

Development of Intercultural Education through English language textbooks used in elementary schools in B&H

Assist. Prof. dr. Senad Bećirović

Abstract

In today's globalized world mono-cultural societies have been gradually disappearing. A trend towards the creation of multicultural societies began in 1960s. New multicultural societies were forced by the virtue of new conditions to engage themselves with others. The number of international institutions has adopted documents, which became the backbone of new education policy. Therefore, school systems worldwide began to work intensively on the promotion of intercultural values among young people. Intercultural education is most explicitly accomplished through textbook contents which encourage interaction, exchange, desegregation, interdependency and solidarity among people belonging to different cultural groups living in the same territory. Yet nowadays many multicultural nations encounter difficulties in holding together multicultural diversity and in establishing harmonious interpersonal relationships. This work deals with content analysis as one of the most frequently applied research methods in the field of education; and it is concerned with the analysis of the intercultural content in English language textbooks used in B&H in elementary schools. The main goal of this research is to determine the quantity and quality of content that point to intercultural education in the textbooks of English language used in elementary schools in the Bosnia and Herzegovina. The research involves both quantitative and qualitative analysis. We selected nine categories, important for intercultural education throughout English language textbooks: identity, cooperation and friendship, respect, tolerance, cultural relativism, stereotype, prejudice, oppression, and labeling. Results of textual analysis will offer scientific insight about the possible contributions of English language textbooks to intercultural education in B&H. This research for us is important because we believe that if multiculturalism is accepted as an asset not as a burden, with its proper utilization within the education system, multicultural nations would inevitably continue to benefit from their diversity.