

Catalan and International Culture(S) in Catalan as a Second Language Textbooks

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Key words: foreign language, textbooks, cultural content, representation, Catalan

ABSTRACT

Since the year 2000 due to a large wave of international immigration to Catalonia there has been a proliferation of Catalan as a second language (CSL) teaching centers. Subsequently the number of teaching materials for CSL increased. These textbooks give learners a certain vision of a culture of their host country as well as the international culture(s) some of which could be their own native ones.

This study focuses on specific elements of Catalan and international culture(s) in two collections of CLS most widely used textbooks. Adapting a methodology used by Ramirez & Hall (1990), the study firstly gives quantitative analysis of all the geographical references related to Catalonia and the rest of the world in form of a large text (more than 50 words), image, or mere mention in a text. It is later followed by qualitative analysis.

The results show that Catalan culture is favored over international cultures, but that, in most cases, textbooks give a simplified view on both Catalan and international cultures. Catalonia and the rest of the countries mentioned are very often presented as destinations for wealthy tourists without any substantial cultural information. Furthermore, the study suggests that textbooks avoid cultural comparisons therefore giving little space for cultural understanding.