

Nurturing Cultures of Peace with Dialogic Approaches to Language and Literacy

Shelley Wong & Rachel Grant

“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world”: Nelson Mandela

Abstract

This paper argues that violence in society can be reflected in the microcosm of the classroom, primarily taking the form of a range of bullying behaviours, and that TESOL educators can play a role in addressing conflict by connecting individuals and communities through a dialogic approach to TESOL. The article goes on to describe the nature of dialogic pedagogy and identifies its relationship to past paradigms of methodology, using as a framework three questions taken from Prator’s (1979) *Cornerstones of Method*: (a) What is known about the nature of language? (b) What is known about the nature of the learner? (c) What are the aims of instruction? The paper concludes that a dialogic approach assists TESOL educators not only to support the learning of all students from a wide range of ability levels and ages but also to go beyond the classroom to view praxis as connecting with all communities with a global perspective for social justice and peace.

Keywords: dialogic approach, cultures of peace