

# In Search of Peacebuilding Strategies for the Global Civilization: from “Education for War” to “Education for Peace”

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*The article offers a philosophical view on the problem of strengthening the potential of education in the field of peacebuilding, taking into account both current and future challenges: globalization, local conflicts of various scales, hybrid wars. At the heart of the research is the question: what is the role of education (notably higher education) in these processes? It is proved that, on the one hand, education is a “victim,” one of the components of the humanitarian problem, and on the other - an arena of clash of opposing forces, which embody two phenomena: “education for war” and “education for peace.” The tasks of our research need attention, first of all, to the philosophical context of the problem of ideologizing educational discourse. Communicative ethics was considered as one of the alternatives to ideology. We have demonstrated that communicative ethics is primarily the opposite of modern liberal ideology based on John Rawls’ theory of justice. We outlined the positions of Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas on the concept of communication and mutual understanding. We have summarized Appel’s research, pointing to the basic moral principle of his discursive ethics, which is the regulatory requirement for realizing an ideal communicative community in a real communicative community. Based on the methodological framework proposed by Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas, we have proposed three principles of peacebuilding for Ukrainian education: 1) strengthening the analytical tools for research on problematic issues of history, economics, and the current political situation; 2) rejection of stereotypes “we” and “they” in favor of the practice of incremental interaction; 3) implementation of the Ukrainian language in all educational programs, media, and public space.*

*Keywords: development of civilization, peacebuilding, globalization, philosophy of education, education for war, education for peace, world order based on peace*

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## Introduction

The blurring of information boundaries accompanies the global stage of civilization development. It is pretty evident that this phenomenon is not a random stage in the formation of world information but is a response to humanity's need to "be informed." It is clear that man has always sought to "consume the future" to anticipate and influence it. This desire is inherent in human nature. That is why such practices as astrology, divination, magic rituals, etc., do not lose their popularity. However, the only mechanism for influence on the future is a special area of human culture – education. Today, it is able to see and actively determine the future of all spheres of society – from a competitive economy to basic and applied science (Terepshchyi, 2015).

In the days of the pandemic, new and new problems arise for the whole society and its educational sphere. The role of education, in general, and higher education, in particular, is being transformed from a resource for the development of society into a leading social sphere. Education, its quality and accessibility determine the limits of the growth of modern civilization. In the context of COVID-19 challenges, such as the restriction of human rights, the practice requires the development of new forms of adaptation of society and education, optimizing the interests of the state and the individual in post-war civilization.

At the same time, the pandemic did not cross out, but on the contrary - intensified the "old problems," with which the question remains: how to ensure sustainable development when there is a war? We are all not only observers of the turning point of history – the transition to the new space age, but we are also participants in this process. Humanity is conquering space, but our planet is disturbed by hundreds of military conflicts of various scales. The question arises about how we can move into space and what ethical platform we will spread beyond the planet. The choice is ours: we will be the "clay" of these changes or their "sculptor."

One of the urgent tasks of research in modern education is to strengthen its potential for peace, taking into account both current and future challenges: wars, local conflicts of various scales, hybrid warfare, and more: "Perhaps our historical memories may be directed through our history curriculum and other representations of war and peace to inform government policies" (McCulloch & Brewis, 2016).

In general, the ideological history of the twentieth century can to some extent be seen as a tripartite struggle of fascism, Leninism-Communism, and liberalism, from which the last side emerged victorious. The development and transformation of liberal ideology is the main theoretical structure that determines the political, economic, and value metamorphoses in the European-American social space. The strengthening of the global position of communist China at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the creation of a Customs Union led by Russia open up potential opportunities for a recurrence of the world ideological struggle. Such global tendencies can be characterized as the polarization of global ideological structures, which is a harbinger of severe changes in the political arena of post-Soviet society.

The qualitative difference between the looming ideological struggle and the historically decisive clash in the twentieth century is the coexistence of all ideologies in a single system of late capitalism. Indicative is the situation in which we can see how the dominant liberal countries of the West lose the economic competition with innovative Asian countries. The obvious consequence is that liberalism, in all its transformations, needs ideological alternatives.

The current situation in Ukraine is of global importance in resolving the ongoing political confrontation between the West and the East. As an essential geopolitical object on the world map, Ukraine is the subject of a backstage struggle for influence from the United States,

China, and Russia, which in the most likely scenario could decide the future of Eastern Europe.

In this article, it is expedient to raise the question: what is the role of education (notably higher) in these processes. On the one hand, the victims are one of the components of the humanitarian problem. On the other hand, there is an arena of clash of opposing forces, which embodies two phenomena: “education for war” and “education for peace” (Oleksiyenko et al., 2021). The solution to our research problems requires attention, first of all, to the international context of peacebuilding.

## **International context**

Under the domination of the concept of nation-states, the concept of education was characterized by the continuity of knowledge, which, in particular, determined the national identity. The need to participate in the national economy created a system of knowledge and education that stored and transmitted this knowledge in a pragmatic or non-liberal way. As the famous philosopher John Dewey wrote: “While training for the profession of learning is regarded as the type of culture, as a liberal education, that of a mechanic, a musician, a lawyer, a doctor, a farmer, a merchant, or a railroad manager is regarded as purely technical and professional” (Dewey, 1899: 42).

In other words, the national economy and national culture were the two pillars on which the education system was built. The methodological potential of such an understanding of education has been exhausted as a result of intensifying globalization trends. As a result, education has lost its relative staticity and has become hypermobile and changeable in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is increasingly difficult to talk about individual national education systems because it is increasingly difficult to identify and record permanent links between its elements. Given this fact, it is quite relevant to explore international initiatives aimed at including education and its institutions in the discussion around peacebuilding.

The efforts of the UN and its permanent bodies should be mentioned here first (Kyvliuk, 2020). According to the United Nations Charter, the main one is the Security Council, which alone has the authority to act on behalf of all member states. Article 24 of the document states: “In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf” (United Nations Charter, 1945).

The United Nations Security Council activities contribute to the development of a consolidated UN position on the greatest threats to peace. A special Peacebuilding Commission was set up in 2005 to address current peacebuilding challenges: “In resolutions A/RES/60/180 and resolution S/RES/1645 (2005) the General Assembly and Security Council established the Peacebuilding Commission, mandating it to provide political accompaniment and advocacy to conflict-affected countries with their consent. In landmark twin resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016), the Commission was mandated to advise the General Assembly and the Security Council on peacebuilding and sustaining peace; to promote an integrated, strategic and coherent approach to peacebuilding; to act as a bridge among the principal organs and relevant UN entities by sharing advice on peacebuilding needs and priorities; and to convene all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations” (United Nations, 2021). The work of the Peacebuilding Commission focuses on attracting attention and supporting the needs of peacebuilding in countries where it is needed. The Commission

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also encourages an integrated, strategic, and consistent approach to peacebuilding, promotes the sharing of best practices in peacebuilding and facilitates the financing of measures to implement the resolutions on peacebuilding and peacekeeping adopted by the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

Within the activities of the permanent bodies and commissions of the UN, there are targeted programs aimed at specific, limited in space and time practical steps. The experience of the UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Program, which also takes care of Ukraine, is interesting for our research: “The UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Program has addressed priority needs in eastern Ukraine arising since the outbreak of the armed conflict in the spring of 2014. The program intends to strengthen community security and social cohesion, support the economic recovery of conflict-affected communities, and further implement decentralization and healthcare reforms in government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The total budget for 2019-2022 is over the US \$80 million” (Inclusive Development, 2021).

The United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Program for Ukraine includes three main components (Inclusive Development, 2021):

- a) Economic Recovery and Restoration of Critical Infrastructure;
- b) Local Governance and Decentralization Reform;
- c) Community Security and Social Cohesion.

The third component is significant for our research – *social cohesion*, which is extremely necessary for Ukrainian society. Until 2014, it seemed to us that we knew Ukraine, its borders, its people - but the events of recent years inevitably force us to revise our usual ideas about the map of our state, Ukrainian society, economy, politics, culture, and education. Otto von Bismarck attributes the aphorism that German teachers won the war. And this is understandable because national memory and national ideology are primarily a product of education.

### **Peacebuilding in education: from the struggle of ideologies to communicative ethics**

For the needs of our study, it is worthwhile to identify three levels of knowledge about peacebuilding in education. Firstly, the conceptual level is the general understanding of the problem that arises in the multidimensional metatheoretical patterns that define the basic “ideas of peace” around which unfolds “peaceful” space and time. Secondly, the theoretical level of scientific understanding of the problem in its essential quantitative and qualitative characteristics. At this level, different sciences and scientific areas interact, giving rise to an interdisciplinary of theoretical level of peacebuilding, which should be understood as a whole. Third, the methodological level is the level of practice-oriented understanding of the problem, which consists of developing methodology and methods of application and updating the principles of peacebuilding, in particular, in the educational curriculum. Here we will dwell on the conceptual and theoretical levels.

At the conceptual level, one of the most significant attempts to create a way to free society from ideological “webs” is the theory of “ethics of discourse.” Discourse between ideology and communication concepts originated since the “Theory of Justice” of American philosopher John Rawls was published. This book, published in 1971, heated up the debate within the framework of social philosophy and returned interest in ideology from the English-speaking scientific community (Rawls, 1971).

In the 60's years, German philosopher Karl-Otto Apel paid attention to the idea of transcendental pragmatics on which philosophy should be returned to real practical problems, not to sink into self-contained lock theoretical constructs. This goal of the philosopher obviously became the impetus for forming the concept of ethics of discourse, which was formed in constant controversy with Jürgen Habermas.

According to Apel, the modern era is faced with the urgent question of the formation of a planetary ethic that could give practical guidance to every inhabitant of the planet: “My point was, briefly expressed, that the blockade of the possible validity of universal ethics pertains only to the subject-object-relation of scientific and, analogously, of instrumental-technological rationality, whereas in the complementary dimension of inter-subjective or communicative rationality – for example, within the community of scientific investigations taken as an ideal argumentation community – universally valid ethics is indeed presupposed and recognized even by the co-subjects of value-neutral science and technology. Therefore, I concluded, the task of ethics was to overcome the modern absolutization of the subject-object-relation of science and the accompanying methodological solipsism of philosophical epistemology (from Descartes through Husserl) with the aid of the hermeneutic and linguistic turn of the twentieth century's philosophy, in order to reach an ultimate foundation of ethics through strictly transcendental reflection on the necessary presuppositions of the rationality of argumentation” (Apel, 2020: 139).

The difficulty of this task, including the political legitimization of ethics in law, lies in the multi-contextual existence of morality, which is difficult to universalize through multiculturalism, subjective judgments, and other factors. Thus, Apel proposes a unique structure of morality, which covers various areas of relations between the subjects of discourse:

*Micromorality* is morality that covers the relationship to the immediate environment of individuals. The “ethics of one's neighbor,” as the philosopher calls it, changes little over time, as it is based on natural human rights and cultural archetypes. In this dimension, the cultural and moral traditions of individual peoples must prevail.

*Mezomoral* is morality, reflecting the attitude within society and its institutions. This means interstate and political motives and the attitude of the individual to the state, religion, etc. A specific example of the sphere of influence of mezomoral may be the citizen's responsibility for the choice of government, religious tolerance, or social assistance.

*Macromorality* is the newest sphere of morality, which covers the problem of global attitude to humanity, the planet, ecology, war, and peace. Macromorality goes beyond generations because the consequences of the moral choice of modernity determine the future of our family.

Considering the idea of the discursive formation of Appel's arguments, he singled out the concept of ideal and real communicative community:

*An ideal communicative community* is a rationalized structure that exists as regulated on the basis of established ideal norms – law, religious dogmas, statutes of organizations, etc. Its purpose is to rationalize practical situations and precedents derived from moral principles (which are not permanent). It is stable, with a clear definition of ethical priorities, with perfect adherence to the decisions made by each member of the community.

*The real communicative community* is a sphere of continuous creation of moral conclusions from specific practical situations. The participants of moral judgments are not ideal objects (judges, politicians, etc.) but are real people who combine many social roles from position to religious confession. Apel tries to show that the practical situation is not a collision of

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one role with another, interest with interest, but a collision of real people and groups with a complex and multifaceted structure of values.

For Apel, “the mainstream of philosophical ethics in our time pursues another route, in order to reach a practically relevant solution of the problem of universal ethics in the face of multiculturalism. It seems to have given up or absolutized the whole problem of ensuring a rational foundation for universally valid ethics; it rather replaces this problem by providing empirical and pragmatic support for a factual, politically relevant agreement on the elements of global ethics, in a similar way as, since the UN declaration of 1948, the factual agreements on human rights have been prepared and, so to speak, negotiated” (Apel, 2020: 141). Ethical communication is always a dialectic of the relationship between ideal and real community, the impossibility of bringing one to another Apel calls *a priori communication*.

Important in communicative ethics is Kant’s concept of “*regulatory idea*” – the regularity of principles governing human activity in the field of ideal, which at the same time states that the ideal cannot be achieved, but the desire is a necessary *principle of ethical progress*. The focus of the real communicative community on achieving the ideal through argumentation is a transcendental regulatory idea of Apel’s ethics. He rightly raises the question: “Hence we should indeed have a similar declaration of moral duties or responsibilities, in order to provide a counter-weight to the rights talk, which has been accused of being an expression of Western individualism and egotism. But it should not be possible, furthermore, to formulate the procedural principles of discourse ethics as a rational framework of possible agreement about any material proposals that can be made with regard to common duties and responsibilities in our time, keeping in mind that, in a vague form, these procedural principles are already acknowledged in our thousand public dialogues and conferences?” (Apel, 2020: 153).

Jürgen Habermas has a slightly different point of view on the essence of communicative ethics. Unlike, the author pays more attention to practice, social action than transcendental rationality and ideas. Borrowing from Edmund Husserl the living world concept, Habermas reflects on the expediency of mutual understanding between members of one social dimension of existence. In his opinion, mutual understanding becomes necessary due to the presence of the following principles of communication:

*Focus on mutual understanding or success.* Each of the participants in the interaction is interested in mutual understanding because this is the easiest way to satisfy their own interests.

*Mutual understanding as a mechanism for coordinating actions.* The interconnectedness of the actions of each participant in the interaction translates them to the level of one teleological action.

*The situation of speech and the situation of action.* The collective process of interpreting a situation that arises within a particular world of life.

*Background of the living world.* Any interaction or social initiative is subject to the context of common understanding already formed within the life world.

*The process of understanding between the living world and the world.* Communication and communication within the life world always refers to something objectively existing in the world.

*Links to the world and claims to significance.* Moral argumentation takes place in the framework of achieving three aspects: truth, correctness, and truthfulness.

*World perspectives.* The competent subject of speech has a choice between cognitive, interactive, and expressive modes of language use and appropriate classes of representative,

regulatory, and ascertaining actions in order to claim universal significance and focus on justice, truth, or any other aspect (Habermas 2001: 205).

Based on the principle of the need for mutual understanding, Habermas identified two types of communication:

- a) communicative action (interaction);
- b) discourse.

Habermas wrote, “Within the first, meanings and meanings are naively, uncritically assumed in order to exchange information (experience necessary for action); within the discourse, problematic claims to meaning become the subject and no exchange of information takes place” (Habermas, 1996: 84-85).

According to the German philosopher, ideological influence is characterized by the denial of discourse and the lack of need for a free exchange of information: “If an ideology actually succeeds in legitimizing norms in the sense of supposedly just, it is precisely because its claims to discursive justification cannot be verified; the general and independent criterion by which we could do so when we are within ideological consciousness and freedom of discourse for us is forcibly terminated is erroneous; we actually talk about the conditions of discourse only among ourselves” (Habermas, 1996: 90).

According to Habermas, in the ideological sphere of social existence, communicative action only clearly takes the form of discourse, imitating its real presence. As a result, ideological communication is communication where the exchange of information without claims to significance and meaningfulness becomes a cult.

## **Philosophy of peacebuilding in educational practice: Quo Vadis?**

Researchers Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas offer an analysis of the situation in a conflict-ridden area – Israeli Jews and Palestinians, Greek and Turkish Cypriots. They offer three methodological approaches that could be heuristic for analysis of the situation in Ukraine.

First of all, researchers point out the following: “We first point to the need for research in the social sciences to realize the social sciences have surrendered their analytical scope to methodological nationalism... Methodological nationalism is the naturalization of the global regime of nation-states by the social sciences. It expresses itself every time scholars take for granted concepts that should be identified as being folkloristic or political and not necessarily analytical in their studies and research” (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2016).

Therefore, the first principle of peacebuilding strategy in educational practice can be called *strengthening the analytical tools* for research on problematic issues of history, economics, and the current political situation. The analytical approach, being a natural continuation and development of the method of structural anthropology, is essential in philosophical and sociological terms. The essence of the analytical approach is that the understanding and discussion of problematic issues of history, economics, and the current political situation is built following the principle of full (critical) presentation of all possible meanings. For educational practice, this means bringing to a common denominator of all possible, even mutually exclusive (by nature), concepts and theories that have historically appeared in human thought and recognized it as incapable. An example of this kind of systemic reconstruction is the policy of racial discrimination and xenophobia in Nazi Germany, based on the unscientific “concept of racial hygiene” and the crimes of the Holocaust.

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Secondly, Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas point to the need “to review some of the social sciences, main categories of analysis, which in this specific context are “identity” and “culture” ... The pervasive use of culture as a (pseudo) analytical concept in the social sciences for the last 50 years represents paradoxically the opposite direction of that taken by the discipline supposedly responsible for adopting the term in the first place - in anthropology for which the term has become suspect for it tends to exoticise, stereotype and essentialize. Its multiplicity of meanings, today, renders it useless for serious analytical work. In one way or another identity has become the psychologized inner essence of “I” or “Us” or “Them,” and culture has become the outside, not less rigid, “container” into which individuals (or groups) are cast. “Identity” and “culture” seem now to be an inseparable couple” (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2016). Therefore, the second principle of peacebuilding strategy in educational practice can be called *the rejection of stereotypes “we” and “they” in favor of the practice of incremental interaction*. It is known that the most productive form of communication arises in the process of interacting with new real people, whom we accept into our “lifeworld” (according to Edmund Husserl), realizing the fact that we are them. In practice, this state of communication called “collectivism”. This can be understood in a broad sense as a refusal to separate and divide everything that “we” and “they” must do together.

In a narrow sense, in the educational system which is based first on the imperative “every man for himself,” this communication constitutes a waiver of entry into the new social groups. It also means denying mechanical social practices and creating new methods of developing and training people and their thinking. The school principle of incremental interaction means that training in the chosen system should be based on the tactics of “small steps” and real knowledge and practices, regardless of their subjects’ subjective character.

Third, Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas encourage research in the social sciences to first acknowledge and second confront “language” and “complexity”: “... importantly, the above remarks are not just about semantics; yet, language is of the essence in social research. There is no choice but to take language seriously, when trying to understand that which is human and maybe even more so in education; if only because humans see in language one of their main tools to manufacture reality” (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2016). For Ukraine, the issue of language is politicized and problematic. In education, the importance of language is fundamental because it is through the language of the generation to communicate in time and space. But for some reason, this fact is rarely realized in relation to the history of the Ukrainian language and the tradition of Ukrainian education. So, around the Ukrainian language as the language of science and education, there probably is skeptical. Most of the educated people understand what is at stake but understand badly. Language is the information security of society, but there is also such a thing as taste. It is on this basis that behavioral economics is based. Because quality product Ukrainian language should attract the attention of the consumer and keep interesting. Ukrainian language ought to be clear at the domestic level and on a professional and then the language – that requires a real professional. For the scientist and the teacher, we can say that language is a common “heritage” and the only tool that allows you to be at the forefront of social science and actively participate in the formation of new ideas. Language is an organization of public consciousness, and the question of peacebuilding is a question of convergence of languages aimed at creating and maintaining a stable intellectual balance. After all, language is a guarantee against the self-destruction of the state.

Therefore, the third principle of the peacebuilding strategy in educational practice, we consider *the implementation of the Ukrainian language in all educational programs, media, and public space*. The international students can use English but in no case Russian. We



support the thesis that “The Ukrainian language unites.” Flirting with the Russian-speaking population has already led to the occupation of Crimea and the armed conflict in the Ukrainian Donbas. Therefore, if we strive for lasting peace, we must rely on a single information space, the foundation of which is the Ukrainian language. Under these conditions, Ukrainian education will become an instrument of peacebuilding and not a source of smoldering conflict, which can flare up at any time, especially with skillful intervention by neighbors.

## Conclusions

In the international arena, peacekeeping issues are primarily taken care of by the UN and its structures: the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Recovery and Peacebuilding Program, and others. For Ukraine, the period from February 2014 to May 2019 was a time when the political, social, and economic landscape underwent rapid changes. The Revolution of Dignity, Russia’s occupation of Crimea, and the hybrid war in Donbas have exacerbated “old wounds” and created many challenges for Ukrainian society and education.

Military conflict in Ukraine requires changes in education. The question is, what should these changes be? The return of control over the temporarily lost territories presupposes their reintegration into Ukrainian society. What should be the education for the population that has long been outside the Ukrainian humanitarian space? There are no scientifically sound strategies or concrete steps to transform Ukrainian education in the context of the latest military conflict. The main objectives of the peacebuilding strategy in education are: 1) the study of education as a factor in establishing and maintaining peace and 2) highlighting the problems of educational development in conflict and post-conflict societies.

The answer to the main question – what makes education a factor of peace and what a factor of war – largely depends on what positions we will analyze the situation: through the prism of ideology or the ethical one. In our opinion, the main challenge was (and is) that the political consciousness of citizens is determined by ideological influence. The main reasons for this are the Soviet legacy of society’s political and ideological life, and secondly, the rapid development of means of communication, which leaves less and less chance for an individual to stay away from provocative political messages and propaganda.

To this end, in this small study, we considered communicative ethics as one of the alternatives to ideology. We have demonstrated that communicative ethics is largely the opposite of modern liberal ideology based on Rawls’s theory of justice. We outlined the qualitatively different positions of Apel and Habermas on the concept of communication and mutual understanding. We have summarized Appel’s research, pointing to the basic moral principle of his discursive ethics, which is the regulatory requirement for realizing an ideal communicative community in a real communicative community. We explored the principle of the need for mutual understanding between Habermas, based on his idea of “communication of the living world.” Communicative ethics, in contrast to ideology, involves the collective and continuous creation of meanings. In the duration and comprehensiveness of this discursive process, the ideal of achieving justice, truthfulness, and truthfulness of moral regulations, as well as their legitimization in law, lies.

Based on the methodological framework proposed by Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas, we have proposed three principles of peacebuilding for Ukrainian education: 1) strengthening the analytical tools for research on problematic issues of history, economics, and the current political situation; 2) rejection of stereotypes “we” and “they” in favor of the practice of incremental interaction; 3) implementation of the Ukrainian language in all educational programs, media, and public space.

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