

Abstract

The thesis examines the representation of cultures in ELT textbooks in order to reveal whether the textbooks may serve as tools of developing intercultural communicative competence (ICC). The specific aim of the thesis is to assess the extent to which different cultures appear in the textbooks' cultural content. It also aims at examining the manner in which specific cultures are represented. Three textbooks have been selected for the study and the visuals and reading components of units 1-10 of each have been analysed. The method of extracting and counting the cultural references is used to carry out a cultural breadth analysis. In the analysis of the manner of cultural representation, specific cultures are examined in the textbooks which quantitatively favour them. The results show that the two textbooks that have been evaluated as possible ICC-developing tools exhibit diversity both in the extent of different cultures they include and also in the varying manner in which the cultures are represented and which often shows cultures in juxtaposition. Methodological choices made in writing the thesis may inspire further research of cultural content of ICC-supportive textbooks. The thesis also promotes the importance of a critical approach to textbooks as materials of considerable educational value.