

Cultural Contents in Albanian Language Books for Foreigners

Linda Mëniku

Tirana University/Arizona State University (Albania)

lindameniku@yahoo.com

Abstract

In the field of foreign language teaching, one aspect that emerges often as a topic of discussion is the relationship between knowledge of a foreign language, and knowledge of the culture of the country. Culture in foreign language teaching materials has been subject to discussion among professionals and teachers for many years. In Albania there is a lack in investigating how the textbooks for foreigners serve as sources of cultural content in teaching Albanian as a foreign language. To address this issue, this paper evaluates textbooks for their cultural content. Native speakers are best advocates of the cultural component, history, traditions. By including cultural texts they guide the interest of the foreigners toward the main important historical events, national heroes, traditions, their uniqueness.

The books will be evaluated by following some guidelines for their cultural contents:

1. What is the cultural component included in these textbooks?
2. Where is the information taken from? Is this information based on other books?
3. Can we speak about typical cultural content for the Albanian books for foreigners?
4. What cultural and social groups are represented?
5. Is there any difference, based on the countries these books are used?
6. Do the books address specific learners?
7. Do the books represent the culture in an objective way?
8. Does the book include generalizations about the culture?
9. What is the role of illustrations, if present in these textbook?
10. Are there any specific activities related to learning culture?
11. Is this information related to the specific topic of each lesson?
12. Does the information about culture help the learners to have a better understanding of the Albanian history and traditions?