

Opening up the textbook: How textbooks can be read as seismographs of dominant discourses, exemplified through an analysis of upper secondary school textbooks in Denmark

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the textbook as being a powerful document to establish and maintain dominant discourses and at the same time as a seismograph for the reading of such discourses. It presents a trans-disciplinary framework for critical analysis of textbooks based on Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Basil Bernstein's theory of the pedagogic device.

By making an analysis of four textbooks for the teaching of media and communication in upper secondary schools in Denmark, it provides examples of how this theoretical framework may be used. The paper encourages teachers and pupils to critically challenge the hegemonic construction of subject knowledge and the pedagogic identities that dominate textbooks at any particular time, and thereby to scrutinize the borders between what is thinkable and what is not.

Introduction

According to Selander (1991), the textbook is an example of the mass media that is particularly difficult to avoid in society. In your leisure time, you can choose whether you want to read magazines or watch thrillers. But the textbook is not a medium you choose. It has already been chosen by the educational institutions we join during our childhood. In this way, the textbook is an element of everyday school life that is endowed with the same inevitability as desks, chairs, doors, boards, teachers and so on.

Because of this inevitability and the accompanying 'naturalness' related to the textbook (Selander, Åkerfeldt, & Engström, 2007), there is good reason to focus on it. If we temporarily suspend the primary function of the textbook - to be a tool to enhance learning - it appears as a complex structure formed and informed by a multitude of rules, requirements and experiences (Johnsen, 1999) with reference outwards to a number of contexts - academic, educational, political, moral, economic and so on (Johnson et al., 1998). In line with this conceptualization of the textbook as a cultural artefact (Gray, 2010; Wala, 2003), this paper takes as its primary premise that the textbook should be seen as a particularly powerful document to establish and maintain dominant discourses while at the same time being a sensitive exegetical tool for the reading of such discourses.

Against this background, the paper has two purposes. The first is to outline a framework for critical analysis of the textbook based on Norman Fairclough's dialectical-relational version of Critical Discourse Analysis and Basil Bernstein's theory of the pedagogic device. Drawing on the concept of trans-disciplinarity (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2001b; Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011), this part of the paper constitutes a theoretical and analytical

framework for examining how pedagogic knowledge and identities are (re)constructed in textbooks according to dominant principles of society.

The second is to exemplify this through an analysis of four widely used textbooks for the teaching of media and communication in the subject Danish in the upper secondary school in Denmark. The subject Danish has traditionally consisted of two dimensions: 'literature' and 'media and communication'. In this paper I focus attention on textbooks produced for teaching 'media and communication', and the analysis shows that, in the most recent reform in the Danish upper secondary school (1st Aug. 2005), there has been a shift in ways of conceptualising the dimensions of media and communication in textbooks for teaching Danish in upper secondary schools. More specifically, there has been an increase in functionalist approaches to textual analysis at the expense of critical language awareness. Furthermore, the specific changes reflect an increase in the power of the state in reconstructing pedagogic knowledge and pedagogic identities.

Related studies

Research into textbooks has grown significantly since the millennium (Knudsen & Aatmoesbakken, 2010) and can be characterised as occupying three categories, according to whether the approach used centres around process, application or product (Drotner, 2006; Olsen, 2005; Svensson, 2000). Where process-oriented research focuses on the production and distribution of teaching resources, and application-oriented research focus on *how* teaching resources are used in teaching (including issues such as access), product-oriented research focuses more specifically on *content* (for example, its selection and presentation (Johnsen, 1999)). The present paper takes its cue from the latter and devotes specific focus on textbooks as ideological texts (Apple & Christian-Schmidt, 1991), expressing wider social and paradigmatic patterns (Selander, 1991) and embedded in overall power relations (Knudsen, 2007).

In detecting inappropriate power inequalities, CDA has focused attention in general on a number of areas, which are not restricted to gender, media and politics (Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011; van Dijk, 2001) but also specific institutional texts, in order to examine the (re)production of inequality and the role of the language in that connection (see, for instance, an overview in van Dijk 2001). Norman Fairclough in particular has analysed the transformation of higher education in late modern British and European society on several occasions. These studies are based on analyses not of textbooks but of advertisements for academic posts, prospectuses and HE policy documents in EU (Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 1999, 2001b; Woodak & Fairclough, 2008; 2010). Drawing on the theoretical framework of Fairclough, several studies have conducted analyses of textbooks focusing on the construction of identities, for example, the marginalisation of specific groups or cultures (Gulliver, 2010; Harper, 2012; Heros, 2009; Xiong, 2012) and the reinforcement of gender structures (Gungor & Prins, 2010).

However, in working specifically with the critical analysis of textbooks, there is a need for a more nuanced understanding of the rules that are fundamental to educational discourse (Author, 2014). Here, the British sociologist Basil Bernstein, as 'a middle range theorist', supplements Fairclough's three-dimensional framework by providing a mediating link between grand theories of modernity and the analysis of specific types of discourses (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

As Chouliaraki (2001) puts it, Basil Bernstein's late work contributes to critical discourse analysis by addressing, "how a specific institutional context enforces a particular social relation" (p. 47, my translation) and in so doing he sharpens the focus on how pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical identities are constructed in the educational system.

Theoretical perspective – a framework for analysing textbooks based on Fairclough's version of CDA and Bernstein's Pedagogic Device

One of the main objectives of CDA is to grasp, expose and point up chances to overcome the abuse of power (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011; van Dijk, 2001), and – drawing on the work of Foucault (1971, 1972, 2001) - power relations are always discursive. The text is a particularly privileged place to identify the social abuse of power, and a key point in Fairclough's version of CDA is to understand the text's nature, to appreciate how it is embedded in discursive processes, and to be able to analyse discursive and social change on the basis of text (Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2001b).

According to Fairclough, a text can be regarded from two perspectives. On the one hand it is the material created by the user of language, not least a constitution of distinct units in the form of words and phrases. On the other hand, the text can be understood as the product of an extensive, discursive process involving wider social processes (Fairclough, 2001b, p. 20). Elsewhere, Fairclough compares the text to the tip of an iceberg (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997), and in order to operationalize the analysis of the complex discursive and structural processes lying beneath this tip, Fairclough works with a three-dimensional theoretical framework in the analysis of the communicative event. The frame is trans-disciplinary and consists of the three dimensions of text, discursive practice and socio-cultural practices (Fairclough, 1992; 1995; 2001b).

In his analysis of the dimension of the text, Fairclough focuses on formal linguistic features such as wording, metaphor, deixis (Fairclough, 1992, 2000). In his analysis of discursive practice, he focuses on the conditions for the production, distribution and consumption of the text. Here he questions the discourses and genres that are drawn on in the process of production and consumption, and a key concept for the analysis of this level of text analysis is intertextuality. Based on Bakhtin (1986) (among others), Fairclough sees intertextuality as the way "texts are constructed through other texts being articulated in particular ways, ways which depend upon and change with social circumstances" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 9). At this level, a central question is whether we find the discursive practice to be conventional or creative (Fairclough, 1995): Are the texts drawing on discourses that come from (as yet) unknown practices, and do we in that way find a new (hybrid) discourse encompassing new subject matter and new identities?

Genre is also a key concept for the analysis of discursive practice. In his definition of genres, Fairclough draws once again on Bakhtin (1986) and thus on an understanding of genres as "the drive belts from the history of society to the history of language" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 65; Fairclough, 1992, p. 126). If we find signs of new mixtures of genre, there will also be signs of new ways to produce and consume texts, and this might suggest changes at a more structural level. In this way, the focus will switch to the level of socio-cultural practices which comprise broader political, economic, cultural and ideological factors. This level has both discursive and non-discursive elements (Fairclough, 1992, p. 66) and the analysis of the level involves

sociological and cultural theory (i.e. major changes conceived as 'globalization' (Fairclough, 2006) or 'individualization' (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Giddens, 1991, 1994)).

Basil Bernstein's Pedagogic Device – specifying the rules for the discursive practice of educational institutions

Following Fairclough (2001b) the specific institution constitutes "a wider matrix for discourse" (p. 20). In specifying the rules of educational institutions, the late work of Basil Bernstein creates a fruitful conceptual framework. Bernstein suggests that the meeting between power, knowledge and modalities of consciousness is established and controlled by a Pedagogic Device (Bernstein, 1990; Moore, 2006, 2013). The Pedagogic Device is defined as consisting of "the distributive, recontextualizing, and evaluative rules for specializing forms of consciousness" (Bernstein, 1990, p. 181), and the relationship between these rules is basically hierarchical.

The hierarchical relationship is primarily due to the gatekeeper-function of distributive rules. These rules 'guard' the dominant discursive system by determining the borders between 'think-able' and available knowledge and 'un-thinkable' and thus non-available knowledge. Through this control over the various potential discursive systems, the relationship between power, social groups and forms of consciousness is *regulated* and simultaneously *formed* (Bernstein, 1990, p. 28). Roughly speaking, the exercise of this control function takes place primarily in the upper part of the education system, such as the universities, while the actual *use* (*reproduction*) of the 'think-able knowledge' takes place primarily at the lower levels of the educational system (Bernstein, 1990, p. 29).

According to Bernstein, the reproduction of 'think-able knowledge' is regulated by a number of recontextualising rules. In the recontextualisation processes, Bernstein distinguishes between the primary context of the discourse and the (new) secondary context (from this the term recontextualisation). He refers to the distance between the two contexts as the space in which ideology can play its part. New relationships are constructed, allowing the constitution of imaginary objects, including 'imaginary subjects' (since the subject-role is abstracted from its specific heritage and from the practice it was developed in) (Bernstein, 1990, p. 38).

When the purpose is to analyse the construction of pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical identities in textbooks, *the official pedagogic discourse* is of particular interest (Bernstein, 1990, p. 195). The official pedagogic discourse is constituted at the intersection between the *official recontextualizing field* and *the pedagogic recontextualizing field*. The official recontextualizing field is the domain of the state, and it carries a number of *dominant principles* that set the context for policies, relationships and identities. These principles reflect the balance of power between different political parties and interest groups, and they are enacted through the ministries, including officials and consultants from official educational state agencies, from the economic field and from the field of symbolic control (Bernstein, 1990, p. 196). *The pedagogic recontextualizing field* consists of teachers, at high school and elementary school, for example, as well as of journals, private foundations and associations (Bernstein, 1990, p. 33). According to Bernstein, there is always a principle which "regulates the range of alternative principles available for selection" and this principle, "varies according to the dominant principles of a given society" (Bernstein, 1990, p. 184).

In analysing textbooks the question is which particular constructions of pedagogic knowledge are at play, and which field – and thereby which set of recontextualization rules – has the power to establish and maintain this position as "a symbolic ruler of consciousness" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 36). This particular framework, then, gives Bernstein's thinking a specific role both as a bridge between the dimension of 'text' and the dimension of 'socio-cultural practice' and as an articulation of particular rules of educational discourses.

Analysis of four textbooks Danish as a subject in the upper secondary school in Denmark

In the following, I will provide examples from four textbooks to illustrate some characteristics of textbooks published since the most recent reform came into effect in 2005. The four textbooks are *The Narrative of New Media* [Når nye medier fortæller] (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004), *Making Connections in Danish. Language, Literature, Film* [Faglige forbindelser i dansk. Sprog, litteratur og film] (Bennike, Nyborg, & Hammer, 2005), *The Textbook. Language. Literature, Media* [Grundbogen. Sprog – Litteratur – Medier] (Poulsen, 2005), *The Interface. A Textbook for Danish* [Krydsfelt. Grundbog i dansk] (Langdahl, Olsen, & Quist, 2010). They are all widely used in upper secondary schools in Denmark (Author, 2011), but they are selected primarily because they fulfil the criteria that they aim to teach media and communication-related subject matter, and that they were released in conjunction with or in response to the latest reform. To exemplify the time-specific nature of these textbooks, I will compare them time to time with the textbook *TV analysis: Theory and Method for Media Education and Critics* [TV-analyse: Teori og metode til medieundervisning og –kritik] (Friis, Kragholm, Walter, 1976), which is representative for an earlier time (Author, 2011). (All the translations from the curriculum and from the textbooks are made by the author).

The analysis will have two focal points: Firstly, I will focus on the extent to which the textbooks are framed by the new curriculum, including their (re)construction of the subject content of the subject Danish. Secondly, I will focus on how the textbooks aim to reflect the immediate context of the pupil and on the 'edited' version of that context as it is presented in the communication models. Before this, however, I will briefly outline the background of the most recent reform of the upper second school and describe the main changes to the new curriculum for the subject Danish in the upper secondary school, since this document is of particular importance for the development of the textbooks analysed.

Background

At the turn of the millennium, the report *Educational policy green paper 2000* made by the Department of Education concluded:

Internationalisation and globalization entail [...] that the layout and professionalism of the Danish education system must orient themselves in line with international conditions and adopt an international basis for parts of its activities (Department of Education, 2000).

Against the background of this report, the Danish government established a committee to work on a reform of Danish as a subject in the Danish education system. The committee was to work within a frame of reference that stated that the definition of the subject should be rethought and

diverted to "the societal expectations for Danish as a subject in the future." (The Working Group for Danish as a Subject in the Future, 2003, p. 310).

The committee's final report responded to this change of international and global direction by suggesting that the subject worked with four core cultural competencies: speaking and listening, and writing and reading, and that the subject should consist of three content areas: language, literature and media, which should be integrated (p. 40). This new view of the subject involved a break with the *Bildung* tradition of the subject, which saw Danish as the primary discipline for practising democratic dialogue or for the pupils' cultural development (p. 36). The subject should, as the committee stated, leave its natural state behind (ibid.). This functionalistic approach to the core output of the subject became a constituent element in the latest curriculum. Particularly significant in the latest curriculum reform is the formulation of the subject's relation to media and communication, the emphasis being on pupils being able to "decode and extract the essence of printed and electronic media texts" and to "navigate in screen-based texts and be able to collect, sort and use materials in both printed and electronic form" (Department of Children and Education, 2006, p. 21). The essential skills in the above goals, 'decode' and 'extract' and also 'navigate', 'collect', 'sort' and 'use', represent a considerably lower taxonomic level (Biggs & Collis, 1982) than the taxonomic key words that were highlighted in previous curricula and guidelines. Where the verb 'decode' off' is used in connection with "to look at a measuring instrument and to determine the quantity of the measuring unit" (Dictionary of Contemporary Danish, 2001), the curriculum of 1971 focused on "understanding that TV is not just something received - but [...] something that should be largely subject to some form of treatment" (Directorate for Upper Secondary School and Higher Preparatory Examination Course, 1971, p. 24). Here emphasis was also given to giving pupils "an active and analytical (critical) approach to film and television as mass communication media and art [...]" (p. 20).

The outline above indicates a new tendency, namely that the new curriculum's definition of the subject Danish to a certain degree has been constrained, in Bernstein's terms (2000), by dominant principles from *the official field of recontextualisation* (state domain). But even more noticeable is the signs of these dominant principles in the textbooks released for Danish after the new reform of the upper secondary school.

The (re)construction of subject knowledge

In contrast to the earlier textbooks the four textbooks are very eager to signal that they relate to and accommodate the new curriculum for Danish. We see this both in the layout and the titles of the books and by their blurbs, prefaces and introductions.

In *The Narrative of New Media* this ambition to live up to the new reform is signalled using a small sticker on the front lower right corner with the words "The new reform 2005" and the book's back cover also advertises, that the book "places itself at the interface between literature and new media expression" (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004), and that it is written "as a consequence of the requirement of the recent reform to integrate new media into Danish" (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, back cover). In *The Textbook* it is made clear that "the intention is to present the subject as a totality of language, literature and media in accordance with the 2005 curriculum" (Poulsen, 2005, p.5). *The Interface* presents itself as a "coherent basic textbook for the teaching of Danish after the reform" (Langdahl, Olsen, & Quist., 2010, p. 8), and, finally, the

title *Making Connections in Danish. Language, Literature, Film* has been chosen with direct reference to the new curriculum's focus on core skills:

Making Connections is a general requirement in the curriculum for Danish. The strands interweave, allowing the three main areas of literature, language and media to interact, integrating receptive and productive dimension and binding oral and written skills together. Special attention is paid to language that is to be included as an integral part of all other areas of the subject and be reflected in all exam questions (Bennike, Hammer, & Nyborg, 2005, p. 7).

The wording here is almost identical to the wording of the new reform:

Work with oral and writing competences links the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing with an overall understanding of language, literature and media, and is based on an integration of the subject's receptive and productive dimensions. In the lessons the skills of the subject work across areas related to language, literature and the media. Language work in particular is an integral part of reading texts, understanding language structure, function and history (Department of Education, 2004, §3.1).

Clearly, we see here intertextual relations between the two types of text and thus a process of recontextualising where what is dominant is the official field of recontextualisation – and thereby the dominate principles from the domain of the state.

This specific focus on the curriculum in the textbooks is even more specific in the books' conceptualisation of Danish and its objectives. In *The Narrative of New Media*, the intention of the new reform is to "integrate new media into Danish" (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, back page); *The Textbook* presents itself as "a coherent presentation of the basic content of the subject Danish" (Poulsen, 2005, back page), and *Cross Field* "conveys the basic theory and method of Danish [...]" (Langdahl, Olsen, & Quist., 2010, back cover). And *Professional Connections* (re)defines Danish as a distinctive area of subject knowledge as regards the "subject's basic theory and method" and "the discipline's methods and skills" (Bennike, Nyborg, & Hammer, 2005, p. 8). This (re)definition of core skills is also significant elsewhere in *Professional Connections*, where narrative is placed at the centre:

The narrative is, in fact, an ideal venue for the subject's various elements – language, literature and media – and represents a fruitful starting point for working on the receptive and productive skills we want pupils to develop (Bennike, Nyborg, & Hammer, 2005, p. 8).

In this quote it is also worth noting that the authors of the textbook in the 'we' deixis of the sentence directly gives an impression of common ground between their own stance regarding the objectives of Danish, the stance adopted by other teachers and the curriculum. The 'we' deixis, however, is not at odds with the rest of the text but is an expression of a general, implicit assumption.

This focus on the curriculum and on a specific definition of the subject content in the textbooks of

the new millennium are not significant *in* their time, but they are significant *for* their time if we compare them with textbooks from other periods (Author, 2011). As an example, the objective in a typical textbook from the 1970's, *TV analysis: Theory and Method for Media Education and Critics* (Friis, Kragholm, & Walter, 1976) is related to something outside the subject itself. This textbook is designed in order to teach pupils how to analyse the role of television in society. Moreover, the purpose of the book and its content is not formulated as an extension of the curriculum; instead, the textbook wants to challenge the frameworks of the curriculum. Thus, the author claims that

We have to acknowledge that the media as an area does not have the position in Danish as a subject that its social significance and the present research justifies. [...] In the dissemination of research from different disciplines, this book has a dual focus: to contribute to giving the media area a stronger position in various learning contexts and to provide the public debate with what is hoped is informative material (Friis, Kragholm, & Walter, 1976, p. 7).

Motivated by a desire to influence public debate, *TV analysis: Theory and Method for Media Education and Critics* is not only developed for the upper secondary school but for "all those who care about the media in society" (Friis, Kragholm, & Walter, 1976, p.8), and it is suitable for study groups (Friis, Kragholm, & Walter, 1976, back cover). Compared with this, the arguments in the textbooks published after the latest reform seem remarkably focused on the subject in itself and specifically on the best way for teachers and pupils to reach the goals in the curriculum.

The (re)construction of pedagogic identities

Another distinctive feature of recent textbooks is the explicit attempt to meet the pupil in his/her own (media) world, and – concurrently – a conceptualization of communication as a matter of individual intentional acts. It manifests itself in the textbook *The Narrative of New Media*, where the authors urge caution in relation to the 'abstract theories' about the development of the media. In contrast to this, the authors encourage the use of a phenomenological and experience-based approach to the media:

Unlike the book, computer technology will continue to undergo transformations that will give rise to new manifestations and gaps in comprehension. It is tempting to be seduced by the rhetoric that goes with the digital technology. [...] Instead of speculative prophecy, we need a comprehensive understanding of the new media form and content. It is about how we read and not least how we experience digital stories (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, p. 22).

In this argument for the media approach the pupil is incorporated through a 'we' deixis, and there are certain similarities to the procedure of *TV analysis: Theory and Method for Media Education and Critics* (Friis, Kragholm, & Walter, 1976), where the pupil is supposed to be open to new approaches and not blindly accept 'authorities'. This becomes even clearer later in the same textbook, where the 'parents' are positioned in opposition to this 'we':

If parents sound the alarm, it is often because they do not have insight into the

universe of computer games. Perhaps it is the worried parents who have difficulties in distinguishing between game and reality. [...] The same goes for violent computer games as for many other phenomena: everything in moderation (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, p. 105).

However, something has been reversed. Whereas textbooks from the 1970's and 1980's considered it important to reveal the hidden ideological content of a media experience (Author, 2011), those individuals who are in danger of becoming alienated in *The Narrative of New Media* are those who are critical of the media. Now, the media experience gives access to essential skills to succeed in the present and future society:

Computer games can give us a preview of a changing future where it is an advantage to be able to master the use of media. Bo Kampmann Walther, who has done research on video games, even suggests that playing computer games is a part of young people's education and development. Computer games should be taken much more seriously in upper secondary school: "They [children and young people who play computer games] both run fast, shoot monsters, and reflect on how to reveal intrigue and keep track of an organization. They must have a sense of telling a story and move from level to level. The business world requires exactly this: adaptability, ability to engage in mobile teams, belief in themselves, the ability to sell and understand information." (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, p. 105).

The starting point for judging the essence of the media has shifted, then, to the quality of the experience and the specific competencies emanating from it.

In relation to this, the experience-based approach to working with media is grounded in a specific understanding of human beings and to communication and agency. As shown in the textbook's treatment of the theme "Violence and aesthetics - a moral dilemma", the 'dramatic part' of the media has a natural function:

The action hero is a distinct American invention. Yet it is as a Dane difficult to disregard the myth of the action hero, at once excluded and redeeming which appears in several movies and computer games. We all have a deep desire to see good defeat evil (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, p. 103).

The new media are, according to this textbook, something we have to live in –and to live with. They "coincide with the technological wallpaper" (Hanghøj & Knudsen, 2004, p. 171), and the ability to adapt is in this way something that is achieved in and through the media.

This starting point in the pupil's immediate experience is also apparent in the communication models of the textbooks. The first chapter's introductory section "About Communication" in the textbook *Professional Connections* is fundamental for understanding the generation of meaning. Based on a communication model deriving from Karl Bühler (see Bühler, 1934), two theories are presented here. They form the basis for understanding the types of communication that occur later in the book, and they apply a pragmatic communication theory and a structuralist code theory. It is significant for the textbook's conceptualization of communication that it is understood

as a relationship between the intention of the sender, the reaction of the recipient to this intention and then a common context having the form of the "what's referred to in text or utterance." (Bennike, Nyborg, & Hammer, 2005, p.17). Only the perspectives of the participants in the dialogue are accentuated since the context is defined as their common and immediate nearby reference room. Thus, a socio-cultural level is not embedded in the conceptualisation of the communication situation. In this way, the intention of the sender regulates the communication.

This conceptualisation of communication is also present in *The Textbook*, where "a communication model that accounts for communication 'in its basic'" is presented (Poulsen, 2005, p. 85). What we find here is an understanding of the context that correlates with the other textbooks from the period, and thus a context whose framework is the intentions and 'contracts' of the language user.

Cross Fields presents two communication models, a 'simple communication model' and an 'enhanced communication model' (Langdahl, Olsen, & Quist, 2010, p. 324). Whereas the simple model only includes 'a sender', 'a message' and 'a recipient', the enhanced model also includes 'channels', 'codes' and 'situations'. The situation is defined as "the place where the communication situation unfolds (e.g. a workplace, a cinema)" (p. 324). We also find this specific understanding of the communicative situation in the interpretation of the speech act theory. Here the authors ask what "[...] ensures that a speech act works?" They answer:

The context is crucial. We saw this particularly in the form of indirect speech acts. To truly understand a speech act [...] it has to be seen in the context in which it is included. [...] At least three conditions should be met. These are the so-called 'conditions for success' (Langdahl, Olsen, & Quist, 2010, p. 249).

As in the other textbooks, the concept of 'context' here appears as a (contractual) relationship between sender and recipient and thus a more in-depth (linguistic) analysis of the logic at the institutional and socio-cultural level is left out. In the conceptualization of communication, there are no constraints, contradictions or conflicts deriving from, for example, economic, social, ethnic or gender issues.

Conclusions

The analysis sheds light on a particular period when the official field of recontextualization (the state domain) is very powerful and influences the construction of content in textbooks for Danish in the upper secondary school in Denmark. This manifests itself in several ways. Firstly, it is exposed through the textbooks' explicit references to curriculum and through compliance between curriculum and documents from the level of the state. Secondly, and related to this, critical awareness has been played down in favour of an increase in functionalist approaches to communication. This is manifested as an explicit attempt to meet the pupil in his/her own (media) world instead of challenging it, and, concurrently, as a conceptualization of communication as comprising individual intentional acts. Thus, when opening up these textbooks, pupils are presented with more than 'just' content knowledge. They meet a time-specific conceptualization of media and of how to analyse and practise communication.

I will argue that there is a need to encourage both teacher and pupil to challenge the hegemonic construction of subject content and the pedagogic identities that dominate the textbooks at any particular time. It is hardly possible to provide a simple explanatory model independent of political, economic and educational interests, which can help, for example, upper secondary school pupils to understand the overall societal and global contexts that they are part of and that they affect and are affected by. Similarly, it is hardly possible to incorporate comprehensive diachronic and synchronic meta-analyses of the textbooks for the whole range of subject areas pupils may encounter during their time at school. However, it is possible to encourage pupils to question the world that is presented to them in their textbooks.

Using a framework for opening up the textbook at an analytical level it is possible to understand the textbook as a reflection of dominant discourses and to start scrutinizing the borders between thinkable and unthinkable. The trans-disciplinary framework that has been formulated here as a means to analyse textbooks as bearers and creators of overall societal presumptions should be understood as a heuristic for such analyses. The intention is to make it possible to stimulate critical awareness for both teachers and pupils.

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