Abstract

The decision about emigration for economic reasons, including emigration to Ireland, after Poland joining the European Union, has been the object of research interests of a number of fields of knowledge. Sometimes, a tempting vision of improving Polish people's own economic status makes them decide to leave the homeland without any knowledge about the culture of the adopted society. The article is focused on the analysis of the language competence of Polish grammar school students in Ireland. There are presented weaknesses and strategies for surviving in the new environment without language ability and its influence on adaptation to school and life in Ireland. The article is supported by the research conducted in Irish grammar schools and Polish weekend schools in Ireland (2010–2011).

Keywords: emigration to Ireland, adaptation, language competence, Ireland

Introduction

Polish membership of the EU has led, among other things, to the massive emigration of Poles to the countries such as Ireland or Great Britain as a result of opening up of new earning possibilities there. The hallmark of this emigration is settling in, especially in Ireland, by whole Polish families (Grabowska-Lusińska, 2007, pp. 6–7). Therefore, apart from the influx of manpower, a group of Polish children at the school age has appeared, obliged to fulfil the school duty in this country. These children have been labelled as 1.5 generation. They are children born in the country of their parents, brought up there and having lived there for so