

Racism, Discourse and Textbooks

The coverage of immigration in Spanish textbooks

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Introduction

In this paper I examine some properties of the discursive reproduction of racism in textbooks in Spain.* Racism is a system of social domination and inequality that is reproduced in many ways, for instance by discriminatory practices. One of these practices is discourse. Discourse is specifically relevant in the reproduction of racism because it is also the principal means for the reproduction of racist prejudices and ideologies. And since these racist beliefs in turn are the basis of discriminatory practices (including discourse), it is obvious that discourse plays a prominent role in the reproduction of racism (Van Dijk, 1984, 1987a, 1987b, 1991, 1993, 2005, 2007; Wodak & Van Dijk, 2000).

Not all discourse types are equally relevant though in these processes of social reproduction. Obviously, news reports in the press are more important than the weather report in this sense. Thus, because of their impact on the formation of beliefs of many people, public discourses have a more significant primary influence than personal, private text and talk. There is little doubt that the discourses of the mass media in contemporary society play a leading role in the reproduction of socially shared beliefs.

The same is true for educational discourse. Among the few discourse types that are 'obligatory' for some of the participants, namely the students, forms of educational discourse such as lessons and textbooks, play a prominent role in the reproduction of society. Besides their overt contents aiming at the acquisition of standard knowledge in society and culture, textbooks and their hidden curricula also play an important role in the reproduction of dominant ideologies, such as those of race, gender and class. It is therefore important to examine in some detail how textbooks do this (Apple, 1979, 1982, 1993; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991).

Also because of increasing migration, most contemporary societies are more or less multicultural or multiethnic. Also North America and Western Europe in the last decades have thus become increasingly diverse. Such diversity is expressed in many ways, such as in social practices, ideologies and discourses, for instance in politics, the media and education. Adequate textbooks of multicultural societies may thus be expected to reflect and promote the values of such multicultural societies. Unfortunately, much research in the last decades has shown that this is seldom the case. Most textbooks in the past — and many still today — rather reflect the prejudices and stereotypes of the dominant white, European, group about the indigenous populations in the USA or Australia, and about the immigrants from the South and East in virtually all countries of Western Europe and North America (Blondin, 1990; Gill, 1992; Giustinelli, 1991; Klein, 1986; Mangan, 1993; Preiswerk, 1980; Troyna, 1993).

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Against the background of these general dimensions of discourse and the reproduction of racism, and the more specific ones of the role of textbooks in the discursive reproduction of racism, this paper shall examine some properties of the coverage of immigration and minorities in contemporary textbooks in Spain.

The case of Spain is interesting because unlike other western European countries, migration to Spain is much more recent – also because until quite recently Spain was itself too poor a European country to attract immigrants. Rather, it was for a long time itself the motherland of many migrants, first of all to its own former colonies, and later to the USA and North-Western Europe. Yet, at the same time, Spain had its own minorities, such as the Jews and especially the ‘Gitanos’ (the Romaní community, the ‘gypsies’), who had been persecuted, expelled and discriminated against for centuries. Until North-Africans, especially from Morocco – often still called ‘Moros’ – arrived in large numbers during the last decade, the Gitanos were the main target of racist prejudice and discrimination (Calvo Buezas, 1989, 1997; Colectivo IOE, 2001; Manzanos Bilbao, 1999; Martín Rojo et al., 1994; Van Dijk, 2003; see also the annual Reports of SOS Racismo).

There are several other reasons to examine the representation of immigration and minorities in Spanish textbooks. First of all, several studies suggest that increasing immigration has been accompanied by increasing racism, and that in that respect Spain has become more and more like the other countries in Western Europe. Secondly, however, in some respects Spain may be different than other western European countries, for instance because of its own experiences of emigration and the period of fascism under Franco. These experiences might have created more pronounced ideologies of solidarity as a possible protection against racism. Arguments for such a position might be the absence of racist parties – ubiquitous elsewhere in most Western Europe – and of racist media and tabloids, as we know them from the UK and Germany.

In the present paper, thus, it is interesting to investigate whether such a special situation of Spain – if it is true – would also be true to textbooks. In this case we may compare with results of textbook research in other countries which were at the same stage of immigration as Spain has been in the last decade.

Racist discourse

It has been assumed above that racism as a system of social inequality daily reproduces itself through social practices, such as various forms of discrimination, exclusion, problematization, or marginalization (Back & Solomos, 2000; Bulmer & Solomos, 1999; Essed, 1991; Essed & Goldberg, 2002; Feagin, 2005; Feagin, Vera & Batur, 2001; Merenstein, 2008; Moore, 2008)

A crucial social practice in this case is discourse, language use or communication. Both as directed at minorities or immigrants, for instance in everyday conversation, as well as *about* Others in everyday talk as well as public elite discourse in politics, media, education and research, discourse plays a fundamental role in the perpetuation of racism. The same is true, incidentally, for the reproduction of *antiracism* as a system of resistance and opposition.

Despite the vast differences between countries, ethnic groups and discourse genres involved, racist discourse has a number of characteristic general properties. First of all, as is the case for most ideologically based text and talk, racist discourse tends to be po-

larized in the sense that it features a negative representation of *Them*, combined with a positive representation of *Us*. Century-old prejudices and stereotypes fed by an ideology of racial (white) superiority have thus left their traces in contemporary collective beliefs about non European peoples. Such polarized representations can manifest themselves at all levels of discourse, such as the choice of topics, the way discourse participants are represented, in the syntactic means to emphasize or de-emphasize agency and responsibility for good and bad actions, in metaphors and in general in the way *our* good things and *their* bad things are being enhanced or mitigated. We find such biased representations in most political discourse, in the mass media as well as in textbooks (Hill, 2008; Reisigl & Wodak, 2000, 2001; Van Dijk, 1984, 1987a, 1991, 1993; Wodak & van Dijk, 2000).

Racism in textbooks

Textbooks are known to be shaped by the dominant ideologies of society. They are intended not only as means to realize the explicit curriculum of socially accepted knowledge, but also as the conduit for prevailing norms, values and attitudes. It is therefore not surprising that they also have been one of the main sites for the formulation of racist or Eurocentric ideas, first about the peoples of the Third world, and then about those from the South migrated to Europe and Northern America. Whereas such racism in the early 20th century and until the Second World War was quite explicit, and formulated in terms of white superiority, contemporary forms of racism in textbooks have become more subtle and implicit. Research on racism in textbooks of the last decades has found the following typical characteristics:

- **Exclusion:** immigrants and minorities do not or barely appear as groups represented in textbooks. Even when significant groups of immigrants are present, many textbooks still represent society as homogeneous, monocultural and 'white'. Diversity is not celebrated as a positive value.
- **Difference:** if represented at all, immigrants, minorities and in general non European peoples tend to be described as essentially different from us; differences are emphasized and similarities are de-emphasized.
- **Exotism:** The 'positive' side of the emphasis on difference is the enhancement of the exotic, strange or otherwise distant nature of the Others. This is especially the case for peoples living far away, or for the first small groups of immigrants from such peoples.
- **Stereotyping:** Representations of the Others tend to be stereotypical, schematic and fixed. Textbooks often repeat each other in the reproduction of such stereotypes about poverty, lacking modernity, backwardness, and so on.
- **Positive self-presentation of Us:** Our own group (Europeans, nationals, etc.) are attributed many positive characteristics: Technologically advanced, democratic, well-organized, knowledgeable, and so on. Typically, We are being represented as actively helping or assisting (passive) Them.
- **Negative representation of Them:** Besides the usual stereotypes, Others may also be attributed many negative characteristics, such as being violent, criminal, illegal, using drugs, authoritarian, undemocratic, backward, passive, lazy or lacking intelligence.

- **The denial of racism:** The positive representation of Us also implies the absence, denial or mitigation of the negative representation of Us. Thus, our history of colonialism, aggression or racism tends to be ignored or reduced. Racism is typically represented as of the past (slavery, segregation in the USA) or elsewhere (e.g. in the USA or South-Africa), and seldom as being here, now, among us, and in our institution.
- **Lacking voice:** The Others are not only represented stereotypically and negatively, but also passively and as lacking voice. We talk and write about Them, but they are seldom heard or represented as speaking and giving their own opinion, and even less when saying critical things about Us.
- **Text and Images:** Many of the characteristics mentioned above not only are exhibited in text, but also in images, which typically exhibit the exotic, negative or problematic dimensions of Others or other countries. Thus, we will typically see a picture of 'huts' in Africa or igloos in Canada, rather than of a traffic jam among skyscrapers of many cities in Africa, Asia or Latin America.
- **Assignments:** The didactic dimensions of textbooks often presuppose the exclusive presence of 'white' students in class, addressing them specifically and inviting them to reflect about the Others as if these were not also present in class.

Many of these characteristics are not explicitly racist, but contribute to an overall stereotypical image of a homogeneous monocultural society, and of Them as being distant, different, absent or more or less subtly inferior to Us Europeans. Once immigrants and minorities are being represented, such representations may remain more or less stereotypical or negative – as *Them*, rather than as part of *Us*. Problems of multicultural societies tend to be emphasized, whereas the many positive aspects of diversity are ignored or played down. Immigrants tend to be portrayed as creating problems for us, rather than as contributing to our economic prosperity or cultural diversity.

These general characteristics of textbooks are more pronounced in countries where immigrants or minority groups are recent. Thus, in the USA and the UK, where debates about racism and textbooks have been going on for a longer time than in (other) countries of Europe, textbooks have followed the tendencies of a more general debate about multicultural education.

In Spain, this debate is more recent, and barely integrated in the curriculum. The international debate in other countries is of course known to education specialists in Spain, so that they did not need to begin from scratch (for discussion, see Aparicio Gervás, 2002; Calvo Buezas, 2003; Colectivo Amani, 2002; García Martínez & Sáez Carreras, 1998; Jordán Sierra, 2001; Martín Rojo, 2003; Ruíz Román, 2003; Sabariego Puig, 2002; Sierra Illán, 2001).

Under the influence of international debates on immigration, this also means that Spanish textbooks are already markedly better than for instance Dutch textbooks 20 years ago (for Dutch textbooks, see Van Dijk, 1987b). Let us illustrate this general observation in more detail.

Spanish textbooks

In the remainder of this paper we examine some Spanish textbooks of social science of obligatory secondary education (ESO), which in principle is for adolescents between 12 and 16. Social science in general is taught together with history and geography, and

textbooks tend to be integrated. Some of the autonomous regions use their own textbooks, in their own language. In this chapter there is space to comment only on a Catalan textbook (for details about Spanish textbooks and how they cover immigration, see Castiello Costales, 2002).

Catalan textbook

The Catalan textbook we have examined is called *Marca* (Vicens Vives, 1st edition, Barcelona 2003), used in the second year of secondary education. It combines social sciences, geography and history and is written by a team of 5 authors (A. Albet Mas, B. Benejam Arguimbau, M. García Sebastián, C. Gatell Arimont, and J. Roig Obiol, of which the first is professor of geography and the others secondary school teachers). The first volume of this book, written for the first year of ESO features a part on physical geography, and history from prehistoric times to the Greek and Roman empires, and sections on Catalunya in the times of the Greeks and the Romans. The volume we shall examine, Volume 2, continues the history part of this book, focusing on the Middle Ages, with a special section on the Iberic peninsula.

Relevant for our analysis of immigration are the passages on the Arabic period of Spain (Al Andalus). This section is written in rather 'objective' terms, on the one hand in terms of conquest by the "Muslim army" and various periods of Arabic administration between 711 and 1492, and on the other hand focusing on the major cultural contributions, mainly those of architecture, such as the Mosque in Cordoba, and the Alhambra in Granada, as well as literary and agricultural renewal. In other words, neither the content nor the style of this section imply a negative attitude towards Muslims or Arabs other than in the usual way in which historical battles and conquest is being described. On the contrary, the unique cultural contributions of the Arab conquerors are emphasized.

The rest of the textbook is about the geography of the modern world: demography, migration, social and political organization, rural and industrial societies, Europe, Spain and Catalunya. Let us examine some sections of this part of the book in somewhat more detail (words between double quotes are translations of Catalan words used in the text – whereas single quotes have the usual functions of special uses of words, and so on).

A first categorization and polarization between the "developed" and the "underdeveloped" world is made according to different "demographic models", with high and low birth rates, respectively (pp. 166 ff.). The demographic "explosion" in the underdeveloped countries (nearly all in the South, and appropriately colored orange on the world map, p. 167), which is also described as a consequence of medical and sanitary advances ("coming from the developed world") is thus compared to the sometimes negative population growth in the developed countries in the North (colored green on the map). Low birth rates in the developed countries are explained in terms of increasing numbers of women entering the work force and different attitudes about having children now these are no longer needed for economic reasons. Rather strangely, no mention is made of the increasing use of anti-conception. For the "underdeveloped" world, high birth rates are explained in terms of the economic necessity of having many children, the social marginalization of women, and religious beliefs. No such references are made for the religious beliefs in developed nations such as the USA or Spain, and it is implied that women in the South do not work, and hence more easily can have babies. These few passages already suggest a rather generalized, if not stereotypical, polarization between "developed" and "underdeveloped" nations,

if only as far as their demography is concerned. A picture of a well dressed, middle class, well to do 'white' family, seated at a table with much food, and with one child, two parents, two grandparents (and a cat), all smiling (except the cat), and in bright colors, is shown next to a picture of a very poor mestizo family in the countryside, with many children, barefoot and dressed very poorly, standing in front of a very simple house made of wooden sticks, and overall colored in brown like the soil they are standing on. That is, the picture illustrates and emphasizes the polarization provided in the text. No mention is made of rich nations, classes or people in the South or of poor people in the North.

A separate chapter is dedicated to migration and population structure (pp. 172 ff.). Migration is explained in terms of economic inequality in the world. Several pictures on the first page of the chapter illustrate the multicultural population in the UK, a Muslim woman in Berlin, and a poor family "from" Ecuador (without indication of where they are, but implicitly suggested that they reside in Spain). As conditions that favor immigration are mentioned that necessities of people are not satisfied in the country where they live (whereas they can be satisfied in the country where they are going), the media that transmit information about the new country so that people can compare with their own circumstances, and means of transport to reach the other countries. No mention is made of the necessities of the receiving countries, such as the need for cheap, immigrant labor (as also the term 'Gastarbeiter' suggests), as well as because of increasingly low birth rates. Besides economic reasons and natural causes (catastrophes), also social (religious, political, etc) reasons of migration are mentioned. That the causes of immigration are in the South and not in the North is explicitly formulated as follows:

Sembla clar que els corrents migratoris els generen més aviat les condicions adverses dels països d'origen I no pas tant els factors d'atracció dels llocs de destinació. Així doncs, és la desesperació dels habitants de molts països del sud la que origina, actualment, els fluxos migratoris cap a països del nord.

It is clear that migration flows are rather generated by the adverse conditions in the countries of origin and not so much by the attraction factors in the places of destination. Thus it is the desperation of the inhabitants of many countries in the South which presently give rise to the migration flows toward the countries of the North (p. 176).

A drawing linking "attraction territories" and "expelling territories" (*territoris de repulsió*) shows a worried picture of a man in the first, and a happy picture of a man in the latter, transmitted by TV to the first. Again, we see that the main explanation of migration is the negative motivation of people in poor countries, rather than the needs of rich countries. Also, this drawing seems to imply that people in poor countries are unhappy and that immigrants in rich countries are happy, thus contributing to unfounded generalizations and stereotypes, and to ignorance about the actual living and working conditions of immigrants in rich countries.

The authors of the textbook are of the opinion that measures need to be taken against the "explosion" of migration. Thus, there will be less migration from poor countries if the following actions are taken (p. 176):

- Growing investments in technology, education, health care and infrastructure in the poor countries.
- Import barriers in underdeveloped countries need to be lowered so that imported goods can generate wealth.
- Social and political changes (more democracy) will favor progress.

First of all, this passage implies that migration is a problem (“explosion”) that needs to be solved. Secondly, the solution is sought in the poor countries and not in the rich countries. Thirdly, lowering import barriers in poor countries first of all benefits the rich exporting countries. No mention is made of the necessity to lower import barriers in the rich countries so that poor countries can export their products. And finally, the poor countries are stereotypically associated with social inequality and lacking democracy. That many of the undemocratic regimes in the South have been created and supported by the ‘democratic’ regimes of the North is another fact that is not fit to be read about by school kids. Thus, the textbook gradually construes a polarized picture of the rich, democratic North and the poor undemocratic South, and immigrants are associated with the latter.

After a brief description of the consequences of migration for the sending and the receiving countries (in rich countries immigrants do work others do not want to do), the focus of the next section is on migration control, described as one of the major worries of the receiving countries. In other words, after briefly suggesting that migrants may contribute positively to the demography and economy of the rich countries, immigration is more emphatically defined as a problem, as is also the case in politics and the media. These problems are described as follows:

*Els països receptors d’immigrants consideren que el nombre de treballadors estrangers que poden acollir està en relació amb el nombre de llocs de treball que necessiten cobrir. La superació d’aquests límits pot generar fluxos il·legals de persones, que es didiquen a **feines clandestines i d’economia submergida**.*

El fet que els immigrants no trobin feina pot provocar problemes de tipus social.

*Tot això facilita que una gran quantitat d’**immigrants clandestins** puguin arribar als països de destinació a través d’uns itineraris controlats per les màfies, que comercien amb el tràfic de persones i posen en perill fins i tot la vida dels immigrants.*

The countries that receive immigrants consider that the number of foreign workers they can take in is related to the number of vacancies they need to fill. If these limits are exceeded, illegal flows may result of persons involved in clandestine jobs and the hidden economy.

The fact that immigrants do not find work may cause social problems (...)

All this favors the arrival (...) of a large number of clandestine immigrants through itineraries controlled by mafias who make money with smuggling people and who even endanger the lives of the immigrants (p. 178).

The problem with such passages is not that they are totally wrong or misguided, but rather that the selection of negative aspects of immigration and immigrants creates a social representation that is predominantly negative. If only a handful of things are being said about immigrants, and these are the same kind of things the children hear from parents or friends or see on TV, then this can only confirm established stereotypes. It would in that case be much more important to take advantage of the textbooks to emphasize those aspects of immigration that are less known, or that tend to be denied or forgotten. Thus, in the cited passage, immigrants are associated with such negative concepts as ‘illegal’, ‘clandestine’ as ‘creating social problems’, ‘smuggling’ and ‘mafias’, even when they are victims of the latter. That immigrants often contribute positively to the demography, the economy, the diversity, renewal and cultural richness of their new homeland, would have been an alternative and less stereotypical way of formulating the consequences of immigration. And among the social problems one should not only mention or vaguely suggest those *caused by them*, but also those caused by the receiving population, as is the case for prejudice, discrimination and racism.

The latter issues are briefly dealt with in a special section on “Immigrants and social problems at the place of destination”, where we find a brief typology of different relations between immigrants and people in the receiving country, such as integration, multiculturalism and marginalization (p. 179). When immigrants are integrated this give us their norms, values and habits; this does not cause any problems except a “loss of personality”. Multiculturalism is defined as the acceptance of different norms, values and conduct by the receiving society, and such should not lead to any problems. The third situations is defined as follows:

*La **marginaliació** o el **conflicte** es presenta quan la societat receptora I els nousvinguts no s'accepten I no respecten els valors, les normes I les conductes propis. Es poden denencadenar problemes de **racisme** o **xenofòbia**.*

*Les **polítiques migratòries** són essencials per evitar els conflictes I afavorir la integració I la multiculturalitat.*

Marginalization or **conflict** arises when the receiving society and the newcomers do not accept each other and do not respect the values, norms and behavior of the others. Problems of racism and xenophobia may thus be unleashed.

Migration policies are essential to avoid conflicts and to favor integration and multiculturalism. (p. 179).

Again, in this passage, immigration and immigrants are presupposed to be related to problems – which are said *not* to occur when the immigrants integrate and do not need to occur when the receiving society recognizes and accepts the immigrants. The latter passage mentions racism and xenophobia as some kind of natural phenomenon, or as a problem that spontaneously arises, and mutually between groups, and not as something engaged in by people of the receiving society, that is of *Us* in the Northern countries. No more is said about racism and its consequences than this one vague sentence. Moreover, the way integration is defined it rather stands for assimilation, because there is no mention of possibly changing norms, values and habits of the receiving society. Finally, the textbook unambiguously seems to support “migration policies”, thus implicitly favoring a limitation of immigration, and defining the problems and conflicts in terms of the immigrants and not in those of the receiving society.

One year and 5 years later...

We examined the same series of textbooks for one grade higher, and we found the same kind of stereotypes, denial of racism and scant useful information for students.

Since in the early 2000s immigration in Spain was still quite recent, we finally also examined the (2008) textbooks in use at present, and the conclusions are virtually the same. Textbooks of some 300 pages dedicate a mere few pages to immigration and immigrants and manage to repeat more or less the same limited and stereotyped information students and their parent may glean from the newspaper, e.g., about “illegal” immigrants, arrival in “pateras” (small boats) and controversies about the *hijab* or opening of a mosque in some neighborhood. Here is just one example (although not all textbooks are that bad), which needs no further commentary than requiring to focus on the multiple repetition of “illegality”:

*Des dels darrers anys del segle XX, Europa s'enfronta al problema de la **immigració il·legal**. Nombroses persones procedents de països pobres s'introdueixen en els països europeus de manera il·legal. És el cas dels nord-africans que travessen l'estret de Gibraltar en pateres o barques de poc calat. Molts d'ells són detinguts per la Guàrdia Civil i altres sovint naufraguen. Malauradament, la notícia del naufragi i la mort de persones que intentaven entrar il·legalment a Espanya creuant l'estret de Gibraltar ha estat freqüent els darrers anys.*

Aquests immigrants il-legals, si aconseguixen arribar als països europeus, es veuen obligats a treballar clandestinament. Com que no tenen documentació de cap mena (permís de residència o contracte laboral), se'ls anomena «sense papers». Solen treballar per a empresaris poc escrupolosos que els paguen sous de misèria. De vegades n'hi ha que es veuen obligats a delinquir per poder sobreviure, i no és estrany que dones que han emigrat de manera il·legal acabin prostituint-se o sent víctimes del tràfic de blanques. (Barcanova 2, 54)[†]

Since the last years of the XXth century Europe is confronted with the problem of **illegal immigration**. Large numbers of people from poor countries manage to enter the European countries by illegal means. This is the case for the North-Africans who cross the Street of Gibraltar in *pateras* (type of small boat) or in boats with a shallow draft. Many of them are arrested by the Guardia Civil and other often perish at sea. Unfortunately, the news of sinking boats and the death of people who tried to enter Spain illegally crossing the Street of Gibraltar has been frequent these last years. These illegal immigrants, when they manage to arrive in European countries, see no other alternative but to take clandestine jobs. Since they have no documents whatsoever (residence permit, work contract), they are called “undocumented”. They use to work for unscrupulous employers that pay them a pittance. Sometimes, some of them see no other alternative but to commit crime to survive, and it is not strange that women who have illegally emigrated end up as prostitutes or as victims of traffic in women (literally: white women).

Conclusions

Concluding out analysis of a Catalan textbook we may conclude that there are of course no explicitly racist passages. However, we do find a confirmation of many of the usual problems of representing other people, other countries, and in particular of dealing with migration, its causes and consequences. These problems may be summarized as follows:

- The textbooks show the stereotypical polarization between *Us* and *Them*, between *Us* in the North, in Europe or in Spain, on the one hand, and *Them* in the South or in the Third World, on the other hand. Very little variation or diversity is observed among *Us* or *Them*. For instance, in the South there are no rich people, and in the North there are no poor people.
- Immigration is represented as motivated and caused only by the needs of immigrants, not by the needs or benefits of the receiving countries.
- The information about the immigrants is scarce, and largely limited to some simple statistics about how many there are, where they come from, and where they settle.
- Their work is stereotypically described as what Spanish people do not want to do. There is no diversity of information about motivation of immigration or type of work the immigrants do.
- Even if little information is given about immigrants, one of the standard items is virtually always that many of them are illegal. No information is given about “illegal” employers who give work to immigrants without papers.
- Also, it is emphasized that immigrants have problems to “integrate themselves”. Little information is given about the causes of lacking integration, and such causes hardly have to do with the receiving population.

[†] TREPAT, C., et al. (2008). *Ciències socials, geografia i història. 2n ESO*. Barcelona: Barcanova.

- Racism, prejudice and discrimination are sometimes mentioned, but in general, abstract terms, and not as a major problem of *Us* in Spain or Europe, and of which we are the active agents. It is never described what the consequences are in the everyday lives of immigrants. No details are given about the kinds of daily discrimination.
- More generally, negative aspects of *Us* in the North are ignored, toned down or described in very vague and general terms. This is also true for the (lacking) account about colonization and its consequences, as well as contemporary globalization.
- Even after more than 10 years of immigration, most textbooks still provide scarce, stereotypical and occasionally racist information about immigrants.

These are not incidental problems, but structural problems that characterize virtually all passages, and since the textbooks are so standardized, we may venture the conclusion that what we have found in our analysis may be generalized for all textbooks currently used in Spain. This may also mean that the general curriculum does not insist on including the kind of information that is now obviously lacking.

The consequence for the learning process of adolescents in Spain is serious: They are not prepared for active and adequate participation in an increasingly multicultural society. They lack knowledge and insight into one of the most important social issues of our time, immigration and racism, and have not been prepared for daily interaction with fellow citizens from other countries and cultures. Ignorant about what racism means they will not be able to recognize it when they see it, nor be able to take into account the serious difficulties immigrants may experience who are victims of everyday racism. In sum, on the basis of our analysis we must conclude that current textbooks and curricula in Spain need serious revision if they want to contribute to the necessary knowledge and abilities of the citizens in a multicultural society.

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