ambitious goals and lack of clarity (Bar-Tal, 2002).

Of particular relevance to the focus of this article are critiques that call for more fundamental consideration of this approach to peace education as the product of an insufficiently critical and undertheorized field of curriculum development and practice. For instance, Zembylas and Bekerman (2013) conclude that peace education, privileging attitudinal and behavioural change, needs to eschew the 'idealism and fideism' (ibid, 202) driving its widespread ap- plication. In particular, they argue that such peace education practice should be more 'critical about its theoretical assumptions concerning issues of power relations, social justice as well as the terms of peace and conflict themselves' (ibid, 198). Hence, they argue that 'peace education may often become part of the problem it tries to solve, if theoretical work is not used to interrogate the taken for granted assumptions about peace and peace education' (ibid, 197). Likewise, in a pioneering article, Gur-Ze'ev (2001) noted a 'lack of conceptual work and reflection' (ibid, 315) in peace research. He concluded that rather than 'taking the goodness of peace for granted' there was a need to explore its 'contextual meanings and implications' to ensure that peace education did not become a 'justification of the status quo' (ibid, 315). In particular, he noted how its privileging of attitudinal and behavioural change, universally applied, was grounded in 'modernist technical reason' (ibid, 316) that was limited to 'positivist, pragmatic and functionalist views of knowledge which pay scant attention to the social and cultural context' (ibid, 316).

Other scholars (Bajaj, 2008; Bajaj and Hantzopoulos, 2016) have called for peace education to draw on the theoretical resources of critical pedagogy and social justice education, based on the work of Freire. This would enable teachers and pupils to raise awareness of, and take action against, structural injustices and inequalities. Similarly, Ross (2014) has highlighted the limitations of a focus on shifting attitudes without equipping participants in peace education programs with critical skills to enable them to challenge and transform the 'status quo.' Zembylas (2018) has recently problematized the orientation to critical pedagogy from a postcolonial theoretical perspective, highlighting its Eurocentrism and failure to problematize key issues of the ongoing power asymmetries in knowledge production between Western producers of peace education and its target audiences.

These various strands of critique underscore the increasing theoretical diversification that scholars are bringing to the field of curriculum research and practice in the field of peace education. What they

share is a concern to critically interrogate, rather than idealize, the privileging of attitudinal and behavioural change as the primary vehicle of promoting peace.

This article seeks to contribute to this process of theoretically informed interrogation. It does so by drawing on the analytical framework and heuristic tools of Cultural Political Economy (CPE) analysis. This is a nascent and broad interdisciplinary theoretical current that extends the traditional concerns of political economy analysis to show how they interact with cultural processes of meaning making. The article draws on CPE to explain and interpret the content and development of 'Emerging Issues' (EI), a peace education curriculum developed in 2007–8 by UNICEF for use by teachers in conflict-affected Sierra Leone (Novelli, 2011). While addressing the five thematic areas of civics and democracy, gender, health and environment, human rights, and learner-centred pedagogy, the curriculum was explicitly framed as 'a way of creating a composite and comprehensive whole for the dimension of personal behaviour change' (Baxter, 2014, 175). It was rolled out to in-service and pre-service teachers across the country in 2008 (Novelli, 2011, 54).

This curriculum is particularly appropriate to take as an exemplary case study. It has been promoted as a flagship product of UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Program (Novelli, 2011). It has been adopted as an example of best practice by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE, 2015). EI has been described as the 'best example' of the 'mother manual' (Baxter, 2014, 176) education program developed by UNHCR for refugees in Kenya (1997–2005). This earlier curriculum, which also teaches skills and values associated with peaceful behaviours, has been described as 'the most widely used generic package of peace education materials' (Buckland, 2005, 60). Therefore, UNICEF's EI curriculum for Sierra Leone represents not only the use of peace education in one conflict-affected context but also its wider institutional embeddedness, durability, and status as a traveling curriculum in the previous decade. By clarifying how a theoretically informed analysis may enhance critical understanding of a curriculum implemented in diverse contexts of conflict, the concerns of the article are also aligned with the explanatory goals of comparative and international education. As Dale (2015) has recently noted, its 'potential power . . . lies fundamentally in providing different ways of seeing the world, of going beyond and behind concrete examples of educational practice, with a view to indicating how they might be improved or how they might be explained' (ibid, 356). In addition, by highlighting the relevance of such theorized explanations to improving the practice of peace education, the insights of this article demonstrate the 'power' of the field of comparative education to pro-vide policy relevant 'expertise' (ibid, 341). This is particularly necessary given the need to 'take stock' of the strengths and weaknesses of educational interventions noted by Winthrop and Matsui (2013) in their review of the history of education in emergencies since the 1990s. Finally, the article responds to calls in the broader field of education and conflict for more critical and theoretically informed approaches that advocate a normative commitment to peace with

social justice in conflict contexts (Novelli et al., 2017). The article proceeds first by explaining the context of Sierra Leone. Second, the key characteristics of a CPE approach are outlined. The next section presents the research design and methodology of the case study. The following section presents the findings. The discussion and conclusions highlight the contribution of CPE to developing a critical understanding of peace education as an effect of the intersection between cultural and political economy processes. The emergent insights suggest that peace education, despite its benign reputation, might not be as positive as projected. Instead, we assert that it promotes a form of pacification derived from a decontextualized curriculum that treats victims as guilty and in need of attitudinal and behavioural change, while avoiding engagement with the structural and geopolitical drivers that underpin many contemporary conflicts.

The Sierra Leonean Conflict, 1992–2018

Sierra Leone's conflict between 1992 and 2002, which left thousands of people internally displaced, resulted in over 50,000 deaths, with many others maimed, resulting in the amputation of arms and legs. The savagery of the conflict has led some commentators to characterize it, in judgmental and moralizing terms, as an irrational descent into primordial barbarism or a manifestation of extreme greed and criminality (Novelli, 2011). Keen (2005) has emphasized the role of socioeconomic and political grievances in motivating the violence. Such analysis has highlighted the anger of swathes of impoverished, uneducated, and jobless rural youth and their perceived social, political, and economic exclusion by political elites based in Freetown, as well as by chiefs in rural communities across the country; massive regional inequalities in the provision of education and health services; resentment at a corrupt and patrimonial style of politics through which elites monopolize power and resources; and, finally, the perceived exploitation of the country's diamond resources by national and international actors. Foregrounding such factors as key explanations for the recourse to violence, the Sierra Leonean conflict has thus been construed as a 'venting of grievances and a cry from the dispossessed and powerless who could find no other outlet for their anger and rage at their marginalization and exclusion in a dysfunctional society' (Hirsch, 2006, 305).

Since peace was declared in 2002, Sierra Leone has been the target of various interventions by UN agencies operating within the priorities of the dominant model of international peacebuilding interventionism, namely, liberal peacebuilding. Such interventions have emphasized the importance of establishing security and democracy and the opening up of markets (Novelli, 2011). Having enjoyed relatively peaceful elections in 2007 and 2012 and as one of the fastest growing economies in sub-Saharan Africa, Sierra Leone is often used to demonstrate the success of liberal peacebuilding (AfDB, OECD, and UNDP, 2017, 287). However, scholars have also underlined the continuation of the structural drivers of conflict that pose a major threat to sustainable peace. First, they have highlighted

the failure of liberal peacebuilding's security and market priorities to realize the promise that macroeconomic reform would ameliorate the widespread poverty of the Sierra Leonean population (Castañeda, 2009). Second, they have noted the failure of the state-building mission and the 'security first' approach of international peace operations to meet the 'everyday' needs and aspirations of Sierra Leoneans (Cubitt, 2013, 92). Third, specific grievances, especially unemployment among the population's youth, have been identified as continuing drivers of conflict (Cubitt, 2011). Fourth, researchers have noted resentment in some parts of the country toward the operation of international mining companies, and a perception that the country's resource wealth is being exploited by global business with little tangible benefits to local populations (Zulu and Wilson, 2012). Finally, there remains continuing widespread distrust and dissatisfaction between the state and its citizens (Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012, 60). It is therefore not surprising that many have suggested that Sierra Leone may be considered postwar rather than postconflict, experiencing only a tenuous peace in which, despite the absence of violent conflict, many of the structural causes of grievance and conflict re-main unaddressed[1]. Indeed, some commentators have warned of the high likelihood of recurring conflict (Cubitt, 2013).

The Value of CPE as a Tool for Curriculum Analysis

This article builds on recent applications of CPE in the field of education (Robertson and Dale, 2015) and in conflict-affected contexts (Novelli et al., 2017). However, it contributes to the ongoing exploration of the potential for using this theoretical approach by drawing on Sum and Jessop's (2013) recent articulation and applying it to a particular curriculum. While not aiming to provide a comprehensive guide to CPE, this section clarifies key features of its analytical approach and conceptual tools that are particularly relevant to its application to peace education curricula.

CPE takes as a fundamental ontological premise the existential necessity of simplification through making meaning. This is required to enable social agents to 'go on in the world' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 24), given the fact that the world is too complex to be grasped in its complexity in real time. This insight underpins its analytical concern with various interrelated processes of selectivity through which the complexity of the social is reduced and under-stood. These processes provide distinct but interconnected entry points into understanding how the meanings that actors attribute to the social world are embedded in material, political, and economic relations and institutions.

[1] Johan Galtung (1964) makes a distinction between negative and positive peace—whereby the former simply refers to the absence of violence or war, and the latter implies not only the mere absence of violence, but a removal of the underlying causes of violence.

Sum and Jessop offer four such selectivities:

1. Discursive Selectivity
2. Structural Selectivity
3. Agential Selectivity
4. Technological Selectivity

First, discursive selectivity refers to the selective process of intersubjective meaning making through the use of language. This is a process that reduces complexity for actors by 'directing attention to and focusing on, some aspects of the world out of countless possibilities.' Hence, 'every social practice entails meaning making' (ibid, 149). This process of meaning making shapes perception and social communication. CPE uses various concepts to illustrate discursive selectivity. For instance, social 'construals' refer to actors' apprehension of the natural and social world that result from this process of reduction of meaning. These set limits on how the social world is framed, imagined and understood. CPE also uses the notion of social imaginaries to understand the impact of discursive selectivities on actions and agendas of agents. This refers to representations of social reality that 'frame individual subjects' lived experience of a complex world and inform collective calculation about that world' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 165). Within a CPE approach, the production of such social imaginaries constitutes an important semiotic moment in complexity reduction. Without such imaginaries, as Sum and Jessop have noted, individuals cannot 'go on in the world' and 'collective actors such as organisations could not relate to their environments, make decisions or engage in strategic action.' These imaginaries therefore, have performative effects and constitutive power in shaping as well as framing social relations. Moreover, they have 'a central role in the struggle not only for hearts and minds' but also for the 'reproduction or transformation of the prevailing structures of exploitation and domination' (ibid, 165). Offering one entry point into a super complex reality, they can be associated with different standpoints that frame and contain de-bates, policy discussions, and conflicts over ideal and material interests.

Recent applications of the notion of discursive selectivity have been applied to understanding the transnational dominance of particular economic imaginaries, for example, economic competitiveness in response to the crisis of neo-liberal capitalism in Europe and Asia (Sum, 2015). Sum shows how these are communicated in Poverty Strategy Reduction Papers and World Development Reports produced by the World Bank. This article argues that it also offers useful explanatory value in relation to understanding developments in the field of peace education. Thus, within the explanatory logic of CPE, the content of EI may be considered as a discursive selectivity, or as offering from a range of possibilities a particular, partial construal or diagnosis of the needs and agency of teachers, students, and the postconflict Sierra Leonean community.

However, within a CPE analytical framework, some construals of social reality are privileged over others. They may dominate ways of thinking about and also determine social relations due to their promotion and appropriation by institutions and agents with varying degrees of power and technologies of persuasion. As has been noted, such ‘reductions’ are ‘never wholly innocent’ (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 149). Thus, a further explanatory challenge addressed within CPE is explaining why some construals are selected and institutionalized over others. Here, CPE analysis focuses on the interrelation of discursive pro- cesses, in other words processes of meaning making using language, with extralinguistic factors. It thus invites interrogation of the underlying social, eco- nomic, and political dynamics, material conditions and power asymmetries that have shaped and conditioned the construals that are privileged. These explanatory priorities connect cultural or meaning-making processes with the traditional concerns of political economy analysis.

CPE analysis offers three other types of selectivity. First, structural selectivity refers to the impact of political and economic processes and the relative power of institutions in determining which construals are privileged and come to dominate discourse landscapes. This selectivity thereby creates an uneven distribution of constraints and opportunities ‘on social forces as they pursue particular projects’ (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 214).

Second, agential selectivity refers to the processes that enable some agents to be more effective at advancing particular discourses due to their power or technical expertise.

Third, technological selectivity refers to the range of technical apparatuses that are deployed to advance particular construals, as well as their role in regulating and controlling behaviours and creating subject positions. Examples might include programs, guidelines, policies, and best practice advice produced by institutions and organizations. Applying a CPE approach to peace education curricula therefore entails understanding how its content and development are the product of the intersection of discursive, structural, agential, and technological selectivities. Within a CPE analysis, moments of crisis in a given field of social practice are taken to be particularly revealing of the operation of all selectivities and a useful analytical entry point. Put simply, these refer to moments of cognitive and strategic disorientation in which new circumstances threaten established ways of thinking and acting (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 25). While objectively in- determinate, they generate a proliferation of crisis responses. These attempt to make sense of, or in other words interpret what has happened through, for instance, developing new policy paradigms or rethinking established institutional agendas. These may be considered to be discursive selectivities, since the process of construing the crisis involves a range of partial responses or readings, depending on actors’ particular standpoints. Moreover, some such responses become more dominant and authoritative than others due to the operation of agential, structural, and technological selectivities.

This notion of crisis is particularly appropriate as an analytical framing to understand the context within which peace education emerged. Winthrop and Matsui (2013) have noted how the engagement of aid agencies in the unprecedented intrastate conflicts of the 1990s began to threaten intervention paradigms that had been established when conflict between states was ubiquitous. Extending the sociology of the constituencies who were affected by conflict to include whole populations, including women and children, such new forms of internal conflict created new strategic and epistemic challenges for those concerned to leverage education in relation to peacebuilding.

Also relevant are the various key goals of social analysis in CPE. Sum and Jessop (2013) note an underlying concern to denaturalize taken-for-granted imaginaries and to repoliticise them by locating them as symptomatic of the play of power relations. Hence, CPE is also committed to a critique of ideology. This means a concern to reveal the 'immanent contradictions and in- consistencies in relatively coherent meaning systems; [and to] uncover the ideal and material interests behind specific meaning systems' (ibid, 164). Given the resistance of peace education to critique, such attention to its underlying ideology is a particularly relevant part of CPE's theoretical armoury for an analysis. The next section explains the research design and methodology.

Research Design and Methodology

A case study approach was considered appropriate in particular because it allows the possibility for theoretically informed reflection based on a bounded particular example. The overarching research question is, How may the analytical and conceptual tools of CPE enhance critical explanation and interpretation of the aims, goals, development, and implementation of peace education with particular reference to the development and text of the EI curriculum in Sierra Leone?
Following the CPE theoretical entry points noted above, this overarching question breaks down into a further set of sub questions.

- How may the EI curriculum be explained and interpreted as an effect of discursive selectivity? This invites analysis of how the EI curriculum represents Sierra Leonean teachers, their pupils, and the national community and invites attention to the social imaginaries presented therein.
- How may the EI curriculum be explained as an effect of structural selectivity? This invites analysis of how the curriculum's content, its social imaginary, may be understood as located in relation to developments within the global aid architecture, geopolitics of aid intervention, institutionalization of aid interventions, and responses to these within international organizations.

- How may the EI curriculum be explained as an effect of agential selectivity? This invites analysis of the differential contributions of diverse actors in the process of writing and developing it.
- How may the EI curriculum be explained as an effect of technological selectivities? This invites analysis of the techniques used to promote and communicate the EI curriculum and how these regulatory and control behaviours target the audience of teachers and the Sierra Leonean community.

Data were gathered through content and discourse analysis of the final published EI curriculum text (UNICEF, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c). This article also draws on initial in-depth semi structured interviews as well as on follow-up communications with 16 individuals involved in the writing and production of the EI text. These include two UNICEF staff members directly involved in the writing and production of the curriculum, three other UNICEF educational specialists, two national and international consultants employed to support the processes of curricula development, and six lecturers from four teacher training colleges who were involved in writing the curriculum, as well as three individuals from the Sierra Leone Ministry of Education who were engaged at different stages in its development. These initial interviews, conducted between January and July 2012, sought the views of individuals on the aims and content of EI and, where appropriate, their experiences of the processes of its writing and production. They were transcribed and analysed following a qualitative interpretative methodology. This entailed thematic attention to emergent meanings, in particular how informants individually and collectively perceived and experienced the process of curriculum writing and their roles and contributions. The article also draws on follow-up interviews with all groups, which provided an opportunity to clarify and confirm the findings.

Findings

The following account presents a CPE analysis of the data, highlighting illustrative examples of each process of selectivity operating within the EI curriculum. Following a CPE logic, this analysis starts by explaining the curriculum's discursive selectivities, before exploring other selectivities—structural, technological, and agential—that highlight the role of political economy factors in explaining its content and priorities.

Discursive Selectivities

The curriculum repeatedly announces its goal to position teachers to effect processes of behavioural and attitudinal change in Sierra Leoneans. Typical is the declaration that 'we looked at behaviour change in individuals because EI is a course about behaviour change' (UNICEF, 2008a, 15). The emphasis on behaviour change underpins the curriculum's homogenizing presentation of Sierra

Leoneans as collectively prone to negative and 'destructive' behaviours. Thus, the text declares at the outset that 'the behaviour and understanding of the people of Sierra Leone is not constructive' (ibid, 14). Likewise, trainee teachers are invited to 'think about all the destructive behaviours practiced by Sierra Leone' (ibid, 7).

The overwhelmingly negative portrayal of Sierra Leoneans and the resulting need to engineer national social transformation through attention to individual behaviours constitute a defining social imaginary that is invoked throughout the text. It is also communicated through the text's repeated in- vocation of a contrast between such 'destructive' behaviours and the 'constructive' future that will result from the curricula intervention. The text's repetition of the verb 'internalize' to characterize the impact of curricula content on Sierra Leoneans underscores its attention to the inner, psycho-logical transformation of individuals.

These aspirations are celebrated as self-evidently legitimate, beneficial, and appropriate. For instance, the text asserts that 'Sierra Leone is a postwar nation in the process of reconstruction. To help us to look to a constructive future we need to change our current destructive behaviours.' Moreover, the curriculum is promoted in redemptive terms such as 'life-saving and life- changing' (UNICEF, 2008a, 15).

However, applying a CPE analysis invites analytical attention to problematize the claims of the text as self-evident truth. As noted above, this approach seeks to understand and explain its content as the effect of a selective process of meaning making that privileges one particular version of peace promotion in Sierra Leone from a plurality of possibilities. Several instances of this selective process may be identified. First, consideration of the various iterations of peace education occurring throughout the twentieth century indicates that the focus on attitudinal and behaviour change, emphasized in EI, amounts to a drastic narrowing down of potential possibilities (Harris, 2008). These include, for instance, knowledge, critique, and activism against global, national, and local issues of social injustices linked to conflict; identifying forms of systemic and structural violence causing grievance and conflict and taking action to challenge them; studying the geopolitical causes of war and conflict and holding governments to account for policies likely to threaten peace. The text's fore-grounding of individual personal change in Sierra Leoneans excludes the concern with social and political transformation and the structural and systemic drivers of conflict associated with peace education's previous goals and activities.

Second, the certainty of purpose articulated in the wording of the curriculum disguises the equivocal and contested emergence of peace education within a particular historical conjuncture in the geopolitics of aid and development in the late 1990s. Indeed, as noted earlier, the unprecedented

challenge of mobilizing education to address the needs of whole populations affected by conflict produced cognitive and strategic disorientation among professionals working in such contexts. Within a CPE approach, such a crisis necessitates a rereading of initial responses by professionals and researchers aiming to mobilize peace education to address these new forms of conflict and is to be reminded of the uncertainty that accompanied their efforts. For instance, Aguila and Retamal (1998) warned that 'the technical impact of education as a tool for changing the behaviour and attitudes of an illiterate or semi-literate population in general by the trauma of war needs to be further assessed' (ibid,7). Such uncertainties are excluded from the EI's unhesitating promotion of the need for attitudinal and behavioural change in the Sierra Leonean demographic as a necessity to enable peace.

Third, the overwhelmingly negative portrayal of Sierra Leoneans distracts attention from the existence of alternative, more positive, and more optimistic paradigms of the nation and its postconflict trajectory. For instance, the report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2004) paid tribute to Sierra Leoneans living 'in the ghettoes of Freetown or the villages of the Provinces [who] maintain their dignity notwithstanding conditions of extreme poverty and deprivation' and who are 'examples for us all' (ibid,125). It concluded that the political elites of successive regimes in the post- independence period were responsible for creating the conditions of conflict.
Far from representing the behaviours of the whole nation as deficit, the report pinpointed the activities of a small but powerful constituency who 'plundered the nation's assets, including its mineral riches at the expense of the national good' (ibid, 14). This more specific sociology of national failure draws attention to the exclusionary nature of the EI's undifferentiated judgment on the national demographic. Fourth, the undifferentiated treatment of Sierra Leoneans occludes the social fault lines within the country, particularly between the state and its citizens, urban Freetown elites and rural communities, and rural youth and elders, groups between which grievances leading to conflict emerged and continue to exist. Indeed, the curriculum's foregrounding of internal personal change is at odds with the insights of research that has demonstrated the persistence of the structural drivers of conflict into the postconflict period, as noted earlier.

This section has highlighted some of the ways in which EI's construal of postconflict Sierra Leone is highly selective. As has been noted, such reductions are not purely discursive and 'never wholly innocent' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 149). The analysis turns now to explore how EI's partiality of content may be explained by the constraints shaping its location within structural selectivities entailed by the geopolitical agendas of powerful global institutions and actors in the field of peacebuilding interventionism and global governance.

Structural Selectivities

The discursive selectivities of EI implicate education within the mission to transform 'whole societies' (Duffield, 2001, 121) in conflict-affected zones, which has been identified as a key rationale of liberal peacebuilding. A key feature of the geopolitical agenda of liberal peacebuilding has been to problematize conflict-affected states as threats to international stability and Western interests. This has resulted in what some commentators characterize as a 'direct attempt to transform whole societies, including the beliefs and attitudes of their members' (ibid). The content and assumptions of the discursive selectivities of the EI curriculum resonate directly with key features of this peacebuilding agenda and indicate how the curriculum mediates its priorities and parameters. First, in offering a wholly negative projection of Sierra Leoneans as displaying 'destructive' behaviours, the text reiterates the pathologization of conflict-affected societies as a rationale driving intervention (Hughes and Pupavac, 2005). For instance, in a section on pollution, the text declares that 'Sierra Leone suffers from every type of pollution; but it is not the big factories that create most of the pollution in Sierra Leone. It is us. The ordinary Salones we are destroying our own soil, air and water and thereby killing ourselves and our country' (UNICEF, 2008b, 25).

This above analysis ignores the widely evidenced environmental degradation resulting from the extractive operations of international diamond mining companies in the country, a major source of grievance among its communities especially in Kono (Zulu and Wilson, 2012). It thereby casts the Sierra Leonean demographic as the sole locus of blame. This problematization of the national community is repeated throughout the text. For instance, there is an injunction to 'think about what we do to increase our level of poverty' (UNICEF, 2008a,7). It is claimed that 'here in Sierra Leone corruption is endemic (everywhere)' (UNICEF, 2008b, 27). This homogenization of responsibility occludes the primary responsibility of both national elites and inter- national actors in the production of both corruption and poverty. Relentlessly problematizing the behaviours and attitudes of the Sierra Leonean demo- graphic, the curriculum repeats liberal peacebuilding's tendency to attribute blame for the emergence of conflict on endogenous societal factors disconnected from broader global political economy dynamics.

Second, in its micro-level attention to transforming the individual behaviours and attitudes of the Sierra Leonean population, undifferentiated by class, gender, tribe, language, or region, EI operationalizes the ambitions of liberal peacebuilding interventionism to penetrate the socialization habits of conflict-affected nations (Nadajarah and Rampton, 2015). For instance, ex- plaining the aims of the curriculum, the text announces that 'we looked at behaviour change in individuals because Emerging Issues as a course is about behaviour change' (UNICEF, 2008a, 15). At another point, the text explicitly declares that 'we are teaching a form of socialization' (UNICEF, 2008a, 10). Such aspirations

explicitly tie the curriculum to a project of social transformation of a demographic deemed inherently prone to violence and self- destruction. This is aligned with what Paris (2002) has described as the 'mission civilisatrice' at the core of international peacebuilding, whose interventions in conflict-affected contexts, he argues, are redolent of the mission to civilize populations deemed inferior that characterized colonial engagement with colonized states in the nineteenth century.

Third, in framing issues of environmental damage and health care as a matter of addressing the negative personal behaviours and attitudes of Sierra Leoneans, the EI curriculum reproduces the concern with individual responsibility, disconnected from an analysis of structural socioeconomic constraints, which has been identified as a feature of liberal interventionism. As Hughes and Pupavac (2005) have noted, an implication of liberal peacebuilding's projection of 'domestic populations' as 'dysfunctional' is the 'criticism of the failure of the populations to take responsibility' (ibid, 883). The result is that 'societies are viewed as formed of violated or violating individuals, whose actions spring from psychological processes rather than from political beliefs or eco- nomic needs' (ibid, 874). The declaration in the EI curriculum that 'any change has to come first from within; in fact it is not actually possible to change any- body else's behavior' (UNICEF, 2008a, 15) typifies a similar individualizing and psychologizing approach to social change in a conflict-affected context. Such construals of the sources of conflict fail to acknowledge or to critique features of the current global economy that generate social and economic inequalities that drive grievance and conflict (Novelli, 2017).

Finally, the curriculum reproduces the state and elite-centricity that has been noted as a feature of the failure of liberal peacebuilding interventionism to address the needs of the majority of the populations living in conflict- affected contexts (Richmond, 2012). Hence the text declares that the project to engineer personal change is 'an area of concern to the Ministry of Education because the behaviour and understanding of the people of Sierra Leone is not constructive'' (UNICEF, 2008a, 14). This explicit affiliation of its peace education program with the wishes of the Sierra Leonean government ignores the widespread mistrust of the central state by the majority of Sierra Leoneans living outside of its capital, and in particular the failure of government to ad- dress massive regional inequities in the provision of social services.

The next section turns to consider how the partiality of the curriculum's conceptualization of peace promotion in Sierra Leone may also be explained by considering it as an effect of agential selectivities.

Agential Selectivities

The EI text was a product of a collaboration between various actors. These included UNICEF education staff, teacher educators at the country's colleges of teacher education, international

consultants in peace education, and individuals attached to the Sierra Leone Ministry of Education. Together, they brought diverse knowledges, expertise, and professional concerns to the process of writing the curriculum.

However, the data gathered from interviews reveal a process of agential selectivity by which the knowledges of some participants were valorised over others in the production of the final text. While interviewees represented a range of groups, all noted that corrections were made by international consultants to the initial drafts produced by college lecturers. Evoking the extent of the revisions one independent consultant pointed out how 'the text was transformed from an academic oriented course to behaviour change . . . anew programme . . . that change transformed the course.' These textual re-visions were understood as a necessary corrective to the inadequacies of the original version written by lecturers. One consultant pointed out that the drafts produced by lecturers were 'not too far away from conventional academic modules . . . and were a problem if we wanted to incorporate behavior change.' Resulting changes included the discarding of much material produced by writers because of its perceived irrelevance or inappropriateness to curricula format and content required by peace education programs.

Commenting on the differential contribution between local writers and external consultants, one informant noted that 'the views of the international expert carried a lot of weight and greatly influenced the direction of development.' Some writers of the initial drafts expressed frustration that the work of lecturers had been discarded. One lecturer commented that 'we expected a bigger participation in the writing by our staff.' Caution was also expressed about the dangers of relying on external experts; 'when you bring an external consultant . . . they look at their experience in other countries . . . it makes it easier for them . . . they can pick a lot of things, this is what I have done, I think it can work here . . . and what you think may be applicable in one area may not be applicable in another area.' Another informant expressed some reservations at the appropriation of a 'standard thing . . . peace education being around in all countries globally.'

These reflections illuminate how the final peace education curriculum was a form of knowledge production that relied on several processes of agentic selectivity. First, in appropriating an inherited peace education format, the textual revisions illustrate the privileging of the specialized knowledge and techniques of 'experts,' what Kothari (2005) has characterized as the 'in- creasing professionalization of development.' Thus, 'what counts as professional expertise in development is not primarily founded on in-depth geo- graphic knowledge about other places and people but is located in technical know-how' (ibid, 430). In the case of the evolution of EI, this professional culture is demonstrated by the exclusion of text written by local teacher educators because of its failure to fit

with a particular pre-established curriculum format circulating within, and legitimized by, international aid agencies.

Second, the exclusion of local contributions to the curriculum's final content illustrates a power asymmetry in knowledge production as a result of a process whereby 'some agents, by virtue of their nodal position in social net- works, have better capacities to read particular conjunctures, refocus arguments, displace opponents and introduce timely imaginaries and world views than others' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 220). Thus, the international consultant is afforded the institutional authority to reframe and rewrite the EI curriculum.

While ostensibly a collaborative project, then, the production of the EI curriculum in fact results from a process of knowledge production reliant on agential selectivity. This also constitutes a moment of technological selectivity insofar as it is secured through technologies of 'expertise, techniques and apparatuses that construct authority and marginalize others as well as guide actions and process' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 221).

Technological Selectivities

As discussed, authorial authority in the writing of EI resulted from access to and knowledge of the INEE peace education curricula (UNESCO-INEE, 2005a,2005b) for attitudinal and behaviour change. Indeed, it is striking that large sections of the text repeat verbatim the content of the INEE Peace Education Programme, initially developed by the UNHCR for teachers and com- munities living in refugee camps in Kenya and Uganda between 1997 and 2005 (UNESCO-INEE, 2005a, 2005b) This was promoted as 'developing in its audiences skills that build positive and constructive behaviors for peace and conflict prevention and minimization' (Baxter and Ikbowa, 2005, 22). EI's sec-ions on experiential learning (UNICEF, 2008a, 13), curriculum theory (UNICEF, 2008a, 11), effective listening (UNICEF 2008a, 28), questioning skills (UNICEF, 2008a, 30–31) effective teaching (UNICEF, 2008a, 32), and conflict management theory (UNICEF 2008a, 54–55) all reproduce images and text that appeared in the earlier INEE curriculum (UNESCO-INEE, 2005a, 40, 22–25, 29, 36–37, 28, 19–21). Also reproduced are explanations of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive development, Kohlberg's theory of ethical or moral development, and Maslow's theory of social development (UNICEF, 2008a, 20, 24–26; UNESCO-INEE, 2005b, 28–33, 40–42; UNESCO-INEE, 2005a, 19–21). This derivative textual strategy is recognized by one of the main authors of EI, who notes that 'the INEE peace education programme was the foundation of the Emerging Issues programme, not least because the basic skills were applicable to human rights, good governance, citizenship and pedagogy' (Baxter, 2014, 175). However, the result is to appropriate for Sierra Leonean teachers and their pupil's material for a curriculum developed for another conflict- affected group in another setting by other aid agencies. In

this way, the curriculum text reproduces the institutional embeddedness whereby peace education has been instrumentalized across very different contexts and between institutions

The text's repurposing of a peace education curriculum written for an-other context entirely implicates the EI curriculum in the rise of a professional culture of replicable toolkits and templates. As noted by Winthrop and Matsui (2013), from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s the field of education and emergencies was characterized by a concern to develop 'shared assumptions, standards and tools' (ibid, 14). This resulted in the proliferation of 'technical re- sources' (ibid, 21) to guide policy makers and practitioners, exemplified by the INEE peace education program. Such developments were driven by a perceived need to advocate for the role of education within humanitarian interventions and to disseminate 'best practices.' That EI was promoted as one of the best examples of an earlier INEE peace education program being used as a 'mother manual' (Baxter, 2014, 176) demonstrates its implication in this drive to identify and disseminate exemplary curriculum models.

However, while laudable and well intentioned, such professional practices also encourage a problem-solving approach that emphasizes commonalities between conflict-affected contexts rather than their distinctiveness. This has resulted in what a recent review of the political economy of education interventions in such contexts has concluded is their 'disembedding' from the context-specific political and cultural dynamics conditioning the lives of the communities in which they arrive and take root (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014). This insight leads to another technological selectivity, namely, its implication in processes of social control and regulation.

Through its explicit focus on inculcating personal attitudinal and behavioural changes in Sierra Leoneans, the curriculum may be understood as a technology of governance aiming to regulate the subjectivity of whole populations. A study of the implementation of the UNHCR peace education program on which EI was based draws attention to the regulatory nature of its behaviour change goals that are described as a 'controlling process' (Sagy, 2008, 360). Here, the imperative of achieving personal attitudinal and behavioural change was mobilized to reshape the conduct of Kenyan refugees, perceived to be intrinsically predisposed to engaging in violent conflict and having destructive attitudes. However, this focus deflected attention away from the structural causes of refugees' grievances, such as material scarcities or experiences of human rights violations, and instead onto the problematic dispositions of refugees themselves. Peace education in this context, Sagy concludes, 'seems to be an act of pacification and disempowerment of the blaming the victim kind' (ibid, 370). In repurposing this same curricula EI instantiates a further iteration of the capacity of this approach to peace education to operate as a technology of social control across conflict-affected con- texts and demographics.

Conclusion

By applying CPE analysis to a particular instance of peace education curriculum, this case study has problematized the taken-for-granted reputation of peace education as a panacea in conflict-affected contexts. On the contrary, it has revealed how its concern for attitudinal and behavioural change of individual Sierra Leoneans is a highly partial and exclusionary representation of this conflict-affected demographic. Thus, understood as a product of various processes of selectivity, the EI curriculum mediates the geopolitical priorities and institutionalized assumptions about conflict-affected states of global peace- building interventionism, reproduces unequal power relationships sanctioned within transnational circuits of knowledge, and is collusive with technologies operative within the professional culture of education and peacebuilding that serve to regulate and control conflict-affected populations. The result is a curriculum that is deeply implicated in the geopolitical and biopolitical agendas of the West. Furthermore, it fails to address the structural issues of Sierra Leoneans, pathologizes the nation, blames the poor for their plight, and fails to achieve the transformative goals of education to address the social injustices driving conflict.

These insights overlap with the theoretically informed critiques outlined at the start of this article. Exposing the inattention to structural drivers of grievance in peace education curricula aligns with the priorities of more critical approaches. Equally, highlighting the dominance of Western foreign policy agendas and psychological knowledges exposes the failure to consider ongoing coloniality and asymmetrical power relationships that postcolonial critiques have opened up. What this CPE analysis contributes to further enhance theoretically informed explanation is its systematic exploration and elucidation of these limitations as material effects of cultural political economy dynamics and processes. In this way, peace education is also ‘put in its place’ as a product of particular geopolitical interest and agendas, power relationships, professional networks, and technologies. These are all rendered invisible in its reputation as a neutral and benign panacea. This explanation operationalizes the specific agenda of CPE to denaturalize meaning-making processes and to repoliticize them within multiscalar power relations. Such a theoretical goal is particularly apposite given the much noted insulation of this particular approach to peace education from critique and its reputation as offering self-evident truths about the peace needs of conflict-affected societies (Zembylas and Bekerman, 2013).

This case study also has policy relevant implications for peace education as a field of practice and points toward the need for more active and transformative interventions that are more contextually grounded and challenge in- equality and injustice in all its diverse forms. The findings corroborate the need for careful conflict analysis prior to educational interventions to ensure that programming is properly tailored to drivers of grievance and pinpoints the role of education in addressing and

challenging them (Novelli et al., 2017). Furthermore, a CPE approach also highlights how this process should not assume that the origins and drivers of conflict are internal to the country or inherent in the personality traits of its poor. Finally, caution needs to be taken in privileging the traveling expertise of international consultants to ensure that participation of local actors in curriculum development and writing is more than merely symbolic.

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Chapter 3

Higgins, S. and Novelli, M., (2018). The Potential and Pitfalls of Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Analysis of the Emerging Issues Teacher Education Curriculum in Sierra Leone. *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, 6(1), 29-53.

Abstract

Peace education in conflict-affected societies has achieved widespread popularity amongst international aid agencies seeking to find a place for education in supporting peacebuilding since the 1990s. However, its aims, content, and effectiveness have been critiqued particularly for its failures to address structural causes of grievances. This article draws on empirical research exploring a UNICEF supported peace education related curriculum reform in Sierra Leone developed in 2008 called 'Emerging Issues.' The article draws on a critical discourse analysis of its content and qualitative interview data with key informants. It argues that while 'Emerging Issues' was well-intentioned, its lack of regard for contextual dynamics generating conflict and a tendency to pathologize the nation served to undermine its transformatory goals.

Introduction

Peace education, aiming to promote attitudinal and behavioural change in conflict-affected societies, has achieved widespread popularity amongst international aid agencies seeking to find a place for the role of education in supporting peacebuilding since the 1990s (UNESCO, 2011, 245). As an intervention developed by international aid agencies for implementation by teachers in diverse conflict-affected contexts, it has been very influential in framing their expected agency in such settings. Teachers' contribution to peacebuilding is therefore frequently aligned with a psycho-social process of conflict amelioration through changing the hearts, minds, values, and behaviours of pupils, their families, and wider communities in order to enhance their capacity to forge more harmonious inter-personal relationships (Sinclair, 2004; Novelli and Sayed, 2016).

However, the aims, content, and effectiveness of such peace education interventions have been also critiqued by scholars pointing in particular to their failures to address structural causes of grievance and a lack of reflexivity about its underlying assumptions and implications for the roles of teachers (Novelli and Sayed. 2016, 34; Zembylas and Beckerman, 2013). Responding to such contrasting views, this article draws on empirical research on a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported peace education related curriculum reform in Sierra Leone developed in 2007/2008 for in-service and pre-service teachers called 'Emerging Issues' (Novelli, 2011, 54). This was developed through a collaboration with lecturers at the country's teacher education colleges as well as international peace education consultants. As a flagship product of the United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Programme in Sierra Leone, and adopted as an exemplary model of peace education

by the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), this curriculum is particularly appropriate as the focus of a case study on peace education. While addressing four thematic areas of civics and democracy, gender, health and environment, and human rights, as well as offering learner centred pedagogy, the curriculum was explicitly framed following the priorities of peace education 'as a way of creating a composite and comprehensive whole for the dimension of personal behaviour change' (Baxter, 2012, 175).

Highlighting its exemplary status as a peace education curriculum modelled on earlier versions, 'Emerging Issues' has been described as 'probably the best example of the INEE (peace education) programme being used as a 'Mother' manual' (ibid, 176). This article takes this curriculum as a case study through which to explore both the potential as well as the pitfalls of this type of educational intervention in a specific conflict-affected context. It focuses on its production and textual content. It interrogates the curriculum's underlying assumptions about peacebuilding processes, the needs and agency of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans, the drivers of conflict in the country, and the agency of teachers. The article aims to make a distinctive contribution to recent critical reflection on the nature and effectiveness of peace education (Zembylas and Bekerman, 2013) by drawing on some of the tools of social analysis offered by cultural political economy, hereafter CPE (Sum and Jessop, 2013). This is a recently developed trans-disciplinary approach to the analysis of the social world which explores the interconnections between the dimension of the cultural—understood as systems of meaning making through which the social world is apprehended and understood—with the traditional concerns of political economy analysis with power relationships and the role of institutions. Of particular relevance is the resulting analytical attention of CPE to the partial and contingent nature of all representations of the social world, which are thereby understood as outcomes of their embeddedness in political economy processes through which some versions are privileged over others. In this way, what Sum and Jessop call 'common sense assumptions' (ibid) that may frame the actions and understandings of agents in the social world are denaturalized and subject to critical explanation within CPE analysis. Given what some have seen as an overly idealistic commitment to peace education as a benign panacea for conflict-affected communities, this approach offers a compelling framework to enable such curricula to be subjected to greater critique and scrutiny.

This article's critical approach to peace education also responds to insights emerging from recent research on the contribution of teachers, education systems, processes, and, more broadly, to sustainable peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts (Novelli and Sayed, 2016). Firstly, this has drawn attention to the relevance of 'high quality…conflict analysis that is sensitive to the conflict dynamics of local contexts' (Novelli and Smith, 2011, 7). This is necessary to maximize the contribution of education to peacebuilding by ensuring that programming goes beyond a generic faith

in the positive value of all educational interventions (ibid, 24) and to ensure a precise orientation to conflict drivers.

Second, this research (Novelli et al., 2016) has illuminated the potential of education to contribute to transformatory peace by addressing structural drivers of conflict and contributing to processes of social justice outlined by the philosopher and social theorist Nancy Fraser (2005). Education interventions in conflict-affected contexts are therefore recognized as potentially contributing to political processes of representation, economic processes of redistribution of resources and opportunities, and cultural processes of recognition of ethnic or religious identities that may address grievances driving conflict. By leveraging changes within these systemic processes, education potentially has a pivotal role in building what Galtung has characterized as a form of 'positive' rather than 'negative peace' (Dilts et al., 2012, 191). In simple terms, this implies that education needs to contribute not only to the cessation of violence, but also to addressing the structural inequalities that underpin conflicts.

Thirdly, while highlighting new criteria through which to understand the transformative potential of education, these insights throw into relief the limited priority given to social services provision within the dominant forms of international interventionism in conflict-affected contexts known as liberal peacebuilding (Novelli and Smith, 2011). Privileging issues of security and the opening up of markets, this model of peacebuilding has arguably underestimated education 'as a core component of building sustainable peace' (ibid, 7). Recent research by a number of scholars highlights the failures of this model in Sierra Leone, drawing attention to the 'violence' of the peace experienced by the majority of its population and indeed the continuance of many drivers that caused conflict (Castañeda, 2009; Cubitt, 2011, 2013; Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012; Novelli and Higgins, 2017).

Fourthly, and of particular relevance to the concerns of this article are the implications of these insights for understanding the agency of teachers. Within such conceptualizations of the relationship between education and peacebuilding, they are positioned not only as contributors to intra-personal and inter-personal changes in the attitudes and behaviours of conflict-affected communities, but also to transformations of the structural social, political, and economic dynamics that impinge on them. In this light, Sayed and Novelli have called for a widened understanding of teacher agency to 'encompass strategies in and through teaching which confront the historic inequities and drivers of conflict.' (2016, 14). This article draws on such insights to analyse the framing of teacher agency within peace education curricula.

Finally, this is an opportune moment to review existing educational interventions in conflict-affected contexts given the renewed international attention to the role of education and teachers in promoting

peaceful and inclusive societies in the Sustainable Development Goals. Clarifying a 'New Agenda for Education in Fragile States,' Winthrop and Matsui (2013, 1) urge academics and practitioners alike to 'take stock' of the strengths and weaknesses of educational interventions implemented since the emergence of a specialized field of practice and research into education and peacebuilding in the 1990s. This will enable educationists to make a persuasive case for the role of education in the global conversations involving security, humanitarian, and education actors currently available at this conjuncture in its evolution.

The article therefore starts by providing a historical perspective on the emergence of peace education in the late 1990s, together with a review of recent critical commentary. This locates the article's case study within current issues and debates on its content and impact. Second, the distinctive characteristics of a cultural political economy approach (CPE) are outlined with attention to its usefulness in the critique, analysis, and interpretation of peace education curricula. This section also outlines the article's research design and methodology based on the analytical priorities opened up by this theoretical positioning. The third section sets the context for the case study by reviewing the nature of Sierra Leone's conflict between 1992 and 2002 and its post conflict trajectory since peace accords were agreed upon in 2002. The fourth section presents the findings of the analysis of the curriculum's content and processes of development. The final section reflects more broadly on the insights of the case study, pointing to some of the pitfalls of this model of intervention as highlighted through a CPE analysis.

Peace Education Revisited: Issues and Critiques

In a seminal work on the contribution of education to 'reshaping the future' of societies during post-conflict reconstruction, Buckland (2005) defines the content and goals of peace education which form the focus of this article. This curricula intervention, he observes, 'includes a range of formal and informal educational activities undertaken to promote peace in schools and communities through the inclusion of skills, attitudes and values that promote nonviolent approaches to managing conflict and promoting tolerance and respect for diversity' (ibid, 60). This definition captures peace education's concern to promote the inculcation of personal attitudinal and behavioral changes in conflict-affected communities (Fountain, 1999, 4; Education Above All, 2012). Such curricula are also often fused with life skills, citizenship, and human rights education which have similar goals and objectives (Buckland, 2005, 60).

This model of peace education has attracted widespread endorsement within the global institutional architecture of aid to conflict-affected contexts (Baxter, 2001, 2012,176; UNESCO, UNHCR, and INEE, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; UNESCO, 2011, 246). Hence, its circulation across global professional

networks and institutional clusters, its promotion by the World Bank, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, and INEE, and its celebration in publications for policymakers and practitioners for its special contribution to achieving a 'future of peace' in conflict-affected contexts (Baxter and Ikbowa, 2005, 2). Thus, adopted as an exemplary curricula, it has been implemented in very different contexts of conflict targeting diverse constituencies. These range from groups fleeing conflict in their home countries in the refugee camps of northern Kenya and Sudan to teachers and their pupils living in contexts which are affected by or recovering from intra-state conflicts such as Sierra Leone (Bretherton, Weston, and Zbar, 2003, 2005; UNESCO, 2011, 245-246). Typifying the idealism accompanying this model of peace education is the claim that 'if only a fraction of the money spent worldwide on conflict could be spent on peace education programmes like the INEE/UNHCR peace education programme we could achieve a future of peace and hope in refugee communities and post-conflict countries around the world' (Baxter and Ikobwa, 2005, 2).

However, the institutional success of peace education belies its uncertain and contested emergence within a particular historical conjuncture in the geopolitics of aid and development in the late 1990s. This period was characterized by a major challenge to established development paradigms and practices posed by the re-orientation of aid to conflict-affected states in the 1990s, in which conflict was occurring within rather than between states (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013, 17). Extending the sociology of the constituencies who were conflict-affected to include whole populations, including women and children, these new forms of internal conflict created unprecedented strategic and epistemic challenges for those concerned to leverage education for peacebuilding purposes (ibid, 19). Indeed, a re-reading of initial responses by professionals and researchers aiming to mobilize peace education to address new forms of conflict is to be reminded of the equivocation and uncertainty which accompanied their efforts. For instance, Aguilar and Retamal in a UNESCO discussion document in 1998 point out that 'the technical impact of education as a tool for changing the behaviour and attitudes of an illiterate or semi-literate population affected…in general by the trauma of war needs to be further assessed.' (1998, 139). Such concerns are in striking contrast to the institutional imprimatur which this model of peace education has subsequently received within the international aid architecture, prompting the particular concerns of this article to problematize its appeal. Indeed, it should be remembered that peace education emerged less from conviction or evidence as to its appropriateness for conflict-affected communities than as an experimental and uncertain response of the international aid community to the unprecedented challenge of developing educational interventions that would be relevant for their needs.

Moreover, peace education curricula, aiming to achieve attitudinal and behavioural changes in various conflict-affected contexts, have been subject to a range of critiques. Firstly, in relation to its content,

scholars have pointed to: its indebtedness to the priorities of the international community rather than context specific conflict analysis (Smith Ellison, 2014, 202) or responsiveness to the views and experiences of local grassroots communities (Lauritzen, 2016, 320); its technical focus on conflict-resolution, involving a 'narrow recipe book approach…heavily dependent on workshop training in mediation and negotiation skills' (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000, 21); its psychologizing emphasis and foregrounding of the 'individual mind' rather than structural issues of social justice and power asymmetries driving conflict (Zembylas and Bekerman, 2013, 200); the tendency of its goals to be utopian given its implementation in contexts of structural violence within and outside of schools (Lopes Cardozo, 2008); and finally its reputation as a curriculum 'based on externally generated and imposed solutions' (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000, 26) that belittles or marginalizes the prior 'culturally and place specific' (ibid) exercise of peacebuilding agency amongst local actors in conflict-affected contexts.

Secondly, in relation to the implementation of peace education, scholars have noted the failure of curriculum developers to anticipate the resistance of teachers, parents, and communities which may impact the sustainability of the attitudinal changes it aims to generate in its target audiences (Salomon, 2006). Furthermore, a lack of evidence of its short- or long-term impact (UNESCO, 2011, 245) and, thus, its status as an 'unevidenced prescription' (Davies, 2009, 20) has also been highlighted.

Thirdly, and more fundamentally, some have critiqued a lack of reflexivity about the underlying ontological assumptions of peace education by its promoters and practitioners leading to its complicity in 'functionalist, psychologised and often idealised perspectives' (Zembylas and Bekerman, 2013, 198). Finally, scholars have also noted its narrow social base as an educational project driven by a 'largely Northern, white, academic elite' (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000, 27).

Mindful of these concerns, some commentators have voiced calls for peace education to reclaim its criticality. For instance, Zembylas and Bekerman (2013, 197) note that as a field of practice and research it needs to eschew a 'fideistic approach' as well as the 'idealism' or 'romanticism' which has underpinned its wide application. Consequently, peace education should become 'more critical about its theoretical assumptions concerning issues of power relations, social justice as well as the terms of peace and conflict themselves' (ibid). This case study aims to contribute to this process of constructive critique and revision. The following section outlines the theoretical assumptions and resulting methodology and methods which will enable this more critical scrutiny.

Research Design: Concepts and Methods

The approach to peace education taken in this article is indebted to the tradition of critical studies on curricula development represented in the work of Apple (1990). Apple has reminded us that the content of educational curricula, understood as providing answers to the question of 'what knowledge is of most worth,' is never a neutral process. As such, the selection and structuring of knowledge is inherently ideological and political, tied to the operation of asymmetrical power relations and particular interests (Apple, 1990, vii). Also relevant are the insights into the operation of such power relations within Western educational projects from the sixteenth century through to colonialism and the present day. Baker (2012) has shown how curricula developed in the West have been deployed in non-Western contexts as key components of a longstanding Eurocentric project to 'civilize' humanity through the acculturation of whole populations. Such insights are a reminder of the underlying interests and power relations that may be at stake in processes of curriculum development, however well intentioned.

However, this article draws primarily on the explanatory and heuristic frameworks of a recent cultural turn within political economy analysis, conceived as 'cultural political economy' (CPE) (Sum and Jessop, 2013). A fundamental ontological premise of a cultural political economy analysis is the inexhaustible complexity of the social world, which therefore necessitates, as an existential necessity, a process of complexity reduction to enable social agents to 'go on in the world' (ibid, 24). This insight underpins its analytical concern with how all apprehensions of the social world may be understood as outcomes of various processes of selectivity (ibid, 2-5). Of particular relevance to this article's methodology is discursive selectivity which refers to the social and semiotic production of sense and meaning making in the face of complexity, an exclusionary process in which some construals of reality are privileged over others. This theoretical insight underpins the method adopted in this article through which the content of the Emerging Issues curriculum is interrogated. Applying the notion of complexity reduction therefore invites scrutiny of its representation of the needs of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans targeted for peace education not as a neutral construal of social reality but one that privileges, from a range of possibilities, a particular, selective version. A methodological challenge is therefore to highlight the parameters and nature of this portrayal, subjecting to analysis what it includes and, just as importantly, what it excludes.

Also of relevance to this article's research design is the concept of 'social imaginary' (Taylor, 2004). This term refers to representations of social reality that 'frame individual subjects' lived experience of a complex world and inform collective calculation about that world' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 165). Within CPE analysis, social imaginaries are significant in setting 'limits to what can be imagined by individual and social agents' (ibid, 204). As such they constitute an important moment of complexity

reduction and within CPE analysis function as a heuristic tool through which the process of discursive selectivity may be analysed. A particular challenge is illuminating and unpacking their 'existential assumptions' (Fairclough, 2003, 54), an analytical priority that contributes to an understanding of their status as contingent and partial products of processes of meaning making or in other words making sense of the social world.

Applying a CPE framing of social analysis to the representation of social reality of a conflict-affected context in a particular peace education curriculum, this article takes a case study approach. This was deemed particularly appropriate as a method that provides an opportunity for in-depth attention to an individual and bounded case, thereby generating rich data for theoretically informed analysis (Yin, 2017). Moreover, in selecting as the object of study a peace education curriculum widely perceived by the international aid community as exemplary, this article's sampling strategy was based on the identification of a 'paradigmatic' case (Flyvbjerg, 2006, 232) which may illuminate issues relevant to other similar curricula.

Aligned with the theoretical foregrounding of complexity reduction in social analysis discussed above, this article focuses firstly on a content analysis of the text of Emerging Issues (EI) curriculum for pre-service teachers (note: similar curriculum texts were produced for pre-service and in-service teachers; this case study refers to the text for distance learners (UNICEF, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c).

This study aims to answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics and assumptions of the social imaginary through which the EI curriculum represents/ construes conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans and the agency of teachers?

- How may this representation be understood as a partial selection of meaning that excludes alternative possibilities and what is the significance of such exclusions in relation to understanding the contribution of this curriculum to addressing conflict drivers?

Secondly, the article's method draws on CPE's concern to address why some construals are selected and institutionalized over others. Here a key analytical focus is on agential selectivity or, in other words, how the inherent partiality of representations of reality can be understood as the outcome of the actions of diverse agents, in which some have more authority and power than others in shaping meanings which are privileged (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 162).

Hence, the second set of research questions:

- What are the differential contributions of the diverse actors, national and international, to the process of curricula development of EI understood as a social practice and form of knowledge generation?

- How do these divergences represent the differential power and status of particular types of knowledge and expertise?

Data collection to answer these questions involved sixteen in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the diverse groups of individuals involved in its development and writing. These included two UNICEF staff directly involved in its production, three other UNICEF educational specialists, two national and international consultants employed to support the processes of curricula development, six lecturers from four teacher training colleges who were involved in writing the curriculum, as well as three individuals from the Ministry of Education who were engaged at different stages in its development. These interviews sought the views of individuals on the process of writing the curriculum and their roles in the production of the final text. In addition, documents related to the origins and development of the EI curriculum were consulted. These included the initial goals envisioned for the curriculum by UNICEF in a concept note prior to the curriculum's development as well as minutes of meetings held to plan the curriculum (UNICEF, 2007a, 2007b).

The Sierra Leone Conflict-affected Context, 1992-2018

Sierra Leone's conflict between 1992 and 2002 resulted in over 50,000 dead, thousands internally displaced, and also left many maimed through the amputation of their arms and legs. Its savagery has lead some commentators to characterize its conflict, in judgemental and moralizing terms, as an irrational descent into primordial barbarism (Kaplan and Rieff, 2000) or a manifestation of extreme greed and criminality (Collier et al., 2003). Others (Keen, 2005) have emphasized the role of similar socio-economic and political grievances in motivating the violence carried out by all sides in the conflict. Such analyses have highlighted: the alienation and anger of swathes of impoverished, uneducated, and jobless rural youth at their perceived social, political, and economic exclusion by political elites based in Freetown as well as chiefs in rural communities across the country (Richards, 1996); massive regional inequalities in the provision of education and health services resulting from a centralization of power and resources in Freetown, a legacy of British colonial rule; resentment at a corrupt and patrimonial style of politics through which elites, through exercising their personal connections, monopolize power and resources; and finally the perceived exploitation of the country's diamond resources by national and international actors to benefit a small section of the population.

Foregrounding such factors as key explanations for the recourse to violence, the Sierra Leonean conflict has thus been construed as a 'venting of grievances and a cry from the dispossessed and powerless who could find no other outlet for their anger and rage at their marginalisation and exclusion in a dysfunctional society' (Hirsch, 2006, 305).

Since peace was declared in 2002, Sierra Leone has been the target of various interventions by UN agencies operating within the priorities of the dominant model of international peacebuilding interventionism: liberal peacebuilding. In particular, establishing security, democracy, and the opening up of markets. Having enjoyed relatively peaceful elections in 2007 and 2012 and one of the fastest economic growth rates in sub-Saharan Africa, largely based on a revival of its mineral extractive industry led by international corporate investment, Sierra Leone is often taken to demonstrate the success of liberal peacebuilding (African Development Bank Group, OECD Development Centre, and UNDP, 2017, 287). However, many scholars have also highlighted the continuation of structural drivers of conflict which pose a major threat to sustainable peace. Firstly, they have highlighted the failure of the security and market priorities of liberal peacebuilding to realize the promise that macroeconomic processes of reform would ameliorate the widespread poverty and immiseration of the Sierra Leonean population through a 'trickle down' process of wealth redistribution (Castañeda, 2009).

Secondly, they have noted the failure of the statebuilding mission of international peace operations, oriented more to meeting international goals of global security than to enabling the Sierra Leone state to meet the 'everyday' needs and aspirations of its people for improved social services (Cubitt, 2013, 92). Thirdly, specific drivers of grievance, especially amongst the population's youth constituency, have been identified. These include lack of job opportunities for youth (Cubitt, 2011) and the co-option of youth into political violence by political elites during election times and the continuation of patronage politics (International Crisis Group, 2008).

Fourthly, researchers have noted resentment in some parts of the country, in particular Kono, at the operation of international mining companies, and a perception that the country's resource wealth is being exploited by global business with little tangible benefits to local populations (Zulu and Wilson, 2012).

Fifth, there is widespread resentment amongst local mining affected communities at the perceived collusion of elites, local and national, in this process, who are perceived to be monopolizing wealth accruing from such business activity.

Finally, continuing widespread distrust and dissatisfaction between the state and its citizens (Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012, 60). It is therefore not surprising that many have suggested that Sierra Leone may be considered post-war rather than post-conflict, experiencing only a thin type of negative peace in which many of the causes of grievance and conflict remain unaddressed. Indeed, some commentators have warned of the likelihood of a recurrence of conflict in Sierra Leone (Hanlon, 2005; Cubitt, 2013).

This review of recent analysis and evidence of conflict drivers in the Sierra Leonean context has highlighted their complex and multi-dimensional nature with particular implications for this article's focus on the EI peace education curriculum. Firstly, the dynamics of conflict in Sierra Leone are rooted not in identity based ethnic or religious tensions which characterize many contexts targeted by peace education programs, but are driven by inequalities in access to power, resources, and opportunities, in part a legacy of colonial (mis)management of the country. Secondly, they highlight the failures of international peacebuilding interventions since 2002 to address drivers of grievances that underpinned the initial conflict. Thirdly, they are multi-scalar, implicating not only national constituencies of Sierra Leonean elites but international forces, the limitations of the priorities of the UN peacebuilding operations as well as the operations of international mining companies. The presentation of the case study data and the application of a CPE analysis in the following sections will refer back to these insights in order to illuminate the extent to which the EI peace education curriculum engages with the particular contexts and dynamics of conflict which they reveal.

Data Analysis and Findings

Emerging Issues as an Outcome of Discursive Selectivities

While addressed to Sierra Leonean pre-service and in-service teachers in 2008, the text of EI (UNICEF, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c) is locateable within a genre chain (Fairclough, 2003, 31-32) through which attitudinal and behavioural change peace education curricula had been circulated and implemented within institutional networks of international aid agencies in the previous decades. As such, it is striking that large sections of the text repeat verbatim the content of the INEE Peace Education Programme initially developed by the UNHCR and UNESCO for teachers and communities living in refugee camps in Kenya and Uganda between 1997 and 2005 (UNESCO, UNHCR, and INEE, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Baxter, 2012). This was also promoted as developing in its audiences 'skills that build positive and constructive behaviours for peace and conflict prevention and minimisation' (Baxter and Ikobwa, 2005, 22). Amongst the many areas of direct overlap with the components of the UNHCR programme are EI's text on peace and conflict theory, similarities and differences, trust, honesty, and transparency, communication, questioning skills, effective listening, and the characteristics of an effective teacher. Also reproduced from earlier peace education texts

are explanations of the principles of developmental psychology based on Kohlberg, Maslow, and Bloom (UNESCO, UNHCR, INEE 2005a, 23-26, 2005b, 19-22, 30-34, 40-42). This textual strategy therefore appropriates for conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans the texts of peace education curricula developed for another conflict-affected group by other aid agencies, INEE, UNESCO, and UNHCR. The derivative nature of the curriculum's content was recognized by one of its lead writers who noted its alignment with the priorities of its 'mother manual,' the INEE peace education program (Baxter, 2012, 175). 'The INEE Peace Education Programme was the foundation of the Emerging Issues programme,' Baxter explains, 'not least because the basic skills were applicable to human rights, good governance, citizenship and pedagogy' (ibid, 176). Hence, the approach taken in the EI curriculum was to assimilate these areas of content to peace education's overarching goal of 'creating a composite and comprehensive whole for the dimension of personal behaviour change' (ibid).

This derivation of EI from prior peace education and behaviour change curricula demonstrates that inter-textual process which Fairclough (2003) refers to as recontextualization, whereby texts and meanings are transferred from one context to another. The resulting verbatim similarities demonstrates how this curriculum's content is explained in part by the institutional embeddedness of peace education as a curricula format transferable across diverse contexts by different international aid agencies. The next section analyses key themes in the curriculum's content, and in doing so reflects on the consequences of this textual repurposing of a generic peace education format prioritizing attitudinal and behavioural change for its treatment of the singularities of the Sierra Leonean context.

The Representation of Sierra Leoneans

Explaining the relevance of peace education for Sierra Leoneans, the text declares that 'the behaviour and understanding of the people of [Sierra Leone] is not constructive' (UNICEF, 2008a, 14). This pathologizing of the nation as a demographic who are to be blamed for their 'destructive' behaviours and attitudes, and as such in need of tutelage through peace education, recurs throughout the text. Communicating a particular construal of the character and behaviours of Sierra Leoneans, this amounts to a defining social imaginary invoked throughout the curriculum. At the start of the course, teachers are invited to 'think about all the destructive behaviours practised by [Sierra Leone]' (ibid, 7). The nation is variously characterized as endemically corrupt (UNICEF, 2008b, 27), self-destructive, careless, and lazy in relation to their environment (ibid, 25), culturally deficient in relation to child rearing (UNICEF 2008a, 89) and lacking 'genuine respect' for each other (UNICEF, 2008c, 10).

This judgemental representation also applies to individual Sierra Leoneans with particular attention to their inner psychological states. Hence EI is presented as a curriculum which will achieve national amelioration through its commitment to the principle that 'any change has to come first from within' (UNICEF, 2008a, 15), through addressing 'behaviour change in individuals' (ibid). The repetition of verbs such as 'internalize' or 'instil' (ibid, 18) to characterize the impact of curricula content on Sierra Leoneans underscores its focus on the psychological and personal dimension of internal change to remedy purportedly inherent propensities to conflict in the Sierra Leonean demographic. The text mobilizes several legitimation strategies (Fairclough, 2003, 98) to promote and naturalize this social imaginary. It invokes the support of the state and political elites, asserting that the envisaged emphasis on behavioural and attitudinal change responds to the urgent priorities of the President and the Ministry of Education for whom it is 'of paramount concern' (UNICEF, 2008a, 7). It presents the curriculum in redemptive terms as 'life-saving and life-changing' (ibid, 15). It suggests that EI is particularly attuned to the current vicissitudes of the nation and post-conflict renewal. 'EI is vital,' it declares, 'if we are to meet the challenge of living in the [twenty-first] century in a post conflict country that is struggling to rebuild' (ibid, 21). At times the text adopts a moralizing, almost missionary tone in exhorting teachers to reflect on 'what we need to understand if we are to be constructive' (ibid, 58) or reminding them that 'values are caught not taught' (ibid, 15).

Yet the curriculum's self-righteous language serves to suppress the selective and partial nature of its imaginary of Sierra Leoneans. Indeed, the text's overwhelmingly negative projection distracts attention from the existence of alternative paradigms of the nation and its post-conflict trajectory. For instance, the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) paid tribute to Sierra Leoneans living 'in the ghettoes of Freetown or the villages of the Provinces' who 'maintain their dignity notwithstanding conditions of extreme poverty and deprivation,' and who are 'examples for us all' (SLTRC, 2004, vol. 2, 125). It concluded that 'the political elites of successive regimes in the post-independence period were responsible for creating the conditions of conflict' (ibid, 14). Far from representing the behaviours of the whole nation as deficit, the report pinpointed the activities of a small but powerful constituency who 'plundered the nation's assets, including its mineral riches at the expense of the national good' (ibid). This more specific sociology of national failure draws attention to the process of reification and homogenizing of Sierra Leoneans within the framework of the behaviour change imperative framing the curriculum text. This results in claims which are highly simplistic when compared with more nuanced contemporary analysis of the causes and nature of conflict in Sierra Leone. Thus, the particular social fault lines within which grievances leading to conflict have emerged and which continue to exist as noted above, between the state and its citizens, urban Freetown elites and rural communities, rural youth and elders (Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012), are erased within a broad-brush critique of national misbehaviours. Moreover, recognition of the regional variations in experiences of conflict drivers—as evidenced in a recent nationwide

consultation which highlighted land and mining issues in the eastern region of Kono and lack of provision of services in Pujehun in the south—is foreclosed by this undifferentiated approach to the national demographic (UNICEF, 2011).

The curricula's overwhelming orientation to the need for internal personal change by Sierra Leoneans is also in contradiction with the emphasis of the TRC and others of the persistence into the post-conflict period of the structural drivers of conflict which continue, as noted above, to create misery and frustration for the majority of the population at the time of EI's development. This analysis suggests therefore that the emphasis on the moral failure of Sierra Leoneans as agents of destructive behaviours forecloses attention to the conditions and contexts impacting their everyday lives. As noted above, these include patrimonialism and patronage within national governance and democratic processes, widespread alienation from the state, entrenched rural poverty, limited access to healthcare and education, especially in rural and provincial areas, and mass youth unemployment. Given that some commentators have noted the likelihood of a recurrence of conflict resulting from the persistence of such grievances, the discursive selectivity operating here strikingly indicates the limitations of this curriculum in harnessing education to empower teachers and their pupils to navigate conflict drivers and build a sustainable and 'positive' peace.

Justifying its behavioural change program by negative and undifferentiated judgement of the Sierra Leonean demographic, the text's imaginary serves to create the problem for which the attitudinal and behavioural change promised by peace education is the answer. This illustrates that the process of problematization, which Foucault and others have pointed out results from a selective construal of social reality (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 202), may serve to secure the naturalization or legitimation of a particular solution, thereby discounting other possibilities. Drawing attention to alternative conceptualizations of the behaviours and attitudes of Sierra Leoneans, this section has highlighted some of the discursive selectivities through which EI presents a highly essentializing and distorted imaginary of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans.

The following analysis spotlights other instances of similarly exclusionary processes in its treatment of particular themes and issues.

Human Rights, Civics, and Democracy

In focusing on the need for individual teachers to understand and to relate their aspirations to the provisions of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNICEF, 2008a, 33,40) the curriculum's text follows an approach commonplace within the institutionalization of human rights education by the UN (Englund, 2000; Coysh, 2014). 'We will revisit the idea of human rights and the

values that they embody,' the text declares, 'it is these values and the behaviours that reflect them that will be the core of the behaviour change we need for Emerging Issues' (UNICEF, 2008a, 41). Coysh (2014, 96) points out such framings privilege the 'abstract' terms of the legal instrument—understood as the locus of knowledge about human rights to be transmitted to learners over contextually rooted understandings and experiences. Given the knowledge we have of what anthropologists have noted is 'the role of local social agency in the making of local cultures of human rights in the rural populations of Sierra Leone' (Archibald and Richards, 2002, 340), this omission is particularly relevant in the Sierra Leonean context. Recognizing the rootedness of Sierra Leonean experiences of 'human rights' in indigenous post-conflict societal transformation, the authors warn that 'human rights is not to be understood as the embrace of any pre-existing global doctrine of rights, but more as an aspect of local, social renewal, constrained and shaped by wartime experience' (ibid, 340). For instance, a study of post-war social activism among youth in Kono highlights their pursuit of social and economic rights through an interest in collective farming, reform of chiefdom governance, and advocacy against international mining companies. The study makes clear how such aspirations were forged out of their responses to experiences of wartime displacement. These had generated 'a new sense of self-reliance among people of all ages,' expressed in rejection of traditional modes of unquestioning social deference towards chiefs and elders and an intolerance of patrimonial practices (Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010, 270). Operating outside of the universalizing imperatives conceptualized within UN legal instruments, these insights illuminate how 'human rights' behaviours and attitudes are historically rooted within the day to day lived experiences of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans. Their omission in EI's treatment of human rights demonstrates a discursive selectivity that renders invisible the particular experiences and agency of Sierra Leoneans.

A similar selectivity is evident in the course's treatment of civics and democracy. Here the curriculum makes clear that its overarching concern is a regulatory one to 'instil the ideas of democracy in the people of [Sierra Leone]' (UNICEF, 2008b, 18). This includes a range of activities aiming to disseminate knowledge amongst the principles and practices of 'representative democracy.' This approach forecloses recognition of what many commentators have noted is the country's distinctive political culture which renders aspirations to remould Sierra Leonean society 'within the norms and institutions of liberal democracy' highly problematic (Taylor, 2009, 159-175). Hence particular context-specific features of its political processes, in particular regional and identity politics, clientilism, high stakes elections predicated on competition for the state's resources, and orchestration of youth violence by political elites (International Crisis Group, 2008; Cubitt, 2013), are bypassed by the overarching framing of Sierra Leone's challenges within generic democratic ideals. Here then is another instance of the decontextualizing effects which result from a process of discursive exclusion that foregrounds peace education's generic focus on individual attitudinal and behavioural changes.

Local Peacebuilding Agency

In some instances, what is not mentioned in the text is revealing of the parameters of its social imaginary of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans. For instance, there is no recognition of the work of grassroots, community driven peacebuilding practices such as that of the local NGO Fambul Tok (Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012). This organization has been working in communities across the country using traditional practices of conflict resolution through ceremonial bonfires and practices of confession and forgiveness. By ignoring these initiatives, the curricula reproduce that marginalization of grassroots cultural practices of healing and reconciliation which anthropologists and ethnographers have noted was also the weakness of the internationally led transitional justice mechanisms, the TRC, and the Special Court (Shaw, 2007). The dominant model of global interventionism, liberal peacebuilding (Richmond, 2012, 37), has also been critiqued for its belittling of local agency. In a curriculum devoted to inculcating peaceful behaviours and attitudes addressed to Sierra Leonean teachers and their students, this is a telling omission, suggesting a similar failure to valorise traditional and indigenous approaches to peacebuilding.

The Agency of Teachers

Teachers are positioned as instrumental in redeeming this national pathology by their role in triggering attitudinal and behavioural change. So, the course aims to encourage them to 'reflect on the teaching and learning in order to promote the internalising of constructive attitudes and behaviours' (UNICEF, 2008a, 7). Moreover, the text locates both teachers and the national community within a narrative of social transformation through peace education which would interrupt and remedy this alleged propensity of Sierra Leoneans to 'destructive behaviours.' It thus reminds teachers that, in their capacity as behavioural and attitudinal change agents, they are helping to build a new Sierra Leone (ibid, 14), a 'better Sierra Leone' (ibid, 46) which will equip the nation to 'look to a constructive future' (ibid, 7) and 'new ways of doing things' (ibid, 11).

The curriculum's focus on national personal behaviour change from a 'destructive' base has particular implications for defining the parameters of the agency of teachers which it envisions. Promoted as 'change agents' (ibid, 15), they are centralized as pivotal figures in national development, contributing to EI's social imaginary of mass behaviour change. The text spells out the particular responsibilities accruing to such a role. In relation to teacher's personal behaviours, it invites them to undertake a continuous process of self-disciplining. 'Being a change agent,' it cautions, 'means understanding that every word you say and every action you take must be consistent with the behaviours you are trying to encourage' (ibid). Such specification of the responsibilities of teachers emergent from its overarching vision of attitudinal and behavioural change demonstrates what Sum and Jessop have noted is the performative power of social imaginaries to 'frame individual subjects' lived experience

of a complex world and inform collective calculation about that world.' (2013, 165). EI thus situates teacher agency within a privatized psychological realm of personal and inter-personal behaviour change, privileging a narrow understanding of the role of teachers in relation to peacebuilding processes. In effect, this bypasses opportunities to engage them in critical and context-specific analysis of the social injustices and power-relations currently driving grievance and potential conflict in Sierra Leone as noted earlier; and of their potential role in empowering their pupils and the wider communities in which they teach to challenge and transform the status quo as envisaged in other models of peace education (cf. Bajaj and Hantzopoulos, 2016, 4) and more transformative perceptions of teacher agency (Horner et al., 2015, 20-22).

The various exclusions and absences highlighted by this section's analysis of the content of the EI curricula demonstrate the partiality of the social imaginary through which it portrays the needs and agency of conflict-affected Sierra Leoneans and their teachers. The next section builds on this analysis of such discursive selectivities by relating them to the contributions of different agents to the production of the final text, thus illuminating the agential selectivities also at work.

The Emerging Issues as an Outcome of Agential Selectivities

The final text of EI was the outcome of several meetings involving national and international actors over the period between May 2007 and December 2008. These included: (1) an initial consultation in Bo (UNICEF, 2007a) involving college principals of five teacher training colleges in Sierra Leone, UNICEF education staff, representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Tertiary Higher Education Commission, and the examinations assessment and awarding body NCTVA (UNICEF, 2007b); here the thematic content of EI was agreed to include human rights, civics, and democracy, as well as gender, health, and the environment; (2) arising from the first meeting, the formation of a task force to write the curriculum text which involved lecturers from teacher training colleges (May 2007-June 2008); (3) the submission of the draft texts on the thematic areas to consultants in peace education hired by UNICEF, two international and two national; (4) a process of revision, editing, and making additions to materials under the supervision of the consultants (June-December 2008); and (5) the completion of the final curricula text of 129 sessions (UNICEF, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c) characterized by its lead writer and international consultant as a comprehensive program for 'personal behavior change' (Baxter, 2012, 175).

These processes of curricula production brought together national and international agents, including UNICEF education staff, teacher educators, and international peace education consultants. They brought diverse sets of knowledge, expertise, and professional concerns. In particular, this included the educational programming expertise of UNICEF staff, especially in child centred teaching

methodologies; the expertise and knowledge of teacher educators and the international expertise in peace education programming and curricula development from the INEE and UNHCR. This collaboration, therefore, had the potential to bring together the local knowledge of Sierra Leonean lecturers with the expertise in peace education of international consultants.

Yet, analysis of the documentation linked to the curriculum's textual history as well as insights from interviews with all groups involved in its writing suggests that the final curriculum content, analysed above, was the outcome of a process of selectivity in which some knowledge was more influential than others in the shaping of the final text. In this regard, it is significant that the curriculum was not initially envisaged as a peace education behaviour change program. The initial goal was an attempt to streamline the initiatives of a range of discrete teacher training initiatives by international aid agencies which had proliferated in post-conflict Sierra Leone (Baxter, 2012, 175; interview with independent consultant). Its original rationale was stated in the 'concept note' developed by UNICEF's national staff (UNICEF, 2007b). This is also notable for an emphasis on the need to upgrade teacher education to compensate for its lack of engagement with 'human rights, democracy and civic education, gender and environmental issues.' As 'issues of worldwide concern, including Sierra Leone,' these were represented as substantive knowledge with global and national significance. In pointing out that 'the effects of these issues have resulted in wars, human slavery, maltreatment of people, destruction, violence, abuse of women and children, death and sickness, depletion of human population' (ibid, 2), the concept note also underscored the opportunity presented by the curriculum to equip teachers with substantive knowledge addressing broad multi-scalar societal challenges linked to a range of structural dimensions and symptoms of conflict. That the final text of the EI curriculum foregrounds internal personal attitudinal and behaviour changes underscores its departure from this initial broad-based vision of teacher empowerment.

Moreover, interviews which invited different groups of participants to share their experience of curriculum writing reveal a process in which the expertise, interests, and knowledge of some participants were privileged over others. This is apparent during the transition from the production of drafts by college lecturers on the agreed thematic issues to be addressed in the curriculum (stage two as outlined above) to the revisions and reshaping into a peace education behaviour change framework by national and international consultants of stages four and five. Evoking the extent of the process of textual revision, one independent consultant noted how 'the text was transformed from an academic oriented course to behaviour change…a new programme…that change transformed the course' (Interview with independent consultant, Freetown, March 2012). Many teacher educators who had written the bulk of the initial texts expressed resentment that their work had not been reflected in the final peace education text. One writer and senior teacher educator commented that 'we expected more participation in the writing by our staff' (Interview with senior teacher educator, Freetown, April

2012). Moreover, some expressed caution about the desirability of this form of textual revision, one commenting: 'When you bring an external consultant…they look at their experience in other countries…it makes it easier for them…this is what I have done I think it can work here.' He added that 'what you think may be applicable in one area may not be applicable in another area' (Interview with teacher educator, Freetown, April 2012), underscoring his concern that knowledge brought by independent international consultants may not be relevant to particular contexts.

These insights and reflections demonstrate how the final text of the EI curriculum was a form of knowledge production that relied on several processes of agentic selectivity. Firstly, in foregrounding an inherited peace education format, modelled on pre-existing texts circulating in the international institutional architecture of educational interventions, the textual revisions illustrate what some researchers have noted is a privileging of the 'specialized knowledge and techniques' of 'experts' in conflict-affected contexts (Branch, 2011, 29). In such cases, Kothari (2005, 430) points out that 'what counts as professional expertise in development is not primarily founded on in depth geographic knowledge about other places and people but is located in technical know how.' In the case of the evolution of EI, the problematization of material written by local teacher educators on the thematic content of human rights, civics, and democracy because of its failure to fit with a particular peace education curricula format is a case in point. Moreover, the differential contributions between independent consultants and local writers illustrates a power asymmetry in the process of knowledge production underpinning its final content. It reveals the differential access of participants in EI to certain specialized knowledge—in this case of a generic peace education formula. Within a CPE analysis, this derives from the way some discursive forms, i.e. peace education curricula writing, are 'more or less accessible to some agents and not to others because of their sense and meaning making competence' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 215).

Thirdly, the fact that the curriculum was not initially conceived as peace education and only later became so with the involvement of consultants after initial drafts by local writers suggests the power of certain actors to shape and define knowledge production. Bringing the institutional authority accorded to a particular version of peace education in refugee contexts to reframe the EI curriculum in Sierra Leone, the role of the international consultant illustrates how 'some agents, by virtue of their nodal position in social networks have better capacities to read particular conjunctures, refocus arguments, displace opponents and introduce timely imaginaries and world views than others' (ibid, 220).

Conclusions

Applying the analytical priorities of cultural political economy to the Emerging Issues curriculum, this case study has attempted to contribute to that process of critically re-envisioning peace education referred to at the start of this article. In so doing, it has revealed some of the limitations and pitfalls of a model of peace education emphasizing attitudinal and behavioural change in conflict-affected populations, despite well intentioned aspirations. Several limitations of this curriculum intervention in relation to its capacity to contribute to transformatory peacebuilding have been highlighted in this case study. They serve to caution against the sometimes-uncritical idealism which has accompanied the reputation of peace education as a panacea for conflict-affected contexts.

First, the findings outlined above reveal the partiality of its content as a form of exclusionary knowledge production that ultimately privileges an international peace education agenda over the context-specific lived realities of its target audiences of teachers, pupils, and local conflict-affected communities.

Second, and relatedly, by locating the key challenge of peacebuilding in their psyches and personal predispositions, there is a danger of diverting attention from the structural issues of injustice—political, social, and economic—that drove and continues to drive conflict in the country. This psychologizing of conflict forecloses opportunities to harness education to empower conflict-affected communities to navigate and address the systemic conditions of hardship and suffering that drive grievances.

Third, there is a danger that the focus of peace education on the need for personal and behavioural change of conflict-affected populations may serve a regulatory and disciplinarian agenda that blames them for moral failure. This approach is more aligned with pacification rather than transformation. Jabri (2013,1) has highlighted the role of pedagogical projects and practices in contributing to the agenda of Western peacebuilding interventions in post-colonial contexts to govern and control their target populations. Indeed, its moralistic and homogenizing projection of Sierra Leoneans as a problematic national demographic displaying negative behaviours and requiring social transformation, EI strikingly implicates education within that regulatory and intrusive mission of liberal peacebuilding interventionism ‘to transform whole societies, including the beliefs and attitudes of their members’ (Duffield, 2001, 121, 130). In this sense, one of the perhaps unintended consequences of peace education’s well intended focus on behaviour change is its reiteration of a longstanding Western European agenda to ‘civilize’ other nations through educational interventions.

Fourth, the location of the peacebuilding challenge in the behaviours and minds of Sierra Leoneans skews the parameters of conflict analysis not only by inattention to structural violence but also its

representation of the national demographic as the locus of the peacebuilding challenges. This delimiting of the geographical parameters of conflict ignores the role of endogenous and global dynamics and their inter-relationship. For instance, in a country where the perceived extractive operations of international mining companies in regional areas are a cause of great frustration to local communities, this curriculum strikingly ignores a major current driver of conflict which implicates actors at multiple scales, international as well as national.

Fifth, the study of the production of EI has highlighted the role of power asymmetries in the process of its production and selection of its content. This draws attention to peace education as a form of knowledge production structured by power relations between international and local actors, an issue overlooked within commentary that assumes its wholly benign and disinterested agenda.

Ultimately, the research evidences how educational interventions can contribute to reinforcing hegemonic narratives that seek to construct violence as pathological and the West as a benign actor reaching out in pursuit of the common good, neither of which stand up to close scrutiny, in Sierra Leone and elsewhere. Sustainable peace, through education and beyond, requires a different narrative that recognizes both our shared humanity and our collective culpability for the drivers of conflict in our increasingly interconnected but highly unequal world.

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Chapter 4

Higgins, S., (2018). School mining clubs in Kono, Sierra Leone: the practices and imaginaries of a pedagogy of protest against social injustice in a conflict-affected context. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 16(4), 478-493.

Abstract

This paper takes as a case study the pedagogical practices emergent from the educational interventions of a civil society organisation in the conflict affected region of Kono, Sierra Leone. Using a cultural political economy approach, it highlights the possibilities of pedagogy being leveraged to protest against perceived and experienced social injustices. In so doing it contributes to understanding of a context-specific model of teacher agency, rooted in the local and global challenges faced by pupils and their communities. It thereby illuminates an alternative to the generic and decontextualized framings of pedagogy frequently offered in human rights and peace education curricula.

Introduction

This paper focuses on the pedagogical practices and positioning of teachers in School Mining Clubs (SMCs) resulting from partnerships between five schools affected by the operation of the extractive mining by international companies in the region and a local NGO, the Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) working with mining affected communities in Kono in the east of Sierra Leone. The paper takes the imaginaries and enactments of teacher's pedagogical roles and relationships in this educational intervention as a case study which, though limited in scope and scale, illuminates how, why and in what forms pedagogy may be mobilised to address perceived and experienced structural injustices faced by pupils, their families and communities in a conflict-affected context.

The paper responds to issues raised within recent research addressing the role of education and in particular, the agency of teachers in relation to conflict and peace enabling processes in conflict-affected contexts.

First, by focusing on how pedagogical practices respond to particular context-specific drivers of conflict experienced by teachers, their pupils and communities the paper answers critiques of the decontextualised and generic framings of teacher pedagogy in some models of human rights, citizenship and peace education curricula promoted by international aid agencies (Coysh, 2014; Zembylas, 2016).

Second, it responds to warnings against over-ambitious expectations as to what teachers can be expected to do and achieve to contribute to sustainable peace formation in conflict-affected contexts.

This has arguably resulted from inattention to the challenging contexts in which they work (Novelli and Sayed, 2016, 23).

Third, by centralising the voices, visions and peace-related practices of teachers and the work of a local NGO in Kono, Sierra Leone, the paper is aligned with critiques of international peacebuilding interventionism for it top-down and state-centric peacebuilding strategies (Richmond, 2018, 2).

Fourth, the paper contributes to understanding the potential of pedagogical processes to equip teachers and their pupils to navigate the effects of an unprecedented form of global capitalism in accelerating socio-economic inequalities that precaritise whole communities and lead in turn to the likelihood of conflict or its recurrence (Richmond 2014).

Finally, by connecting pedagogical practices within formal state schools to the educational mission of a local NGO, this paper's focus is inspired by recent research that recognises the distinctive strengths of the frequently neglected informal 'learning activism' (Choudry, 2015) of social movements and civil society organisations. This has underscored the creativity of their educational responses to the predicaments of people confronting 'systems of power and exploitation' resulting from the impact of 'global economic processes and national states and governments' (ibid, 12).

The first section of the paper explains the interconnected and multi-scalar dimensions of current conflict drivers in Kono and introduces the work of the Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), their partnerships with schools and the formation of School Mining Clubs (SMCs). Second, the conceptualisation of pedagogy used in the paper is explained as well as the analytical tools of the cultural political economy which are deployed to locate pedagogical micro-practices within broader structural processes and experiences of social injustices. The resulting research design, methods and methodology are then outlined. The third section presents the data findings. It draws on the voices of teachers, NMJD staff and pupils to first describe the pedagogical practices in SMCs and then highlights the imaginaries that frame them and in which they derive meaning in relation to challenging the cultural, political and economic processes of injustice driving conflict and grievance in Kono. Data analysis reveals a counter-hegemonic pedagogy of protest and hope, albeit one with the limited capacity to achieve substantive changes to ameliorate social injustices, at least in the short term. Finally, the discussion and conclusion reflect on the contribution of this case study to a greater understanding of the nature and significance of pedagogical practices in addressing structural drivers of grievance in conflict-affected contexts. It also highlights the limitations of international framings of pedagogical agency and the possibilities for re-envisioning support for teachers undertaking and enacting them.

The conflict-affected context of Kono, 1992–2018

A recent article in a Sierra Leone newspaper entitled 'Kono may become warzone' (African Young Voices, July 2016) spotlights the dangers of an imminent recurrence of conflict in a region in eastern Sierra Leone famous for its 'blood diamonds' and the epicentre of the nation's 11-year civil war between 1991 and 2002. It emphasises the resentments of local communities against the extractive operations of an international mining company. Planned demonstrations involved 'community people, the Kono student union, civil society and other land rights activists' in order 'to know those that are behind the mining and of what benefit will it be to the district and its people'. The article also underlined the community's desire for better protection by the state and customary leaders in the local area, noting calls for the intervention of the President to advocate to the Chief, as well as referencing recently passed mining legislation which the companies were allegedly breaching.

This volatile nexus of community grievances, the operations of the corporate extractive industry, and tensions between regional communities and the central state in Kono, Eastern Sierra Leone forms the conflict-affected context for the paper's case study which explores pedagogical responses by teachers and local civil society actors. As one of the most diamondiferous regions of Sierra Leone, Kono represents contrasting and contested explanations of the country's civil conflict, foregrounding either greed or grievance (Maconachie, 2010, 194; Novelli, 2011). In 2004, the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Committee reported on the 'endemic greed, corruption and nepotism', in particular that of 'political elites' including 'the business elites and those occupying positions of power and influence in the public and private sectors' who 'plundered the nation's assets including its mineral riches' (SLTRC, 2004, vol. 2, 27). As a region in which diamond mining has long co-existed with widespread community immiseration, Kono also represents the role of grievances which many analysts have recognised underpinned conflict, particularly in relation to the resentment of youth at their perceived exclusion from the proceeds of Sierra Leone's extractive industries by rural elites (Richards, 1996).

Recent research suggests that many structural drivers of conflict that drove participation in the country's civil war are still present in the country's regional areas including Kono (Castañeda, 2009; Cubitt, 2011). These include mistrust of the central state; widespread resentment at the monopoly of wealth and power by elites, national and local; regional inequalities in the provision of education and health services, and widespread youth alienation, stemming from their exclusion from political and economic power. Moreover, analysts of the country's post-conflict trajectory have also drawn attention to the failure of liberal peacebuilding, emphasising marketisation and the integration of SL into the global economy, to address structural drivers of conflict, in particular grievances based on socio-economic inequities and regional inequalities in the provision of social services (Novelli, 2011).

Of relevance is the impact of the post-war proliferation of international diamond mining companies in the region since 2002 in driving grassroots grievances. As a resource rich region in sub-Saharan Africa, Kono is one of many targeted for extractive industrial operations, a development prompted in part by rises in in global commodity prices and increased worldwide demand for natural resources (Maconachie, 2012). As the conditions of the communities in Kono outlined above attest, SL is also not unique in the grim co-existence of mining operations with conditions of extreme immiseration. Thus, Zulu and Wilson (2012) ask the question 'Whose minerals. Whose develop- ment?' in a paper which concludes that despite attempts at greater regulation of extractive industry in Sierra Leone since 2004 to ensure more benefits for mining affected communities, there has been 'no significant improvement across dimensions of material deprivation, education and health, vulnerability and powerlessness' (Zulu and Wilson 2012, 1103). Hence widespread resentments amongst local communities at the perceived exploitation of land and resources by outsiders with few tangible benefits for them despite their displacement from homes, schools and land as well as environmental degradation and pollution (Fanthorpe and Gabelle, 2013). In the views of some commentators they threaten a 'potential resurrection of the grievance based unrest, marginalisation and frustration that led to the civil war' (ibid, 8/58).

The network movement for justice and development (NMJD) and the role of education In parallel with the expansion of extractive industry, commentators have also noted the proliferation of civil society groups, NGO activity and community and youth driven activism in Kono protesting against its negative impacts outlined above (Maconachie, 2012, 716). The NMJD is one such organisation. It has been described as 'the most vociferous of the local non-governmental organisations dealing with the mining sector' (Ojukutu-Macauley and Keili, 2008, 525) and 'singularly effective in bringing to the attention of the national and international media and international organisations the inequities of the sector and the perceived excesses of the mining companies' (ibid) Founded in 1988, the organisation promotes itself as a 'national human rights oriented civil society development and advocacy organisation' with a long history and experience of working with grassroots communities in Sierra Leone (NMJD Strategic Plan, 2012–2014). Its Strategic Plan (NMJD, 2012b, 4) presents its mission to 'see a Sierra Leone where basic services and justice is delivered to the poor and for them to be able to challenge the systems that keep them in abject poverty'. Though staffed by Sierra Leoneans, it is funded by international donors, receiving financial support from the Swedish-based Oxfam-IBIS and also Medico International.

Of relevance is NMJD's mobilisation of education, broadly conceived, in its engagement of communities affected by mining, including women and youth. The organisation's Vision Statement (NMJD, 2012a) expresses a Freirean commitment to generating 'awareness, reflection, transformation' and 'conscientization' (Motto and Vision Statement) to achieve 'social transformation'

(NMJD, 2012a). Hence, advocacy with and on behalf of mining affected communities, forms one of its key educational activities (NMJD, 2012b) along with the circulation of information on relevant legal instruments through which communities may be empowered to assert and secure their socio-economic rights. NMJD also supports research to highlight lack of transparency, equity and justice in the mining industry. This has resulted in publications with titles that underscore its concerns with social injustice such as 'Not Sharing the Loot' (Dieckmann, 2010). Educational activities are also a component of its pursuit of 'gender equity and justice' (NMJD brochure; Strategic Plan, 2012–2016). In 2012 NMJD extended its community-based activities in the Kono region to develop partner- ships with 5 secondary schools (3 secondary and 2 junior secondary schools) whose teachers, families and communities were directly affected by the operation of extractive mining industry. Situated in diamondiferous chiefdoms, they were all relocated to enable Octea Mining to take control of land for extractive purposes, with resulting disruption to the educational experiences of their pupils and dispossession and rehousing of their families. NMJD sought the approval of the headteachers to partner with individual teachers in the schools. Known as 'focal teachers' they were expected to establish School Mining Clubs (hereafter SMCs) in their schools. These aimed to provide opportunities for groups of pupils aged 11–16 to engage in learning activities that address their experiences and concerns in relation to the impact of mining on their education and daily lives, as well as those of their families and communities.

The project ran between 2012 and 2014 closing with the onset of Ebola. It is due to resume in an extended form, involving more schools in 2018. While small in scale and scope, involving a small number of teachers and schools in a particular chiefdom, the initiative is of particular interest in its engagement of teachers and their pupils in a highly charged conflict-affected context and its emergence from civil society activism in relation to perceived and experienced drivers of conflict by local communities.

Situating pedagogical practices: conceptual and heuristic tools

This paper draws on Alexander's (2008, 49) conceptualisation of pedagogy as not to be narrowly conceived as only consisting in 'the act of teaching'. As a morally purposeful activity, it is crucially anchored in – 'ideas, values and collective histories' (ibid, 92), underlying goals and assumptions about 'social purpose' and 'human identity' (ibid, 49) within which it is derives meaning and justification. This framing eschews a narrowly technical view of the actions of teachers which detaches them from their situated and embedded nature. In other words, this conceptualisation grounds the practices and relationships that constitute pedagogy within larger cultural, political and social processes, within which teachers make judgements about what and how, when and where to teach. For Alexander (ibid, 5, 92–121) such beliefs and values are in part revealed by the content of

classroom talk and the verbal and affective interactions between teachers and pupils through which both express and construct shared meanings.

Applying Alexander's conceptualisation to a particular context of pedagogical practice, the paper draws on the heuristic and analytical tools of a cultural political economy approach (CPE) (Sum and Jessop, 2013; Robertson and Dale, 2015) to social analysis. This is an evolving post-disciplinary project which is fundamentally concerned with explanations of the social that elucidate the co-articulation of the cultural with the traditional subjects of political economy analysis with material economic and political processes (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 1). Within this framing of social analysis attention to the cultural necessitates engaging with processes of meaning making through which we may understand 'the business of making selves… how worlds, meanings and consciousness are formed' (Robertson, 2012, 3). Furthermore, 'to speak of culture is also to speak of the ways in which we live and experience our condition through categories, classifications and frameworks for action which shape the possibilities for reflexivity and social practice' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 6). The goal is not to add culture as an epiphenomal factor, but rather to recognise its constitutive significance as fundamental to social existence and explanation (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 96). This construal is relevant to this paper's understanding of pedagogy, following Alexander, as a form of social and cultural practice that is purposive and meaningful in relation to political and economic dynamics driving conflict at local, national and global levels.

Hence, the paper uses the concept of 'social imaginaries' as an entry point into understanding teachers' pedagogical practices and their relation to processes of addressing drivers of conflict. These are defined as the 'semiotic systems that frame individual subject's lived experience of an inordinately complex world and/or inform collective calculation about that world' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 165). While framing the viewpoints of actors, individually and collectively, on their context and condition, imaginaries also have performative effects on behaviours and practices through their role in 'coagulating subjectification and vitalising affective energy' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 10). The purpose of this study is therefore to explore how teachers' pedagogical practices are informed by imaginaries that locate education as a lever of conflict amelioration and challenges to perceived and experienced social injustices.

The paper's approach aligns with the critical goals of CPE to problematise hegemonic framings of the cultural, political and economic. In particular, a key issue is to ask whose interests and powers are served by imaginaries of the social world and why some are privileged over others (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 79). This is relevant, given the paper's attention to the emergence of pedagogical positionings from a context of antagonistic and asymmetrical power relations between an international corporate company and communities in conflict-affected Kono. Finally, exploring how pedagogy is implicated in

critiques of global capitalism, this paper aligns with the analytical priority of a CPE approach to problematise categories such as capitalism and modernity within social analysis (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 151). This opens up the possibility of recognising the role of pedagogical practices in promoting alternative and counter-hegemonic agendas in the interests of challenging social injustices driving conflict.

Research design, methods and methodology

A case study approach was deemed appropriate, enabling in-depth attention to a delimited context while also affording opportunities for the generation of theoretically informed insights. Aligning with the conceptual tools outlined above, the research design was structured around 3 key questions:

1. Who are the focal teachers chosen to partner with the NMJD and what are their personal and professional characteristics?
2. What pedagogical practices, activities and relationships did teachers enact with their pupils in the SMCs and where and how did they take place?
3. According to NMJD staff and teachers, what social imaginaries of conflict drivers and peace pro- motion in Kono informed these practices and relationships and how are they emergent from and constrained by cultural political economic dynamics?

These questions shift attention from and between the lived experiences of teachers (question1) their pedagogical practices and relationships (question2) and the underlying values and vision as articulated in the social (economic, political and cultural) imaginaries and material determinations that frame them (question 3). In so doing they operationalise what Robertson and Dale (2015, 153) have termed the 'methodological implications' which follow from interconnecting the category of the cultural with political economy dynamics. This necessitates shifting the analytical spotlight back and forth between on the one hand the categories that order teachers' understandings and 'ways of seeing', their experiences and practices and on the other the 'the structuring mechanisms' that condition and constrain them.

Data gathering for Question 1 involved 2 focus group discussions with all the focal teachers (5) who were managing the SMCs in all the schools which had formed partnerships with NMJD in Kono, thus enabling a fully representative sample. Questions (see Figure 1) aimed to elucidate the personal and professional contexts of the teachers managing the clubs. A focus group setting, with its opportunity for interactions between informants, also facilitated understanding of the collective as well as individual lived experiences and perceptions of these teachers and in particular their views on mining related conflict drivers in Kono.

Data for research questions 2 and 3 involved two semi-structured interviews with all 5 SMC teachers. In addition, interviews were conducted with four NMJD staff based in the Kono region who were involved in establishing and supporting the SMCs, as well as interviews with three staff from NMJD's donors, Ibiss-Oxfam, based in Kono and the organisation's head office in Denmark. Questions firstly elicited views on the aims and purposes of the SMCs, what learning activities were undertaken, when, where and how they were conducted and how teachers felt about their pedagogical roles. Further questions on the broader purposes and rationale of the activities yielded insights into how they were located and accrued meaning and significance within teachers' and NMJD staff's imaginaries of conflict drivers and peace formation and the role of education in Kono. All informants were encouraged to recall specific examples or anecdotes of SMC practices.

Focus group discussions with SMC teachers	**Semi-structured interviews with teachers**	**Semi-structured interviews with NMJD and Oxfam-Ibiss Staff**	**Pupils**
Are you a resident of Kono?	How did the school partnership with NMJD come about?	What are the aims and purposes of the SMCs and why were they established?	What do you do in the SMCs?
Can you tell me about your education and qualifications, level of pay?	What are the aims of the SMCs and what is your role?	How were schools and teachers selected for the partnerships with NMJD?	What activities do you enjoy?
How do you feel about your working conditions?	What do you do with the pupils in the SMCs? Can you describe the learning activities in the SMCs and their aims and purposes? How do you relate to your pupils in the SMCs?	What skills, knowledges are expected of teachers?	How are SMC activities different from other school lessons?
What challenges so you face as teachers eg personal, professional?	Given your knowledge of drivers of grievance experienced by communities in Kono, how do you see the importance of activities in the SMCs?	What learning activities are teachers expected to do in the clubs and why are they important in relation to grievances driving conflict in Kono?	What did you do at the Radio Station?
Have you been affected, personally or professionally by the operations of the Mining Company in Kono? If so how?	What challenges do you face in relation to your teaching and learning activities in the SMCs?	What challenges do you believe teachers face in the SMCs?	What do you do during Assemblies?
What do you see as the main drivers of conflict in Kono at present?	How does your work in SMCs differ from your usual subject teaching?	What training is provided for teachers? How do you train the teachers?	How do you like your teacher in the SMCs?

	What training did you receive from NMJD and how did it prepare you for your work in the SMCs? What is the impact of the SMCs on pupils and the school community?		Why do you think the SMCs are important?

Figure 6 Interview questions

Interview data were supplemented by analysis of minutes of SMC meetings taken by teachers and NMJD staff which recorded the activities which took place as well as 10 hours of tape recordings of selected meetings made by NMJD. These were particularly useful supplements to teachers' accounts of their activities, given the imperative of the research to hear the voices of teachers and pupils and their interactions during pedagogical activities in the SMCs. Also useful in understanding the educational agenda and activities of NMJD and Oxfam-IBISS were their policy documents and mission statements.

The writer's reflexivity on his positionality in the research process was important throughout. Certainly, a white British background rendered him an 'outsider' to the particular context and challenges faced by the SMC teachers and NMJD civil society actors. However, commentators have noted how the binarism between 'outsider' and 'insider' may be a shifting rather than a static categorisation (Berger, 2015). Indeed, research for this paper followed several years' experience of living and working in Sierra Leone as a volunteer teacher and was thus emergent from long-term immersive experience which arguably enabled a more 'insider' stance. In this sense, the writer's positioning benefited from what Millar (2018) has recently described as the 'under-appreciated benefits of long term … and close engagement with the subjects of peacebuilding' in order to 'better interpret local experiences and locally salient practice' (Millar, 2018, 1). Moreover, against a background of increasing evidence of 'fatigue' amongst those subjected to research with little tangible improvements to their lives in conflict and other developing contexts (Hoglund and Oberg, 2011), this presence, or proven commitment over time, arguably enhanced his credibility in the eyes of informants. Furthermore, the writer's prior professional experience in the country enabled him to respond positively to invitations to teach as well as to share learning materials in the schools of the teachers interviewed. This ability to exercise in a small way the ethical principle of reciprocity avoided an entirely 'extractive' approach to a research process that was calling upon the energy and time of teachers already facing the daily hardships of poor working conditions and remuneration. Finally, data collection was carried out in 2 phases (January–March, 2014; November–December, 2016), pre and post the outbreak of Ebola between May 2014 and January 2016 when schools were closed. This afforded the opportunity to consolidate trust with informants over a period of time, especially important given the contentious issues being explored with them.

Findings

All interviews, tapes of SMC meetings and radio discussions were recorded and transcribed. Together with minutes of meetings and policy texts, they were coded and analysed to reveal evidence of SMC pedagogical activities and the imaginaries in which they were located by teachers and NMJD staff. The following presentation of data starts by providing an overview of the personal and professional backgrounds of the focal teachers managing the SMCs. This is followed by detailed descriptions of their pedagogical activities. The next section identifies and analyses 5 key social imaginaries within which teachers' roles and pedagogical activities were located and valorised and which have been selected to represent the collective views of SMC teachers and NMJD staff.

The SMC 'focal teachers'

Figure 2 presents a summary of the key characteristics of the 5 teachers managing SMCs. Notably, all were male, reflecting broader gender imbalances in Sierra Leone's teaching force (Shepler and Williams James, 2017, 422). That the majority were qualified renders this group unrepresentative of the larger teacher constituency in Kono where recent reports indicate an over-reliance on unqualified and untrained teachers (Mbayo, 2010, 22). Four of the five were middle ranking teachers, indicating that headteachers judged that the SMC roles needed more experienced teachers.

While only one teacher was not on the government payroll, all teachers complained of the personal challenges of living on poor pay and sometimes late or non-existent salaries with the consequent daily anxieties about feeding and supporting their families, and other dependents. Representing his colleagues, one focal teacher (interview, Kono, February 2014) pointed out that 'before the month ends all need support and think of this little 100,000 leones' (the equivalent of 30 pounds).

Teacher	Gender	Qualifications	Experience (years)	Status	Place of Birth
1	Male	Higher Teaching Certificate	10	Approved and on Government Payroll	Kono
2	Male	Higher Teaching Certificate	20	As above	Kono
3	Male	Higher Teaching Certificate	10	As above	Kono
4	Male	Teaching Certificate	5	As above	Kono
5	Male	Higher Teaching Certificate	2	Not Approved	Kono

Figure 7 SMC 'focal teachers.'

The reported experiences of the personal hardship of all the SMC teachers confirm the continuing relevance of the findings of a report on the challenges faced by teachers in Kono which concluded that 'teachers are not paid living wages and barely live from one pay check to the next' (Mbayo, 2010,

140). They attest to these teachers' experience of systemic, nationwide challenges in relation to teachers' pay and conditions of service, challenges which are exacerbated in regions of the country outside of the capital such as Kono (Turrent, 2012).

All teachers had been affected by the relocation of schools to make land available for mining and talked passionately about the resulting exacerbation of their existing material and financial hardships. One teacher, complaining of increased transport costs eating into an already small salary noted that 'you have to pay and if you check what you have to pay from your monthly salary it is a lot'. Many talked openly of their resentment at feeling belittled as professionals by a perceived failure of international mining companies to consider their personal wellbeing, Thus another teacher pointed out that 'Even in ourselves, we are not pleased … coming to school with broken hearts … we are faced with problems that are disturbing our social existence'. Some had resorted to walking several miles with an avowed impact on their morale and energy levels for school. Thus, another teacher noted that 'Some who walk on foot like me they sweat, I have a bulky body, so when I come I will sit behind that building for natural ventilation' observed one teacher. Such comments attest to the somatic demands of teaching in this context and the vulnerability of teachers to sudden worsening of their already precarious contexts. Moreover, all teachers spoke of their awareness of outbreaks of violence and fatalities which had resulted from community protests against mining companies, in particular about working conditions and the salaries of Sierra Leonean employees and their worries about the prospect of a recurrence of violence. Their concerns corroborate the insights of research into collective protests in Kono involving rioting and deaths in 2007 and 2012, which Maconachie (2014) notes 'crystalized on the back of perceptions of severe exploitation and marginalization by powerful corporate actors' (ibid, 78). However, while many Sierra Leonean teachers are leaving the profession due to poor or absent pay and working conditions (Turrent, 2012, 7) these focal teachers all expressed commitment to their work in the SMCs, despite their challenges. Responding to the question 'How do you feel as a teacher?' the reply from one of the groups, with which the others concurred was that 'I don't feel ok. Sometimes I do teach but if I think of my lot … my situation I feel discouraged. But I just have to do it'. The next section describes the learning activities undertaken by these teachers in the SMCs, despite their challenging personal and professional contexts.

Pedagogical activities and relationships in the SMCs

Representing the views of all focal teachers, one recalled that the main purpose of the SMCs was to provide pupils with a 'forum to express themselves … so that they can see things that are disturbing them so that they can use that particular medium or forum to convey this message to stakeholders to come to their aid'. So, a core activity was to encourage them to 'identify' the burning issues that are affecting you and your school pertaining to Octea mining'. Hence the injunction in one taped SMC

session to ‘just express yourself in any shape or form’. One NMJD staff explained that as a result of this activity SMC pupils would be emboldened to say to stakeholders, including representatives from the mining company and local chiefs, ‘this is what we are feeling and this is what we think we should benefit from mining to help us’. One teacher also explained that such activities, seeking to elicit pupils’ feelings and experiences, recognised that ‘they are very clever, they know what is happening’. Topics discussed in these activities included disruption to pupils lessons caused by kimberlite blasting; dangers to their health and safety in the buildings and environments of relocated schools (e.g., air pollution, cracks in classroom walls, the lack of a clean water pipe, no trees, soil erosion); pupils’ fear of security officials carrying guns when protecting the mining sites; their concerns about lack of a library and a playground in school; and their views on the responsibility of the company and local chiefs to intervene to address their concerns (Minutes of meetings, taped discussions).

SMC focal teachers explained that follow up activities aimed to support pupils in drawing up an ‘action plan’ or ‘advocacy agenda’. This involved making decisions about what they could do to promote awareness of their concerns and experiences, or ‘how they are suffering’, in the school and wider community. In one taped SMC meeting, the teacher encourages the pupils to ‘talk about the action points, the activities you will want to undertake’, stressing the need for a strategy; ‘you cannot do it by chaos’. So, for instance, during SMCs pupils prepared presentations ‘to be educating their colleagues’ during School Assembly. Teachers saw these as especially important because ‘a teacher can talk to pupils but a colleague can be the best teacher’. One teacher recalled with pride that after one such assembly ‘you see the children everywhere … they would be discussing … ooh these are our problems … what are we going to do?’

Another SMC activity involved preparation for pupils to contribute to monthly radio discussions ‘where the children go on the radio and tell the public how they are suffering and what can be done to address those issues’ (interview, NMJD Manager). Using such a forum enabled the ‘message to go down to a wider range of people’. This was a joint school activity, and involved teachers taking pupils to local radio stations. In them, pupils can be heard critiquing the impact of mining operations on their learning, safety and school environments. For instance, they talk passionately about the cracks on the walls of their classrooms caused by blasting of land for mining. They express frustration about the loud noises made during this mining process which interrupted their lessons, insufficient provision of buses to enable them to travel to relocated schools, and toilets not being in working order because of the vibration of the soil during mining activities. Typifying such critique, during one radio programme a girl from an SMC said; ‘we ask them since when they have moved us … and they brought us here … we have lost a lot of things that we were having in our former school … .since they brought us here we don’t have anything like playground … we don’t have library … we are suffering from a lot of things … they should help us … the mining company is not trying’.

Teachers also recalled activities in which they prepared SMC pupils for meetings with 'the management of Octea to tell them that we need scholarships in our schools or we need a school bus or them to come to schools to rehabilitate the cracks, a death trap for students'. Pupils were also encouraged to write letters to other 'stakeholders' such as the Ministry of Agriculture, to gain their support to buy seeds to plant trees to compensate for a lack of shade in the grounds of relocated schools. Finally, teachers helped pupils to role play their experiences of being affected by mining in their schools and communities. They expressed particular faith in drama as a vehicle through which pupils could promote awareness within communities with high levels of illiteracy; 'sometimes seeing is believing … when you make an explanation people will not pay attention'.

According to teachers and NMJD staff, an important dimension of all these activities was confidence building to express their views or in the words of one teacher to enable them to express themselves in a 'fervent manner'. One teacher during an SMC meeting reminded pupils that such activities were necessary because 'when we go the stakeholders, NMJD staff will not talk … the talk is left with you'. Some teachers commented that 'the pupils who are involved in this particular advocacy sometimes 'they are afraid to talk' or that they were often 'discouraged … you see the trauma in them'. Such perceptions underscore the emotional underpinnings of the SMC activities, in particular their role in helping pupils to overcome an initial fear to articulate their concerns and experiences of social injustice to adults, whether representatives of the mining company, community elders or radio broadcasters.

More teacher led SMC activities included communicating substantive information to pupils about recently enacted state legislation, in particular, the Mines and Minerals Act, 2009, which had regulated international mining operations and outlined the social and economic rights of mining affected communities. Other legislation referred to in the SMCs included the Child Rights Act, 2007 and the Education Act, 2004. For these activities, teachers used summaries of the legislation specially prepared for school use by NMJD. 'we give the teachers brochures or leaflets to aid them in carrying out sensitization exercises; extracts from the minerals and mines act. That what they use to talk to the children', explained one NMJD staff.

The next section presents 5 key imaginaries within which these pedagogical activities accrued meaning and momentum, and which catalysed the 'subjective energy' of SMC teachers and their NMJD partners to invest in and enact them. While not seeking to homogenise the views of informants, data analysis indicated that these imaginaries were collectively shared by all the focal teachers and their NMJD partners.

Pedagogical imaginaries

Education

Teachers expressed strong views about the SMC activities as examples of the way they believed education could be leveraged in relation to social injustices. Firstly, they characterised the learning activities outlined above as a form of advocacy or campaign to enable pupils to articulate their experiences and develop strategies to try to effect changes. Hence, at the end of one SMC meeting, pupils were congratulated because they were 'becoming civil society activists because you are now bringing the issues and talking about the way forward'. Such framings underscore the alignment of SMC activities with the educational priorities of NMJD itself to 'advocate' with and on behalf of marginalised affected communities. In particular teachers understood such activities as an educational response, within the school space of SMC meetings, to what recent researchers have noted are widespread community wide resentments of poor information flow about the operations of international mining companies and the monopoly of decision making processes by their representatives in conjunction with local elites, producing a sense of voicelessness and powerlessness amongst local communities (Zulu and Wilson, 2012, 1125). Indeed, one teacher commented that 'we are powerless our voices cannot be heard'.

Talking about SMC activities in which pupils learned about mining laws, teachers also stressed the importance of equipping pupils with substantive legal knowledge and information as resources which could be mobilised to assert rights and to fight perceived and experienced injustices. 'If we look at the way mining is affecting the schools and what the mining companies are supposed to do they are not doing it … so when we sensitise them about these laws … they accept it' noted one teacher. This pedagogical emphasis on the transmission of particular legal knowledges was also valorised by focal teachers and NMJD staff as an educational response to a perceived lack of any attempt by the Sierra Leonean state to circulate relevant information amongst mining affected com munities, thus obligating educational interventions to compensate 'Not many people have knowledge about the Mining Act because as a society there is hardly any conscious effort to reach people' (interview with NMJD staff). Hence, even teachers themselves were 'novices to those laws'. Teachers and NMJD staff were aware that their support for pupil articulation and participation in the SMCs contrasted with the more passive positioning of pupils in the teaching of the formal curriculum. 'When we went to school they were focusing on teaching us to be obedient' explained one NMJD partner, 'like something like doctrine … dogma; this is what we are teaching; this is how you behave … this is what you do … to the extent that the people don't speak out easily'. By contrast in the SMCs 'we are trying to bring them to advocacy, not just teaching things and the children learn… but there are real issues affecting the children that need to be addressed'. Teachers and NMJD staff in particular were also critical of the failure of the formal curriculum to provide any opportunities to address mining related issues.

Teachers expressed frustration that their obligation to cover the national state curriculum for BECCE and WASSC examinations prevented them from addressing the issues they did in the SMCs which were relevant to the needs and concerns of their pupils. Asked whether the things he discussed in the SMCs could be discussed in subject times, one teacher replied 'is it in the syllabus … will they be examined on it?'

Non-violent resolution of conflict

Teachers and NMJD staff emphasised that the SMC activities had particular urgency as a way of defusing potential involvement by young people in violent protest against the mining companies which they recalled had led to deaths in 2007 and 2012. Hence one teacher saw their significance in preventing pupils from 'going on the rampage' because of the opportunity they afforded to air grievances constructively and to explore peaceful ways of navigating them.

Some of the SMC teachers also attributed significance to SMC activities in relation to their memories of the causes of youth participation in the SL conflict, 1992–2002. One teacher noted that 'What really prompted the action was because people don't really know how to talk … why to talk … so the only thing they will do is to use their fists'. In this light, some teachers recalled the lack of opportunities for youth to vent grievance, which had propelled some into volunteering to join the RUF as a matter of revenge. Another commented that the use of legislation in clubs to communicate pupils' rights in relation to addressing the immiseration of mining affected communities emerged from the belief that absence of this avenue had in the past had created conflict. 'This is the root part of it some of the causes of the war when the rights of people were abused … right to education. Right to health. right to housing … all centred around poverty. If such things we are not addressing the circle will not be broken'. One NMJD staff member highlighted the value of SMC activities in encouraging pupils to articulate their concerns and make demands to stakeholders by recalling the time in SL 1970s and 1980s prior to the war and the suppression of public critique of the state during autocratic one party state prior to the conflict; 'for far too long the APC were in leadership in power … there was no democracy … all these things create a conflict among the people of SL'. 'if you know your rights you can demand your rights … you have to find a way of advocating'.

Social responsibility to local communities

Teachers and NMJD informants also talked about the significance of other SMC activities, in particular, those encouraging pupils to identify and advocate on the 'burning issues' affecting them, as the pedagogical effects of their concern to channel community anger and frustration at the perceived neglect or indifference of corporate extractive industry to its social obligation to local Kono communities. Echoing the 'strong sense of community ownership' which scholars have noted

(Fanthorpe and Gabelle, 2013) drove resentment at the perceived exploitation of land by outsiders without adequate compensation for affected communities, teachers emphasised the social duty of mining companies together with local elites to ensure adequate infrastructure and resources for displaced schools and more broadly to invest in the well-being of local affected communities. 'As far as we know the company are not ready to do good, which is what they call corporate social responsibility' noted an NMJD partner. Likewise, a focal teacher noted that 'If we look at the way mining is affecting the schools and what the mining companies are supposed to do … they are not doing it within this chiefdom'. Another teacher noted that 'I hate the mining company because they are not working with the community people. let's talk about social responsibilities which they are supposed to have'. These framings underscored how pedagogical practices of SMCs were purposive within an imaginary of the social responsibilities of mining companies to local communities which was defined in explicit opposition to the brutal indifference attributed to corporate extractive industry.

Moreover, teachers notably emphasised their own and their pupils' entitlement as 'indigenes of this place', with an organic, historical and religious affiliation which should be respected and valued. This social imaginary of the mineral resource rich Kono landscape to meet community needs was deemed to have been ignored by the operations of international mining companies. It was thus a matter of concern to a headteacher of one of the relocated schools that the site selected had been a burial ground and thus deemed inappropriate as a learning environment by its target community. Within such processes of re-imagining the status quo, SMC teachers underscored their relationships of solidarity with the experiences of the suffering of their pupils and the wider community as a key driver of their pedagogical practices. One noted that he was 'not only as a teacher but also part and parcel of the community'. Likewise, another pointed out that 'I feel the same pinch as the children'.

The challenges and dangers of critique

SMC activities, in particular those which encouraged pupils to articulate their experiences and concerns, and to overcome their fear of doing so, were also construed as interventions in a highly contentious discursive arena that made the critique of the activities of international mining company a challenging and sometimes dangerous activity. Such critique it was believed was especially contentious because of a widespread view that the company was protected by national and local elites including chiefs. Hence one teacher noted that 'our activities and even at times when you have radio discussion with the students some stakeholders see us as inciters'. All the SMC teachers expressed their fear of being branded as 'troublemakers' by local chiefs and political elites. The 'talk' generated within SMC activities was perceived to be particularly dangerous because it challenged perceived power asymmetries between local Kono communities and an international mining company believed to be sheltered by national and local elites from critique. For instance, one NMJD staff noted

that ‘we are living in a society where like I told you … the powers that be are part of this thing…the people directly benefiting from those mining companies’. Likewise, a teacher observed that ‘the chief is supporting the company … let me categorically tell you that’. Aware of the implications of their work in a complex discursive arena governing what was sayable about the operations of international mining, teachers expressed fear about its repercussions on their safety and well-being. ‘Even now’ one teacher commented during an interview ‘I do have that fear in me’.

Slow progress

Given such challenges, teachers also located SMC activities not only within a discursive but also a temporal imaginary of leveraging slow, non-linear changes to the situation of their pupils and communities. Some did recognise some tangible successes arising out of their work. ‘We advocated for a bus and a bus was provided’ noted one NMJD official. ‘They were advocating for pure drinking water and a pump and they provided it for them’. However, a celebration of such progress was tempered by a sense of powerlessness to achieve structural and sustainable change which would address pupils concerns and experiences. Hence one NMJD staff member pointed out that the SMCs had ‘exposed connectocracy’ or the collusion of chiefs with international companies and interests. Yet, ‘because they [the pupils] are not connected their voices cannot be heard’. One teacher typified the sense of collective disempowerment felt by all the SMC leaders in noting that ‘we have no power the company does whatever things they want to do’. Such comments attest to a strong sense that even while empowering their pupils to critique social injustices, their exclusion from the patrimonial networks linking elites to international industry undermined their ability to trigger structural change or to be listened to by local stakeholders.

Within this context, small and contingent progress was to be celebrated. Thus, one NMJD staff noted that a major breakthrough had been to open up channels of communication, involving school going pupils, with the mining company and other stakeholders including chiefs who had previously ‘refused to listen’. One teacher recognised his sense of embattled commitment to an ongoing and challenging process of shifting power relations, despite uncertain outcomes; ‘no matter how powerful they are if we continue to raise awareness … there will come a time when the people are going to be fully aware … fully prepared maybe to rise up against these companies … advocacy is not a one off thing; it has to be a continuous process’.

Conclusions

Applying Alexander’s expansive conceptualisation of pedagogy and using a CPE approach this research has shown how the pedagogical practices and relationships in one conflict-affected context are meaningful within diverse social imaginaries held by the teachers and their partners in a local

NGO. In so doing this methodology has connected micro-practices in the classroom to meso and macro level CPE processes, thereby contributing to the understanding of how teachers in one conflict-affected context 'confront the historic inequities and drivers of conflict' as called for in knowledge gaps cited at the start. The case study has opened up several key insights into nature, rationale, embeddedness, meanings and challenges of such pedagogical practices. These may contribute to a rethinking and re-envisioning of teachers' pedagogical agency beyond decontextualised framings of teachers' agency for peacebuilding in some models of human rights or peace education, thus opening up strategies to enhance support for them in this role.

Firstly, centralising rather than ignoring the voices and visions of teachers and other actors in local conflict-affected communities, its methodology reveals them to be highly reflexive and passionate about the structural injustices their pupils and communities face. Their situated local knowledges and experiences could be drawn upon directly in teacher education courses supporting teachers to navigate and address conflict. This finding corroborates other recent research which emphasises the tendency to limit peace-related knowledges to psycho-social rather than political economy and historical structural issues in teacher education courses (Sayed and Novelli, 2016, 16).

Secondly, analysis of teachers' and NMJD staff's imaginaries of pedagogical practices has revealed how, far from being technical and decontextualised, they respond to and are purposive within the complex global and local challenges faced by teachers and their communities. Thus, driven and informed by social imaginaries of education, land, community and social justice teachers' pedagogical practices in the SMCs are striking for their context-responsive engagement with structural drivers of conflict at multiple scales. In other words, they target the vested interests, material inequalities and power asymmetries at local, national and global levels, that condition their pupils and communities' everyday experiences of suffering.

Thirdly, this context-responsiveness generates a pedagogy that is 'oppositional and transgressive' (Bajaj and Hantzopoulos, 2016, 12). The analysis has indicated how the micro-practices of such a pedagogy achieve this goal by through diverse learning activities whose relevance to their teachers and pupils is based on their location within counter-hegemonic imaginaries of the land, natural resources, the agency of local and national elites and of the responsibilities of international corporate capitalism. Targeting the operations of an international mining company as the locus of grievance and conflict, SMC pedagogical activities challenge the commonplace assumptions of liberal peacebuilding that assume the sources of conflict are internal to conflict-affected societies who are therefore in need of national behaviour change programmes such as peace education (Higgins and Novelli, 2018). Moreover, these teachers through their pedagogical activities problematise exploitative capital operations and the resulting precaritisation of local communities, challenging the uncritical

commitment of the World Bank and other actors to the integration of conflict-affected communities into the global economy (Maconachie, 2014). Stressing the historical, religious and relational meaning of the rich natural resources of Kono landscape, the imaginary driving their activities in SMCs is defined in striking opposition to the economism of the 'Rostovian discourses of modernisation and progress' through which the World Bank legitimates the operation of transnational extractive industrial corporations in sub-Saharan Africa (Maconachie, 2014, 77).

Fourthly, in their context specificity, teachers' pedagogical activities engage with aspects of SL's political culture and post-conflict social dynamics that are missed within more generic framings of their agency that are inattentive to the singularities of their conflict-affected contexts. Thus, teachers recognised that the 'talk' generated within SMC activities challenged the power exercised by local elites, in particular chiefs, who were believed to monopolise the benefits of mineral wealth in collusion with international corporate industry, at the expense of local communities. SMC activities, in and outside of schools, were thus understood by these teachers as a means of navigating the tenacity of patrimonial relationships, centred around the continuing significance of chiefs and customary practices. Scholars have recently argued that such aspects of SLs political culture, a legacy of colonialism, have been ignored in peacebuilding interventions that project western notions of civil society (Datzberger, 2015) and assume the existence of autonomous, rights bearing subjects, undermining their relevance.

Fifthly, the pedagogical practices leveraged to address social injustices in the SMCs are predicated on an expansive understanding of education that connects directly to the lived experiences of pupils and their community. They attest to the creative influence in the formal school sector of the distinctive 'learning activism' (Choudry, 2015) associated with the community based educational work of social movements. That SMC activities engage pupils at various levels – experiential, affective, imaginative, as well as strategic and reflective – attests to the influence of NMJD's understanding of the potential of education to support advocacy and activism against social injustices. Combining teacher led communication of substantive legal knowledges with engagement with the lived experiences of suffering their pupils, SMC pedagogy transcends the learner-teacher centred binarism which has tended to associate the former rather than the latter with peace-related pedagogical practice (UNESCO, 2017).

Finally, and perhaps most important message to emerge from this case is pedagogical practices in relation to challenging social injustices in conflict-affected settings are exceptionally important in themselves, because even if they do not change the outputs of schooling or the structural injustices they target, they affect pupils' experiences and understanding of how the world (here) is. The long-term temporal imaginary within which the significance of SMC activities was framed by teachers and

their partners highlighted the multi-scalar cultural, political economy dynamics and power asymmetries between communities and local and international actors that delimit the possibilities for immediate tangible changes to their experiences. Against the agendas driving liberal peacebuilding and global capitalism, teachers and NMJD staff recognised that the imaginaries of protest and social justice of the SMCs had comparatively little 'weight in the system' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 155). This finding highlights the dangers of overstating what teachers, can do and achieve in relation to the transformation of structural social injustices driving conflict. That these teachers show such a high level of commitment to the SMC practices, despite personal and professional constraints and their recognition of little chance of immediate structural change underscores what Novelli (2011, 50) has noted is the 'enthusiasm and resilience' of Sierra Leonean teachers who 'represent the biggest and most important resource that the education system has'. Nevertheless, within the imaginaries driving these teachers' practice, encouraging pupils to articulate what is at stake for them, envisioning alternatives and strategies to achieve change in the short and longer term, tempering anger with hope by celebrating small successes such as a girl expressing her 'suffering' on the local radio station all matter. In the SMCs in Kono, teachers' embattled support for pupils' personal and collective acts and imaginaries of resistance to injustices, local, national and global, are the very stuff of a pedagogy of hope and protest in a conflict-affected context.

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Chapter 5

Higgins, S., (2019). Culturally responsive peacebuilding pedagogy: a case study of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 0(0), 1-19.

Abstract

Recent research on the peace-promoting agency of teachers in conflict-affected contexts has critiqued the dominance of a menu of curriculum initiatives circulated within aid organizations which ignore or dismiss indigenous cultural resources available within local communities. On the other hand, the turn to local culture in peacebuilding interventions has also been critiqued for idealizing the local. This paper presents a case study of the work of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone which aim to support teachers in drawing on local practices, rituals and symbols. Using an interpretative approach, alert to the meanings teachers ascribe to their pedagogical practices, it finds that teachers respond to local culture in multiple, sometimes contradictory ways. These range from celebration of indigenous practices as resources for conflict resolution that resonate with their pupils and communities to critique of their oppressive gender norms and inability to address structural drivers of conflict.

Introduction

Recent studies of interventions by international aid agencies to support the pedagogical agency of teachers in contributing to peace formation in conflict-affected contexts have highlighted their neglect of the 'elaborate language of symbolic practices, tools and resources' which are available within the 'theological, intellectual and cultural warehouse' of local communities (Sayed and Novelli, 2016, 73). This inattention to the potential of teachers to capitalize on the peace promoting value of the culture of their pupils and communities is connected to several critiques of the assumptions driving the work of global aid agencies in the field of education and peacebuilding.

Firstly, scholars have pointed to a failure to listen to the voices of teachers whose situated knowledges may be alert to the possibilities of drawing on local cultural resources (Novelli and Sayed, 2016). Secondly, research in the political economy of education and peacebuilding has highlighted the circulation of a prescriptive 'top down' international menu of curricula, such as peace, human rights or citizenship education amongst international aid agencies, which are reproduced in diverse conflict-affected contexts, regardless of the specificities of their conflict drivers and peacebuilding challenges. Such curricula and the pedagogical practices they promote privilege the agendas of donors and global actors over the agency and aspirations of local actors and the cultural, political and economic contexts in which they take root (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014). Hence their lack of connection with the specific experiences of teachers and children living in conflict-affected communities; and in particular their mobilization of processes of inter-group reconciliation and trauma healing that universalize

individualistic western psychological recovery models of social and individual healing (Hattam et al., 10-28 in Ahalwai et al., 2012) without attention to the indigenous meaning systems within which conflict-affected societies themselves understand their progression from violent conflict into sustainable peace.

Scholars have also highlighted the prominence of modernization and human capital theories of development in the framings of teacher agency by international aid agencies, which foreclose opportunities for teachers to value and draw on local cultural resources. By privileging teachers' contributions either to a modernizing process of detachment from indigenous culture or the development of work-related skills, they marginalize their wider role in shaping the imaginaries, values, emotions, behaviours and identities of their pupils (Novelli, 2016). This neglect of culture within educational interventions is symptomatic of the dominant mode of peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts known as liberal interventionism. Richmond (2011) has argued that its state and/or elite-centric framing of peacebuilding as a combination of the restoration of liberal democracy, the rule of law and markets has resulted in an overly prescriptive, institutional, technocratic approach and as such an 'oversight of culture' as a source of peacebuilding agency at a 'community level' (ibid, 45). Hence, scholars have spotlighted its 'universal prescriptions derived from a narrow Western experience' (ibid, 3); failure to engage with local actors, or the 'everyday life of post-conflict citizens' (ibid); and a 'standardising tendency' (Mac Ginty, 2008, 157) to disseminate 'good practice' or 'template style' interventions (ibid, 143) which overlook the distinctive experiences of conflict-affected populations. Others have noted a tendency to pathologize conflict-affected populations as a demographic in need of paternalistic programmes of social engineering (Duffield, 2010, 57), therapeutic governance (Pupavac, 2004), rescue and redemption (Jabri, 2013) or a 'mission civilisatrice' (Paris, 2001). Such framings present a negative, unitary and essentialising view of the cultures and demographics of conflict-affected contexts including Sierra Leone. They also make it difficult to recognise that conflict-affected societies may contain within themselves the social and cultural resources conducive to building locally meaningful peace. These critiques have generated a turn to the local and the cultural in peacebuilding discourses and practices (Mac Ginty, 2011). However, the culturalist turn has also drawn criticism. Mac Ginty has warned of the dangers of romanticizing 'all things local without subjecting them to critical scrutiny', cautioning that they can be 'flawed, counterproductive and ineffective' (ibid, 47). Critiques have also focused on the dangers of reproducing patriarchal social orders that reinforce the powers of male elites; the dangers of essentialising local culture as part of a timeless and ahistorical entity; and of reproducing an untenable binary between the local and the global, with the former regarded as the only site of authenticity (Branch, 2011).

This paper responds both to the marginalization of indigenous cultural knowledges as well as their contested status and significance as resources for building sustainable peace through education. It aims to contribute to greater empirical understanding of the potential of the pedagogical mobilization of cultural resources through a case study of the educational interventions of a local NGO in Sierra Leone called *Fambul Tok* (hereafter FT). Founded by Sierra Leonean John Caulker in 2007, in partnership with Libby Hoffman, leader of a US Philanthropic Organisation, Catalyst for Peace. *Fambul Tok*, translated from the local language Krio, means 'family talk', this signals the organisation's mission to promote indigenous practices of public confession and forgiveness as a vehicle of conflict resolution and reconciliation between perpetrators and survivors of violence experienced during the country's conflict between 1992 and 2002. Enjoying widespread participation and approval from communities in diverse ethnic groups in the country, the work of FT has been praised 'as an example of how peacebuilding and reconciliation and social cohesion can be locally nurtured and somewhat owned' (Datzberger, 2014, 53).

The focus of the study is on FT's extension of its mission to Sierra Leonean teachers. From 2010 until the onset of the Ebola crisis in April 2014, FT formed partnerships with 30 secondary schools in 6 regions of the country, spanning diverse ethnic communities and languages. Teachers were expected to repurpose FT's broader vision of peacebuilding and reconciliation processes based on local community cultural practices in learning activities with groups of pupils outside of formal curriculum time in what were known as FT Peace Clubs (hereafter FTPC). This is different from other peace-related initiatives developed by international aid agencies, noted above, because of its explicit attention on the use of indigenous cultural practices as resources to be used by teachers and pupils. As such, it may be considered an exemplary case that illuminates a neglected cultural dimension of teachers' peacebuilding agency in a conflict-affected context.

Using a qualitative interpretative methodology, this paper offers an in-depth study of the culturally responsive FTPC pedagogical practices and the meanings teachers attach to them. It illuminates how and why these teachers draw on local cultures as resources for peace, their perceptions of the implications for their pedagogical practices and relationships, and for their own and their pupils' exercise of agency in relation to peace promotion in their schools and communities. It also reports their views on the challenges, strengths and weaknesses of this form of culturally responsive pedagogy.

First, the paper outlines the conflict-affected context of Sierra Leone (SL), current peacebuilding challenges and the contested role of the cultural in interventions by international actors and aid agencies. Second, it explains the research design and outlines the diverse theoretical approaches and tools which are drawn upon to understand the pedagogical mediation of cultural practices; and in

particular to avoid either essentialising or reifying indigenous culture or ignoring and dismissing its potential to contribute to teachers' pedagogical practices. The third section presents emergent insights into the peacebuilding imaginaries of FT staff and teachers, highlighting the complex sometimes contradictory, meanings attaching to teachers' mobilisation of cultural practices for peace promotion. The concluding discussion reflects on the significance of these findings in relation to knowledge production about the role and potential of indigenous cultural practices to enhance teachers' pedagogical agency in a conflict-affected context**.**

The SL conflict and its legacy

Resulting neither from inter-ethnic nor inter-religious conflict, the social dynamics of the SL conflict (1992-2002) present distinctive challenges for peacebuilding and in particular, reconciliation processes. The cleavages leading to violent conflict were multi-faceted and complex. They exposed fault lines that were in part intergenerational - between chiefs and rural youth; geographical - between urban based elites and rural communities; and between the state and regional communities (Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012, 60-63). Moreover, the lines between victims and perpetrators, civilians and combatants, government forces and insurgents were often indistinguishable (Hoffman, 2011, 36). Furthermore, the SL conflict is internationally renowned for its horrific brutality and atrocities, including rape, amputations and executions which for some commenters defy rational explanation (Mitton, 2012).

Adding another layer of complexity to understanding the SL conflict, anthropologists have also highlighted the intersection of violence with symbolism, dramaturgy and ritual (Richards, 2005, 377). Hence, the interpretation of the conflict as a form of 'war as smoke and mirrors' draws attention to its 'ritual dynamics', helping to 'help make sense of a war that seems inexplicable in terms of its material incentives or ideological motives' (ibid). Commentators have noted the continuation of the psychological and social scars of its violence experienced in tensions amongst communities and sometimes within families across the country (Drew and Ramsbotham, 2012). In addition, the structural drivers of grievance remain, especially in the country's regional areas including Kono, the context of this case (Novelli and Higgins, 2017). These include inequitable access to public services, including health and education; elite control over mineral and resource wealth, high levels of youth unemployment and alienation, and the persistence of widespread mistrust of the central state amongst rural communities outside of the capital. Hence, the conclusion that since the official peace was declared in 2002, Sierra Leoneans are experiencing what amounts to a superficial 'negative' peace in which underlying grievances remain, increasing the likelihood of a recurrence of conflict (ibid).

Sierra Leonean culture in international peace related interventions

Of relevance to the concern of this paper are the negative and dismissive approaches taken to SL culture within international interventions to support sustainable peacebuilding. For instance, analysis of the Sierra Leonean conflict as a reversion to an inherent primordial barbarism (Kaplan, 1994) have been critiqued for their essentialising and negative portrayal of the behaviours and attitudes of Sierra Leonean and other West African populations. Educational initiatives in the country supported by international aid agencies such as UNICEF are also notable for their alignment with the tendency of liberal peacebuilding interventions to pathologize conflict-affected societies, thereby ignoring inherent cultural resources that may be conducive to peacebuilding. UNICEF's Emerging Issues curriculum for teachers presents Sierra Leoneans as 'destructive' and in need of behaviour and attitudinal change interventions through peace education. Moreover, it is notable that curriculum contains no references to the work of community peacebuilding initiatives such as that of FT (Higgins and Novelli, 2018). Despite the country's ethnic and linguistic diversity these framings represent SL culture as unitary and undifferentiated and typify the tendency noted above to belittle, ignore or pathologize the cultures of conflict-affected demographics.

By contrast, anthropologists who have studied local communities' experiences of the internationally driven transitional justice mechanisms in Sierra Leone, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court, have critiqued their lack of sensitivity to grassroots cultural practices among the largest ethnic groups in the country, the Temne and Mende. This negation of the cultural has arguably undermined their effectiveness in contributing to post conflict peace (Shaw, 2005). For instance, Shaw has noted how the TRC used a model of social healing through public truth telling based on individualistic western psychotherapy, was at odds with local practices and rituals of healing which stressed collective recovery. Likewise, Millar (2014) has noted that the TRC was experienced as a form of provocation because of its failure to recognise key features of SL's culture amongst all its ethnic groups, in particular the role of beliefs in the supernatural and the importance of patrimonial and kinship relations. Furthermore, in relation to the recent Ebola epidemic Richards (2016) points to the neglect by global aid agencies of the community-based mobilisation of local rituals such as dancing practices to encourage societal behaviour change. These amounted to a 'people's science' which, while unrecognised, in fact proved to be highly successful in preventing transmission of the disease.

All these instances highlight both a tendency to treat SL culture in homogenising and dismissive terms as well as a series of lost opportunities to draw on indigenous practices in peace promoting interventions. This paper's case study offers an educational counter-example.

The Case: theoretical and conceptual tools

This paper draws on Alexander's expansive conceptualisation of pedagogy which eschews a narrowly technical definition and aims to locate pedagogical practices in 'ideas, values, and collective histories' (2008, 92). These are the underlying assumptions about 'social purpose' and 'human identity' (ibid, 49) within which they derive meaning and justification. This broad context specific socio-cultural framing is particularly appropriate given this paper's concern to retrieve the meanings attaching to culturally responsive pedagogical practices by Sierra Leonean teachers.

The paper follows Geertz (1973) in framing culture as a dynamic process of meaning-making that is constitutive of social reality, subjectivity and social practices. Hence, its point of departure is the well-known insight that 'man is an animal suspended in webs of significance that he himself has spun' (ibid, 5). Such a view draws attention to the processual and semiotic nature of culture, as a constantly evolving and contingent process of meaning-making. Moreover, this is a process affected by power relations in which meanings are to be understood as contested, determined by the differential power of actors and institutions to render some hegemonic and others more marginalised (Sum and Jessop, 2013).

In addition, the paper recognises that the realm of the cultural, as a process of meaning-making, is also constitutive in the production of subjects. This formulation foregrounds the intersection between forms of meaning-making and what Robertson (2012, 3) has termed 'the business of making selves…how worlds, meanings and consciousness are formed'. Hence, the paper makes use of the concept of social imaginaries in understanding meaning-making processes. These are defined as the 'semiotic systems that frame individual subject's lived experiences of an inordinately complex world' and which also 'inform collective calculation about that world… coagulating subjectification and vitalizing affective energy' (Sum and Jessop, 2013, 10).

Finally, Bonaventura de Sousa Santos's (2005, 12) call for a 'sociology of absences' is relevant to understanding the significance of this case study's purpose to retrieve and recognise cultural knowledges previously marginalized. By this term he refers to processes of knowledge production which contribute to 'global cognitive justice' (ibid, 13). Hence, the imperative to engage with alternative 'ways of knowing' or ontologies and cosmologies associated with indigenous knowledges which lie outside of 'western centric conceptions of humanity'. Their retrieval would depend on 'listening to the voices of the south' or metaphorically those whose 'subaltern' status means that their views are frequently marginalized from hegemonic discourses. By revealing the 'inexhaustible diversity of human experience' or what Santos terms an 'ecology of knowledges', such processes may rectify the 'monocultural field' that characterizes knowledge production in general. Exemplifying his conception

of a dialogue between different knowledges he refers to the affiliation between the western concept of human rights and the Hindu and Muslim concepts of human dignity (Santos, 1999). Santos's theoretical architecture is thus particularly relevant in addressing what amounts to a monocultural field of knowledge production in the field of education and peacebuilding.

Research Design

Given the purpose of the research to explore the situated and inter-subjective meanings which teachers and local actors attached to their pedagogical use of indigenous cultural practices, a broadly interpretive methodology was deemed appropriate (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). The following research questions were addressed:

1. What are teachers' pedagogical practices and relationships in FTPC and how and where do they take place?
2. What meanings do teachers ascribe to their use of local peace-related cultural resources in learning activities with their pupils?
3. What are the challenges and limitations of a culturally informed pedagogy, according to teachers and FT staff?

A case study approach was adopted, offering the possibility of generating rich data sources from research into a bounded instance with opportunities for broader theoretically inspired reflections. Research focused on FTPC in schools in the Kono region in the east of SL. As the epicentre of the country's conflict, site of some of its most brutal fighting and atrocities, and more recently of conflict between international mining companies and local communities over revenues from mineral extraction, which some fear could lead to a recurrence of conflict, Kono is particularly well suited to an in-depth micro study exploring teachers' pedagogical practices and attitudes to conflict resolution.

A combination of data generating methods was used. Semi-structured, but nevertheless conversational, interviews as well as follow up meetings and communications were conducted with 10 teachers managing FTPC in the all 5 secondary schools with which FT has established partnerships. In addition, interviews were also held with 3 FT field staff, working with teachers in the Kono region as well as the organisation's two directors, national and international. Interviewing was complemented by participant observation. Hence the researcher accompanied FT field staff to schools to observe school assemblies and activities in which FTPC presented drama to their school communities. Data gathering also included direct observation of the spaces in which teachers led FTPC activities, in particular under lush mango trees. Data was collected in 2 separate 3 month phases; the first between January and March 2014, immediately before the outbreak of the Ebola

Virus, during which schools were closed for up to a year; and the second between November and December, 2016. This enabled an iterative research process, providing an opportunity for follow up interviews to elicit how meanings may have changed over time.

Prior to undertaking the research, the writer had lived and worked alongside teachers in state secondary schools in the capital, as well as in the Kono region, for several years. Arguably this long-term familiarity with the research setting enabled him, as a white European male, to achieve more of an 'insider' than an 'outsider' positioning. This was particularly important given the interpretative purpose to engage teachers and other local actors in co-generating data about the meanings of their pedagogical mediation of local cultural peace related practices. This research arguably benefited from what Millar (2018) has recently described as the 'under-appreciated benefits of long term…and close engagement with the subjects of peacebuilding' (ibid, 1) in order to 'better interpret local experiences and locally salient practice' (ibid).

Data Analysis and findings

All interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically for what teachers and FT staff said about their activities in the clubs and the meaning attaching to them in relation to their imaginaries of peace. The following presentation of findings firstly provides information on the backgrounds and professional status of the teachers. Drawing on the words of FT teachers and staff, the next section presents six imaginaries within which they ascribed meaning to pedagogical activities in the FTPC. These represent the collective views of all informants and provide insights into the diverse, sometimes contradictory ways in which teachers construed their mobilisation of Sierra Leonean culture. This provides the basis for further analysis applying Santos's lenses on epistemic justice in the concluding section.

Who are the teachers in the FT clubs?

All 10 teachers leading the FT clubs in the Kono region were male. This reflected the gender imbalance in SL's teachers nationwide (Shepler and Williams, 2017, 422). They varied in levels of seniority with one headteacher, 2 senior teachers, 2 qualified, and 5 unqualified teachers. This high proportion of unqualified and untrained teachers reflects the situation in Kono and nationwide. All complained of low wages or frequently late or sometimes non-existent salaries, and day to day material hardships and worries, suggesting that they experienced similar challenges to those faced by teachers across the country. None had been consulted by the Sierra Leonean state about their views on peace or the role of education, corroborating recent findings that highlight a failure to acknowledge teacher agency in relation to peace promotion or to support teachers in addressing the legacy of the nation's conflict in their classrooms (ibid). Moreover, none had been consulted by

international aid organisations working on education and peacebuilding in the country. Ignored therefore by both state and international actors as well as suffering high levels of daily precarity this group constitute subalterns in the sense suggested by Santos (2005), they represent disempowered constituencies whose voices and knowledges are excluded from dominant knowledge production processes. However, all were passionate about the FTPC and keen to volunteer their time and energies to run them. FTPC met once or twice a week during lunchtimes or after school. Pupils volunteered to take part with around 40 in each group, including an equal number of boys and girls. All meetings took place under trees in or near the school grounds which were designated Peace Trees. The following analysis highlights the imaginaries that drove and

Learning activities and their imaginaries in the FTPC

Blind spots of internationally led peacebuilding

All informants emphasised how FTPC activities were valorising local cultural practices which had been ignored in the 'surface peace' left by internationally supported transitional justice mechanisms, the Special Court and the TRC. Evoking what he believed was their formulaic and culturally insensitive 'tick box approach' approach, the executive director of FT John Caulker noted that 'when the war was declared over in SL…the international community came and they said ok we should have a truth commission - tick - we should prosecute people at the special court…-tick- we should support the military training -tick-...we should support the police -tick-…finish…so what we are saying is in addition to all of that…it is only realistic if this process is rooted in a local ownership'. A key issue for all informants was what they perceived to be the prescriptive approach and a lack of consultation with grassroots communities outside of urban centres and thus a failure to recognise grassroots cultural practices supporting process of reconciliation and conflict resolution. As a result of such failures, an FT leader noted that, even in 2017, there was a need to compensate for the failure of international interventions to lead to sustainable peacebuilding in the country where interpersonal conflicts between perpetrators and victims were still 'under the surface like a festering wound'.

Multi-ethnic practices and values as resources for peace

All teachers and staff were passionate about indigenous cultural practices as a source of values and behaviours conducive to peaceful resolution of inter-personal conflict. Teachers were known as 'peace co-ordinators' and pupils were called 'peace makers' and 'peace ambassadors' to underline their agency in mobilising indigenous cultural practices. One teacher (T1) explained: 'the name itself bears it…Fambul Tok… Fambul…reconciliation…the word Fambul means your relation your relative. Everybody's considered your relative. Nobody's exempted. It is a custom of Sierra Leoneans'. This referred in particular to the practice known as 'harmattan', when families and communities gather together, sometimes around a bonfire in the colder windy months of the dry season to talk together

and in particular to solve any inter-personal conflicts. The practice was perceived as common to all ethnic groups in SL. One FT staff member noted: 'One issue they all agree is dialogue…What we are trying to work towards is this should be the melting pot where all the tribes have a converging point'. Such traditions were believed to have been destroyed during the conflict**,** 'Our culture, our traditions were extinguished during the conflict' said one headmaster. The tradition of 'family talk' was also understood as a pre-colonial practice. One FT staff member said, 'I believe that before the colonial masters came they used to find ways to resolve their conflict with the concept of dialogue between communities'.

Teachers spoke of their efforts to explain to pupils the Sierra Leonean tradition and principles of 'family talk' and to encourage them to draw on this practice in solving conflicts themselves. T1 noted: 'We try to let them see themselves as reconciliatory actors not only in the school but wherever they find themselves in communities'. Teachers also spoke of the process of identifying with pupils' situations where they might apply the culturally rooted values of reconciliation and forgiveness in their roles as 'peace ambassadors'. Another teacher explained that 'pupils can now use FT messages to solve disputes like fighting, quarrels, malice, abusive languages, stealing, and sports violence among themselves peacefully…they are encouraged to mediate minor conflicts like malice, disrespect for one another, long standing quarrels between family members'.

Teachers also stressed the relevance of FT principle of dialogue as a flexible conflict resolution tool which was relevant to pupils' peaceful navigation of sports or political violence when youth were frequently instrumentalised into violence by elders. 'When they understand these concepts and become part of them in their daily living, during sports or elections it helps them to remain peaceful. They also serve as role models and peace ambassadors'. Moreover, during post-Ebola interviews teachers and FT staff highlighted the contribution of FT peace club members to the diffusion of inter-personal conflicts arising from the stigmatisation of affected families within communities.

Teachers recalled talking in the clubs about the power of Sierra Leone's oral culture traditions as transmitted through proverbs. FT staff noted their cultural weight, pointing out that they were as one staff member (FTS2) said, 'like God speaking to children'. According to FT teachers, a favourite proverb for discussion in the FT clubs was 'family tree bends but does not break'. This proverb evokes the ties that bind Sierra Leoneans to each other and that enable them to withstand the impact and effects of conflict. Teachers talked of the goal of such activities in enabling FT club members to promote culturally resonant values of peace. One said, 'everyone is encouraged to preach peace'.

Multi-ethnic rituals as resources for peace

Teachers also talked of their promotion of the value of indigenous peace related rituals and symbols in the FT clubs to enhance the peace promoting agency of pupils. For instance, FT clubs always opened with Muslim and Christian prayers said by all pupils, an implicit recognition of the religious toleration espoused by Sierra Leoneans. When FT clubs met, they would form a circle, in recognition of the power of symbolism to encourage a sense of peaceful mutual interdependency of club members. Explaining this, one teacher noted that 'we organise the children in a circle because Fambul Tok is trying to teach that we should be one...they will hold each other's hand…to tell them that you are my brother…my sister…my friend…my school mate'.

Teachers also encouraged pupils to solve conflicts under what were known as peace trees, usually mango trees, in or near the school site. 'All the pupils will know that's the peace tree' commented one headteacher. These trees were recognised as distinctive places where FT club members would practice conflict mitigation. One teacher pointed out that 'when you get there your temper will get cool'. Teachers and FT staff recognised that this pedagogical practice repurposed a tradition in which 'our forefathers used to settle disputes under a tree…that is also a symbol of reviving our culture'. One teacher explained the collective process of healing symbolized by the tree: 'the tree is the symbol of peace and unity. It has many branches and leaves. But all in one tree. By interpretation we are all one people regardless of ethnicity or regionalism'.

Teachers drew upon indigenous ritual in another key activity of FTPC, school bonfires. Teachers invited families and community members to join pupils to gather around a bonfire and share with them their personal experiences of violence and injury during the conflict, whether as perpetrators or victims. This practice employed the symbolism of FT reconciliation bonfires between victims and perpetrators of the war, to provide a space in which pupils could hear individual testimonies of pain, suffering and trauma suffered during the conflict. Bonfires were recognised, explained one teacher, as part of a tradition of 'coming around the bonfire to talk about the day's events and to address problems, tell stories and to draw on the collective wisdom of the community'. In its adapted version for the FTPC, this was valued by teachers and FT staff as a form of inter-generational communication about the experience of conflict which would incline pupils against violence. 'Stories and past war atrocities are shared in the FT approach in order for the pupils to feel the horror of war and violence' explained one teacher, words underling the particular value of the experiential knowledge offered by people who have lived through the conflict. The FT director recognised School Bonfires as a 'way of oral history for the kids…to learn about the war in a localized sense', pointing out how thrilled he had been to 'see the level of commitment by the parents…and by their willingness to come forward to tell their stories in front of the kids'. Moreover, the ritual space of storytelling was perceived to enable

reflection on brutal difficult traumatic memories of their experiences during the conflict which were usually impossible to talk about. Thus, one teacher noted 'it is only within that circle, within that bonfire that you can say anything you want relating to the war…you feel empowered, because you know the community is behind you'. This same teacher pointed out that he had shared with pupils his recollections of how 'my nephew was hacked to death with his body given to his mother to chew'.

Responding to community-based practices and languages

While seeing the FTPC as using cultural practices that transcended ethnic difference, FT teachers and staff emphasised the need for teachers to respond to the sometimes-distinctive conflict resolution practices taking place in different ethnic communities. Here their knowledge of local community practices enabled by living in the communities where they taught was deemed very important. One FT staff noted that 'teachers who have a passion for communities [are] the main driving force in terms of the future of the programme'. While drawing on the practice of 'family tok' teachers were thus well placed to understand how, as one explained 'the peace activities vary depending on the tribe, region or district…some don't have things like the pouring of libation while others do'. Hence, 'the teachers would need to be sensitive to the diverse community traditions'. Moreover, in activities involving the community such as bonfires and drama presentations, teachers were expected to break with the official mandatory language of instruction in schools, English, and to use Krio, the most common language spoken by all ethnic groups and also the local language spoken within communities. As another FT noted, 'in some communities people prefer to testify in their local dialect for better understanding'. This linguistic flexibility had particular pedagogical importance in ensuring communication between communities and the pupils during FTPC events involving local communities.

Critique and re-envisioning indigenous culture

FT staff and teachers also talked about critiquing and repurposing indigenous cultural practices, all noted that such traditions, while offering peaceful models could also be exclusionary of certain groups, in particular women and youth. One FT staff said 'Various conflicts of the past was the result of exclusion of youths and women from discussion and engagement. Youths and women are not involved in decision making their voices are not heard. Chiefs do sign up contracts on behalf of their subjects, they also received money which is not shared but been used on personal issues. Because of the above, chiefs are not respected'. Such words underscore awareness of patriarchal nature of chieftaincy dominated discussions in families. So, for instance, FT staff underscored their concern not to reproduce its exclusionary practices which had resulted in the widespread resentment of chiefs by youth, rendering this constituency prone to instrumentalisation into conflict during the civil war. 'When we had the Fambul Tok that did not include the school programmes it seemed as if we were condoning

or supporting the same approach of youth alienation', observed Caulker. FT teachers talked about the need to respond to community requests for youth to be involved in peace related initiatives.

FT teachers talked passionately about their concern to support the voice and agency of girls as part of a commitment to gender equality. One FT staff noted that 'The club do aim of ensuring equal participation of boys and girls as it is a pre-requisite in the FT values. It has respect for both boys, girls, women and children as they are the most vulnerable ones in society'. Hence, FT staff stressed the importance of ensuring that all clubs included an equal number of boys and girls to ensure gender parity. Moreover, FT staff and teachers also talked of repurposing traditional practices by using them as opportunities for shifting patriarchal power relationships between chief and their subjects, including youth and women. This involved ensuring that women and girls participated in the discussion spaces within indigenous practices such as bonfire gatherings. Referring to FT's reconciliation processes, one fieldworker noted that 'it is almost impossible for a woman to accuse a paramount chief…in the open...of doing something wrong...but within the FT bonfire…they can accuse the paramount chief of doing something wrong…so that is the only space'. Moreover, in the FT Clubs, recent Gender Laws passed by the national government, in particular outlawing gender-based violence, were taught to youngsters and also the Child's Rights Act which specifies participation of children in dialogical talk. Evoking FT's vision of effecting a fusion of traditional cultural particularism and global human rights practice, FT's founder John Caulker pointed out 'radical and traditional is the best way to describe it. The radical side of it is bringing in the human rights component as compared to the tradition. I see that as important…recognizing the role of women leaders'. Caulker explained that in supporting such processes he was drawing upon his prior professional experience as a human rights activist at Amnesty International. However, despite aspirations to repurpose patriarchal nature of indigenous culture, FT staff recognised a key constraint in the gender inequalities of SL's teaching force. One noted that 'getting women teachers to be FT club leaders is sometimes difficult. In most schools 95% of the teachers are men. In some schools, you don't even find a single woman. It is really a challenge'. This highlights the systemic gender imbalances in the nation's teaching force which undermined the aspirations of FT to ensure that girls and women were seen as leaders of peace promotion, alongside boys and men.

Limitations

FT teachers and staff also critiqued what they perceived as the limitations of FT, despite their commitment to its methods of peaceful conflict resolution, in addressing some drivers of current grievances in Kono communities outlined above. For instance, when asked about the role of FT messages in addressing local community grievances about a perceived collusion of the Sierra Leonean state and local chiefs with international corporate extractive industry at the expense of local

communities, one teacher said: ‘The state men would pay little or no attention to these [FT] messages, let al.one to act in the direction of these messages’. Another noted the limitations of the conciliatory model of conflict resolution through dialogue within the principle of FT when pitted against the allegedly state supported power of the international mining companies, saying ‘They stand to be more powerful than the national government and can do whatever they want to do because of heavy support and order from the above’. Reflecting on the possibilities of youth using FT principles to challenge employment practices of international mining companies, held to favour outsiders, one teacher noted ‘It stands to be very difficult and very frustrating for youths to use FT methods to deal with some current frustrations. How would they put their cases? Where would they go and who will listen to them? Those who are supposed to receive the youths or even listen to them are the wrong people’. One teacher expressed pessimism about the potential of FT activities to be leveraged to solve socio-economic and political grievances that had driven the nation’s conflict and which he believed persisted in Kono: ‘All that caused the war are still within. Unemployment, attitudes of chiefs, Octea mining [mining company operating in the region], regionalism, lack of access to education and the like. FT methods are applied but stand to be of little or no value. To no avail’**.**

Discussion and Conclusions

Using an interpretative methodology, these findings indicate that the pedagogical mediation of indigenous cultural practices by teachers in conflict-affected Kono results from a plural and dynamic, sometimes contradictory process of meaning-making. The following discussion applies Santos’s conceptual architecture for achieving epistemic justice in order to interpret and assess their significance in illuminating the nature, potential as well as the challenges and limitations of enacting a culturally responsive peace-related pedagogy.

Firstly, listening to these teachers talk of the peace promoting potential of indigenous proverbs, rituals and practices widens the epistemic parameters within which teachers have been framed as agents of peace promotion within the curricula of international aid agencies as noted at the start of this paper. Far from problematizing indigenous values and practices, the rationale for the clubs presented by teachers and FT staff reverses the teleology of modernization theory. By integrating into their pedagogical strategies indigenous peace related rituals, symbols and values common to SL’s ethnic groups, and recognised as powerful and flexible resources for conflict promotion, into their pedagogical strategies, teachers and staff drew upon precisely those ‘practices, rationalities or cultural universes’ which Santos (2012, 50) has called for that lie outside of western legal or scientific paradigms or ‘ways of living and being’. In drawing upon the peace promoting values contained in proverbs they widen teachers’ knowledge base to include what Santos has termed ‘African oral sagesse’ (Santos, 1992). Stressing the collective nature of healing from conflict through shared

symbols and rituals and addressing FTPC members as a group they locate peace promotion outside of the individualistic assumptions of human rights, offering an alternative ontology of peace promotion. Moreover, highlighting teachers' need to respond to local community practices and languages, FTPC eschew the homogenizing projections of SL culture, capitalizing on rather than dismissing its diverse cultural resources. In so doing, FTPC mobilise grassroots resources for conflict resolution ignored in the international interventions, noted at the start of this paper but, resonant with their teachers and pupils and their families and communities as models of peace promoting behaviours.

Secondly, these teachers integrate into their pedagogical practices what anthropologists working in Sierra Leone (Richards, 2016; Douglas, 1975) have noted are socially resonant rituals of conflict resolution particularly attuned to addressing the ineffable nature of the extreme atrocities suffered by its population because of the non-discursive nature of their 'healing power' and appeal to collectively intelligible cultural symbols. Here responsiveness to indigenous cultural practices enable the FTPC to deploy modes of conflict resolution whose symbolic richness and allusiveness are directly attuned to the particularity of the nation's experiences of violent conflict and its legacy.

Thirdly, in both valorising indigenous practices as well as engaging in critique of their exclusion of women and youth based on a human rights agenda, FT clubs demonstrate how peace related pedagogy may be enriched by what Santos has called an 'ecology of knowledges' that brings together diverse ways of being and thinking. The FTPC practices demonstrate that creative dialogue between different knowledges which Santos celebrated. Hence, while the 'family tok' principle of conflict resolution through dialogue is a feature of peace education practice, the FTPC invests that principle with resonance for SL teachers and their pupils through showing its emergence from indigenous cultural traditions. Moreover, the integration of traditional culture with promotion of awareness of human rights and gender equality also demonstrates the benefits of drawing together the strengths of diverse knowledge traditions to enhance peace promoting pedagogy. In this way, teachers' pedagogical practices in the FT clubs traverse what Mac Ginty (2008) has noted are the oversimplified dichotomies between a 'western uber rational and legalistic model of peacebuilding and a non-western, traditional' (ibid, 151) one.

Fourthly, even as they mobilise cultural practices as vehicles of inter-personal peace promotion, teachers are also alert to their limitations in leveraging change in relation to structural socio-economic drivers of conflict, local and global. These findings corroborate recent critiques of the dangers of a narrowly culturalist approach to peace promotion detached from material socio-economic and political causes of grievance which assume in the words of Branch that 'the most authentic identities are cultural identities' (2011, 154).

Fifthly, this case study highlights the challenges faced by teachers in adopting a more culturally attuned pedagogy. The paper evidences the power asymmetries between the peace agendas of international institutions and the local experiences and practices which these teachers are aiming to promote, rendering their pedagogical practices as a form of resistance to international framings of SL culture in their pedagogical practices. Moreover, systemic issues such as the gender inequality of SL's teaching force undermine the concerns of FTPC not only to celebrate but also to critique indigenous cultural practices. Not least are their daily material challenges and the unpaid nature of their efforts.

Finally, and perhaps the most important finding is the epistemological significance of listening to teachers and recognising the value of their subaltern or alternative knowledges in understanding the role of culture in peace promotion. Going beyond the dichotomous understandings of local culture as either uniformly positive or negative, the FTPC teachers adopt a more nuanced approach that eschews idealizing either the local or the global. They highlight both the multiple benefits as well as the limitations of drawing on indigenous cultural practices and values, embrace opportunities to fuse them with western knowledges and evidently navigate these choices in a creative process of pedagogical mediation, involving both valorisation and critique.

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Chapter 6

Higgins, S., (2019). "This is of concern to me really…"; Using photo elicitation to understand the vulnerability and resistance of teachers to drivers of conflict in Kono, Sierra Leone. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education*, Forthcoming.

Abstract

Recent research into the peace promoting agency of teachers in conflict-affected contexts has highlighted a lack of context-specific attention to their emotional responses to the conditions of extreme precarity driving grievances which they experience on a daily basis. This is particularly true of the framings of teachers' agency within the interventions and polices of international aid agencies. This paper addresses this knowledge gap by using photo-elicitation, a research method known to be particularly generative in exploring the feelings of informants whose life experiences are frequently marginalised within dominant framings of their agency. It combines this with Butler's recent conceptualisation of resistance to conditions of precarity as inhering in the experience of vulnerability to them. The paper applies Butler's ontology of the subject to data generated by photo elicitation. It demonstrates how the affective responses of 7 teachers to the sites and situations they identify with conflict underpins their pedagogical and professional interventions to ameliorate and address such situations and imagine alternatives to the status quo. In doing so the paper demonstrates the hitherto unrealised potential of a theoretically informed application of photo-elicitation to enhance understanding of the peace promoting agency of teachers living and working in conflict-affected contexts.

1. Introduction

> 'Our school was completely destroyed and pupils, teachers and parents die [...] this tragedy discourages us, because we groom these people for the future and then unfortunately, they die' (The Sierra Leone Times, July 2017).

The reported response of a teacher to the devastation wrought by mudslides on the homes, schools and lives of communities living on the outskirts of Freetown, capital of conflict-affected Sierra Leone throws into relief the focus of this paper. The report continued to detail this teacher's efforts to help parents find safe shelter and consider options to rebuild the school and continue to teach. Her words evoke grief and pain, while recalling the hope and expectation that had previously driven her investment in teaching and her pupils. They demonstrate the constitutive role of a range of emotions in response to unsafe and fatal infrastructural conditions in defining her professional experiences, goals and relationships with the living and the dead when working as a teacher in a conflict-affected context of extreme precarity.

Such situations are not only true of teachers in the conflict-affected global south. A headteacher struggling to lead a school in a deprived area of South London whose pupils and families lived in a housing block which burned down, killing 80 people including five pupils, commented that 'any emotion that you are feeling is valid' (The Guardian 17th August, 2017). Referring to the diversity of emotions expressed by pupils at a school assembly shortly after the tragedy — hope, grief, anger — his comment underscores recognition that attention to the affective dimensions of their experiences was a key component of professional support for them to cope in its aftermath. While the tragedies faced by these teachers occur in different contexts of teachers' work, both situations underscore the intersection of their professional goals and practices with their own and their pupils' exposure and affective responses to conditions of severe deprivation and precarity. However, recent research into the agency of teachers in relation to peace promotion in conflict-affected environments has highlighted a lack of context specific understanding of teacher's daily realities and experiences in such challenging environments. This means that attention should be focused upon how their emotional and non-cognitive responses shape the micro-practices of their professional work and relationships. This applies to their approaches and actions to addressing social injustices that drive conflict inside and outside of their classrooms (Van Ommering, 2017; Novelli and Sayed, 2016).

This knowledge gap is symptomatic of framings of teachers that truncate, belittle or erase their agency in such settings, and in particular its emotional and embodied dimensions. Thus, scholars have critiqued the paternalism of top down curricula interventions developed by international aid agencies, such as peace education. Such interventions expect teachers to give rational approval to and then implement a generic international menu of programmes developed without regard to the particularities of their challenging contexts or indeed their prior navigation of the very circumstances that purportedly necessitate such interventions (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014). The emphasis in education strategy, policy and programmes on the need for teachers to be trained to develop skills and knowledges positions them in the recent words of Ginsburg (2017) as 'human capital [or] resources [rather than as] human beings' (ibid, 6). Such framings define the professional practices of teachers in narrowly technical and educationist terms, eliding the inter-connections between their experiences of conflict inside and outside of their school environments. Likewise, a study aiming to illuminate 'what makes teachers tick' (VSO, 2002) critiqued approaches to teachers that treated them as an undifferentiated category whose value is in filling gaps in teacher supply or as 'technical experts' (ibid, 4). All these framings of teachers' agency present them as words, depoliticised actors, bypassing their values, emotions or reflexivity.

The contrasting presentation of teachers in some policy documents as heroic individuals who are a 'critical resource' (Buckland, 2005) with a pivotal contribution to make to peace promotion also serves paradoxically to truncate holistic recognition of their agency. Larsen (2010) has noted how the

discourse of teacher centrality within which the agency of teachers is framed, tends to foreground teaching rather than the teacher, who is associated with the performance of discrete and decontextualized skills and competencies. Hence, 'the idea of the teacher who thinks critically and feels strongly about the social contexts of education and acts as an advocate for social change or social justice is absent' (ibid, 219). The failure of teacher education interventions to engage teachers' views about social justice issues and the role of education in addressing them is symptomatic of this erasure (Moon, 2013). Ranging from hyperbole about their potential contributions to denials of their autonomous agency or humanity, these framings, in all their contradictions and assumptions, attest to an underlying failure to engage with the views, voices and feelings in the contexts of their schools and communities in conflict-affected environments.

Vongalis Macro (2006) has also pointed to the power imbalances between international and local actors in peace processes that explain this lack of engagement. She points out that in Iraq teachers views and voices were side-lined in a process of rebuilding educational provision after conflict led by international actors, concluding that 'educators are key actors in the symbolic theatre of policy but that real educational change is left in the hands of others' (ibid, 107). Symptomatic of this marginalisation is the widespread failure to consult teachers on their views about peace promotion, conflict resolution and appropriate professional practices. This brings to conflict-affected contexts the under-estimation of the value of teachers' perspectives, noted more broadly within Africa, in deficit understandings of their agency that represent them as unable to deliberate on their practices (Akyeampong et al., 2006). These occlusions of teachers' verbal, emotional and embodied exercise of professional agency in relation to grassroots drivers of conflict reproduce what scholars have noted is a tendency within international humanitarian aid agencies to position conflict-affected or vulnerable populations as passive or lacking in agency; and therefore, in need of interventions. Hence there are calls for the 'overly human capital driven logics of much teacher policy reform agendas' to be replaced by a more 'holistic' approach (Novelli and Sayed, 2016, 15).

This paper responds to these knowledge gaps and in particular their foreclosure of the possibility that teachers' affective, embodied and experiential responses to the precarious conditions in which they live and work may form a key and constitutive locus of their exercise of agency in relation to addressing social injustices. In particular, it seeks to foreground the conceptual and methodological challenges of widening the parameters in which teachers' agency is understood and recognised. It does so through a case study which explores the responses of seven teachers working in conflict-affected Kono in the eastern part of Sierra Leone to perceived and experienced drivers of conflict they identify as affecting their communities and pupils.

Exploring these issues, this paper draws on Butler's (2016) recent conceptualisation of resistance to conditions of precarity, and perceived and experienced social injustices as inhering in the experience of vulnerability to them. It combines this with using photo elicitation as a productive data gathering method to elicit teachers' affective and embodied experiences of vulnerability. Bringing this conceptualisation of resistance together with an innovative methodology, the paper aims to show how their emotional and embodied experiences of conditions of precarity may motivate their exercise of agency, both professional and personal, in relation to addressing grievances linked to conflict.

The paper starts by locating the discussion within recent insights from research into education and peacebuilding which have sought to widen and sharpen our understanding of teachers' contributions to peace promotion and on which this paper builds. The next section outlines the value of Butler's notion of vulnerability and resistance together with photo elicitation as theoretical and methodological tools which are particularly generative in illuminating the neglected dimensions of teachers' exercise of agency. The third section presents an analysis of the drivers of conflict in Kono and the precarious conditions faced by teachers and their communities, highlighting the multi-scalar factors at play. Next, the research design is described followed by presentation of a selection of the photo-elicitation data. This highlights what is revealed about teachers' feelings and actions in response to perceived and experienced conflict drivers and forms the basis for theoretically informed discussion, applying a Butlerian lense, in the fifth section. This shows how teachers, in their micro activities in and out of school, mobilise their experience of vulnerability on a daily basis to navigate resistance to social injustices. The conclusions draw out the policy and programming implications for re-envisioning support to and reframing expectations of teachers in conflict-affected contexts.

2. Towards a holistic understanding of teachers' peace promoting agency

This paper builds on empirical and conceptual developments in recent research on teachers in conflict-affected contexts. For instance, teachers' exercise of peace promoting agency has been located within normative dimensions of social justice identified by Nancy Fraser (2009), which include the economic processes of redistribution of wealth and resources, cultural processes of recognition and political processes of representation (Novelli and Sayed, 2016). A key analytical benefit of this research has been to go beyond both the erasure of teacher agency or its narrowly technical focus by spotlighting the contribution of teachers to precise context specific peace related processes. Furthermore, the application of a cultural political economy framework to study the role of education in peacebuilding and of key actors has re-oriented attention to the micro-level 'feelings' as well as the 'social practices, experiences and forms of reflexivity' (Robertson and Dale, 2015, 154) of individuals and communities. Moreover, albeit critiqued for being 'all too rational' (Lopes Cardozo, 2019, 25) recent conceptualisations of teachers' agency through the heuristic lense of the strategic relational

approach has also facilitated understanding of their roles as 'strategic' actors within an often-conflicted space defined and delimited by options emergent from their contexts. Yet, the need for more holistic understanding of teachers' agency remains.

While there are calls for a more radical understanding of teacher's agency in addressing the structural and historical inequities that drive conflict (Novelli and Sayed, 2016) we have little evidence of how teachers feel in relation to such issues. While teacher agency in relation to peacebuilding has been defined as their ability to think, feel and act to promote 'values and attitudes that offer a basis for transforming conflict itself' (Novelli and Smith, 2011, 7), we have little knowledge of these components nor the interconnections between them within the agentic trajectory of teachers in relation to conflict, despite the high expectations of their roles noted above. The next section explores the conceptual and methodological challenges as well as opportunities to achieve this wider understanding.

3. Methodological Challenges and Opportunities

Adopting a more holistic approach that foregrounds the affective responses of teachers raises fundamental ontological issues related to the parameters through which the human subject and the collective social may be conceived. In particular it problematises the Enlightenment notion of the sovereign rational subject as the locus of human agency and invites attention to alternative ontologies that foreground its affective dimensions. This rethinking of the parameters through which to understand teachers' agency has epistemological and methodological consequences. It opens up to question **what** we can know and in turn **how** we can know, or in other words what methods we may use to retrieve and understand these dimensions of the agentic. The following discussion of the paper's methodological positioning in relation to these issues draws on Dunne, Pryor and Yates's (2005) useful articulation of the interconnections between research methods, which include data gathering techniques and procedures; and the research methodology or the underlying assumptions upon which they are based. Hence the following explanation highlights the inter-relation between methods and methodology as part of an iterative research process which is 'dynamic, contingent, dialogic and context specific' (ibid, 166).

This paper's approach draws on several insights of recent research on the role of emotions in teachers' exercise of professional agency which has formed part of a broader turn to the affective in social science disciplines (Zembylas and Schultz, 2016). Firstly, emotions are defined as constituted by a mix of bodily sensations, thoughts, judgements and beliefs and their inter-relation. Secondly, the activity of teaching is conceptualised as a form of emotional labour, a practice conditioned not only by teachers' beliefs and values but also their emotional orientation to the needs of their pupils and communities (Hargreaves, 1998). Thirdly, Zembylas (2007) has shown how teachers may mobilise

emotions such as compassion and anger to address social injustices affecting their pupils. Fourthly, emotions – what Boler (1999) terms 'feeling power' - are not to be conceptualised in psychologising terms as private or the expressions of some individualising inner reality. Rather they are to be understood as relational, embedded within the social and political operation of power and the materiality of lived experience of which they are the contingent and historically specific effects.

However, this paper draws primarily on Butler's recent ontology of the subject as vulnerable and resistant (Butler, 2016). Decentralising the autonomous sovereign subject, Butler highlights the affective and embodied experience of vulnerability, not as conventionally understood as the antithesis of agency and as signifying passivity and victimhood, but rather as the locus of agency, from which emerges forms of resistance to perceived and experienced social injustices. Here, vulnerability is understood as a differentially allocated and 'politically produced' effect of the precaritisation of some populations through their exposure to power. This process results in the exposure of populations to poor infrastructures resulting in injury and death, as well as dispossession, unemployment, illiteracy and inadequate health care. Within Butler's ontology, such experiences of suffering, while disabling and disempowering, may also furnish the grounds for critique, resistance and social activism, wherein vulnerability itself, in its sensual, embodied and emotional dimensions, and in its capacity to underscore the fundamental inter-dependence underpinning social relations between individual human subjects, is mobilized as a source of resistance. Hence, the experience of vulnerability may be simultaneously 'perilous and enabling' (Butler, Gambetti and Sabsay, 2016, 1). This ontology of the subject as vulnerable, while a general claim about the social and relational condition of the human subject, 'always appears in the context of specific social and historical relations that call to be analysed concretely' (ibid, 4). Spotlighting the experience of vulnerability in the exercise of agency also entails attention to the embodied relation between subjects and the materialities of their environment as this is conditioned by power relationships. Hence, this necessitates 'a different conception of embodiment and sociality within fields of contemporary power, one that engages object worlds, including both built and destroyed environments, as well as social forms of inter-dependency and individual or collective agency' (ibid, 6).

Foregrounding the affective and embodied experience of precarity as the locus of agency and resistance, Butler's conceptualisation offers a means of recognising and understanding the agentic significance of teachers' emotional responses to the structural conditions and inequities driving grievance and conflict which they, as individuals and collectively, face daily in conflict-affected contexts. Hence, her ontology of resistance is well suited to exploring the very dimensions of their agency which have been erased or occluded from view in the framings noted at the start of this paper. As Zembylas (2016) has commented, 'what we as critical ethnographers may find illuminating and exciting about thinking with Butler's theoretical frame is how it makes visible the constitution of

affective subjects in the intersections of the psychic and the socio-political as those are manifest in everyday encounters' (ibid, 49). The next section discusses photo elicitation as a data gathering method particularly well suited to these ontological priorities.

3.1. Photo elicitation as method and methodology

Photo elicitation involves informants taking pictures that represent things and issues that matter to them. These photos form the basis for subsequent interviewing which may trigger reflections, memories, emotions and personal narratives (Harper, 2002). Various characteristics of this method make it particularly relevant. Firstly, it is valued for its potential to elicit a 'different kind of information' (ibid, 13) from that yielded in traditional interviewing, in particular its capacity to trigger and evoke the intense feelings of informants. Second, as Hansen-Ketchum & Myrick (2008, 211) note, visual images offer very 'immediate, tangible and intimate ways of understanding participants' experiences'. Moreover, their intrinsic ambiguity and polyvalence may prompt exploratory verbalization by informants, inviting in-depth exploration of 'feelings and memories' (Harper, 2002, 13). Thirdly, the method has been generative in 'giving a platform' for marginalized and frequently unheard groups to express their emotions and views and thereby challenge dominant understandings of their lives (Torre and Murphy, 2015). Fourthly, by vesting agency in the informant photo elicitation unsettles hierarchical power relationships of conventional interviewing (ibid, 12-13), thereby enhancing the agency of the informants as self-determining constructors of knowledge about themselves. This feature was especially relevant given the broad concern of the research to re-orient attention to dimensions of teachers' agency previously erased, in particular their experiences of drivers of conflict and their emotional responses to them as teachers.

3.2. Teachers and their communities in Kono, Sierra Leone

Many recent commentators have highlighted the continuation of the structural drivers of grievance that led to the nation's conflict, 10 years after peace was officially declared. They have also critiqued the failure of liberal peacebuilding interventionism, which prioritises security and the opening up of markets, to address them (Cubitt, 2012). Drivers include; regional inequalities in access to and provision of social services, including education and health; high levels of youth unemployment and frustration; elite monopolies of resources and wealth; an exclusionary political process in which power resources and wealth are controlled by elites at state and chieftaincy levels; and widespread mistrust of the central state. Low life expectancy at 50.8 years, high levels of infant mortality at 13060 deaths per 100,000 live births (UNDP, 2016, 216); high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition (Government of Sierra Leone ,2015, 12); and the recent outbreak and rapid spread of Ebola attest to the massive failures of infrastructure and chronic exposure of the majority of Sierra Leoneans to death, disease, hunger. Educational provision is also implicated in this grim picture of immiseration;

with regional disparities in the number of schools and qualified teachers, pupil-teacher ratios, and attendance at primary and secondary school between Freetown and outlying regions, including Kono (Government of Sierra Leone, 2010). Recent studies have highlighted the daily conditions of precarity faced by the nation's teachers, particularly in the outlying regions, who struggle on low or non-existent salaries, are constantly worried about buying food and about household expenditures and having to take other jobs to make ends meet (Higgins and Novelli 2017).

In the case of Kono these conditions are exacerbated by community wide resentment at the impact of extractive industrial operations resulting from the post war proliferation of international diamond mining companies in the area (Zulu and Wilson, 2012). Communities resent the perceived exploitation of land and resources by outsiders; their failure to receive tangible material benefits despite their forced dispossession from homes and land; and frustrations at the poor infrastructure of the houses and schools built to relocate them. A recent study of the responses of Kono youth found 'perceptions of severe exploitation and marginalisation by powerful corporate actors' (Maconachie, 2014, 75) while another study has warned of the 'potential resurrection of the grievance-based unrest, marginalisation and frustration that led to the civil war' (Fanthorpe and Gabelle, 2013, 57). Such insights underpin Richmond's (2014) assertion that 'neoliberal forms of capitalism are not conducive to peacebuilding in a post-conflict transition' (ibid, 450), in particular through their contribution to exacerbating existing social and economic inequalities frequently driving conflict.

These conditions have led commentators to characterise Sierra Leone as experiencing a 'negative peace' in which structural violence remains pervasive and drivers of conflict remain. The statistics and experiences of disease, death, exploitation and immiseration noted above certainly evidence Galtung's characterisation of this modality of partial peace characterised by the exposure of whole demographics to 'inequalities of power, resources and life opportunities' (Winter, 2012, 168). Moreover, with its communities experiencing poverty, hunger, dispossession from homes, illness, death as the direct or indirect effects of their vulnerability to the operations of global mining companies, the priorities of liberal peacebuilding and the decisions of national and local elites, Kono represents, in Butlerian terms, a zone of hyperprecarity. In other words, this is a 'politically induced condition' in which certain populations 'suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence and death' (Butler, 2009, 2). That little has changed for this population over the decade since peace was declared in 2002 underscores the 'slow' temporality that Nixon (2011) has noted frequently characterises the relentless daily suffering of the poor over long periods of time. The next section outlies the research design tailored to embedding teachers' agency in relation to conflict drivers within their responses to such conditions.

3.3. Research Design

A case study design was chosen as particularly appropriate, enabling in depth exploration of a bounded context in order to generate rich data to generate theoretically informed reflection. Seven teachers, four male and three female, from three government assisted secondary schools in Kono region were involved in a process of photo elicitation.

All schools served impoverished communities affected by the operation of international mining companies in the Kono district. One school was forced to relocate and its community rehoused, to enable land to be free for mining purposes. Another was directly adjacent to a mining site. All schools and their communities were disturbed by blasting operations, causing pollution, infrastructural damage and noise.

All participating teachers volunteered to be involved in the research and were selected on the basis of purposive sampling and snowballing. While not aiming to provide a representative sample in strict quantitative terms, the participants did offer an inclusive group across diverse criteria. They included teachers at various stages of seniority, with 1 headteacher, 2 senior women teachers, 2 middle ranking. Five participants were in receipt of monthly state salaries, while 2 were unqualified and unpaid, dependent on community stipends. They included 3 women and 4 men. As such the sample was not representative of the wider teaching force in Sierra Leone, which is male dominated.
Teachers were asked to take between 5 and 7 photographs. It was requested that photographs should represent things that they felt strongly about, or which mattered to them in relation to their experiences of, or awareness of grievances causing conflict in their schools and wider community. Digital cameras were provided to teachers. Local *Okada* transport was provided for teachers, this is the key means of traveling locally in Kono and injected a 'roaming' element into the photo-elicitation process, which enabled mobility for teachers to make choices based on access to the wider region of Kono outside the city.

The pictures taken formed the basis for subsequent in depth and conversational interviews. These were open-ended, exploratory and dialogical, with the teacher informants taking the initiative in deciding what to talk about. However, within this format, questions included:

Why did you choose to take a photo of this?
Why does it matter to you?
What feelings do you have about this?
What associations or memories does it have for you?
What did you do, or are you doing as a teacher about this and what are your challenges?

Figure 8 Photo elicitation follow-up questions

These questions were intended to trigger teachers' thoughts and feelings about the subjects representing conflict which they had photographed as well as the associations and narratives within which their selected images accrued meaning, both in relation to conflict drivers impinging on their daily lives as teachers as well as their activism and agency in response.

In all, 7 teachers took 46 photographs. Data analysis was an iterative process, which included thematic analysis of the subject content of the photographs taken to indicate the individual and collective concerns and priorities of the teachers as a group. Secondly, transcriptions of photo-elicitation interviews were made with particular attention paid not only to words used but also to the tone of voice and emotional expression communicated. Thirdly, the two data sets were analysed together by repeatedly listening to interview recordings and analysing transcripts in conjunction with the images to which they referred. This was a process in which alertness to 'data that glowed' (Maclure, 2010, 282) was as resonant as conventional extrapolation of codes from a rich body of data.

4. Photo elicitation data and analysis

This section presents the data in 3 stages. The first provides a thematic categorisation of the subjects of the photographs selected by teachers which they associated with conflict drivers. The second section reports on five photo-elicitation interviews. While not intended to be representative in any quantitative sense, the selection illustrates the responses of individual teachers to the subjects representing conflict which were prioritised by the broader group. It draws on quotes to illustrate the emotions, associations and narratives triggered by the subjects of their photographs as well as their articulation of personal and professional agency in response to the conflict drivers they represented. The third section takes the analysis further by applying to these findings the conceptual lenses of Butler's ontology of the vulnerable and resistant subject, as they respond to conditions that are both 'perilous' but also 'enabling' (Butler, Gambetti and Sabsay, 2016, 1). The conclusions consider the implications for re-envisaging and supporting the peace promoting agency of teachers in more holistic, and less paternalistic ways.

4.1. Teachers responses to conflict drivers

The table below shows the subjects and broader thematic categories of the photographs taken by teachers. Numbers are given in brackets when more than one picture was taken of the same subject. The subjects of these photographs which Include: buildings, objects, physical features of the environment, and people, bear witness to the tangible and palpable materiality that mediate the experience of conflict drivers for these teachers in their daily experience. Their overlapping choices suggest some level of thematic consensus around these teachers' perceptions of and experiences of

conflict. The following section locates these images within teachers' emotional and agentic responses to the conflict drivers these images signify.

Thematic focus	Subjects of Individual photographs
School infrastructure and wider infrastructural problems	• Broken school tap • Ditch caused by erosion in school grounds • Crack on school wall • Bags filled with sand to prevent flooding of school site • Dangerous school fence • Damaged school toilet • School playground erosion; pit caused by gulley (3) • Dangerous electricity pylons (2) • Disused electricity power supply station • Dilapidated community school (2) • Poor road conditions (3) • Pupils fighting to get onto school bus
Features of the Kono Environment	• Rubbish dump in centre of town (3) • Stagnant pond in town (3) • Stagnant pond near houses • Pupils stepping on stones over water flooded path • Water flooded path
Youth experiences	• Meeting place for youth (3) • An *Okada* rider (2) • Children out of school welding • Child chopping stones
Operations of an International Mining Company	• Blocked road for mining work • Mountain of rubbish caused by land extraction (2) • Gravestone of man who died in protest against mining company (2) • House built for Chief by Mining Company • Houses built for local community for mining company • People being displaced from homes and land (3) • Broken fence caused by town mining activities
Significant objects or sites	• NGO Advocacy Sign • Ebola burial site • Broken door due to vandalism after football match

Figure 9 Thematic analysis of photographs

Figure 10 School grounds with soil erosion

4.2. Teachers' responses to sights and sites of conflict

4.2.1. School grounds with soil erosion

One senior female teacher took the photo (Figure 3) of a deep gulley caused by water erosion. This was one of many subjects showing poor or unsafe school infrastructure taken by the group. These evoked passionate expressions of frustration and anxiety at the conditions teachers and their pupils were obliged to work and learn. Explaining her choice this teacher noted that it showed "heavy erosion right in the centre of the compound". She was moved to take it because "I see it as very dangerous for our children and even the teachers". She pointed

out that “I feel bad because we are here to protect life…if something is there that is harmful to the children it will not go down well with us here”.

This teacher also explained her sense of abandonment resulting from failed attempts to enlist the support of local chiefs, elders and the international mining company which had rehoused the school to open up land for extractive purposes. “We have channelled the matter to authorities…but nothing has happened”. This led to staff resentment of constituencies whom they felt had the resources and power to intervene, but who, nevertheless, were neglectful of their predicament as teachers. However, the pictures also elicited pride for her pupils’ interventions to improve school infrastructure. She recalled how the staff had directed pupils to “come with empty bags and fill them with sand and stone to block the drainage and flow of water”. She recalled the physical stamina and labour demonstrated by children, resulting in a slightly safer environment but was aware that their efforts needed to be continually repeated, especially during the rainy season. The photograph recorded these acts of teacher-pupil initiative that stood in contrast to their experience of being neglected. “We developed the place by ourselves” she enthused.

4.2.2. A schoolgirl crossing a stream

Figure 11 A schoolgirl crossing a stream

The teacher spotlighted its subject matter in a tone of disgust and indignation, directing the writer to look carefully at what it showed. “In fact you see here look at the school girl standing there…have you seen the girl? Have you seen her?” Locating the image in a wider narrative of pupils’ unsafe journeys to school, he explained that **“**in the rainy season when the pupils want to go to school unless they remove their shoes…they fold up their trousers...because no bridge has been constructed…they walk into the water…and go across it to...their various schools”. He also explained his failed attempts to consult the chief and local authority to take action to improve the crossing and his resulting disappointment with local government. “I wrote a letter to him once…to just give a semi bridge…so we can place it there in order to control the water…he refused…now it is the same council who are asking the people of this community to pay their taxes...they don’t consider the people to that extent”. The image also triggered a further emotionally charged narrative of pride in his own and his pupils’ resourcefulness. Referring to a detail of the photograph, the teacher pointed out proudly “I bought the stones you are seeing now there…to help the pupils because it was actually deep…especially deep during the rainy season”. Moreover, referring to the crossing of several stones shown in the photo he added that “those pupils

from this school constructed it". These words evinced his pride in his own and his pupils' exercise of responsibility in response to their predicament.

Figure 12 Image of a youth bike rider

4.2.3. Image of a youth bike rider

The teacher explained that he had taken this picture to represent his sadness. "Just after I left the village, I saw this boy…look at this boy he is a small boy…he should be in school…he is without money…coming from a poor home except he do this to I don't feel good…just look at the face". The teacher recalled that the encounter process of taking the photograph had provided an opportunity for demonstrating his concern and finding out more about him; "I even stopped to ask him to know something of his problem". Recalling his encounter with the youth he explained that "he spoke to me that because of lack of money...he wanted to go to school but there is no way except he go into *Okada* riding…he preferred doing this to gain some little amount for himself". He also had found out that "one of the sad parts of the whole story...his mother died far back". The youth had as a result found himself responsible for caring for his family and contributing to the family income through *Okada* riding. Summarising his response, the teacher said, "it is really deplorable." He emphasised that "I really felt anger for the boy yesterday and the kind of situation he is living in." This prompted his analysis of the underlying national and educational challenge: "These are the people that needs help…he needs school; the mining company could help him…let's cater for children who are not going to school; let's help them; so that they can be educated and develop the country."

Figure 13 Image of a gravestone

4.2.4. Image of a gravestone

The teacher explained this choice of a memorial stone particularly resonant because he encountered it every day on his journey to school, sparking a process of remembering and mourning: "whenever I see that particular site I do recall for the incident that occurred at that time". Referring to the deceased memorialised by the grave the teacher explained with indignation that "this man made died in the 2007 strike action that took place in that company, Koidu holdings". This event was one of several protesting against poor working conditions and pay offered by the company to local people. The teacher repeated the words of the grave which noted that the man

was killed in a “peaceful protest against corporate abuse of community rights.”

The photograph generated this teacher’s expressions of anger at the role of Sierra Leonean police and their apparent collusion with the mining company against community people in responding to local protesters in Kono. The teacher explained that “The shots came from the police in the company as the protesters marched forward…and that led to the death of this guy.” He also noted “police are meant to be neutral…in this case they are not neutral…they are working as if they are for the company.” Moreover, he recalled the contested nature of the memorial site in which local communities had to protest to the chief over the site of the memorial: “Even to prepare this graveside it was actually difficult…we had to challenge Paramount Chief to allow them to bury the man on this particular site…we told the paramount chief that this is serving as a memory that this guy was an hero…he was fighting for the redemption of the resettlement people.” Here, the teacher’s anger was directed against community elders, widely perceived as collusive with international mining companies at the expense of local people. The image also precipitated reflections on his own anger at the social injustices felt by local communities: “As a teacher and a citizen of this country, I am not very happy because all these minerals coming out of the place none are given to the citizens as a percentage…nothing is given.” However, anger also triggered reflexivity about his social goals as a teacher and his sense of solidarity with the plight of local affected communities: “As born and bred in this place…as indigenous of this place…I am living in this community…I am fighting for the development of this community.” Hence, he was particularly aware of community expectations: “So they are expecting you to be that you know everything…in the community…so when such a thing is happening…they see me as a teacher…I am working for the pupils…if I see these people taking advantage of the situation it does go against me...so if I see it goes against me it hurts me’. Hence, he had founded a School Mining Club, in partnership with a local NGO, in which he and other teaching colleagues were “getting students to do school advocacy for change to happen…sometimes we let the children go to the media and tell the people about the mining”.

Figure 14 Advocate for Social Justice and Development NGO

4.2.5. A sign of an NGO

Explaining why he had taken this photograph of one of many NGO signs dotted around the landscape of Kono, and referring in particular to its wording, one teacher pointed out that **“**This matters to me as a teacher…is a great concern to me because when you talk about advocacy it is to advocate for the people…people that are suffering for things

that they need but it is hard for them to get…so the best way to get this is to advocate for them…talk for them." He explained that he was moved to take this because it represented not so much conflict but how to respond to conflict drivers in his role as a teacher: "There is a link because speaking of education you are speaking of advocacy…you advocate for school going children…they are things they need in their schools…maybe someone will come to their aid…I see myself as one of the advocates…I advocate for the people." This socially, and community oriented role of a teacher concerned for the amelioration of the lives of his pupils and communities was a particular source of pride and hope: "it is not just a matter of you standing in front of the blackboard…teaching A plus A is equal to this…no…you need to know something about their social life…about the development in the community."

4.3. Teachers as vulnerable and resistant

These teachers' images bear witness to the tangible and palpable materiality through which conflict is mediated and experienced by these teachers in their day to day encounters with objects, people and the environment. Moreover, their responses in the space of photo elicitation interviews also reveals the powerful affective economy that attends those interactions. Hence, these teachers express a range of feelings from rage, anger and frustration to hope, compassion and grief. The narratives and associations within which their feelings are located reveal them not as wholly internal or personal or individualising.

As Butler's account of vulnerability shows, they attest to their affective and embodied experience of vulnerability, the differentially distributed exposure of some populations to conditions of precarity generated through the 'perilous' effects of power. So, we see these feelings emerging from their responses to the effects on their, and their pupils' lives of the failure of international corporate investment to consider the well-being of local communities; to improve dangerous school infrastructure; eliminate state and police violence and repression of protest. Furthermore, the failure of local government and elites to consider intervening to improve the safety of teachers and pupils walking to school; the failure of the state to address the educational and social needs of youth in Kono; collusion between local and national elites and international mining companies against the local Kono communities and in particular, their failure to listen to community viewpoints. Their emotions speak back to the power relations which result in the persistence in Kono communities of what one recent scholar has described as 'material deprivation, poor education and health, vulnerability and exposure to risk, and voicelessness and powerlessness' (Zulu and Wilson, 2012, 1105). which attests to 'entrenched, unequal patron-client relations of power surrounding mineral exploitation which favour powerful elites' (ibid).

Yet, in the dialogue generated by discussion of their photographs, teachers explained how their emotional responses to these sites of conflict also catalysed actions and initiatives in the micro-spaces of their personal and professional activity through which they attempted to leverage change, or in other words resisted those self-same conditions. As Butler has noted, vulnerability to conditions of precarity is not only 'perilous' but also enabling; emotions are 'the stuff of ideation and critique' (2009, 34) and thus resistance may emerge from vulnerability itself. Photo-elicitation revealed diverse agentic trajectories from these teachers' experiences of vulnerability to actions and imaginaries of resistance namely: from despair at the predicament of a poor unemployed *Okada* rider, to the articulation of an imaginary of education provision that would be better attuned to youth needs; from anger at the failure of local government, to intervene to improve the safety of waterlogged routes to school to pride in his own and pupil's physical labour using stones to address the problem, albeit temporarily; from anxiety at unsafe school drainage systems, to deploying pupils energies to improve it with sandbags; from grief at the death of a member of a community through state violence, to a reaffirmation of the moral purpose of being a teacher based on recognition of inter-dependence and solidarity with the suffering of the families of their pupils; from frustration that communities were not being listened to by elites, to a hopeful identification of professional self-identity with the advocacy work of local NGOs.

Tracking these teachers' trajectories from vulnerability to resistance reveals the multi-faceted nature of their agency in addressing conflict drivers that includes spaces and sites in and out of the classroom. Thus, they show a willingness to do physical labour, mourn and grieve, reimagine their purposes as teachers, write to local elites, exercise solidarity with their communities against an international mining company. Vulnerability and resistance in these teachers' agency involve imaginative, physical and relational dimensions, and interconnects their experiences in and out of the classroom and school environment.

5. Conclusions

Far from being passive or unreflexive, these teachers in Kono are highly agentic in relation to the infrastructural and environmental conditions of precarity they perceive as driving grievance and conflict for themselves, their pupils and communities in and out of school. However, the analysis presented above shows how the nature and modality of these teachers' agency falls outside of the projections and under the radar of the policies and prescriptions of international aid agencies.

Firstly, the analysis of the trajectories of teachers' agency in conflict-affected conditions shows how they mobilise their emotional and embodied experiences of vulnerability in their micro-actions in order to navigate and ameliorate their situation. These findings indicate what is lost in the failures of generic

and paternalistic interventions to consult teachers about their views, feelings and experiences in challenging conflict-affected contexts. In particular, it reveals the failure of framings based on human capital theory to recognise the agentic significance of teachers' affective and palpable responses to perceived and experienced injustices in shaping and defining their priorities and actions.

Secondly, teachers' stories and voices show that their exercise of agency does not align with the triumphant narrative of the pivotal individual teacher implicated in linear processes of peace promotion. As vulnerable in resistance, their agency, as embodied and experienced, is both brought into being by, and constrained by, infrastructural and environmental challenges and the effects of the power of elites and global business interests in resisting their efforts to achieve change. These are felt and experienced repeatedly by these teachers on a daily basis, rendering their contributions to addressing conflict highly repetitive but also contingent and unresolved. The emotions of rage, frustration, anger and hope that drive their actions in relation to conflict are not internal products of their personal psyches but are activated by and intersect with their 'perilous' exposure to the effects of power. Moreover, theirs is a relational rather than independent exercise of agency, foregrounding their inter-dependence with each other and their pupils, advocacy networks of local civil society, and with the objects and environments, graves and stones that impinge on their daily work and imaginaries.

Third and relatedly, teachers' responses to various forms of precarity creating conflict involves their navigation of multiple multi-scalar power relationships. Their infrastructural and environmental challenges in and out of school, their acts of mourning for protests against mining companies, their empathy with unemployed youth all bear witness to the effects on their communities of the market priorities of liberal peacebuilding, extractive global capitalism, as well as the mistrust of the state and local elites. The centrality of the global in Kono as a driver of conflict draws attention to the limitations of locating the challenge of peace promotion solely at the local or national level as in so many curricula interventions that pathologise conflict-affected communities.

Fourthly, these findings strongly caution against narrowly educationist view of teachers' roles in conflict-affected contexts that sterilise their professional activity in their classrooms from the daily realities of living in a conflict-affected context that shape and condition that work. Their narratives and the affective economy driving their agency highlights the intersections of their experiences of vulnerability both inside and outside of their schools with their emergent priorities and professional goals in relation to addressing conflict. This finding supports recent calls to rethink the 'logic' of teacher related interventions to take account of more holistic understandings of their agency such that attention to the possibilities of their pedagogical practices and relationships in peace promotion is

connected to and not detached from their work and living conditions, morale and motivation, emotions and concerns, in other words their ‘vulnerability’.

Finally, perhaps the most important message to emerge from this case study is the value of bringing new methodological and ontological lenses to address knowledge gaps in understanding and recognising teachers’ agency in conflict-affected contexts. Butler (2014) has pointed out that peace is rarely a ‘quiescent state’. This case study has revealed teachers’ micro actions and feelings in their daily navigation of conflict that are hinted at but never fully grounded in the aspirations to locate them in cultural, political and economic processes such as redistribution, representation and recognition (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith, 2017). This study has revealed the concrete materialities of people, buildings, and the environment which mediate these processes as a palpable and tangible reality in the daily lives of teachers. It has drawn attention to the agentic significance of teachers feelings of rage and hope, frustration and grief, pride and solidarity in their responses as well as their micro-actions of resistance to conflict drivers, such as placing sandbags to make the school environment safer, stones in a waterlogged passage, writing to the local council, empathising with the predicament of an unemployed youth, rethinking the goals of education and the duties of teachers, solidarity with the precarity of their communities. these daily examples of vulnerability and resistance are the very stuff of these teachers’ attempts to mitigate and ameliorate conflict drivers in their school and wider environment. Returning to the understandings of teachers’ agency discussed at the start of this paper, this case study has shown how a methodology combining visual methods in combination with Butler’s ontology of the subject may yield more holistic and rooted recognition of their peace promoting agency that are occluded or erased within the paternalistic logics of the educational interventions of international aid agencies.

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Conclusions

1. Conclusions

This section considers the findings of this research as well as its ethical and professional underpinnings, in the light of its broad commitment, as outlined in the introduction, to what Santos (2005, 2007) calls a 'sociology of absences' and a 'sociology of emergences'. These forms of knowledge production would, on the one hand, be attentive to what is missing in hegemonic and western-centric epistemes. Hence they foreground a research imperative to reveal 'absences', or in other words an amplification of 'the voice of those who have been victimised' (2005, 2). On the other hand, in revealing such absences, they also highlighting the significance of generating knowledges that may open up alternative ways of thinking and understanding. Woven together, these constitute a research imaginary that has the potential to be emancipatory and transformative (Robertson, 2006), uniting the 'the struggle for global social justice with the struggle for global cognitive justice' (Santos, 2005, 13). The goal of this thesis to rethink and re-envision the contributions of teachers to sustainable peace in conflict-affected Sierra Leone beyond their interpellation in the framings of peace education curriculum are aligned with both these research priorities.

This section therefore firstly summarises the key findings answering the research questions.
In order to enable a comparative analysis of the separate research findings it includes summary charts that disaggregate each question according to the various dimensions of pedagogical practices and relationships which have framed analysis throughout the research. These are based on the conceptualisations of pedagogy by Alexander, Connell and Robertson (REF) and a broadly cultural political economy approach which has been applied throughout the research. They include: the social imaginaries of conflict-affected societies which are implicit or explicit; learning activities teachers organise for pupils; knowledges they are expected to draw on; the networks and relationships in which teachers are located; the spaces and environments in which they are expected to enact pedagogical practices and relationships; the temporalities or time frames within which the pedagogical practices are located; and the extent to which they are rooted in the lived, emotional experience of conflict and grievance in which teachers are situated. Making comparisons across these dimensions clarifies how the research has revealed absences within the projection of teachers and conflict-affected societies in peace education curricula; and in turn, emergences', or new ways of recognising and understanding teachers' pedagogical agency for peace promotion.

The section then synthesises these findings to highlight nine key messages relating to the empirical, methodological and theoretical insights of the research. These straddle Santos's call for the revelation

of absences in prior knowledge production about teachers' contribution to peace in conflict-affected settings as well as pointing to possibilities for further research, both in Sierra Leone and other conflict-affected contexts.

The final reflection ends on a more personal and heartfelt note, highlighting three narratives that have shaped this research and will continue to drive its momentum in subsequent scholarship and activism.

2. Answers to Research Questions

2.1. Question 1

How and to what extent have educational interventions of international agencies contributed to the promotion of sustainable peace in conflict-affected Sierra Leone, 2002-2018?

This research found that despite the reputation of conflict-affected Sierra Leone as a success story, the educational interventions of international aid agencies have failed to transform the education system into one that could support a process of sustainable peacebuilding or what Galtung refers to as 'positive peace' (1976) in which structural and historical drivers of conflict and grievance are addressed. This failure is symptomatic of the broader failure of the global agenda of liberal peacebuilding interventionism. In privileging security and the integration of Sierra Leone into the global marketplace over social services reform, the provision of health and education, poverty reduction, and addressing the country's huge geographical and social inequalities, the UN peacebuilding architecture has failed to address the factors, both national and global, that contributed to the country's civil conflict. This has left the majority of the population in provincial and rural areas outside the capital, including teachers, in a state of daily immiseration.

Educational interventions in relation to youth, gender equity and teachers are notable for their generic, technical, prescriptive and top down character and their derivation from an international menu of reforms circulating between aid agencies and rolled out to conflict-affected contexts and demographics regardless of the distinctiveness of their conflict drivers. Hence, this research finds a disjunction between education's transformatory potential and the narrow framing of education policy and programming within the global agendas of international aid organisations committed to the liberal peacebuilding model (Novelli, Higgins et al., 2014). This disembeddness from context undermines their impact and effectiveness in contributing to positive sustainable peace that addresses structural drivers of grievance and conflict, whether in supporting teachers' roles in peace promotion, addressing gender inequities or youth empowerment. These conclusions are encapsulated in the paradox highlighted in the title of the publication (Novelli & Higgins, 2017), 'The violence of peace and the role of education'.

2.2. Question 2

How does peace education frame the contribution of teachers and education provision more broadly to conflict amelioration in Sierra Leone and what light does theoretically informed analysis throw on the interests, power relationships and agendas served by this curriculum?

The research focused on a peace education curriculum called Emerging Issues, which was developed between 2007 and 2008 by UNICEF for teachers in Sierra Leone. Following a dominant model of this educational intervention by international aid agencies in conflict-affected societies the curriculum emphasized the need for attitudinal and behavioural change by Sierra Leoneans. The research applied a cultural political economy approach, an interdisciplinary theoretical current that extends traditional concerns of political economy with power and institutions to show their interaction with cultural processes of meaning-making.

Findings demonstrate that this curriculum despite its benign reputation, might not be as positive, neutral or benign as usually projected. Instead, it promotes a form of pacification derived from a decontextualized curriculum that treats victims as guilty and in need of attitudinal and behavioural change, whilst avoiding engagement with the structural and geopolitical drivers that underpin many contemporary conflicts. This essentially individualises and psychologises peace promotion, locating conflict resolution only in the minds and emotions of people rather than in relation to their political, economic, social and cultural needs and materialities; or in other words, structural drivers of grievance.

The research demonstrated that this approach to the conflict-affected Sierra Leonean demographic is deeply implicated in the geopolitical and biopolitical agendas of the west, in particular a mission to regulate and control conflict-affected contexts perceived as threats to global security and the operations of global capitalism. Moreover, the research revealed both a privileging of the knowledge and expertise of international consultants over local teachers and educators and a professional culture whose investment in the circulation of generic toolkits between agencies tended to underestimate the need for distinctive conflict responsive interventions. The research concludes that this form of peace education is collusive with what Paris has termed the '*mission civilisatrice'* (2002) driving international peacebuilding, in particular the colonial belief that colonising powers should civilise dependent populations.

The key findings disaggregating the dimensions of teachers' professional and pedagogical practices envisioned and enacted in this curriculum are summarised in the chart below:

Social Imaginaries	• Sierra Leonean demographic prone to 'destructive behaviours' • Teachers to effect personal behavioural and attitudinal change in individual Sierra Leoneans • Imperative of national behavioural transformation • Exclusion of local peace promoting cultural practices • Conflict drivers are internal to the nation and locatable in national behavioural predispositions
Learning Activities for pupils	• Identify destructive behaviours of Sierra Leoneans
Teacher Knowledges	• Peace education curriculum models of attitudinal and behavioural change developed for other conflict-affected communities by UNHCR and UNESCO • Peace education expertise of international consultants • Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
Spaces and Networks	• Schools focus on individual teacher as role model
Temporalities	• Imperative of immediate national transformation required • Linear progress assumed from destructive to constructive behaviours
Emotions	• Absence of references to teacher's emotions

Figure 15 Key Findings- Research question 2

2.3. Question 3

What pedagogical practices, values and relationships for peace promotion are enacted by teachers in School Mining Clubs resulting from partnerships with the Network Movement for Justice and Development and how do these frame the contribution of teachers to the promotion of sustainable peace?

The research took as a case study the pedagogical practices and positioning of teachers in School Mining Clubs (SMCs) resulting from partnerships between five schools affected by the operation of extractive mining by international companies in the region and a local civil society organisation, the Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) working with communities affected by the extractive operations of global mining companies in Kono in the east of the country. Through a study of the imaginaries and enactments of teachers' pedagogical roles and relationships the research demonstrated how, why and in what forms pedagogy may be mobilised to address perceived and experienced structural injustices faced by pupils, their families and communities in a conflict- affected context.

The key findings disaggregating the dimensions of teachers' pedagogical practices envisioned and enacted in the case study are summarised in the chart below:

Social imaginaries	• Achieving 'awareness, reflection, transformation' and 'conscientization' (NMJD Policy Statement) • Obligations of global mining industry to local communities • Critique of unethical practices of extractive global industry and national elites • The cosmological significance of Kono land and the collective needs of local residents • Pupils identifying and articulating 'burning issues' • Pupils imagining alternatives to the status quo and taking small actions to make changes • Pupils to become 'civil society activists'
Learning Activities for pupils to:	• 'Express themselves' - their experience, feelings and 'suffering' • Identify experiences that affect them; e.g. disruption to lessons/air pollution; cracks in classroom walls/no clean water/no library/soil erosion in playground • Decide on strategies to take actions in local context • Give school assemblies and radio presentations about their experiences and goals • Write letters to local stakeholders/Mining Company/Ministry of Agriculture • Plant trees to ensure shade in school grounds • Dramatize experiences for illiterate local communities
Teacher knowledges	• Educational activities of civil society in support of mining affected communities • National Legislation e.g. Sierra Leone • Mining and Minerals Act 2009/Child Rights Act 2007 • Community grievances against mining companies and behaviour of local elites • Cosmological significance of Kono landscape to local people • Origins of Sierra Leonean conflict 1992-2002 in authoritarian rule and lack of voice of impoverished communities
Spaces and Networks	• Local radio stations • Local families and community elders • Stakeholders e.g. local Chiefs, Ministry of Agriculture • Partnership with NMJD and local civil society organisations
Temporalities	• Slow non-linear change given resistance of mining companies and local and national elites • Small things matter – enabling a child to re-imagine how things could be • Learning activities for pupil talk have contemporary resonance given memories of lack of spaces for youth critique under authoritarian rule of Siakka Stephens prior to outbreak of conflict
Emotions	• Solidarity with suffering communities – anger, hope, frustration • Fear of dangers of speaking out and critiquing corporate actors and Sierra Leonean elites • Hope for change in response to pupil advocacy and activism

Figure 16 Key Findings- Research question 3

These findings provide a counter point to peace education, indicating how pedagogical practices and relationships may respond to the situated daily realities of pupils and their communities. In so doing,

they contribute to greater understanding of a context-specific model of teacher agency, rooted in the local and global challenges faced by pupils and their communities.

2.4. Question 4

What pedagogical practices, values and relationships for peace promotion are enacted by teachers in the Fambul Tok Peace Clubs resulting from partnerships with Fambul Tok and how do these frame the contribution of teachers to sustainable peace promotion?

Through another in-depth case study, the research investigated the work of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone which aim to support teachers in drawing on local practices, rituals and symbols. It thereby illuminated how teachers capitalise on the 'elaborate language of symbolic practices, tools and resources' which are available within the 'theological, intellectual and cultural warehouse' (Sayed and Novelli, 2016, 73) of local communities but ignored in the educational interventions of international aid agencies, as well as the pathologisation of conflict-affected societies within international peacebuilding interventionism. This case study therefore offers a second counterexample to the model of peace education outlined above, highlighting how pedagogy may draw creatively as well as critically on local cultural resources in developing teachers' and pupils' agency for reconciliation and conflict amelioration.

The research found that teachers respond to local culture in multiple, sometimes contradictory ways and that local indigenous culture was not understood as something static but malleable and to be repurposed as well as valorised and recognised as an important resource for peace promotion. Teachers' responses ranged from celebration of indigenous practices as pedagogical resources for conflict resolution that resonate with their pupils and communities to critique of their oppressive gender norms and inability to address structural drivers of conflict.

The key findings disaggregating the dimensions of teachers' pedagogical practices envisioned and enacted in the case study are summarised below in the chart below:

Social imaginaries	• Recognition, valorisation, revival and repurposing by pupils of traditional community rooted rituals of peace and forgiveness • Youth as agents of peace • Critique of western transitional justice interventions as insufficiently engaged with local cultural resources • Critique and re-envisioning of indigenous culture to rectify patriarchal attitudes • Blend indigenous culture with human rights legislation
Learning Activities for pupils to:	• Use peace trees to solve inter-personal and personal conflicts • Attend school bonfires to listen to testimony of elders about the war including atrocities • Recite and discuss peace-related Sierra Leonean proverbs

	• Learn about local cultural peace related rituals and symbols e,g. the practice of 'fambul tok' or 'family talk'
Teacher knowledges	• Local cultural rituals and symbols of peace and forgiveness • Sierra Leonean proverbs of peace • Community insights into peace promotion
Spaces and Networks	• Engage parents, local communities • Respond to ethnic variations in peace related rituals • Partnerships with grassroots community peace activism • Teachers and pupils as collective agents bound together by aspiration for healing and reconciliation
Temporalities	• Peace promoting practices by pupils gain significance and traction from their association with local community histories • Healing and reconciliation are social processes over time
Emotions	• Love for local rituals for peace • Love for Sierra Leonean proverbs • Solidarity with and between community members expressed through social rituals and oral culture • Joy in valorising, and re-enacting historically rooted, indigenous peace promoting practices • Sadness, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation •

Figure 17 Key Findings- Research question 4

2.5. Question 5

How do teachers in Kono, Sierra Leone perceive and experience their pedagogical values practices and relationships in relation to conflict mitigation and peace promotion and what theoretical and methodological resources may be used to explore this?

The final case study of the research responded to the knowledge gaps highlighted in recent research into the peace promoting agency of teachers in conflict-affected contexts. These have underscored a lack of context-specific attention to their emotional responses to the conditions of extreme precarity driving grievances which they experience on a daily basis. This is particularly true of the framings of teachers' agency within the interventions and polices of international aid agencies. The case study addressed this knowledge gap by using photo-elicitation, a research method known to be particularly generative in exploring the feelings of informants whose life experiences are frequently marginalised within dominant framings of their agency. It combined this with Butler's recent conceptualisation of resistance to conditions of precarity as inhering in the experience of vulnerability to them.

The findings demonstrated how the affective responses of 7 teachers to the sites and situations they identify with conflict underpins their pedagogical and professional interventions to ameliorate and address such situations and imagine alternatives to the status quo. The research found that teachers draw on their emotional, embodied experiences of precarity and vulnerability in their

microenvironments in and out of school as resources for pedagogical strategies and actions that address drivers of grievances and conflict; and thereby navigate resistance to perceived and experienced social injustices.

In doing so this case study demonstrates the hitherto unrealised potential of a theoretically informed application of photo-elicitation to enhance understanding of the peace promoting agency of teachers living and working in conflict-affected contexts.

The key findings disaggregating the dimensions of teachers' pedagogical practices envisioned and enacted in the case study are summarised below in the chart below:

Social imaginaries	• Teachers' personal and pedagogical agency rooted not only in rational critique but emotional and embodied responses to processes of precaritisation resulting from power of global corporate actors and national elites • Solidarity with local communities
Learning Activities for pupils to:	• Small actions to enhance lives and learning of pupils • Putting sandbags into waterlogged school field with pupils • Placing a stone in a waterway to enable pupils to pass to get to school • Deciding to commit to 'advocacy' on behalf of communities following example of local civil society activism
Teacher knowledges	• Experiential knowledge of suffering of local communities, families and pupils
Spaces and Networks	• Teachers as collective actors experiencing vulnerability in resistance • Partnerships with local civil society organisations
Temporalities	• Contingent, uncertain outcomes of actions • Limited expectations of immediate change or transformation of situation of precarity • Significance of micro-level actions and activities e.g. placing a stone in a waterway to improve pupil safety
Emotions	• Mobilizing anger, rage, hope, joy, grief • Sense of inter-dependence between teachers, their pupils and communities suffering and experiencing material hardships • Grieving for a protester killed in protests against mining company galvanizes energy to advocate on behalf of pupils and communities • Emotional responses to seeing a broken school tap; soil erosion in school grounds; damaged walls due to mine blasting; youth poverty and despair; NGO signpost for civil society advocacy

Figure 18 Key Findings- Research question 5

3. Absences and Emergences

Extrapolating from the above findings, this research generates nine key messages that respond to its overarching focus on how teachers' contribution to the promotion of peace may be rethought and re-

envisioned beyond the parameters of peace education, construed as personalised attitudinal and behavioural change in conflict-affected contexts. The reflections below clarify both the 'absences' of prior knowledge production which they reveal as well as pointing to new research that may follow up on the 'emergences' or new ways of understanding which they open up. They have epistemological, ontological, methodological as well as policy related dimensions.

3.1. Teachers' mobilisation of an ecology of knowledges

The case studies in this research demonstrate how teachers draw on a plurality of knowledges in their pedagogical practices and relationships to navigate conflict and build sustainable peace. They mobilise insights into indigenous cultural rituals and local cosmological beliefs; oral cultural and sagacity; human rights legislation; pupils experiences and articulation of their own 'suffering'; educational campaigns of local civil society actors working with mining affected communities; knowledge of Sierra Leone's complex patrimonial political culture still dominated by the power of local elders and chiefs; memories of the causes of the conflict, in particular the perception that a lack of spaces of talk for marginalised youth during the authoritarian rule prior to the outbreak of conflict generated grievance making them vulnerable to integration into armed revolt.

Referencing this plurality in their classroom spaces and in their talk and relationships with pupils, the Sierra Leonean teachers in this research demonstrate in their peace promoting pedagogical practices that ecology of knowledges which Santos has suggested may furnish a form of global cognitive justice (Santos, 2005). Indeed, the allusive range of referents to political cultures, symbolism and cosmology these teachers draw on throw into relief the essentially 'monocultural' nature of peace education (Santos, 2004, 15; see Robertson, 2006, 310). They reveal precisely the 'other knowledges, derived from practices, rationalities or cultural universes' (Santos, 2005, 12) outside of western based scientific knowledge (ibid). Juxtaposed with peace education, therefore, this plurality strikingly throws into relief how peace education privileges and effectively universalises a particular western psycho-social mode of inter and intra-subjective change, occluding alternative epistemic resources rooted in the lives and challenges of local conflict-affected communities.

Blending and repurposing a diversity of knowledges, these teachers are involved, albeit in an unresolved and contingent way, in a process of 'cultural translation' as outlined by Santos (1999). By this he refers to the emancipatory possibilities of new ways of understanding that may emerge from bringing into relation knowledge and insights derived from diverse traditions. Thus, Santos points out how our understanding of human dignity may be deepened by affiliating the western concept of human rights with Hindu and Islamic concepts. This research demonstrates how Sierra Leonean teachers enact this process in various ways. For instance, they combine the individualism of human rights

conceptions of human flourishing with the more collective social ontology of local cultural traditions of 'family talk' and the healing power of symbolic ritual practices. Likewise, they integrate pupils' personal articulations of suffering as a result of the impact of mining companies on their lives and homes with reference to Mining legislation obligating international companies to social responsibilities for affected communities. In doing so they combine local knowledges of pupils with what Young has termed 'powerful knowledges' (2010, 9). These relate to disciplinary content and which may be considered to be essential in ensuring marginalised groups leverage power and are able to pursue educational as well as social, economic and political goals (Rata, 2011). Moreover, teachers also draw pedagogically on their insights into the work of local civil society actors in mobilising communities in peaceful protest against the damaging impact of extractive industry. Hence their invitation to pupils to become 'civil society activists'. In this way they draw pedagogically on what Choudry has termed the under-estimated 'learning activism' (2015) of social movements. The assemblage of knowledges for pedagogical practices related to peace in both case studies of this research therefore reveal the rich possibilities of the turn to the local in peace related research. By contrast they throw into relief the absences resulting from the privileging of state-centric approaches and the expertise of the international aid architecture within peace education curriculum.

In their pedagogical fusion, these diverse knowledges do not remain insulated or operate as pure bounded, unchanging categories but are open to critique and resignification. Hence while teachers valorise inherited local cultural practices, they also critique them for their patriarchal bias; and therefore repurpose them to re-enact their strengths as rituals of healing while also ensuring that they promote gender equity. The pedagogical process of cultural translation thus involves a rethinking of particular knowledges in the light of new affiliations. Moreover, teachers also repurpose conventional pedagogical practices such as giving whole school assemblies, which were used as vehicles for the communication and celebration of these diverse knowledges with pupils.

These findings demonstrate teachers' enormous creativity in drawing on diverse knowledges within their pedagogical practices for peace promotion. Mobilising an ecology of knowledges, their pedagogical practices align with but perhaps also goes beyond, the identification of teachers who struggle for social justice as 'transformative intellectuals' or intellectual 'border crossers' (Giroux, 2001, 2006). In other words, their deployment of an ecology of knowledges is immanent rather than merely intellectual; in other words, it is emergent from, and rooted in, the lived material struggles as well as the cognitive resources, and social and cultural capital, of their pupils and local communities. It arises from teachers developing partnerships with local civil society working with conflict-affected communities. These insights open up the possibilities for further research in other conflict-affected contexts to understand how the epistemic base of teachers' pedagogies for peace promotion and social justice may be widened and pluralised.

3.2. Teachers' navigation of an ecology of spaces, networks and environments

This research has also demonstrated how teachers' pedagogical practices for conflict amelioration take place in diverse spaces, engage multiple object worlds and involve them in a range of social networks. The spatiality of their pedagogy includes learning activities that take place under peace trees (usually beautiful mango trees), in radio stations, and at community gatherings. In their exercise of peace promoting agency they place sandbags in waterlogged school grounds, stones in streams used by pupils en-route to school. They mourn in front of a gravestone before and after going into school. The relationality of their pedagogy involves them in liaising with other teachers, local civil society actors, community elders, families of pupils, local social media representatives, priests, imams. That their pedagogical practices depend on their engagement of a range of spaces and networks demonstrates the narrowness of confining understanding of what teachers may do pedagogically in relation to peace promotion to the physical classroom space.

This situated understanding of their pedagogical practices underscores the absences inherent in framings of the lone individual teacher as role model for behaviour change in peace education curricula or the heroic teacher evoked in the policy rhetoric of international aid agencies. Far from being individualised or classroom based, the pedagogical agency and professionalism of these teachers for peace promotion is highly dependent on and intersects with multiple spaces and networks, not least their sense of connection with other teachers facing similar struggles. This research therefore confirms the relevance of Connell's (2009) foregrounding of teaching as a professional activity that involves collective rather than individual labour, dependent on teachers working together across social networks, for teachers' pedagogical agency in a conflict-affected setting. This understanding of the collective rather than individualistic, classroom based agency of teachers is rarely recognised in the curriculum or interventions of international aid agencies. Building on these insights, further research could aim to explore how teachers' pedagogical agency in relation to conflict amelioration both in Sierra Leone and other conflict-affected contexts is locatable within and derives momentum within multiple spaces and relationships.

3.3. Teachers mobilisation of emotion

Teachers' complex and diverse emotions in response to challenging, conflict-affected situations are frequently occluded within the prescriptive and top down framings of their pedagogical agency by policymakers. However, a key finding of this research is to show how the affective dimensions of their lived experience is constitutive of their pedagogical practices in relation to conflict amelioration and social transformation to address structural drivers of conflict and grievance. Thus, teachers' anger, hope, grief, joy, care and concern have all motivated their micro-pedagogical actions to enhance the capacity of young people in the conflict-affected context of Kono to articulate and demonstrate

grievance and to take small steps to make changes. Moreover, these feelings are not to be understood as individual, intra-personal attributes but effects of power relations and collective responses to structural conditions of precarity, within particular cultural and political economy dynamics. Revealing them in relation to teacher pedagogy thus opens up what Williams (1977) has termed the 'structures of feeling' that condition and constrain human agency understood within a cultural materialist approach to social analysis. While researchers have given increasing attention to the emotional and embodied dimension of teacher pedagogical practices (Zembylas and Schultz, 2016; Connell, 2009), this could be extended to understanding teachers' agency in conflict-affected contexts. This would foreground emotions, not as separate from the cultural, political and economy locations of teachers' agency but constituted by those very dynamics and therefore potential resources for the individual and collective energy of teachers to deal with conflict and promote peace. Hence the relevance of further research to illuminate teachers' "vulnerability and resistance" (Butler et al, 2016) in other conflict affected contexts.

3.4. Temporalities of peace promotion

The idealisation of teachers as able to implement an array of curriculum initiatives or transform the morality of a conflict-affected nation within peace education locate their pedagogical practices within an uncomplicated temporality of linear progress over a short time from conflict to peace. So too does the location of teachers within macrosystemic processes of social justice such as the 4Rs. However, the findings of this research suggest that what is absent from such framings is attention to the quotidian realities within which teachers exercise agency related to conflict amelioration. Indeed, listening to the teachers in Kono suggest that teachers themselves are aware of an alternative temporality, that of the highly contingent and uncertain impact of micro-level actions. They frequently voiced their lack of expectation of any immediate change in relation to the structural causes of violence impact their own and their communities' lives.

Hence these teachers take pride in pedagogical actions and activities without immediate outcomes. This research has revealed several such events namely; supporting a girl to articulate her 'suffering' on the local radio station, hence speaking out against an international diamond mining company; making the school playground safer by placing sandbags there; shifting the imaginaries of pupils to envision a global capitalist extractive company supporting the needs of local Kono communities; opening up critique of the status quo. Their pedagogical activities for social justice take place despite their recognition that they as teachers have little power against international diamond mining companies or national elites. They are well aware of the forces stacked against them in achieving immediate change to structural drivers of conflict. In this way, from the vantage point of educators in a conflict-affected context, they articulate their sense that, despite their pedagogical activities for

peace, they have limited power to contribute to social transformation to address drivers of conflict. This finding underlines Robertson's message that educators' capacity to 'radically transform social formations and their institutions will be dependent on their weight in the social system"'(Robertson and Dale, 2015, 6). In such contexts, teachers' radicalism in relation to conflict amelioration consists in the small micro-level pedagogical actions identified above, repeated on a daily basis, highly contingent and unresolved, and forming part of their imaginary of a longue durée of achieving change to contribute to positive peace. The long term and non-linear temporal frameworks within which their pedagogical agency for peace is situated mirrors what Nixon (2011) has termed is the 'slow violence' experienced by the poor.

These insights suggests that the temporal framing of teachers' pedagogical contributions to peace and conflict amelioration need to be rethought outside of linear processes that unhelpfully 'heroise' their agency, shoulder them with hugely ambitious responsibilities through an array of curriculum initiatives, not least peace education, and fail to recognise both the radicalism as well as the fragility of their contributions to promoting positive peace. While particularly true of teachers in Kono, Sierra leone, this finding invites further research which locates teachers' agency within the complex temporalities of transition from conflict to peace that impact on the significance and meaning of their pedagogical activities.

3.5. Teachers' pedagogical practices for social justice defined and constrained by global drivers of grievance and conflict

The case studies in this research show how teachers' pedagogical practices and imaginaries are locatable in relation to local, national and international drivers of grievance and conflict. In particular these teachers navigate the impact of international extractive industry as well as international mechanisms of transitional justice including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court. Juxtaposed with the critique of a peace education curriculum, these findings reveal the absences within the educational and peacebuilding interventions managed by international aid agencies of attention to global drivers of conflict. This results in a highly skewed and partial understanding of conflict amelioration as internal to the national demographic, indeed as locatable in their minds, feelings and behaviours. In turn, this narrows the pedagogical agency of teachers, disembedding their practice from engagement with structural drivers of conflict, in particular those operating at global scales. Given the origins of much contemporary conflict in the inequalities and suffering resulting from the operations in the late 20th and early 21st century of a particular neoliberal version of global capitalism (Novelli, 2016) this is a major omission. Indeed, it serves to erase the impact on the impoverished communities of a form of contemporary global capitalist operations that Harvey (2004) has characterised 'accumulation by dispossession'.

This research has demonstrated how teachers in Kono, through their pedagogical practices, resist the human suffering resulting from one modality of 'accumulation by dispossession', the operations of the international extractive mining industry, and its unprecedented accumulative drive to annex land and resources. In doing so it has located their agency within what Fraser (2009) has noted are the unprecedented challenges for making claims for social justice given the 'postwestphalian world' created by the global operations of contemporary capitalism. Fraser points out that the experiences of exploitation, resulting from global as well as national forces, render national boundaries no longer adequate for advancing claims of social justice. Given the power asymmetries that operate between 'trans-territorial non-state actors', (2009, 282) typified by corporate capital such as mining companies and local communities residing within national territorial boundaries, Fraser draws attention to the meta-political injustices of 'misframing' (ibid, 286) which may arise when the mapping of justice claims is restricted to the nation state. In these circumstances, the 'global poor' are prevented from 'challenging the forces that oppress them' while 'offshore powers' are insulated from 'critique and control' (ibid, 287).

Providing pedagogical support for pupils in Kono to express their grievances to an international mining company and to air them on the local radio, teachers are implicated in precisely the multi-scalar process of claims making against experienced social justices necessitated by unprecedented processes of globalised capitalism. 'Speaking out' and speaking back to the corporate company, the pupils with the explicit though sometimes fearful support of their teachers, are effectively challenging what Fraser notes is the frequent 'misframing' (2009, 286) of justice issues in contemporary conditions of globalisation. This misframing results from the exclusion of the poor from opportunities to challenge the sources of their oppression outside of the territorial state. Here the 'talk' of School Mining Clubs may be seen as an instance of what Fraser characterises as an essential 'reflexive' process of transnational claims making given the current conditions of global capitalism to ensure participatory parity for 'all affected' by perceived injustices (2009, 28). As vehicles for struggles against social injustice, and thereby conflict amelioration, then, their pedagogical practices are significant for their orientation to the global as well as the national and local scales.

Building on these insights, further research needs to be done firstly on how pedagogies for social justice in conflict-affected contexts may be tailored to the unprecedented intersections of global capitalism with contemporary grievances driving conflict; and secondly on how teachers as well as policy developers, teacher trainers, education managers, stakeholders in the academy and in the world of practice and those straddling both domains, may be supported in navigating this complex and uncharted terrain of pedagogical practice.

3.6. Ontology matters

This research has analysed the social imaginaries within which pedagogical practices and relationships in relation to conflict amelioration accrued meaning and momentum. Whether articulating a vision of the responsibility of an international mining company to alleviate the suffering of affected local communities; or the meanings attaching to the local Kono landscape; or the relevance of peace promoting ritual and symbols, they all cohere around an assertion of the presence and humanity of pupils and communities against alternative visions of the social and of the human that were perceived to erase, belittle or occlude them. In other words, what was at stake in the pedagogical processes undertaken by the teachers in this research was a fundamental ontological issue of how their pupils being – as well as that of their families and communities - was injured, misunderstood and erased by the actions of global actors and national elites. Hence the pedagogical imperative to expose the suffering resulting from the operations of extractive industry of School Mining Clubs and the concern to valorise local culture against its occlusion by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In both case studies, this pedagogical pitching of the neglected humanity of pupils and their communities takes implicit aim at the ontological assumptions of modernisation discourses of development that assume the unproblematic good of integrating conflict-affected contexts into the global capitalist economy; or the imperative to transform the sociality of their demographics such as to eschew local indigenous culture, perceived as irrational and primitive. Foregrounding the ontological terrain of their pedagogy for conflict amelioration, these teachers encourage their pupils to refuse the framings of their being as dispensable or injurable with an alternative imaginary of the social that stresses the obligations of global extractive industry to local communities. Moreover, in mobilising local indigenous culture that framed their approach to creating peace in their communities, these teachers asserted their humanity as one affected by the local symbolism and cosmology which is disregarded by peace education and international transitional justice mechanisms. These teachers' practices thus emerged from an ontological logic to announce and assert the humanity of their pupils and their communities, albeit precarious and injured, as the locus of resistance to drivers of grievance produced by global as well as local dynamics.

Triggering pupil's articulation of the suffering resulting from extractive industry and the limitations of international transitional justice mechanisms, these teachers' pedagogical practices overlap with the role of teachers within critical pedagogy (Freire, 1996); in particular that of catalysing critical consciousness that may form the basis of activism for change. However, they also go beyond what some scholars have noted is the rationalism of that model (Gottesman, 2016) by encouraging an expression by pupils of the affected and embodied nature of their suffering as a form of violation or assault on their very selfhood, both at individual and community levels. The invitation to pupils to

share their ‘burning issues’ invokes this physicality, materiality and presence of their humanity as a riposte to being dehumanised.

In foregrounding the ontological dimension of pedagogical practices, these findings align with the recent work of Noah de Lissovoy (2015, 2018) who has highlighted the necessity for attention not just to ‘knowing’ but also ‘being’ in a critical pedagogy oriented to addressing contemporary social injustices. Thus, de Lissovoy argues that in the condition of contemporary neoliberal capitalism, there is an educational and pedagogical imperative to foreground the issue of ‘being’ itself, which cannot be taken for granted. de Lissovoy argues that the project of global neoliberal capitalism contains a ‘dominative logic’ that ‘works pervasively across both material and immaterial levels of social life, and persistently acts against human beings in obscuring them and injuring them’ (de Lissovoy, 2015, 1270). Hence, ‘in an inhuman world, the problem of education is the problem of articulating a human voice against the machineries of violence visited persistently upon persons – a voice against the truth of power, the truth of the inert and the incontrovertible’ (ibid). This would implicate an emancipatory pedagogy in ‘recognising these beings and affirming their integrity and survival against this power’ (ibid) which implies ‘a consideration of the domain of being in relation to education’ (ibid); or in other words, an ‘understanding of the human as the abiding ontological kernel of the selves of students and teachers’ (ibid). De Lissovoy argues that in serving to re-humanise and dignify those whose very humanity has been assaulted, pedagogy for social justice in response to the operations of neoliberal capitalism goes beyond developing a Freirean critical consciousness but ‘instead knows and names human beings here and now against their violation’ (ibid, 1435).

This fundamental ontological terrain of their pedagogy to navigate conflict constitutes an “absence” within the peace education curriculum examined in this research. This also constitutes an “emergence” that points to new ways of construing pedagogical practices for conflict amelioration. By foregrounding and analysing the ontological imperatives at work in one conflict-affected context, this research invites further attention to the significance of ‘being in knowing’ (ibid, 1270) in other such contexts. For de Lissovoy (2019) such an enterprise aligns with a decolonial mission to decentre the west in emancipatory theory and pedagogical practice.

3.7. The possibilities of theoretical bricolage

This research has drawn on the explanatory and analytical power of a broadly conceived cultural political economy approach (CPE) to illuminate the absences and in so doing disclose emergences that warrant further research as outlined above. Its research imaginary however has not mobilised CPE in a totalising way as a unitary, and resolved theoretical framework but rather as a malleable heuristic that can be taken in many different directions depending on responses to the contested

meaning of its components - the realm of the cultural, the political and the economic – and the implications for analysis that probes their intersections.

Exploiting and exploring the possibilities of CPE to interrogate peace education curriculum and pedagogical practices for peace promotion the case studies have adopted diverse conceptualisations of the cultural and brought them into relation with political economy dynamics as played out in peace education curriculum and pedagogical practices. They have mobilised disciplinary insights from anthropology, geography, political science and the broader field of global peacebuilding. They have drawn on a version of CPE to deploy theory to problematise peace education curriculum, thus demonstrating the ability of theoretically informed critique to denaturalise common sense or hegemonic framings of the social operating at a macro systemic level within travelling peace education curriculum. They have also put a CPE approach to analytical use to make sense of and understand micro level pedagogical practices for peace promotion whose significance resides in their blending of cultural with political economy dynamics at multiple scales, local, national and international.

Thus, exploring and exploiting the inherent malleability of CPE as a heuristic tool, this research has demonstrated the usefulness of theoretical bricolage which foregrounds the possibilities of deploying a range of theoretical approaches that may complement each other in social analysis. The underpinning goal of this approach is to avoid inhabiting a single theoretical position that forecloses the possibilities of bringing the strengths of different theorisations of the social into relation to deepen analysis. Given the diverse empirical targets of education and peacebuilding, and the need in particular to connect macro level systemic economic and political processes with the micro level of selves and collectivities, emotions, identities and subjectivity, theoretical bricolage is a compelling framing for their theorisation.

Indeed, the process of theory making emergent from this research has resulted from critiquing as well as deploying the theoretical tools offered by a CPE approach in relation to particular empirical challenges. As Burowoy has noted ‘the vitality of a theoretical tradition depends on continually being put to the test’ (2004, 9). In the case of this research, its theoretical journey has sought to respond to Robertson’s insight that ‘it is not possible to develop a single cultural political economy, as such as if in some grand synthesis’ (2015, 6) and its corollary that ‘it is the ontological and epistemological assumptions we make about these processes and the nature of the relationships between them which matter for our account’ (ibid). Hence, in this research understanding teachers’ pedagogical agency for conflict amelioration has been enhanced by affiliating a CPE approach with the mobilisation of an ontology of the subject as vulnerable in resisting social injustices, thus eschewing the assumption of a sovereign, rational, rights bearing subject in the policies, and programmes of global aid agencies.

The adoption of insights of anthropologists into the formative role of local rituals and symbols in the exercise of agency for peace promotion has also widened understanding of the pedagogical roles and practices of teachers.

The case studies in this research have thus made a small and unresolved start in exploring the variegated explanatory horizons of a CPE approach conceived as opening up opportunities for a form of theoretical bricolage. This may prove fruitful for further theoretically informed research that deepens and widens understanding of the contribution of education to peace promotion. For instance, these findings indicate that theoretical pluralism may be helpful in addressing the key analytical challenge of bringing the macro and micro levels of explanation together, which systemic approaches to understanding the role of education in peacebuilding such as the 4Rs leave unresolved. Hence, complementing understanding of macro-processes impinging on conflict with theories of micro level behaviours such as the 'everyday' (de Certeau, 1984); or empathy (Sylvester, 1994); or theories of space (Massey 1994) that illuminate the multi-scalar production of the environments in which teachers live and work, all offer rich possibilities for further research.

3.8. The possibilities of methodological bricolage and post-qualitative approaches

This research has used a range of data gathering methods in order to do justice to the voices and experiences of teachers. While drawing on conventional approaches such as interviewing and observation, it has also deployed photo-elicitation to show how these teachers' pedagogical practices were shaped and constrained by their interactions with their war-scarred and mining affected physical environment, as well as objects such as gravestones, NGO signs, and a pebble in a waterlogged pathway. Exploring the entanglement of their pedagogical agency with such materialities, the methodological journey of this research has opened up the explanatory usefulness of what are termed 'new materialist' (Barad, 2008; Lemke, 2015) research methods. These seek to go beyond anthropocentric approaches to social explanation that assume human exceptionalism and to reinstate the significance of the material or the non-human or non-discursive as also agentic (Barad, 2007).

In conflict-affected environments such as Kono where teachers' relationship to conflict drivers is mediated on a daily basis by their interactions with environmental degradation, and local infrastructure, methods that seek to explore the constitutive force of non-discursive materialities on their pedagogical agency for peace promotion are apposite and elucidating and deserve further research. Moreover, the insights of political ecology (Perrault et al., 2015) that tie contests over resources and land use and meaning to political economy dynamics, including the operations of global capitalism, may be useful in situating more precisely teachers' pedagogical agency for peace

promotion in relation to the distinctive environmental challenges they and their communities face in conflict-affected environments.

These methodological approaches may be further developed in other conflict-affected contexts. This diversification of methods of data gathering to understand teachers' lives and work beyond normative qualitative methods aligns with the possibilities for more multi-layered understanding and explanation offered by theoretical pluralism, which may therefore be matched by methodological bricolage.

3.9. Implications for policy and programming

The introduction to this thesis drew attention to the positioning in part as a response to requests from policy makers and aid agencies for research that would unpack the cultural, political and economic dynamics of conflict-affected contexts into which educational interventions arrive, and take root, and which impact on their effectiveness and sustainability (Novelli, Higgins et al, 2014). Moreover, the research also responds to the currently outward looking concern of the education community in conflict affected settings to advocate for education with other actors in the aid and development sectors (Winthrop & Matsui, 2015). However, it is also recognised that academic research may be " good at critique" but " less able to offer policy solutions" (ibid, 18) The key messages and insights of this research are perhaps no exception and indeed suggest caution against the easy generalisability of its findings to other conflict-affected contexts. Indeed, the imperative of the research to highlight the limitations of top down approaches to education interventions such as peace education as well as the distinctiveness of the Sierra Leonean context underscore the particularity of its findings.

Nevertheless, there are broad policy-related messages emerging. Perhaps first and foremost, given the dominance of the agenda set by the Sustainable Development Goals, this research confirms what some commentators (Brissett and Mitter, 2018) have noted is a fundamental contradiction at their core. This is inherent in their uncritical acceptance of an accumulative, pro-growth form of capitalism and failure to address 'issues of social and environmental justice' (ibid, 181), alongside a policy rhetoric advocating education to ensure environmental sustainability, including the promotion of cultures of peace. This contradiction has been strikingly revealed in this research which has demonstrated on the one hand the massive challenges teachers face in navigating drivers of conflict resulting from the human immiseration and environmental degradation resulting from extractive industry; on the other the failure of curriculum interventions such as peace education to recognise such conflict drivers, even as teachers are navigating them on a daily basis.

There are also pragmatic lessons for policy makers emergent from this research. These relate to the processes of development of policies and programmes relating to curriculum and pedagogical

practices linked to peace promotion rather than to the context-specific findings. Firstly, this thesis has demonstrated the need to widen the knowledge base through which to understand and support teachers' agency for peace promotion beyond the parameters of international experts and consultants deploying western psycho-social prescriptions. This may be achieved through in-depth consultations with local teachers and local communities, including civil society, about how education may contribute to conflict amelioration. This process needs to recognise and valorise their social and cultural capital and 'local' knowledges, as well as recognises their prior agency in dealing with conflict. In other words, teachers need to be listened to by international aid agencies within a process of the coproduction of knowledges on the role of pedagogical practices in conflict amelioration in order to give reality to the mobilisation of an ecology of knowledges outlined above.

Secondly, the insights into the slow and laborious temporality of conflict amelioration and the multiple cultural political economy factors constraining their agency highlights the utopianism of the excessive reponsibilisation of teachers by policymakers in conflict-affected settings. Yet the teachers with which this research engaged are contributing to peace promotion in a range of engagements with pupils, communities, the school and wider environments, every day on a relentless, repetitive basis, oftentimes without concrete outcomes, other than in the imaginaries of their pupils. Curricula such as peace education and interventions to support teachers therefore need to be responsive to and directly connect with the contingent and temporal dimensions of teacher's agency which are all too frequently overlooked in the prescriptions of peace education and in the educational interventions of international aid agencies.

Thirdly, the precarity and vulnerability of teachers' lives and that of their communities is inextricable from their pedagogical practices for conflict amelioration and peace promotion. Their precarious situation acts both as a motivator to take actions, but also constrains their energy, commitment and resourcefulness. This finding suggests that the frequent separation within policy and programming between curriculum and pedagogy related interventions on the one hand, and on the other, issues of teacher governance and salaries is counter-productive. As Novelli (2011) has pointed out, teachers need to be included in the overall logic of educational interventions in conflict-affected contexts that integrates attention to curriculum, pedagogy as well as their daily challenges to eat, remain healthy and look after their families and wider community networks.

4. Final Reflections: An ongoing tale of three narratives

This research has been energised by three narratives whose intersection will energise further scholarship. Firstly, this research has been a story of hope rooted in professional practice and a priority to do justice to the contributions and potential of teachers to contribute to social justice rather than to collude with a discourse of derision. The commitment to scholar-activism that has animated its research imaginary promises to sustain further such inquiry, not least in terms of building on the solidarities developed with the teachers and civil society actors in Sierra Leone and working in partnership with other teachers in other conflict-affected contexts.

Secondly, the research has unravelled a tragic story, of the collusion of education and peace education in a conflict-affected context with what Mignolo (2005, 2011) and other writers (Quijano, 2008) have termed the 'coloniality of power'. This term refers to the continuation in the present day of quasi colonial power asymmetries between Western and other states that have epistemological, ontological, cultural and political economy dimensions. Their existence and maintenance through the operations of global capitalism constitutes for Mignolo (2011) the 'darker side of western modernity'. In pathologizing a conflict-affected nation, blaming them for their problems, peace education instantiates this ongoing coloniality. Moreover, in revealing the intersections of teachers' pedagogical practices with the immiseration of mining affected communities, the research has highlighted teachers' navigation of one dimension of its effects, what Mignolo has termed the 'colonial wound' (ibid, 291). In the case of teachers and their communities in Kono, this is experienced as the material and ontological violations resulting from the exploitative operations and racial geopolitics (Dussell, 1998) of global capitalism.

Thirdly, and the most important and optimistic story of this research trajectory is to have demonstrated the agency of teachers in resisting the impact of this 'colonial wound' in their pedagogical practices and relationships. These have attended to its somatic, cultural, psychic, and structural implications for the lives of their pupils and communities. All the case studies demonstrate teachers' resilience in the 'general and de-historicized sense' (Bracke, 2016, 14) of making do within the challenging conditions in which one finds oneself. However, their resilience is by no means that associated with the neoliberal technology of the subject, which has become embedded in the policies and programmes of international aid agencies working in the field of education and conflict over the past decade (Shah, 2019). This is understood as residing in the ability of the individual to absorb trauma and bounce back from suffering, thus foreclosing any possibility of a re-envisioning of the status quo, transformation of the structural conditions creating their immiseration and the creation of a positive peace thereby (Neocleous, 2013; Shah, 2019). On the contrary, expressing their collective vulnerability and precaritisation as well as their collective resistance, these teachers, along with their

pupils and communities eschew the individualism of the notion of resilience thus construed. The very core of these teachers' pedagogical agency in relation to conflict amelioration and experienced social injustices consists in imagining with their pupils alternatives to their current conditions, to think and to be otherwise. Their pedagogical imaginaries and activities challenge the political economy dynamics, the power relationships, epistemologies and ontologies of the human that render their pupils and communities injured and violated. They support their pupils to take actions, however contingent, in a range of networks, spaces and activities to contribute to structural change in the future. This thesis is dedicated with humility to the teachers in Kono taking part in those daily struggles.

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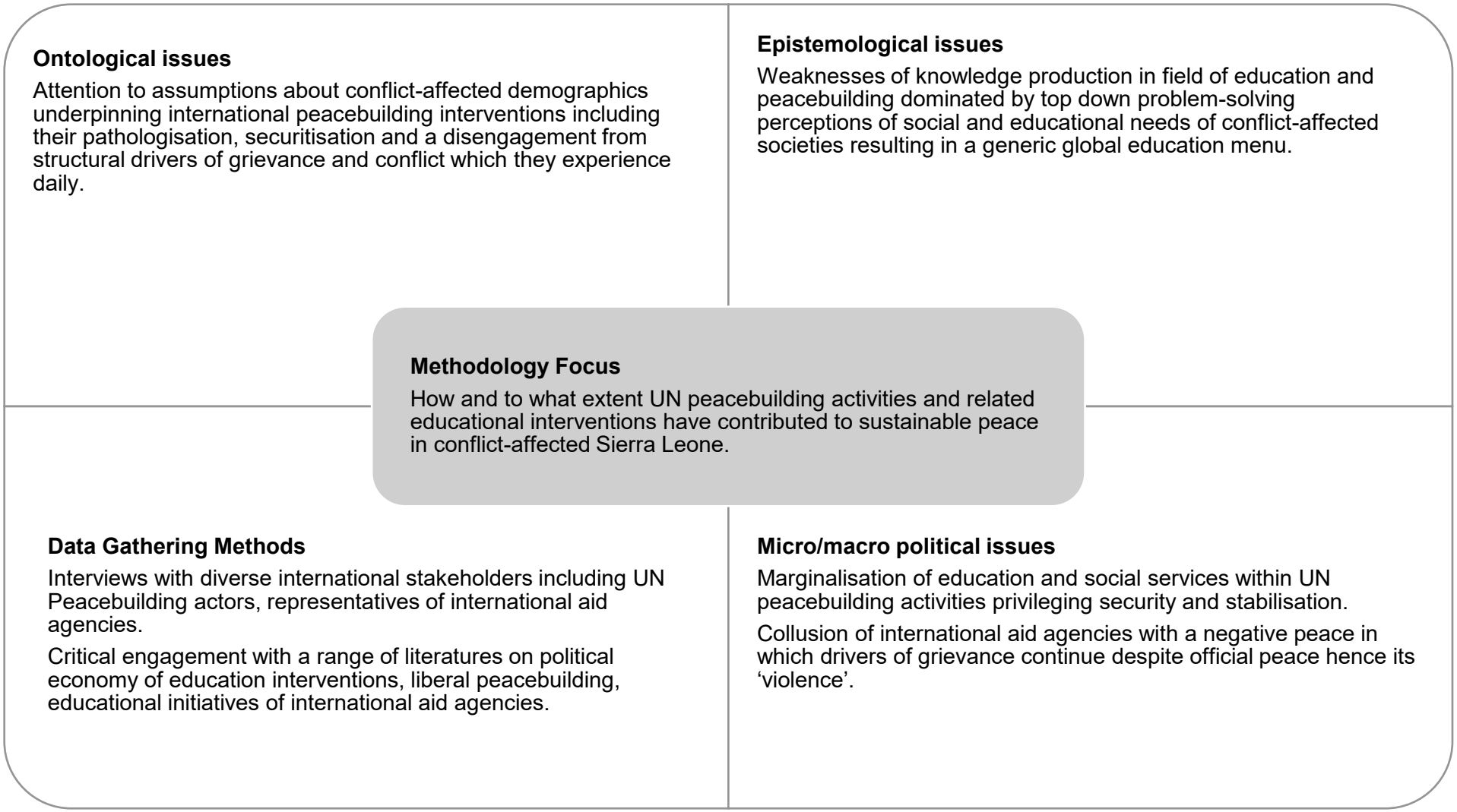
Appendix

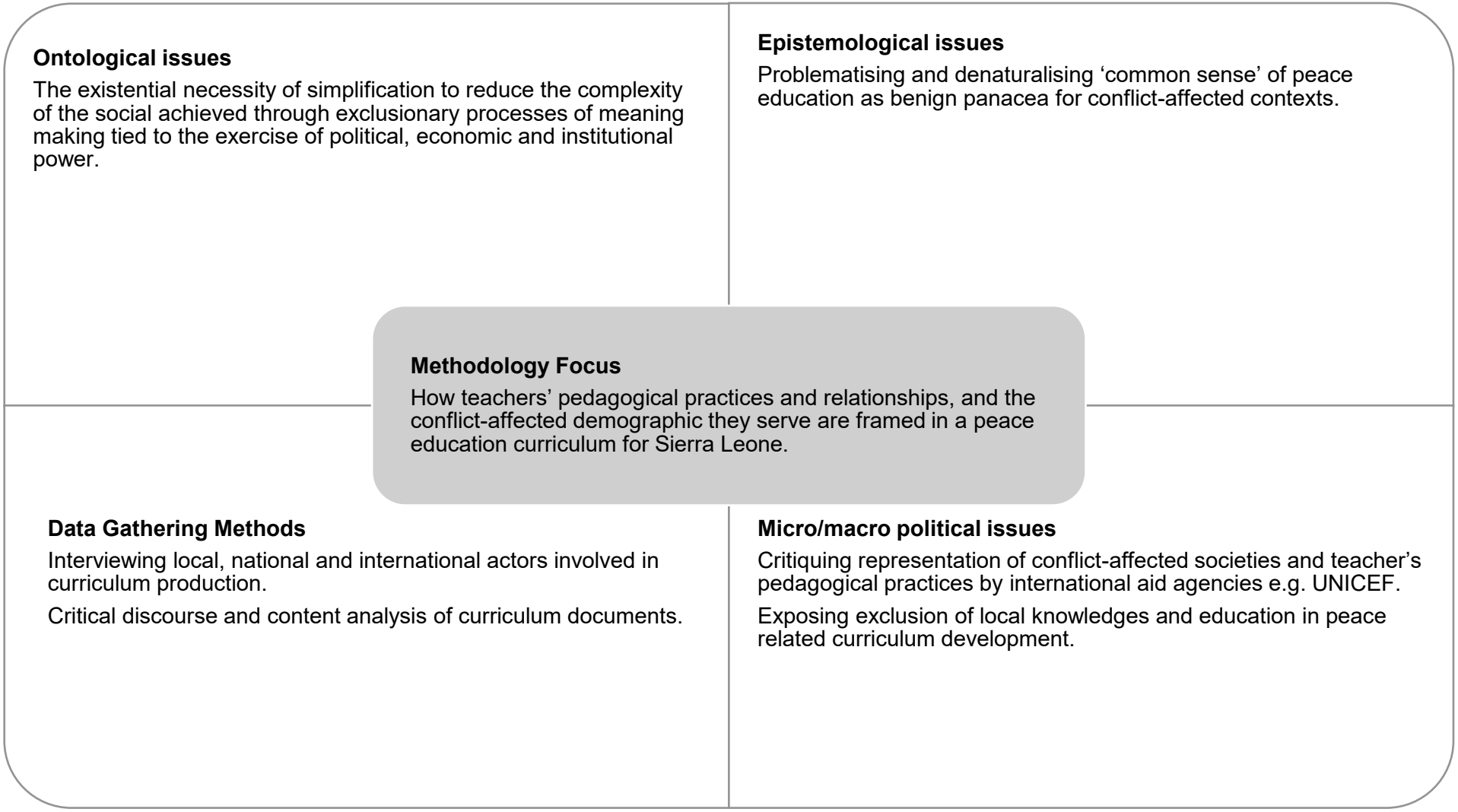
The Shifting Methodological Planes of the Research Papers

Chapter 1: Novelli, M. and Higgins, S., (2017). The violence of peace and the role of education: insights from Sierra Leone. *Compare*, *47*, 32-45



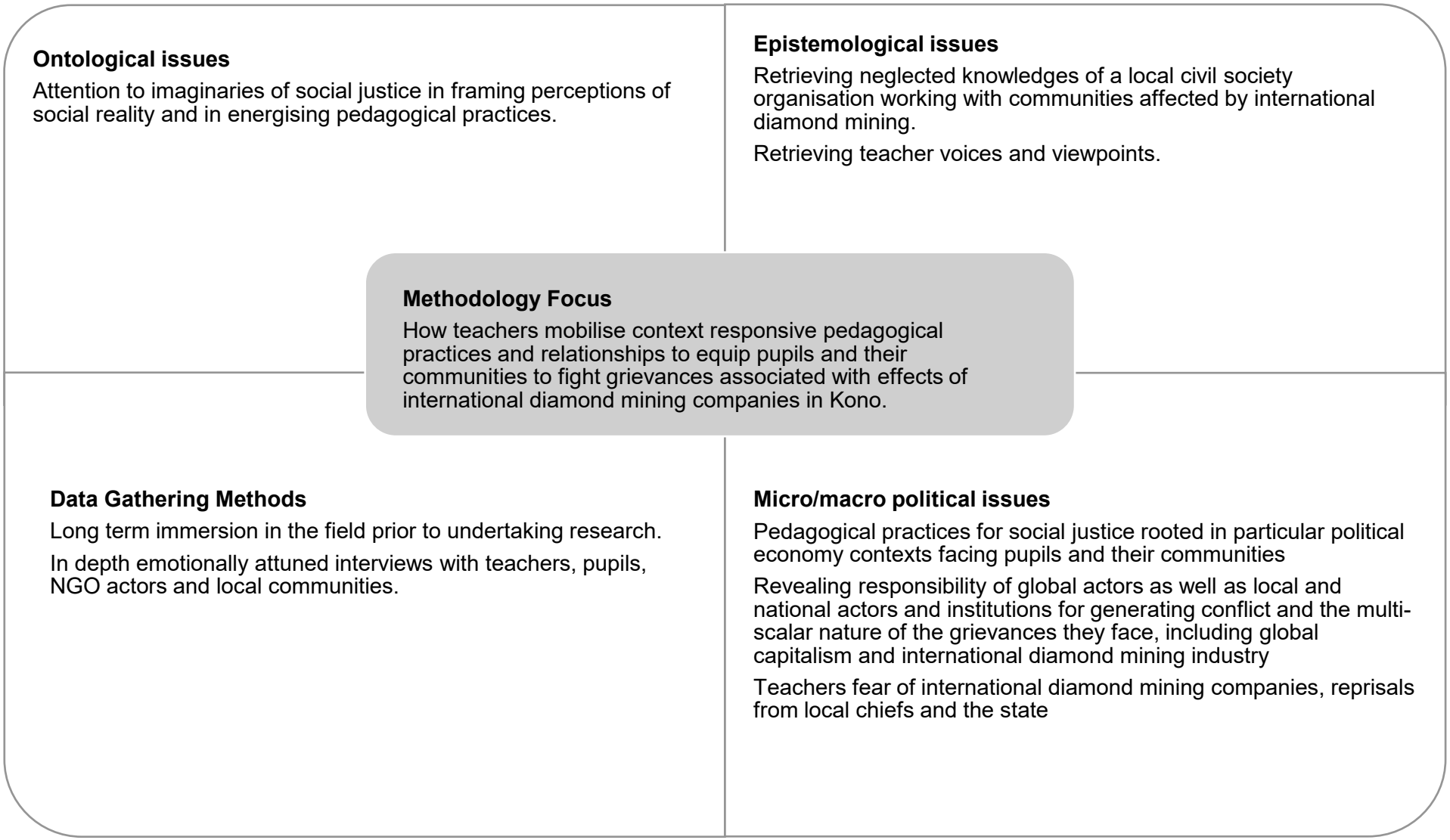
Scale of Analysis: Global and National

Chapter 2: Higgins, S. and Novelli, M., (2020). Rethinking Peace Education: A Cultural Political Economy Approach. *Comparative Education Review*. Featured Article, *64*(1), February 2020.



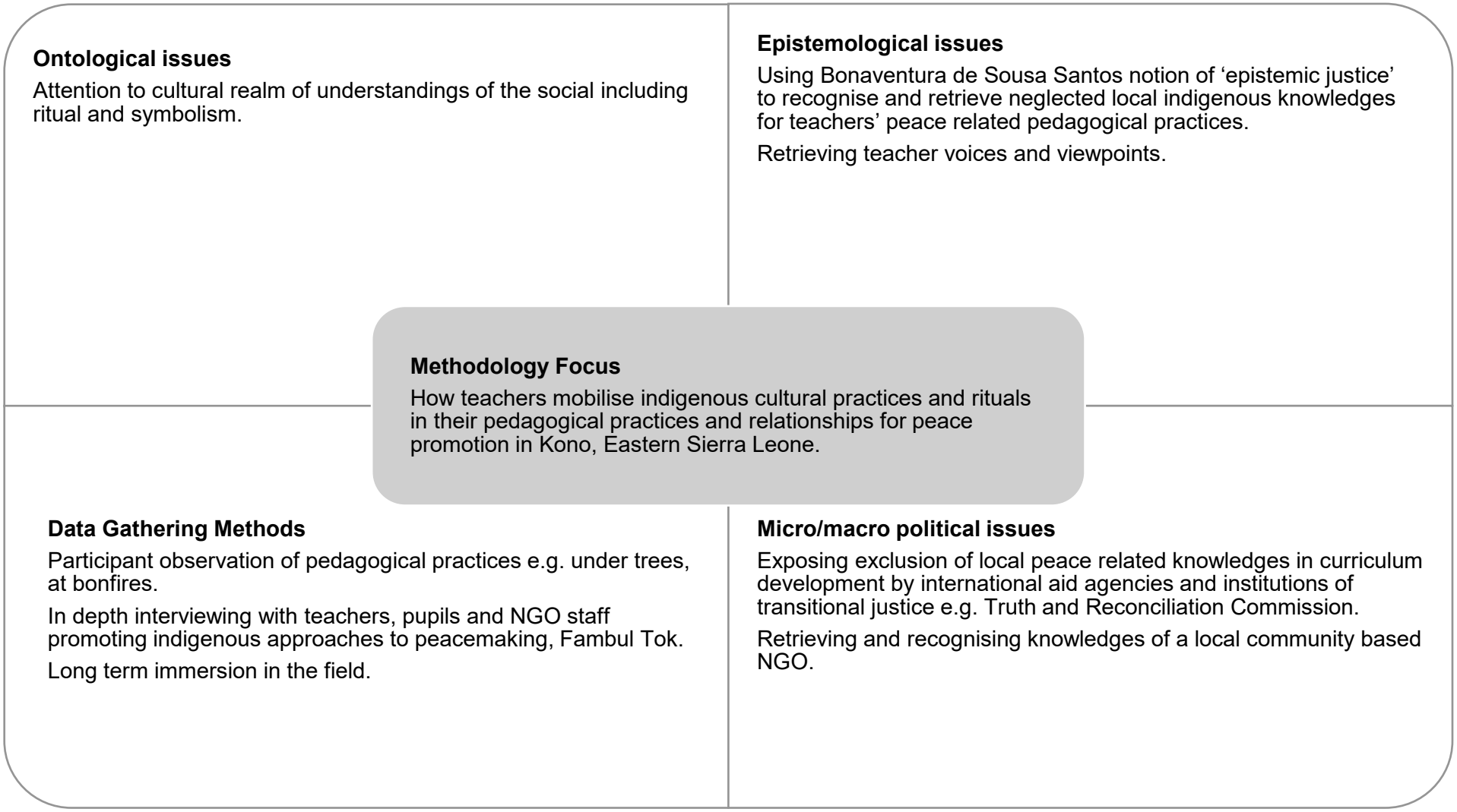
Scale of Analysis: Global and National

Chapter 4: Higgins, S., (2018). School mining clubs in Kono, Sierra Leone: the practices and imaginaries of a pedagogy of protest against social injustices in a conflict-affected context. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *16*(4), 478-493.



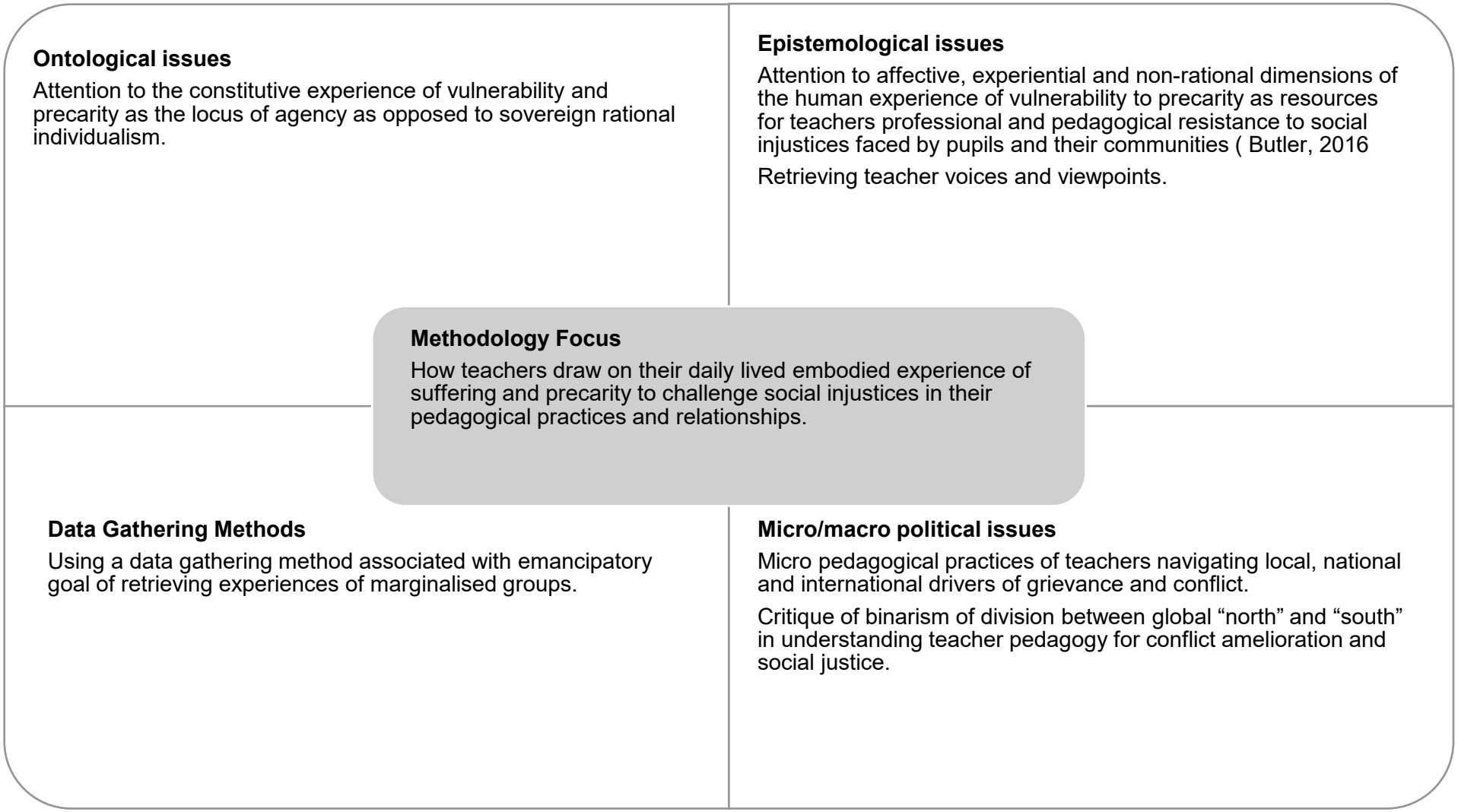
Scale of Analysis: National

Chapter 5: Higgins, S., (2019). Culturally responsive peacebuilding pedagogy: a case study of Fambul Tok Peace Clubs in conflict-affected Sierra Leone. International Studies in Sociology of Education, 28, 127-145.



Scale of Analysis: National

Chapter 6: Higgins, S., (2020). “This is of concern to me really…”; Using photo elicitation to understand the vulnerability and resistance of teachers to drivers of conflict in Kono, Sierra Leone. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education*. Forthcoming.



Scale of Analysis: Local