

“EDUCATION AND SOCIETY” DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE
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EDIT RÁCZ

THE EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEXTBOOKS

A multidimensional comparative analysis of the content of the reading passages of B1 and B2
level English language textbooks

SHORT THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

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1. The research topic

The content of textbooks plays a significant role in the awareness-raising of a generation. “The textbook gives a coherent picture of human history and culture, explores the abundance of knowledge accumulated by mankind and selected according to pedagogical criteria, and, in addition, it presents a worldview determined by social circumstances” (Dárdai 2002: 24). The same holds for language textbooks, albeit in a less direct fashion. The language textbook has a special status in the family of textbooks, because, as opposed to other textbooks, it does not convey to the learners knowledge from a given discipline. Instead, it breaks down the complex system of a foreign language to elementary parts that make the acquisition of an extremely complex system of signs possible supported by the current theory of language and theory of learning. Although texts in language textbooks do not explicitly manifest the traits of the worldview held appropriate by a society, with their choice of topics, with their illustrations, and even with their didactic apparatus (for instance, with their questions) they do perform a worldview-forming role.

In my dissertation I approach language textbooks from a novel perspective: I examine them as means of education. I set out to find out what opportunities language textbooks provide for the complex personality development of learners in the process of foreign language acquisition. I examine the content of texts in language textbooks in order to identify their interaction with educational objectives declared in pedagogical documents. I demonstrate that it is not sufficient to approach the texts of language textbooks solely from a subject-didactic perspective. but it is also important to concentrate on the content of texts, because they contribute to achieving general educational objectives on the one hand, and to carrying out subject integration on the other hand.

1.1. The science-systematic status of my research topic

My research topic is multidisciplinary in nature with the following traits. In the context of Dárdai’s (2002: 20) seven-component textbook-analysis theory, I approach textbooks as (i) means of conveying knowledge and (ii) pedagogical tools. Furthermore, I add a new component enabling me to examine textbooks as means of conveying culture (Risager 2018, Byram 1989).

Educational science examines the textbook as an educational tool. The central question is whether it is suitable for the achievement of direct or indirect educational objectives as laid down in documents of educational policy. The research presented in this dissertation concentrates on the educational potential of texts in language textbooks, which posits the dissertation in the scope of educational science. Language pedagogy is a branch of science

dealing with theoretical questions of language teaching. One of its research avenues subsumes the investigation of the content of language teaching materials. From the perspective of cultural studies we examine the textbook as a manifestation of cultural reality, with the following key question: how much information does the textbook provide for the learner about various cultures, with particular attention to the culture(s) of target language, and what view on these cultures does it express (Byram 1989, Risager 2018)? On the basis of all this, my research is in the overlapping domain of educational science, language pedagogy and cultural studies.¹

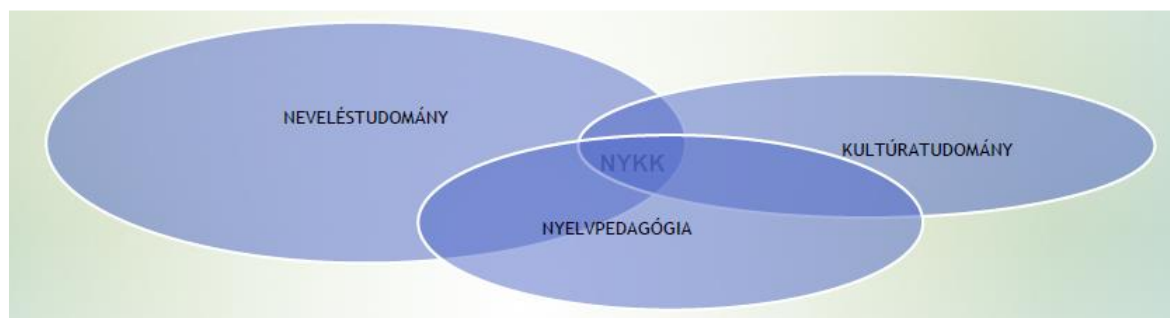


Figure 1. The science-systematic status of language textbook research

1.2. The timeliness of the research topic

The National Core Curriculum (2012) [Nemzeti Alaptanterv, henceforth: Nat], the highest level document of public education “lays down priority objectives like employing a general pedagogical practice at schools based on values and core educational principles” Kaposi (2013: 16) [my translation, ER]. The educational goals in the priority domains of development can be efficiently achieved if they are targeted in the educational process at all levels (in all school years) and in all components (subjects).

In addition, Nat (2012) also states that it is one of the significant goals of learning living foreign languages that its educational and subject-integrational potential should be utilized: the learner should be capable of understanding and discussing in the given foreign language some interesting and important problems from other areas of culture included in the curriculum.² In the dissertation I explore whether the texts of the selected English language textbooks are suitable for achieving these goals.

For carrying out my research, I developed a four-component model. These components make it possible to examine the educational potential inherent in the texts of language

¹ NEVELÉSTUDOMÁNY = educational science, NYELVPEDAGÓGIA = language pedagogy, KULTÚRATUDOMÁNY = cultural studies, NYKK = language textbook research.

² *Magyar Közlöny* 2012(66), p. 10680.

textbooks, i.e. to address the question of whether these texts are suitable for the achievement of the above-mentioned system of educational goals and tasks.

1.3. The novelty of the research topic

So far Hungarian textbook research has predominantly targeted history, geography and biology textbooks (F. Dárdai 2006, Kojanitz 2004, Varga 2008), and language textbook research is barely present in the relevant literature in Hungary. The language textbook market expanded in the past thirty years has fundamentally motivated publications on textbook choice rather than research governed by scientific principles. In this respect my work has a gap-filling role.

The educational perspective adds to the novelty of the research reported in this dissertation. My multi-componential model of the analysis of texts in language textbooks is unprecedented in the Hungarian literature. The components of the model are as follows:

- (a) education for the culture of the targets language,
- (b) environmental education,
- (c) global education,
- (d) education for democratic citizenship.

This complex model, whose components can be used independently as well, approaches the content of texts from a variety of perspectives, and thus it makes the investigation of language textbooks more comprehensive, more refined and multi-layered. The central role of the educational aspect in the process of language textbook analysis opens up a new horizon in language textbook research in Hungary, and it also adds to the richness of foreign language teaching itself.

2. The structure of the dissertation

The dissertation has four main chapters. In the first chapter I present my research topic. The second chapter describes the four major dimensions of the theoretical background of my multidimensional research topic. (1) First I offer an overview of the most salient aspects of the history international textbook research, the types of textbook research and models of textbook analysis, and then discuss the status of textbook research in Hungary. (2) Next I concentrate on language textbook research, a minor part of textbook research. I present the history of language textbook research, which has a gap-filling role in the relevant literature in Hungarian. I also deal with the theoretical frameworks of language textbook research as well as with methods employed in language textbook analysis. (3) In the third part I outline an approach to culture from the perspective of foreign language teaching, because language and culture are

unquestionably intertwined (Kramsch, 1998: 3). I highlight the changes in the interpretation of the notion of culture, the interpretation of the cultural component of language competence models, and its presence in authoritative international and Hungarian documents. (4) In the fourth part I discuss aspects of the interplay between education and foreign language teaching, with particular attention to all the four components of my model for language textbook analysis. After the interpretation and definition of the relevant notions I discuss how the individual areas of education appear in documents of education. Next I highlight points of linkage between the given area of education and foreign language teaching. Finally I give an overview of language textbook analyses abroad and in Hungary that have examined language textbooks from the perspective of individual areas of education.

The third chapter of the dissertation is a detailed presentation of my research. After making my hypotheses and formulating my research questions, I elaborate on the methodology and sources of the research, I describe the units of the analysis as well as the process of my language textbook analysis itself. Next I present the results of my analysis according to the individual areas of education, supported by tabular summaries for reasons of perspicuity and ease of exposition. The third chapter ends with the assessment of the results of the analysis in the course of which I show category profiles³ and textbook profiles,⁴ and I respond to my preliminary hypotheses and research questions.

The last chapter of the dissertation contains concluding remarks about the general theoretical significance and the applicability of my research findings and about potential further directions of investigation inherent in my research topic.

3. Presenting my research

3.1. The type and methodology of the research

F. Dárdai & Dévényi (2015) distinguish nine types of textbook research depending on the dimensions, goals and methods of the research. In the light of their criteria my research can be characterized as synchronous, comparative, disciplinary and pedagogical.

Given the nature of my research, I chose content analysis as my method. According to Krippendorff's (1995) description, "content analysis is a research technique by the help of which we can draw reproducible and valid conclusions from the data with respect to their contexts." The goal of the analysis is "to yield new knowledge, new insights, to show "the

³ Dárdai (2002: 71), for details, see point 4) in 3.5.

⁴ Dárdai (2002: 72), for details, see point 4) in 3.5.

facts”, and to provide guidance one can rely on in practice” (1995: 22). Content analysis is an efficient tool for uncovering covert messages (Antal 1976: 44-45), which is tantamount to exploring the hidden educational potential of texts in language textbooks.

I used the qualitative method, because it is suitable for the analysis of the topics in texts, as opposed to the investigation of the linguistic phenomena in texts, where quantitative methods are more useful. By contrast, I employed the quantitative method in the assessment of my research results. With the combination of these methods my goal was to increase the reliability and generalizability of my findings.

3.2. The sources of my research

In my research I investigated twelve English language textbooks. Ten of them, published in England, were produced for the international market, and two books, targeting secondary school learners, were written by a Hungarian author. Six books were at the threshold level (B1) and six were at the vantage level (B2)⁵ according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (henceforth: CEFR). The following considerations led me to this selection. First, lower level language textbooks may not make it possible to include texts on topics that could serve the achievement of the educational goals I examine in my research. Second, the age of learners and their knowledge obtained in lessons of other subjects can enhance reaching the targeted educational goals in the course of communication in a foreign language. Third, these two levels of the language textbooks are identical to those of the two-level school-leaving examination; thus, my research results hold for language textbooks used by a great number of learners.

In the dissertation I arranged the language textbooks according the chronological order of the years of their publication, starting with those at the threshold level (B1). I used the terms *threshold* and *vantage* to refer to the two relevant levels, instead of B1 and B2 in CEFR, because I used letter+number combinations to refer to the language textbooks under investigation,⁶ which is possibly confusingly similar in nature to CEFR’s level references. For instance, the T1 code stands for the threshold level volume of the *Travellers* language textbook, and H2 refers to the vantage level volume of *Headway*.

⁵ For details, see 2.3.3.1. in the dissertation.

⁶ For the explanation of this, see the dissertation.

3.3. Research hypotheses and questions

The overview of the relevant literature supported my assumption that educational goals cut across school subject boundaries, which equally holds for the teaching of foreign languages. Hungarian educational documents in force also declare that it is important aim at the complex development of the personality of learners in the process of teaching foreign languages. Language textbooks make a significant contribution to achieving this goal.

The language textbooks under investigation are all suitable for enhancing the achievement of the four selected educational objectives, possibly to varying extents. The textbooks under investigation support education for the culture of the target language in an outstanding degree as compared to the other three educational goals.

Prior to the analysis of the language textbooks, I formulated my research questions in two dimensions: content and didactics. The dimension of content, the primary dimension, consisted of the four areas of education. I posed the following two questions. (1) What topics are suitable for enhancing the achievement of the given educational goals? (2) What is the size of the educational potential of individual language textbooks with respect to the four educational areas? In the case of education for the culture of the target language I added a further question: (3) to what extent are various English-speaking countries represented with respect to the topics and to the individual language textbooks? The didactic dimension targeted the exercises related to the texts with the following question: (4) what didactic apparatus supports the achievement of the educational goals?

3.4. The units of the analysis

Before starting the actual analysis, it is a fundamental task to delimit the sampling domain, to define the units of the analysis. In my research the unit of the analysis is the reading passage, “which is a unit of content or methodology in readers or textbooks” (Magyar Értelmező Kéziszótár 1985: 1035) [my translation, ER]. This definition can also be appropriately applied to present day language textbooks, in whose chapters/lessons modules for developing the reading comprehension of learners are conspicuously separated from the rest of skill- and language-developing modules like vocabulary building or the development of writing skills.

In addition to modules for developing reading comprehension, there are specific culture pages (or culture banks) in six language textbooks. These pages are integrated in the lessons of the books (S1, S2), or they can be found in special sections after the lessons (T1, T2, L1, L2). The foregoing definition also applies to the reading passages on these pages; therefore, they, uniformly labelled as Culturebank, have also been included in the sampling domain of the

analysis. The reading passages on the CLIL⁷ pages of the L1 and L2 textbooks were similarly treated. Altogether 207 reading passages originated from these three sources in the twelve language textbooks.

3.5. The description of the analytical process

1. After establishing the set of reading passages to be analyzed, I carefully read all of them, and I categorized them with respect to their relevance to any one of the four educational areas. The analytical corpus contains a few reading passages that are suitable for two or even three educational objectives. Given that documentation is of primary importance in qualitative research, because it warrants the reliability and validity of the research (Sántha 2007), already at this initial phase I used working tables in which I indicated to which educational area(s) (if any) the given reading passages can be related. The figures of the working tables show that there are 207 reading passages altogether in the twelve language textbooks, out of which 105 can be related to the four educational areas under investigation. These 105 passages make up the analytical corpus of my research.
2. At the next phase of the research I collected the reading passages belonging to the same educational areas and I inserted them in tables that I called tables of educational areas. These tables provide the following types of information about each language textbook: the titles of the relevant reading passages as they appear in the books, my translations of these titles, the page numbers of the passages, and the types of exercises supporting the educational potential of the passages. These exercises do not aim at reading comprehension or language practice based on the text, instead, they are didactic tools for educational objectives. The role of these exercises is to make learners capable of positing the content of the reading passages in a broader dimension and express their ideas about cultural, environmental, global or citizenship topics, rather than looking at these passages as merely containing an inventory of grammatical elements of the language.
3. At the next phase, I presented the results of my analysis: the content of the language textbooks with respect to educational areas. In the interest of perspicuity I started the discussion of each educational area with tables of educational areas, then I presented overviews of the content of the relevant reading passages and the accompanying exercises. I made a numerical summary about each educational area separately.
4. This was followed by the assessment of the results of the analysis. The data yielded by the analysis needed to be systematized for reliable responses to the research questions, on

⁷ CLIL = *Content and Language Integrated Learning*.

the one hand, for the results of the research to be capturable and numerically comparable. The products of systematization are category profiles and textbook profiles. The term *category profile* was created and introduced into the Hungarian literature by Dárdai (2002: 72). Category profiles “summarize the research results of a particular category in every book” (Dárdai 2002: 71) [my translation, ER]. In the case of my research this meant that each of the four educational areas under investigation manifested an individual category; thus, four category profiles were created. The term *textbook profile* also entered the Hungarian literature via Ágnes Dárdai (Dárdai 2002: 72). According to her definition “a textbook profile presents a picture of solutions pertaining to content with respect to categories” (2002: 71) [my translation, ER]. In the case of my research it characterizes the language textbook with respect to the four educational areas, and thus it is a useful tool for comparison.

Within all the four categories I subsumed the relevant topics from the reading passages under superordinate topic fields. Systematization can be carried out in two different ways (Dárdai 2002: 69). (i) It can capitalize on an already existing system of criteria with the aim of exploring whether the material under investigation contains the elements of the given system of criteria. (ii) The other method is to put together the list of criteria from the elements identified in the corpus under investigation. In my research I employed the combination of these two methods. In the category of education for the culture of the target language, for instance, I augmented an already existing list of topics with new topics that I had found, while in the case of global education I created a list of topics on the basis of my findings in the investigation of the twelve language textbooks. My lists of topics may turn out to be useful in future research as well. These topic lists give an overview of the topics in the reading passages related to the given educational area. They posit the topics in comprehensive, superordinate fields, and they show (i) what topics can be found in the corpus under investigation (ii) how many times the given topics occur.

In addition to category profiles, I also created textbook profiles, which approach the educational areas from the textbooks. They show what can be found in the individual textbooks with respect to the given categories, which provides indicators for the educational potential of the language textbooks. Textbook profiles contribute to the comparison of textbooks with respect to the given set of criteria. Given the nature of my research, first I created textbook profiles according to categories in order to uncover the differences among the twelve language textbooks with respect to individual educational areas. These textbook profiles provide the following information. (i) What topics do individual language textbooks contain? (ii) Which

topics emerge in which language textbooks? (iii) How many topics do the individual textbooks contain, i.e. to what extent are they suitable for achieving the given educational objectives?

4. Research results

4.1. My most important research results

I made two initial hypotheses, and both of them proved to be valid. (i) All the twelve language textbooks can contribute to the achievement of the educational objectives under investigation, although to varying extents. (ii) The overwhelming majority of the topics support education for the culture of the target language, which is not a surprising result, given the strong symbiosis of language and culture. Of the other three educational areas, global education is supported by language textbooks most, environmental education is supported to a lesser extent, and for democratic citizenship receives the least amount of support.

I formulated my research questions in two dimensions: the first three were related to the *content* of the reading passages of the language textbooks, while the fourth targeted the *didactic apparatus* supporting the processing of the content. In what follows I present the questions and my responses to them on the basis of my research results.

4.1.1. What topics are suitable for enhancing the achievement of the given educational goals?

It is on the basis of category profiles that we can answer this question, because they show, subsumed under topic fields, the topics that enhance the achievement of the given educational objectives in the twelve language textbooks, on the one hand, and they present numerical comparisons with respect to the occurrences of the given topics, on the other hand. I made four category profiles for the four educational areas. Here I show the category profile of environmental education as an example.

TOPIC FIELDS topics	THRESHOLD LEVEL LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS						
	S1	H1	G1	P1	L1	T1	TOTAL
MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY							2
migration		x				x	2
GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS							5
historical milestones		x					1
changes in communication habits				x		x	2
online communities						x	1
dangers, viruses	x						1
SUSTAINABILITY							5
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY							
global warming				2x			2
the effects of environmental destructions on humans				x			1
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY							
population growth, shortage of food				x			1
poverty						x	1
TOTAL PER LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK	1	2	0	5	0	4	12
	VANTAGE LEVEL LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS						
	S2	H2	G2	P2	L2	T2	TOTAL
MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY							1
migration					x		1
GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS							3
online dating	x						1
under surveillance	x						1
technical abuse	x						1
SUSTAINABILITY							8
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY							
the effects of the destruction of the rainforest on the ecosystem						x	1
the water supply of the Earth				x			1
global warming	x						1
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY							
homelessness					x		1
population growth			x				1
growth of life-span	x		x				2
poverty, emigration of talents		x					1
TOTAL PER LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK	5	1	2	1	2	1	12

Table 1. Global educational content according to topic fields

We can posit topics relevant from the perspective of global education in three major fields: multiculturalism, global connectedness and sustainability, which comprises environmental and social sustainability. It is noteworthy that both subtypes of sustainability have economic

consequences as well; however, given that the relevant reading passages do not touch upon them, I do not refer to them in my category system, either.

A significant proportion of the topics of threshold level language textbooks is equally shared by two topic fields (global connectedness and sustainability). There are reading passages about several different aspects of global connectedness: the historical milestones of the internet, changes in our communication habits (two passages), an online community of fans and the dangers of global connectedness as related to a computer virus spread via the internet. As regards the environmental and social aspects of sustainability, global warming appears in two passages. Problems of food supply due to the growth of population, and connecting poverty and migration raise local issues to a global level. The third topic field, multicultural society, offers insights into migration in two textbooks.

As opposed to threshold level language textbooks, the two thirds of the topics of vantage level textbooks raises environmental and social aspects of sustainability. The effect of the deforestation of the Amazon rainforests by humans on the ecosystem is a good example of the relationship between a local problem and its global consequences. Economizing on the water supply of the Earth is an equally complex issue. Similarly, global warming and its consequences manifest a problem for everybody. There also emerge further global social problems to be solved like homelessness, growth of the population, the growth of life-span and migration triggered by poverty. Multicultural society as the result of migration is a topic at this level as well. The topic field of global connectedness is also present, comprising the following topics: online dating, and dangers and risks inherent in novel technology.

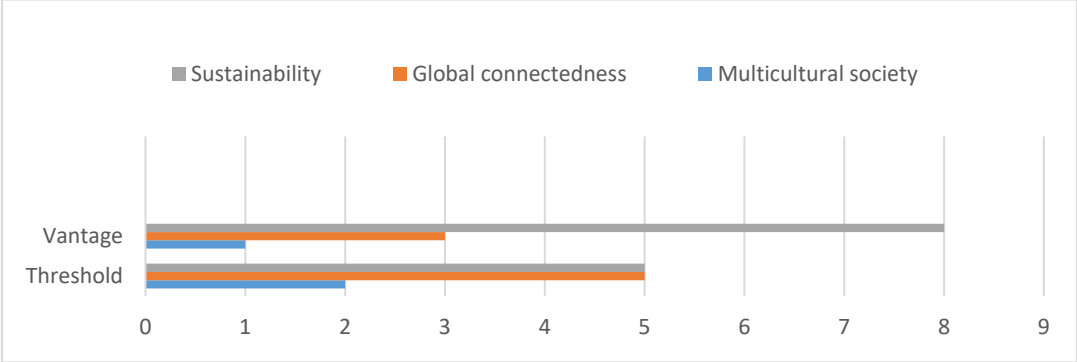


Figure 2. Global topic fields at the two levels in the corpus under investigation

With the two levels lumped together, we can make the following observations. In the twelve language textbooks there are 24 topics altogether that support global education, proportionately distributed at the threshold and the vantage levels (12-12). All the three topic fields are represented at both levels, but not to the same extent. Most of the topics (13 altogether) are related to sustainability, including both its subtypes (environmental and social). There are more

topics at the vantage level than at the threshold level. It is not accidental that the second most frequent topic field is global connectedness (8 occurrences altogether), because the life of the targeted user group is intertwined with the internet. Migration and its consequence, multicultural society, also appear at both levels (three times altogether). At the same time, it must be pointed out that in these language textbooks there is a lack of important global educational topics like wars today, famine, childwork, the disproportionate distribution of goods or overconsumption and its consequences.

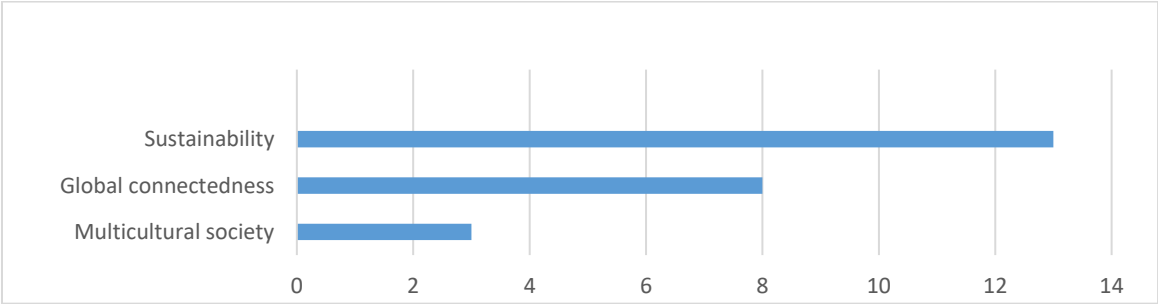


Figure 3. The joint number of all global topics in the corpus under investigation

4.1.2. What is the size of the educational potential of individual language textbooks with respect to the four educational areas?

It is on the basis of the combined textbook profiles generated from the textbook profiles of individual educational areas that we can answer this question, because they give a comprehensive overview of each language textbook in the corpus. They present the educational potential of the individual textbooks with respect to the four educational areas numerically and comparably.

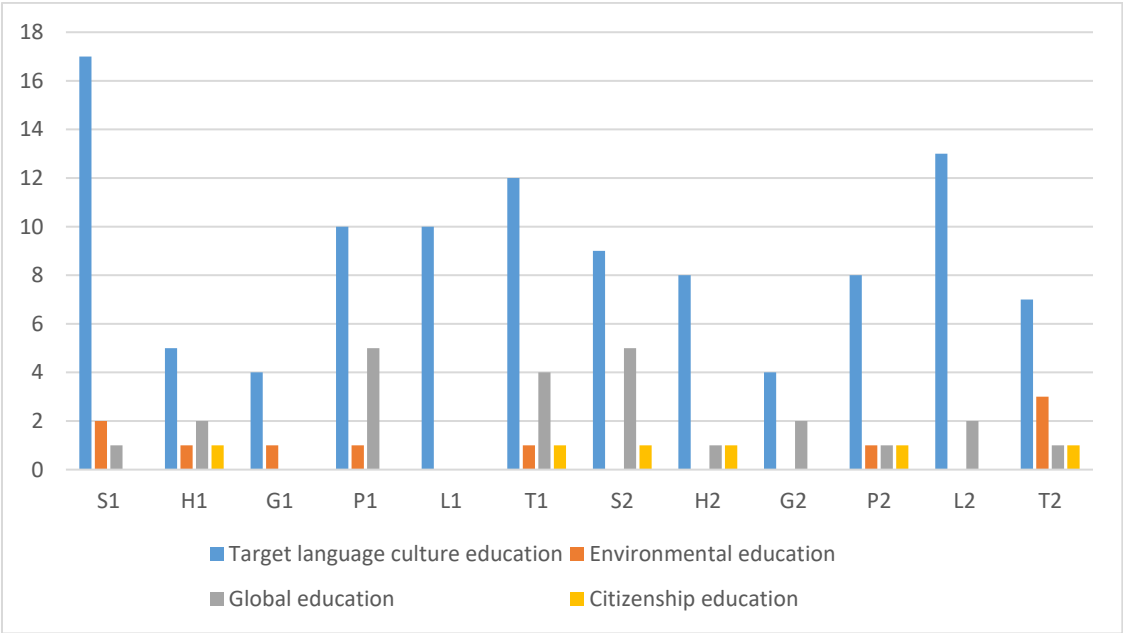


Figure 4. Combined textbook profiles in the corpus

Combined textbook profiles numerically show the potential of language textbooks broken down into educational areas. It can be established that each language textbook has educational potential, but they are suitable for the achievement of individual educational objectives to varying extents. It is a conspicuous fact that there is a language textbook that only contains topics suitable for education for the culture of the target language (L1). Three language textbooks provide topics for two educational areas (G1, G2, L2). Four others offer a wider range: they are suitable for three educational areas (S1, P1, S2, H2). Another four language textbooks contain at least one topic for all the four educational areas (H1, T1, P2, T2).

4.1.3. To what extent are various English-speaking countries represented with respect to the topics and to the individual language textbooks?

When we approach the topics for target language culture on the basis of their distribution with respect to the five English-speaking countries, it turns out that British culture is massively dominant at both levels: 57% and 65%. The ratios of the occurrence of topics related to American culture are very similar: 36% and 33%. Although rather minimally, Australian culture is also represented: 3,5% and 2%. The threshold level is richer than the vantage level inasmuch as it also offers something from Canadian culture. Unfortunately both levels lack topics related to the culture of New Zealand. There can be several reasons for this largely disproportionate representation of the five cultures in the language textbooks under investigation. Exploring them would go beyond the boundaries of this dissertation. It is very likely, however, that the nationality of publishers (they are located in Britain) had a strong influence on the nature of the target language cultural content.

	THRESHOLD LEVEL LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS	VANTAGE LEVEL LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS	MEAN OF THE TWO LEVELS
BRITISH CULTURE	57% (33/58)	65% (32/49)	60,5% (65/107)
AMERICAN CULTURE	36% (21/58)	33% (16/49)	34,5% (37/107)
CANADIAN CULTURE	3,5% (2/58)	0	2% (2/107)
AUSTRALIAN CULTURE	3,5% (2/58)	2% (1/49)	3% (3/107)
NEW ZEALAND CULTURE	0	0	0

Table 2. The ratios of the cultures of the English-speaking countries in the entire corpus

The largest number of target language cultural topics (17) can be found in a threshold level language textbook (S1). Next is a vantage level language textbook (L2, 13), followed by T1 (12). There are five language textbooks in the middle with close numbers: P1 and L1 (10), S2 (9), H2 and P2 (8). There are seven target language culture topics in T2, five in H1 and only four in G1 and H2.

LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK	S1	H1	G1	P1	L1	T1	S2	H2	G2	P2	L2	T2
NUMBER OF TOPICS	17	5	4	10	10	12	9	8	4	8	13	7

Table 3. The number of target language cultural topics in the language textbooks

4.1.4. What didactic apparatus supports the achievement of the educational goals?

I also examined the didactic apparatus supporting the efficient achievement of the educational objectives in the language textbooks under investigation. Of the 105 reading passages making up the corpus 45 (43%) contain exercises that extend the topics and motivate learners to think about them further with a variety task types: pairwork, groupwork, project work and presentations requiring individual preparation.

4.2. The general theoretical significance of my research results

Below I highlight ways in which my research results reported in the dissertation can contribute to the broadening of the horizon of textbook research in general and language textbook research in particular. The relevance of the research results is already implicit in the nature of the research questions posed, because this “shows whether the new concept brings along new discoveries and insights: whether the results are generalizable” (Sántha 2007: 176) [my translation, ER].

My research manifests a new perspective inasmuch as it relates language textbook research to educational science in a new dimension. It emphasizes the fact that language textbooks are not simply the systematized inventories of the linguistic elements of a foreign language supported by a didactic apparatus, but they are also tools for the achievement of educational objectives. This especially holds for their reading passages because with their content they can explicitly contribute reaching the general educational goals as laid down in the relevant documents of public education.

I incorporated my empirical research in a theoretical approach of multiple perspectives, several components of which have a gap-filling role in the Hungarian literature.

(1) An overview of the history of textbook research reveals that although the textbook has always been the primary tool for conveying knowledge “which is constructed by several actors and which is influenced by various interests” (Dárdai et al., 2015: 3) [my translation, ER], its inherent educational potential is also noteworthy, especially if this potential is not employed for progressive and positive goals but for inciting hatred against other nations, for instance. Already the initial stage of textbook research was inspired by the goal to abandon

the falsification of historical facts and by the need for education for respecting other nations and for reconciliation.

- (2) After presenting the nature and models of textbook research I discussed textbook research Hungary. This covered the relatively short history as well the overview of workshops and journals of the Hungarian textbook profession up to date.
- (3) Within the family of textbooks, even international language textbook research has a short history of a few decades, and its literature is mainly in English and German. An overview of the history of language textbook research was entirely missing from the Hungarian literature. I contributed to filling this gap by discussing the history of language textbook research as well as the theoretical frameworks and methods of language textbook analysis. It seems to me that in my dissertation I introduced the term *nyelvkönyvkutatás* (language textbook research) into the Hungarian literature, given that search engines on the internet have no hits for this word except for one of my papers.
- (4) The interpretation of the close relationship between language and culture from the perspective of foreign language teaching is an important part of the theoretical background of my research. In this area I did not only spell out how the notion of culture kept changing, but I also showed how culture appeared in models of linguistic competence at various stages. All this makes the frame of interpretation of education for the culture of the target language tangible.
- (5) Aspects of the interface between foreign language teaching and general educational objectives are manifest in the complex development of the personality of learners. The acquisition of the complex system of a foreign language does not only mean a large amount of new knowledge, but processing novel information also contributes to the development of what are called key competences.
- (6) In the dissertation I paid special attention to the use of terminology, and, thus, I contributed to the general requirement that notions and terms borrowed from foreign languages, primarily from English and German, should be unambiguous, and their use should be consistent in the Hungarian literature. In my terminological endeavours I capitalized on Fischer (2018).
- (7) For the empirical component of my research, I developed an explicit and coherent analytical system that makes it possible for anybody to understand and to repeat the analyses of language textbooks. I documented and presented the phases of the analysis in working tables and tables of educational areas.. I presented and assessed the results of the analysis: I created category profiles and textbook profiles. In this way, on the one hand, I showed the results

according to categories (educational areas), and, on the other hand, I made them comparable with respect to individual language textbooks.

4.3. The applicability of my research results

My research concentrated on B1 and B2 level English language textbooks that are also used in Hungarian public education. My research results primarily have messages for practising languages teachers and university students in teacher training programmes. Language teachers should be made aware of the novel perspective: reading passages in language textbooks are not merely texts for the development of the reading comprehension of learners, but they can also contribute to the achievement of a variety of educational objectives laid down in documents of public education. Furthermore, my research results also highlight that language textbooks are also tools for interdisciplinary education inasmuch as they help to augment the knowledge of learners in other disciplines (e.g. history, geography and biology), on the one hand, and they enable learners to speak, in a foreign language, about the knowledge they have already obtained in these other disciplines, on the other hand. All this adds to students' language learning motivation as they experience direct utilization of their command of the given foreign language.

In addition to language teachers, I also recommend this new perspective to reviewers of textbooks. It would be necessary to add to the system of criteria in the *Evaluation form for pedagogical experts* used in the textbook qualification procedure conducted by the Educational Authority elements that would also take the educational potential of reading passages in language textbooks.

Finally, despite the fact that the number of foreign language textbooks published in Hungary is low currently, it would be useful to advise language textbook publishers to encourage the authors to take into consideration the satisfaction of educational criteria as well in the selection of reading passages.

5. Further possible research avenues

My research has testified that the reading passages of language textbooks are suitable for the achievement of educational goals. It offers several new directions for the future scientific examination of the educational potential inherent in foreign language textbooks. The analytical framework I have developed can be used for the analysis, with similar goals, of textbooks of any foreign language at any level.

The investigation of the educational potential of language textbooks can be extended in various directions.

- The number of English language textbooks to be investigated can be increased by adding other levels to my threshold and vantage levels.
- The whole range of the levels of one or more families of language textbooks could also be examined.
- It would also be useful and informative to analyze textbooks of other languages, at the same levels and from the same perspectives, and to compare those results with the results of this research.
- Other educational areas could also be included in the analysis.
- The investigation of the educational potential the language textbooks of several publishers would make it possible to draw conclusions about publisher policies.

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