

Abstract:

The thesis provides an analysis and comparison of Geography textbooks for children with hearing impairment, children with a mild intellectual disability and children in mainstream elementary schools. The aim of the thesis is to highlight the current state of Geography textbooks for children with hearing impairment and, by means of combining findings on deaf education and the didactics of Geography, suggest specific solutions for improving the quality of education of children with hearing impairment through raising the standard for didactic materials used for teaching. The introduction of the thesis explores the position of Geography as a field of study within the School and Framework Educational Programmes; the objectives of teaching Geography at the second stage of elementary school are examined in relation to the target groups whose the textbooks are analysed in this thesis. Further, the thesis focuses directly on textbooks. The functions of the textbook in the educational process are introduced, as well as its structural components with a particular emphasis on the textual elements. Drawing on relevant academic literature, the characteristic features of these elements are described with special attention paid to learning from text – predominantly with regards to deaf children who typically acquire Czech as a second language. Research questions are formulated on the basis of requirements that follow from the curricular documents of the Czech educational system, as well as the characteristic features of textbooks, their components and functions in the educational process, and with regards to the target groups of the textbooks analysed. Three methods of evaluating textbooks, explained minutely in the thesis, are employed to answer them: the textbook evaluation grid method developed by Z. Sikorová, the method for measuring text complexity developed by M. Pluskal, and the method for measuring the didactic potentiality of textbooks developed by J. Průcha. The purpose of this thesis is to determine the similarities and differences among the textbooks aimed at the three target groups. The findings based on the inquiry conducted with the help of the aforementioned methods are confronted with the initial findings from the introductory chapters. The focal point of the thesis is an assessment of the extent and manner in which the textbooks analysed meet the specific educational needs of the children they have been designed for. Particular attention is devoted to children with hearing impairment. On the basis of the research-based part of the thesis (text complexity, deficiencies in terms of didactic potentiality and interconnection of components etc.) recommendations and suggestions are articulated for the creation of higher-quality Geography textbooks for children with hearing-impairment.