

Peace Education Through Bilingual Children’s Literature Written in Arabic and In Hebrew

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Abstract

This study examines the contribution of bilingual Arabic–Hebrew children’s literature to peace education within the context of the Israeli - Palestinian conflict. Grounded in the premise that literature functions as a central agent of political socialization, the research analyzes how narratives shape young readers’ perceptions of the “other” and of conflict. Using a qualitative hermeneutic approach, the study investigates a corpus of nine bilingual books originally written in both languages. The analysis is guided by Salomon’s typology of peace education, which distinguishes between contexts of inter-ethnic tension, experienced tranquility, and intense conflict.

Findings reveal that most texts emphasize universal, humanistic values such as coexistence, harmony, and environmental responsibility, corresponding primarily to peace education in contexts of experienced tranquility. Only a limited number of texts engage directly with the realities of ongoing conflict, including competing national narratives and the emotional costs of war. The bilingual nature of the texts promotes a discourse of equality and mutual recognition, offering readers exposure to both linguistic and cultural perspectives. However, the relative absence of complex conflict narratives suggests a tendency to avoid controversial or painful dimensions of peace education for young audiences.

The study highlights both the potential and the limitations of bilingual literature as a pedagogical tool for fostering meaningful peace education in conflict-affected societies.

Keywords: Bilingual Literature; Bilingualism; Literature as Political and Ideological Agent of Socialization; Peace Education