

## INTERCULTURALITY IN READERS IN SERBIAN LANGUAGE FOR YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADES

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**Abstract:** *Cultural diversity as one of identity characteristic of contemporary society is reflected in different ways in the educational system as well. The textbook as an element of teaching is an important factor of mutual understanding, respect, acceptance of individuals who wish to preserve their cultural identity in the broadest sense. Reader as a kind of anthology of literary texts, didactically formed, allows acquisition of certain experiences (through the literary art), building up attitudes, development of competencies in the sense of interculturality. The author analyzes the content of 20 readers approved for teaching in elementary grades, in order to determine: (a) whether and in which way the thematic structure of readers for younger grades of elementary school contributes to the development of intercultural competence; (b) which elements of teaching, in the opinion of teachers, to the greatest extent contribute to interculturality. The research results show that: (a) a small number of literary texts in the analyzed readers contribute to the development of intercultural competences related to learning in order to know, learning to live together with others and learning to be; (b) teachers believe that the organization of teaching and the reader contribute the most to interculturality. Although the reader is primarily addressed to pupil, the teacher has the task to put the content of textbooks into function of interculturality development.*

**Key words:** *interculturalism, intercultural competence, reader, literary text, teacher.*

### Introduction

Life in modern societies, which are heterogeneous in the national, linguistic, religious and other sense, actualize the question of multiculturalism, ie. the establishment of a pluralistic society in which any exclusivism will outgrow and achieve coexistence, mutual tolerance and equality of different cultures

in the broadest sense. Multiculturalism is an universal phenomenon, because in modern societies current issue of the right to diversity, which in one cultural dimension implies, above all, issues of education and the requirements for recognition of identity (Pejović according to Gajic 2011). The need to improve the quality of life in multicultural societies and the importance of achieving the equal rights of all to education and respect for diversity imposes to school a matter of personal, national and cultural identity and the question of the right to its maintenance and development (Gajic and Budić 2006; Gajic 2011). Rejection of static vision of culture as a mosaic of different groups according to ethnic origin, language, religion and the like, in opposition to dynamic, interactional model is resulting in the idea of interculturalism, from which in education is expected to respect the civil and human rights and freedoms, to contribute to the further development of democracy, to better mutual understanding and cooperation, freedom and security. In that sense, modern education is defined as a process „which creates the conditions, norms and principles as well as the necessary competences which will make possible the dialogue between different cultures“ (Mlinarević et al. 2013: 13). Differences in culture are understood as richness which should be preserved and developed (Previšić 1996; Gajic 2011), and education in cultural diversity or cultural understanding affirms the right to difference, not discrimination because of them (Sekulić-Majurec 1996). The common acceptance of cultural diversity, mutual respect and tolerance contribute to acceptance of the cultural heritage on the one hand, but also to ensuring development opportunities, on the other hand.

### **Theoretical background**

The idea of interculturality in education is the result of the need to regulate multicultural societies according to the principles of cultural pluralism (mutual understanding, tolerance and dialogue, experiences and permeation of its own and different cultural characteristics), universalism (common interests, beliefs, customs) and social dialogue (cultural particularities and shared links) (Hrvatić 2007: 42). Interculturalism implies a positive and active relationship between groups and individuals, which differ according to national, ethnic, religious, class, race or gender characteristics. Principles of interculturalism include „openness to the other, active respect of the differences, mutual comprehension, active tolerance, respect of the other culture, ensure of equal opportunities and combating discrimination“ (Martinelli and Taylor, 2003: 33).

Intercultural education is an inevitable link that enables effective work on conflict transformation, typical for the modern world, and development of respect for other people, cultures and values (Hrvatić 2007). It is defined as a theoretical and practical approach directed toward development and

improvement of interaction between pupils of different backgrounds, as well as acquiring knowledge of different cultural, religious and linguistic traditions present in schools and societies. It includes the belief that meaningful encounter and dialogue encourage mutual understanding, enrich the intellectual and social life (Sleeter and Grant 1994). Intercultural education aims to overcome the passive coexistence and to achieve developed and sustainable way of living together in a multicultural society, which is achieved by building understanding, mutual respect and dialogue among groups of different cultures, by providing equal opportunities and by combating discrimination. Therefore, the aim of intercultural education is not knowledge, but the attitude towards knowledge, new construction and the level of knowledge that enable the creation and operation of intercultural educational (school) community. Intercultural education of every individual requires knowledge of himself and his own culture in order to be able to understand other cultures, which aims to „better understanding of cultures in modern society; the ability to communicate between people belonging to different cultures; more flexible attitude towards cultural diversity in society; greater willingness of people to participate actively in social interaction with people of other cultural backgrounds and the recognition of the fundamental characteristics of human nature as something they have in common“ (Ouellet, according to Gošović et al., 2007: 6).

Upbringing and education for interculturality affects changes of negative stereotypes towards different social groups. In order to establish, people who have developed intercultural competences, and who accept and implement intercultural dialogue with those who are different are necessary (Mrnjauš 2013: 322). Intercultural competence is defined as the ability to recognize and use cultural differences as one of the resources for learning (Berthoin-Atal and Friedman 2003). In order to develop this competence, it is necessary to acquire the skills related to respect for others and self-expression. In order to achieve this it is necessary a good knowledge of their own culture and sense of identity, which are the basis for openness to other cultures and respecting their diversity (Račić 2013).

The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century identified four pillars upon which education should rely: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be (Delors 1998). Learning to know as a key competences implies intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and problem-solving strategies, and in the context of interculturality, competences are: understanding the basic concepts of social justice; knowledge of the differences that exist; the identification of mechanisms that foster inequality; perception of diversity as a richness, exploration of diversity and the willingness to enter into contact with

diversity. Learning to do involves the application of knowledge acquired in contact with others, and the key competencies are related to the ability of appreciation of diversity as an integral part of life, knowledge of their rights and obligations and respect the rights of others. Learning to live together in the context of intercultural learning involves encouraging pupils to discover differences and to treat them as an incentive for development, and to connect with others through constructive dialogue (Delors 1996). Learning to be involves competencies that are more related to personal value orientation, beliefs or norms than on specific knowledge and practical skills, for example, tolerance of the uncertainty, openness to new experiences, risk taking, and the like (Vranješević 2013).

The aim of intercultural education is:

- „to promote the conditions conducive for pluralism in society through increasing the sensitivity for their own culture and to remind children to the fact that there are other ways of dealing and other value systems;
- to develop childrens respect for the lifestyles that differ from their, in order to be able to understand and appreciate each other;
- to cultivate commitment to equality by empowering children to make choices responsibly (based on knowledge of the facts) and to take actions directed against discrimination and prejudice;
- to recognizes the similarities and differences of the values and enable all children to speak for themselves and to articulate their culture and history“ (Gošović et al. 2007: 14).

The key role in intercultural education belongs to teache, who functionally connects the different elements of teaching, mediates between pupils and teaching content, between pupils and textbooks. For that reason it is necessary to develop teachers' competences related to the openness for changes in the paradigms of education, objectives, forms, contents and methods of teaching and learning, scientific knowledge and the like, but it is necessary it is necessary to develop a sensitivity of teachers for the identification and understanding of the characteristics and needs of members of different groups, particularly in multicultural environment. In order to be able to develop intercultural competence of pupils, teachers should master the civil, the interpersonal, the intercultural and the social competences, which are necessary for intercultural education. Respectively, unless the required professional and methodical knowledge and skills of motivation of pupils, teachers should have a pro-social, empathic, assertive and creative abilities (Jozek, Lomnický and Žbirková 2007).

The development of attitudes towards people from other cultures is influenced by different factors: family discourse and practice in relation to the cultural groups; content of the school curriculum; way of presenting

cultural groups in the mass media, as well as personal contact with individuals from other cultures (Byram et al., 2009: 6). The curricula of Serbian language in elementary grades include tasks which are related to the upbringing and educational intentions of a broader range, that go beyond the subject, class and institutional frameworks, such as: exploring, developing and preserving of national and cultural identity; respect, care and improvement of cultural heritage; educating of pupils in the spirit of the highest moral values (humanism, solidarity, altruism, cosmopolitanism ...) (*Pravilnik o nastavnom programu za četvrti razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja* 2006). In this way, by developing sense of belonging to someone's own community and to mankind as a whole, young people are becoming aware of their national and cultural identity, but also learn tolerance towards diversity, which is the main task of the intercultural education (Spajić-Vrkaš 1993).

Intercultural education and developing of intercultural competences in teaching in elementary grades could be implemented in various ways, including through a reader as a textbook for teaching literature. In order to encourage intercultural competence, a textbook „should be a source of knowledge about the diversity, should develop the skills of communication and living together and to encourage the formation of values which ensure respect for diversity“ (Vranješević 2013: 46).

The textbook that would be suitable for the development of interculturality should include topics that would encourage the development of intercultural competences on three levels, adapted to the developmental abilities of pupils:

- *The level of knowledge and information* – learning the language, customs, standards and values of other cultures, as well as the specifics of their worldview; Learning about the mechanisms of formation and maintenance of stereotyped thinking, prejudice and different types of discrimination or inequality.

- *The individual level, the level of personal competencies* – thinking about ourselves, about our own identity and relationship to the different groups to which we belong, seeing oneself from the perspective of others, controlling one's own behavior in an intercultural context, the development of critical thinking, ie. critical attitude towards reality that surrounds us.

- *The level of social skills* – learning communication skills and constructive solution of conflicts in an intercultural environment, developing of empathy skills, support and solidarity, increasing tolerance to ambiguity, teamwork skills and cooperation in an intercultural context (Vranješević, Trikić and Rosandić 2005).

Reader as an anthology of literary texts may be suitable for cross-curricular learning of intercultural content and developing of intercultural

competencies. It is a specific textbook which affects „the developing of students' personality, communication, independence, creativity, cultural identity and developing habits, too“ (Cvetanović 2007: 80), by its functions. In literary teaching reader has the role of a reliable interlocutor to pupil which, in communication with the literary text activates and stimulates pupils' intercultural competence. We were interested in the potential of readers in Serbian language in elementary grades to develop interculturality.

### **Research methodology**

In order to examine the possibility of developing interculturality in teaching literature through textbook *the research tasks* were related to the determination of: (a) whether and in which way the thematic structure of readers for younger grades of elementary school contributes to the development of intercultural competence; (b) which elements of teaching, in the opinion of teachers, to the greatest extent contribute to interculturality.

The research is based on the use of descriptive *method*, and was conducted using a survey and a content analysis technique, which was implemented by two independent researchers, one of whom was the author of the paper. The categories of intercultural competences: acquisition of knowledge about diversity; developing the skills of living together, cooperation and constructive communication; the formation of values that ensure respect for diversity were identified by analyzing the thematic structure of the texts represented in readers. The protocol of content analysis and closed-ended questionnaire, which examined contribution of some factors of the teaching to development of interculturality were used as research instruments. The survey was anonymous, to avoid giving desirable answers.

*The sample* consisted of a sample of teachers and a sample of textbooks. The sample of teachers was selected from the population of employees of 2014/2015 school year, in elementary schools in the Republic of Serbia, and it consisted of 225 teachers from 25 elementary schools in seven districts. The sample of textbooks consisted of 20 readers for younger grades which were included in the *Catalog of textbooks for primary school*, approved for the period from 2016 to 2019.

Independent variables were: (a) years of work experience (up to 10, 11 to 20, 21 to 30 and over 30) and professional qualification of teachers (college and university).

The obtained data were processed in the statistical package IBM SPSS Statistics 20, and were reported using the statistical measures of counting, relative relationship and average. From the statistical tests the Chi-square was applied as a non-parametric procedure.



## **Results and discussion**

### **1. Readers in Serbian language in younger grades of elementary school in function of developing intercultural competence**

Development of competencies for life in multicultural environment by intercultural dialogue can be achieved through a literary text. The attitude of younger school age child to literary art, among other things, is characterized by: enjoyment in the content and the manner of presentation of such content; empathic identification with the world of the characters and their actions; a strong emotional response to the message of the text. The literary text affects consciousness, knowledge, imagination and language of the child. In this regard, we have analyzed the thematic structure of literary texts from readers in Serbian language for younger elementary grades, in order to determine whether the intercultural contents is one of the structural elements of these texts.

The results of a content analysis show that out of a total of 1138 texts in 20 readers of 5 publishers, 35 (3.08%) texts with its thematic structure contribute to development of interculturality. Some texts are repeated in several readers, so we evidenced a total of 22 (1.93%) different texts which thematic structure can contribute to the development of some of the categories of interculturality. Some readers do not contain any text that fits this criteria.

Based on these results it can be concluded that the texts which contribute to the development of interculturality by its thematic structure are not represented enough in the Serbian language readers for the younger grades of primary school. Since there is no subject in younger grades to deal with interculturality, contents that are related to this topic to the greatest extent are learnt in the course of Civic Education, but also through World Around Us, which is most suitable for intercultural learning in the younger grades of elementary school (Vranješević 2013: 40). Since knowledge about intercultural relations at this educational level is generally acquired cross-curricularly, it is necessary to: (a) make use of literary texts from readers in function of developing intercultural competence by appropriate teaching treatment; (b) carefully select literary texts suitable for developing of interculturality, which may be included in teaching through textbooks or choice of children's press or linguistic-methodical text and the like. In this sense, the obtained results can be of use to teachers and authors of textbooks.

Regarding by categories of interculturality, the results show that thematic structure of texts from readers relates to following:

- Personal and group identity (25 texts);
- Rights and rules for regulating common life (of 5 texts);

- Understanding the perspectives of other social groups (2 texts);
- Mutual understanding and respect (2 texts);
- Permeation of cultural groups and their mutual influences (1 text).

Good knowledge of oneself and his own culture and a sense of identity are the basic prerequisite of openness to other cultures and respect of their peculiarities (Račić 2013). The largest number of texts in readers contributes to the introduction of personal and group identity by its thematic structure, and in this sense, the thematic structure of the textbooks meets the requirements for developing interculturality. On the other hand, understanding the behavior of others, the language of others and their ways of thinking and viewing the world as the basic elements of intercultural competence (Mlinarević et al. 2013: 15) make the element of thematic structure of small number of texts.

We have analyzed the content of readers in the context of the four pillars of Education for the Twenty-first Century (Delors 1996), assessing the contribution of thematic structure and meaning of literary texts to the development of intercultural competencies of students. The following texts are suitable for *acquiring knowledge about cultural peculiarities* (lifestyle, cultural habits, cultural heritage):

- *Icy North* (Marinković, S. i Marković, S. (2016). Čitanka za prvi razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Kreativni centar);
- M. Pupin: *From pasture to scientist* (Todorov, N., Cvetković S. i Plavšić, M. (2016). Trešnja u cvetu – Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd:Eduka);
- D. Lakićević: *The legend about the boy from New York* (Žeželj Ralić, R. (2016). Maša i Raša „Reči čarobnice”, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Klet);
- T. Rodić: *With children around the world* (Stanković-Šošo, N. i Čabrić, S. (2016). Beskrajne reči, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd:Novi Logos);
- P. Bak: *Sisters* (Šojić, V. i Kasapović, M. (2016). Čitanka 3. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- P. Bak: *White and yellow girl* (Todorov, N., Cvetković S. i Plavšić, M. (2016). Trešnja u cvetu – Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd:Eduka);

The following texts can contribute to the *acquisition of knowledge about physical characteristics* (race, gender):

- J. J. Zmaj: *The song about the Chinese* (Jović, M. i Jović, I. (2016). Čitanka za prvi razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Eduka);



- L. Tumijati: *Erika* (Manojlović, M. i Babunović, S. (2016). Čitanka za drugi razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Eduka).

*Development of skills of living together, cooperation and constructive communication can be achieved through the following texts:*

- A. Šopenhauer: *Barbed piglets* (Manojlović, M. i Babunović, S. (2016). Čitanka za drugi razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Eduka);
- A. Šopenhauer: *Nice manners* (Juzbašić, M. i Trkulja, N. (2016). Čitanka 2. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- S. Ćosić: *I also have some rights* (Arandelović, M. (2016). Čitanka 4. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- Lj. Ršumović: *Primer of Children's Rights* (Stanković-Šošo, N. i Čabrić, S. (2016). Beskrajne reči, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Novi Logos);
- *From the Declaration of Children's Rights* (Arandelović, M. (2016). Čitanka 4. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- Lj. Ršumović: *I have the right to an attitude* (Juzbašić, M. i Trkulja, N. (2016). Čitanka 2. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- *Convention on the Children's Rights* (Juzbašić, M. i Trkulja, N. (2016). Čitanka 2. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- A. Dž. Peker: *Socializing, going out, having fun (Drugovi s posebnim potrebama)* (Stanković-Šošo, N. i Čabrić, S. (2016). Beskrajne reči, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Novi Logos);

The following texts are suitable for *the formation of values that ensure respect for diversity:*

- *Lessons of wise chief* (Šojić, V. i Kasapović, M. (2016). Čitanka 3. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- R. Damjanović: *The sky above the circus* (Juzbašić, M. i Trkulja, N. (2016). Čitanka 2. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
- J. J. Zmaj: *Gypsy praises his horse* (Arandelović, M. (2016). Čitanka 4. Beograd: Bigz školstvo; Todorov, N., Cvetković S. i Plavšić, M. (2016). Trešnja u cvetu – Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Eduka; Stanković-Šošo, N. i Čabrić, S. (2016). Beskrajne reči, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Novi Logos; Žeželj Ralić, R. (2016). Maša i Raša „Reči čarobnice”, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Klet; Marinković, S. i Marković, S. (2016). Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Kreativni centar);
- Lj. Ršumović: *Homeland defends by beauty* (Arandelović, M. (2016). Čitanka 4. Beograd: Bigz školstvo; Todorov, N., Cvetković S. i Plavšić, M. (2016). Trešnja u cvetu – Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Eduka; Stanković-Šošo, N. i Čabrić, S.

- (2016). *Beskrajne reči*, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Novi Logos; Žeželj Ralić, R. (2016). *Maša i Raša „Reči čarobnice”*, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Klet; Marinković, S. i Marković, S. (2016). *Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole*. Beograd: Kreativni centar);
- Lj. Ršumović: *Homeland* (Cvetković, M., Cvetković, S., Živanović, T., Plavšić, M. i Prvulović, B. (2016). *Vodeno ogledalo – Čitanka za treći razred osnovne škole*. Beograd: Eduka)
  - A folk song: *Christmas is tapping by a stick* (Arandjelović, M. (2016). *Čitanka 4*. Beograd: Bigz školstvo; Todorov, N., Cvetković S. i Plavšić, M. (2016). *Trešnja u cvetu – Čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole*. Beograd: Eduka; Stanković-Šošo, N. i Čabrić, S. (2016). *Beskrajne reči*, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Novi Logos; Žeželj Ralić, R. (2016). *Maša i Raša „Reči čarobnice”*, čitanka za četvrti razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Klet);
  - D. Erić: *Christmas Eve* (Šojić, V. i Kasapović, M. (2016). *Čitanka 3*. Beograd: Bigz školstvo);
  - K. Ilić: *A dream of Christ* (Žeželj Ralić, R. (2016). *Maša i Raša „Reka reči”*, čitanka za treći razred osnovne škole. Beograd: Klet).

Competences related to knowledge of the diversity can be developed through texts that talk about the lifestyle, cultural habits, cultural heritage, race, and gender. At the same time, it does not indicate to a sufficient extent to the interdependence of different cultures, and the similar are the findings of the analysis of Nature and Society textbooks for the fourth grade (Vranješević 2013: 46). When it comes to social skills that relate to life with others, the readers contain texts about the rights and the way of regulating these rights, the rules of living together and constructive communication, cooperation and support of others and different. Texts about personal and group cultural identity, personal value orientations, beliefs or standards fall into the category which is suitable for the development of competencies to be (Delors 1996). It would be significant to analyze the methodological apparatus, ie. issues, tasks, directions, incentives for experiencing, understanding and interpretation of literary texts which contribute to the development of interculturality by its thematic structure.

## **2. Teachers attitudes about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of interculturality**

In order to achieve intercultural learning, the following preconditions have to be satisfied: exposure to contacts with other cultures and its members; motivation for involvement and engagement in this domain; curiosity; empathy; knowledge of oneself and its own culture; acceptance of complexity, contradictions and frustrations (tolerance to ambiguity) that

occur in situations of encounters with different cultures (Vranješević, Trikić and Rosandić 2005). Teacher as a mediator between pupils and teaching content plays a significant role in achieving the teaching tasks which are related to interculturality. Each of these preconditions of intercultural learning can be achieved with indirect or direct action of teachers.

Bearing in mind the importance of the role of teachers in education for interculturality, we were interested in the attitudes of teachers about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of interculturality. The following factors of teaching were offered: *curriculum*, *organization of teaching*, *pupil*, *reader*. Teachers were asked to indicate which factor to the greatest extent contributes to the development of intercultural competencies of pupils. Also, teachers had the opportunity to supplement proposed list.

Table 1: *Attitudes of teachers with different work experience about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of interculturality*

Work experience	Curriculum	Organization of teaching	Pupil	Reader	Total
0–10	14 34,1%	16 39%	4 9,8%	7 17,1%	41 100%
11–20	5 7,7%	31 47,7%	1 1,5%	28 43,1%	65 100%
21–30	9 10,2%	38 43,2%	6 6,8%	35 39,8%	88 100%
More than 30	0 0%	11 35,5%	8 25,8%	12 38,7%	31 100%
Total	28 12,4%	96 42,7%	19 8,4%	82 36,5%	225 100%

$$\chi^2=42,208 \quad df=9 \quad r=0,001$$

According to research results, the highest percentage of teachers believe that *the organization of teaching* (96 or 42.7%) and *the reader* (82 or 36.5%) to the greatest extent contribute to the interculturality, while *the curriculum* (28 or 12.4%) and *the pupil himself* (19 or 8.4%) contribute to the development of intercultural competences of pupils in the lowest extent (Table 1). The data according to which teachers give the great importance to reader in developing the interculturality is surprising, if we bear in mind the results of the first task in this study, according to which a relatively small number of texts from readers for the younger elementary grades can contribute to the development of intercultural competences with its thematic structure and meaning. On the other hand, teachers believe that the organization of

teaching is very important for the interculturality, ie. they emphasize their role in achieving this educational task. This data shows that teachers are aware of their role in the development of intercultural competences of pupils, so it could be expected that their activities will be proportionate to their beliefs about the importance of themselves in the realization of this teaching task.

We examined the influence of work experience and educational level of teachers as independent variables on their attitudes about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of pupil's intercultural competencies. The results indicate that there are certain differences in opinions of teachers with different work experience (Table 1). The largest number of the most experienced teachers (12 or 38.7%) believe that *reader* has the greatest significance for the realization of this teaching task, and all other subgroups formed according to teacher work experience considered that the organization of teaching to the greatest extent contributes to interculturality. It is interesting that a large percentage of teachers at the beginning of their career (14 or 34.1%) consider that the *curriculum* to the greatest extent contributes to the development of intercultural competencies of pupils, which is not surprising if one bears in mind the importance which teachers attach to the curriculum. Also, about a quarter of the most experienced teachers (8 or 25.8%) consider that pupils themselves to the greatest extent contribute to the development of their intercultural competences. This result can be interpreted in two ways – either teachers base such attitudes on their experience or they want to share responsibility for the realization of this teaching assignment with the other participants in the learning process.

Results of statistical analysis ( $\chi^2 = 42.208$ ,  $df = 9$ ,  $r = 0.001$ ) show that the differences in the attitudes of teachers with different experience in teaching about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of interculturality are statistically significant.

Table 1: *Attitudes of teachers with different education level about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of interculturality*

Education level	Curriculum	Organization of teaching	Pupil	Reader	Total
College	2 6,3%	17 53,1%	5 15,6%	8 25%	32 100%
University	26 13,5%	79 40,9%	14 7,3%	74 38,3%	193 100%
Total	28 12,4%	96 42,7%	19 8,4%	82 36,5%	225 100%

$$\chi^2=5,725 \quad df=3 \quad r=0,126$$

More than a half of teachers (17 or 53.1%) who have a college degree, the organization of teaching determined as the most important factor in developing of interculturality of pupils, while a quarter of this subgroup of interviewed teachers (8 or 25%) the highest significance in this area gave to the reader (Table 2). On the other hand, somewhat smaller percentage of teachers with the academic education the greatest importance attaches to the same factors in function of developing interculturality. Statistical analysis ( $\chi^2 = 5.725$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $r = 0.126$ ) shows that there are no significant differences in the attitudes of teachers with different professional qualifications about the contribution of the factors of teaching to the development of intercultural competencies of pupils.

A reader is a significant element of teaching which by its content structure, thematic direction and meaning of literary texts, by comprehensiveness and the quality of orders within the methodical apparatus can contribute to the development of intercultural competencies of pupils, but not without a teacher. „Textbook can do a lot, but it can not do it alone“ (Antić 2016: 32). Teacher and textbook must work together in the process of developing the interculturality, too.

## Conclusion

Multicultural society requires intercultural concept of teaching and learning, which includes the creation of a constructive dialogue, understanding different cultures, ensuring equal rights and opportunities of free formation of the identity of each person (Mrnjauš 2013: 322). Results of the content analysis of readers in Serbian language for younger elementary school grades show that there is a little quantitative representation of the literary texts which can contribute to the development of interculturality of pupils by its thematic structure. Assessing the contribution of thematic structure and meaning of literary texts to the development of intercultural competence of pupils in the context of the four pillars of Education for the Twenty-first Century (Delors 1996), it was found that the texts which can contribute to the development of competences related to learning in order to know, learning to live together with others and learning to be are represented in analyzed readers.

The results of the survey of teachers attitudes about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of intercultural competences of pupils indicate that in this area teachers valued the most organization of teaching, and their role and the role of readers in achieving these learning tasks. Since teachers are aware of the significance of their role in developing the intercultural competences, it could be expected that their activities in this

area will be proportionate to their beliefs about the importance of themselves in the realization of this teaching task. Results of the statistical analysis show that the differences in the attitudes of teachers with different experience in teaching about the contribution of some factors of teaching to the development of interculturality is statistically significant, and the difference in the attitudes of teachers with different professional qualifications about the contribution of factors of teaching to the development of intercultural competences of pupils are not statistically significant.

Although readers in Serbian language for younger elementary school grades allow developing of pupils intercultural competence, the contents of the reader are not enough to acquire the necessary experience, building of attitudes, development of competencies in the sense of interculturality. The key role in intercultural upbringing and education – which bears the mark of individual and collective action, tolerance, protection of their own socio-cultural identity and self-awareness – belongs to a teacher, as an important initiator and promoter of intercultural values (Mlinarević, Brust-Nemet 2012). Although the reader is primarily intended for the pupil, teacher has the task to put the content of readers into function of developing interculturality.

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