

CONCEPTS OF LITERATURE IN DANISH L1

Textbooks and their framing of students' reading

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Abstract

This article focuses on concepts of literature, reader and literary reading in five Danish textbooks for lower secondary school from the period 1983-2008. The bases, priorities and orientations of the textbooks are studied by the use of Langer's five stances for environment building (Langer, 2011), and Witte & Sâmihaiian's model of paradigms in literature teaching (Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013). On this basis, the article analyses the aims, approaches, text selection and the reader stances intended in the tasks and assignments of the textbooks. The aim of the article is to present an analysis of the learning designs of the textbooks in order to discuss how the different designs may frame students' encounters with literature, and how they link to paradigms in literature teaching and to current discussions about text and/or reader orientation within literature teaching.

Keywords: literature teaching, textbook design, literary approaches, choice of text, students' assignments

1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of literature education, diverse approaches to literature teaching and their implications for students' learning have been widely discussed (Fialho, Zyngier & Miall, 2011; Kubik, 2012; Rødnes, 2014). Moreover, this issue has been linked with studies of classroom discourse and modes of reading, literature dialogues and/or organisation of literature teaching (Hultin, 2006; Liu, 2016; Schijvers et. al., 2019a, 2019b; Tengberg, 2011). However, textbooks and their implications for students' encounters with literature seem to be a less debated area.

Approximately 40-50 years ago, textbooks with an explicit learning design became part of literature teaching in primary and lower secondary school in Denmark. Before that, literature teaching was often termed reading education as in *Den blå betænkning 1960* [The blue report, 1960] (Undervisningsministeriet, 1960), which was the guideline for primary and lower secondary school in 1960-1972. At that time, literature teaching was primarily based on semantic learning materials, that is, literature anthologies or novels without learning design, tasks and activities, or any kind of help for teachers and students (Grinder-Hansen, 2016). The aim of reading literature was, accordingly, to train students' general reading skills and develop their knowledge about literary history, especially related to Danish authors of literature for adults.

The study presented in this article focuses only on L1 textbooks with a learning design and a pedagogical framing of literature reading. Five textbooks for fourth-grade students, spanning a period of 25 years, have been analysed and discussed with a point of departure in the early 1980s. The study set out to explore the role of the textbook as a site for students' encounters with literature, and to analyse how these encounters were framed by diverse textbook designs. The research interest covered both *the intentions* of the textbooks and the *activities* they presented (Bundsgaard & Hansen, 2011). More specifically, focus was on the conceptions of literature, reader and literary reading as manifested in the choice of texts, approaches to literature, overall aim of the literary pedagogy, and tasks and assignments.

The most recent textbook (or complex of materials) in this study, *Fandango* from 2008 (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a, b, c, d), is identified as the most frequently used textbook in the fourth grade in Denmark, in the quantitative part of the learning material study presented in this special issue (Bremholm et al., 2017, 32; Bundsgaard, Buch & Foug, 2020, this special issue). Accordingly, we have analysed the learning design of *Fandango* to explore how it approaches the concepts of literature, reader and literary reading, and how it shapes current fourth-grade students' encounters with literature. In addition, we have picked out four formerly popular textbooks to study how the notions of literature, reader and literary reading have been interpreted in diverse learning designs throughout a period of 25 years in which the volume of textbooks has been increasing. From the quantitative part of the learning

material study, we know that analysis and analytical tasks make up 22 % of the overall content in current Danish learning materials on literature in the fourth to sixth grade, whereas interpretation and critical reflection constitute a much smaller part, only 6 % (Bremholm et al., 2017, 39). Exploring the intentions and activities in the learning designs of the currently most used piece of learning material for the fourth grade, and in four formerly popular textbooks, the study contributes to elaborate and/or nuance the general numeric findings of the quantitative study, and to contextualise the study in identifying constants and changes among the selected textbooks. Furthermore, the study aims to link the analyses of the specific textbook designs to an ongoing discussion of different approaches in literature teaching regarding the basis and orientation of literature teaching.

The aim of the article is to present the analysis of the learning designs of the textbooks, in order to discuss how the different designs may frame students' encounters with literature, and how they link to paradigms in literature teaching and to current discussions about text and/or reader-orientation within literature teaching. However, the study and its Danish context need a brief further introduction.

This study explores five textbooks (including booklets, folders and teacher's guides) aimed at fourth-grade students. During the first three years of schooling, grades one to three, literary texts in the school subject Danish are mostly used to develop basic literacy, which is primarily reading skills and competences. In the fourth grade, the reading of literature is still linked with the development of basic skills and language awareness (as can be seen in the examples), but literature teaching also involves text analysis and interpretational strategies. This means that literature teaching is consolidated as an independent discipline in the school subject Danish in the fourth grade. At the same time, the basic assumption of the textbooks in our study seems to be that fourth-grade students can still experiment and work relatively freely, whereas literature teaching in textbooks for the seventh to ninth grade aims at a more scientific discourse on literature and is often influenced by tests and examinations (Skyggebjerg, 2017, 106; Rørbech, 2017).

State of the art

A recurrent issue in literature teaching is the dilemma of whether to read and teach with the purpose of looking for information about form, content, narrative voices, etc., or to live through the literary experience with the purpose of exploring literature, the self and the surrounding world (Rosenblatt, 1995)—or to conceive approaches that integrate these two divergent aims (Rødnes, 2014). Consequently, when focusing on how concepts of text, reader and literary reading in Danish textbooks frame fourth-grade students' encounters with literature, we inscribe this study in an ongoing discussion within literature teaching (Fialho, Zyngier & Miall, 2011; Koek et al., 2016; Kubik, 2012; Rødnes, 2014; Schrijvers et al., 2016; 2019a; 2019b). Studies conducted in this problem field of text and/or reader orientation

often refer to Rosenblatt's distinction between *effeient* and *aesthetic* modes of reading (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 32-33) and her break with the autonomous concept of text in New Criticism (Brooks, 1947; Wellek & Warren, 1942/1956).

The question of whether analytical and concept-driven or experience-based instruction forms the best conditions for the development of students' literary competences, and accordingly whether a text-oriented or reader-oriented approach should be the basis for literature teaching, are focal points in a number of studies on literature education (Kubik, 2012; Rødnes, 2014; Schrijvers et. al., 2019b). Scholars adopt various positions towards this problem. Some scholars see a gap between two separate or conflicting approaches within literature teaching (Kaspersen, 2012). In her research review, Rødnes finds that experience-based approaches further students' motivation more than analytical and text-oriented approaches (Rødnes, 2014). Other scholars see a dilemma, a challenge that research aims to balance (Faust, 2000; Fialho, Zyngier & Miall, 2011; Rørbech, 2016; Schrijvers, et. al.2019b).

Some studies conclude that a combination of text-oriented and reader-oriented approaches promotes literary competence (Rødnes, 2014), and that the two approaches do not present us with an either-or situation but can be regarded as complementary (Fialho, Zyngier & Miall, 2011), and other studies show that the two approaches co-exist in practice (Faust, 2000; Rørbech, 2013, 2016). Accordingly, it is relevant to study if and how the ideas of text-oriented literature theories, e.g. New Criticism (Brooks, 1947; Wellek & Warren, 1942/1956), formalism (Jakobson, 1967), structuralism and narratology (Genette 2004), and the experience-based approaches in literature teaching, e.g. Rosenblatt and Iser (Iser, 1996/1981 Rosenblatt, 1995), influence textbooks. Another question is whether the dilemma of text and/or reader orientation marginalises or miss other relevant approaches to literature teaching. Faust argues that Rosenblatt's ideas have often been misinterpreted, and highlights the phenomenological and performative aspects of her thinking. In his rereading of Rosenblatt and Dewey, Faust suggests a combination of a reader-oriented and a culture-oriented approach (Faust, 2000), a balance between an aesthetic and a critical perspective, which is also Corcoran's project (Corcoran, 1994).

Looking at literature teaching and textbook designs, the questions of classroom discourse and choice of student tasks become essential too. Some studies point out the link between reader orientation, critical reading or personal growth (*Bildung*) (Koek et al., 2016) and a dialogical framing of classroom discourse (Gourvenec, 2016; Schrijvers et al., 2016, Schrijvers et al., 2019b, Schrijvers et al., 2019a). In our study, we have addressed these questions by exploring how student tasks and activities in the textbooks may frame the students' reading and individual or collaborative work processes.

Research question

Informed by the questions and dilemmas pointed out in existing research on approaches to literature teaching, and on classroom discourses, this study focuses on

how the diverse learning designs of five textbooks frame students' literature reading differently. The research question of the study is:

How are students' encounters with literature framed by selected Danish textbooks for lower secondary school?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Our theoretical framework consists of two components, Langer's theory of envisionment building (Langer, 2011) and Witte & Sâmihaiian's study on paradigms in literature teaching in L1 (Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013). We have used Langer's theory of envisionment building to explore the approaches of tasks and activities in the five textbooks. Langer has developed and reshaped central points of Rosenblatt's thinking (Langer, 2011). In her socio-cognitive approach to literature teaching, she focuses on the reader's imaginings, reflections, positions and actions in the process of reading, which she describes as *envisionment building*:

Envisionment building [is] an activity in sense making, where meanings change and shift and grow as a mind creates its understanding of a work (...). Even after the last word is read (or the final scene completed and the curtain drawn), we are left with an envisionment that is also subject to change with additional thought, reading, discussion, writing, and living (Langer, 2011, p. 16-17).

As stated in the quotation, Langer understands envisionment building as a dynamic process that involves interplay between different analytic and interpretive actions. Her five-phase model shows a principled order for the building of envisionments, which forms a process from an initial understanding of the text, over an analytical phase focused on the text itself, to reflections on personal and literary aspects of the reading experiences, and in some cases to positions where the envisionment has become internalised and can be used in new contexts.

Importantly, Langer also emphasises that the process of meaning making and understanding rarely proceeds in the same way or in the same order. She stresses that in literature teaching, the processes are heterogeneous and depend on the actual reader, the text and the situation. Instead of level or position, she uses the term *stance* to describe different ways of approaching or reading literature. The five stances that mark the reader's (cognitive) activities during the process of reading in Langer's model are:

- 1) Being Out and Stepping into an Envisionment
- 2) Being In and Moving Through an Envisionment
- 3) Stepping Out and Rethinking What One Knows
- 4) Stepping Out and Objectifying the Experience
- 5) Leaving an Envisionment and Going Beyond (Langer, 2011, p. 17-22).

The first stance refers to an initial understanding of the text; the reader's exploration of meaning is based on knowledge, experiences and available clues. In this first stance, the reader develops a surface understanding of the text. Initial ideas of the characters, the plot, the setting and the situation are developed. In the second

stance, the reader becomes “immersed in developing understanding” (Langer, 2011, p.18). The reader tests his/her ideas about e.g. the characters’ feelings and motives, about causality and about the relations between different aspects of the text. The envisionments in this stance concern the understanding and interpretation of the text as a coherent whole. In this sense, the reader does most of the traditional textual analysis in the second stance, such as posing questions regarding milieu and places, analysing the narrator(s) and the plot, etc. The perspective shifts in the third stance. The reader steps back and compares the envisionments of the textual world to his/her own experiences, and reflects on what the envisionments mean to his/her own ideas, life and experiences. In the fourth stance, the experience of the reading is objectified, and the reader becomes a more distanced and critical reader. The reader uses literary theories and cultural understanding to reflect e.g. on the literary elements and allusions of the text and on clashes between the author’s worldviews and his/her own, and to identify relations of conflict and power within the text. The reader adopts a reflective approach by relating his/her understanding and reading experience to other works, epochs and experiences. In that way, this stance includes intertextuality and e.g. knowledge of literary epochs and traditions. Moreover, dialogue with other readers enables the reflection at this stance. The fifth stance occurs, according to Langer, less often than the others. Going beyond an envisionment seems to include being so familiar with its idea, aesthetic form and meaning, and to have internalised the envisionments of the reading to such a degree, that one is able to build upon it or transform it in new contexts. Langer illustrates the generative implications of this stance as follows: “This happens when a composer might call upon aspects of a poem in the creation of a symphony (...)” (Langer, 2011, p. 21).

In this model, Langer presents a procedure that encompasses basic understandings, explorations and reflections on different levels of abstraction. In this sense, the model of envisionment building entails a dialectic between exploration and reflection, between experience and abstraction, and between individual reading processes and dialogue with other readers’ reading. We find this model appropriate for the analysis of the textbook designs and the reader stances intended in the tasks and activities of the textbooks (Bundsgaard & Hansen, 2011). However, since the envisionment-building model, especially in the second and fourth stances, involves literary concepts, knowledge and modes of reading that do not match fourth-grade students’ experiences with literature, we will use the stances in a version adapted to the target group of the textbooks without abandoning the idea of the five stances and the interplay between them.

As the textbooks in our study span a period of 25 years, we expect them to have different approaches to literature and literature pedagogy, different pedagogical aims and different understandings of the role of literature in the school subject Danish. However, we do not expect to be able to identify a linear development following the changes and paradigms within literary theory (Corcoran, 1994). Studies on paradigms in mother tongue education and literature education show that different paradigms co-exist, compete and become interwoven in practice (Sawyers & Van de

Ven, 2006; Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013). Accordingly, mother tongue education can be seen as a complex and poly-paradigmatic field of study (Sawyers & Van de Ven, 2006).

Nevertheless, in order to be able to relate the learning design of the five textbooks to broader tendencies and patterns, we will link the textbook analysis to general paradigms in literature teaching in L1. A frequently referenced study on paradigms in L1 education is the study by Sawyers and Van de Ven (2006). On a general level, Sawyers and Van de Ven identify four paradigms in mother tongue education: an *academic* paradigm, a *developmental* paradigm, a *communicative* paradigm and a *utilitarian* paradigm (Sawyers & Van de Ven, 2007). Contrary to the broader pedagogical and sociological approach by Sawyers and Van de Ven, Witte & Sâmihaiian's study specifically addresses literature education in L1 in lower and upper secondary school (students from 12-18) (Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013). Accordingly, we use this study to identify links between the textbook designs and paradigms in literature teaching. Witte & Sâmihaiian have studied differences and similarities in literature curricula in the following six European countries: the Czech Republic, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and some parts of Germany (Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013). Their model consists of four paradigms: the *cultural* paradigm, the *linguistic* paradigm, the *social* paradigm and a paradigm concerning *personal growth*. These paradigms are connected to the historical development in major theoretical discussions about L1 education. The cultural paradigm with its focus on cultural heritage and canonical works dominated from the middle of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. After WWII, a linguistic paradigm influenced the reading of literature, characterised by a scientific approach to textual analysis. The linguistic paradigm includes different analytical approaches with an interest in the structures and formal linguistic aspects of literary texts. In the 1970s, the social paradigm gained way, with a focus on literature reading as a way of developing social competences, and finally, the paradigm of personal growth dominated around the end of the 20th century, when literature reading was considered a manner of recognising and better knowing oneself. In the beginning of the 21st century, all these paradigms co-exist, and Witte & Sâmihaiian aim to explore which paradigms dominate in the different European curricula. Quite surprisingly, they conclude that the linguistic paradigm still dominates the majority of the curricula in the six European countries included in their study. This is an interesting finding considering the current dilemma in literature education mentioned in the state of the art in this article.

Witte & Sâmihaiian's paradigm model builds on the following categories: *the aim of literature teaching, approach, text selection criteria, classroom management and evaluation*. It partly overlaps with Corcoran's model based on paradigms within literary theories (Corcoran, 1994). However, it includes more categories concerning literature pedagogy and classroom practice, whereas Corcoran uses the following classification: *expressive realism, new criticism structuralism, reader response 1, reader response 2, semiotics and post structuralism*, and identifies the nature of text,

the role of the reader and the role of the teacher within each paradigm. With reference to the ongoing debate on content-oriented and/or experience-based approaches in literature teaching, and considering the European focus in Witte & Sâmihaiian's study, we consider their model suitable as an analytical framework for our study of the learning design of the Danish textbooks and their underlying assumptions about literature, reader and literature reading. However, on a cautionary note, it should be pointed out that their model does not include a semiotic or post-structuralist perspective on texts and readers (like Corcoran's model), and thus it risks maintaining a dualistic approach to the dilemma of content and student-oriented approaches. Furthermore, the separation of the cultural and personal growth paradigms might prevent identifying a culture-oriented approach to literature teaching and induce a static understanding of culture and *Bildung*. We will return to these critical points in our discussion.

3. METHOD AND ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

As mentioned in the introductory section, this study is part of a larger mixed method study of current Danish learning materials, presented in the first articles in this special issue (Bremholm et al., 2017, Foug, Bremholm & Buch 2020). The study presented here differs from the other qualitative studies by involving a historical perspective on textbooks. In the previous sections, the reason for this choice is stated as a wish to contextualise the study of the currently most used textbook in the fourth grade, and to explore if and how the designs of the textbooks are linked with broader paradigms in literature education.

The number of examples in our study is limited. We have analysed five textbooks and/or systems—four of them to our knowledge no longer in use. On this basis, we have explored how different learning designs frame students' reading differently, and identified constants and changes over a period of 25 years during which the popularity of textbooks with a learning design has been notable and increasing. However, we do not see the specific textbooks as representative of a certain decade or one specific tendency. The main criterion for the selection of the four textbooks no longer in use is their distribution and popularity. All five textbooks or book systems are published in several editions. They are written by authors (or author collectives) with a large influence on the curricular domain at the time. The authors have a large textbook production behind them, and/or they have been leading members of discipline-related associations and ministerial work, and/or they have participated in discipline-related debates and/or been engaged in in-service teacher training.

The method used in the study is *textual analysis* (Silverman, 2001). Although we have focused on the written texts in our analytical strategy, we have included *the expression* of the textbooks that is the layout, illustrations and materiality as well (Bundsgaard & Hansen, 2011). The analytical framework is constructed from a combination of concepts from Witte and Sâmihaiian's and Langer's studies (Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013; Langer, 2011). We have selected some of the categories from Witte

& Sâmihaian's study to analyse *the intentions* of the textbooks. For this purpose, we have applied the categories *text selection criteria*, *approach* and *the aim of literature teaching* (in the mentioned order). As conceptual perspectives to analyse the activities in the textbooks in regard to the implied approaches to literature and literature reading, as well as the way they position the students as readers, we have used the five stances in Langer's envisionment building model.

Through this analytical strategy, we are able to explore various aspects of the learning design of textbooks that we presume influence students' encounters with literature and frame their reading: text selection, approach, and aim and stances in tasks and assignments that focus the reader's attention on specific ways of making meaning of literature and/or give the reader access to specific ways of building envisionments (Langer 2011). Furthermore, by applying Witte & Sâmihaian's paradigm model, we are able to link our analytical observations to current paradigms in literature teaching.

The above-mentioned analytical strategy has been used to conduct and organise the textual analysis. In the next section, our analytical findings are presented in the following structure: general introduction to the book system(s), text selection criteria, approach, aim of literature pedagogy and conclusion.

4. FINDINGS IN FIVE TEXTBOOKS FOR THE FOURTH GRADE

In this section, we present the results from the analysis of the following five textbooks for the fourth grade: *Dig selv og din fantasi...* [Yourself and your imagination] (Jeppesen, Lisby & Voss, 1983ab), *Arbejd med dansk! Rim og remser. Lim og dimser* [Work with Danish! Rhymes and chants. Glue and thingies] (Moos & Hansen, 1986), *Digting og dansk. Litteratur for fjerde* [Literary work and Danish. Literature for the fourth grade] (Kurth, Larsen, Møller & Olsen, 1995ab), *Læs for livet 1* [Read for life 1] (Toft, 1998ab) and *Fandango 4* [Fandango 4] (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a).

4.1 *Yourself and your imagination*

The literature book *Yourself and your imagination* (Jeppesen, Lisby & Voss, 1983a) is part of a larger system of books and folders with printable tasks for different grades (Jeppesen, Lisby & Voss, 1983b). At first glance, the book is a semantic learning material (Hansen, 2010)—an anthology with texts and pictures in black and white without any pedagogical framing. However, two folders with 50 and 55 work sheets, respectively, are part of the learning material. The folders contain instructions and tasks for the students. Therefore, we consider them to be a pedagogical learning resource. In the 1970s and early 1980s, it was quite common to publish learning materials of this kind, and it has not been necessary to explain the special concept (book and folders) to the teachers. The system is flexible in the way that the teacher can select relevant tasks from the folders, and he or she will not necessarily have to explain their choice to the students. In the preface, the authors stress that they have a

holistic view on language in L1 teaching (Danish) and that this is why they have integrated different curricular elements of the subject (language and literature, oral dialogue and written student performances). The preface shows an orientation towards the students and their experiences with reading and life in general, but on the same page, it is also claimed that the pedagogy may depart in a focus on the textual expressions. This represents a double orientation—a balancing between text and reader, which, according to the theoretical part of this article, is quite typical in the teaching of literature (Faust, 2000).

Text selection criteria: Although the common theme is imagination, the texts are very different in relation to genre, style and media. The students are presented with poetry from the 19th and 20th centuries, folk tales and fairy tales, documentary texts, extracts from realistic children's novels and fantasy, comics and images from films and television. Because the text selection is based on the students' experiences, the representation of children's literature is impressive. Besides literature written by adults for children, there are literary works written by children and popular literature written by adults and read by children, for example extracts from *Superman* and *Star Wars*. Thus, the concept of literature is very broad in the textbook.

Approach: When it comes to the literature pedagogy applied in the two folders, the questions are not always as inclusive as promised in the preface. Although the students are introduced to tasks and exercises where they have to write, draw, talk and dramatize, they are often met with questions that are quite repetitive and similar. A typical way of framing literature is seen in the work sheets for Astrid Lindgren's *Ronja Røverdatter* [Ronja, the Robber's Daughter], which was published in 1981 and therefore is an example of the inclusion of newly published and awarded children's literature. The possibilities of working with this text should be many, but the repertoire realised in the work sheets is limited. The reading strategies are mainly efferent in the sense presented by Rosenblatt, as the students are encouraged to seek concrete information about the characters, the environment and the language. For example, they have to answer many questions in a multiple-choice test about the characters' names and clothes in order to demonstrate their reading skills and understanding. A typical question is: What is the name of Ronja's mother, Louise, Lovis or Lone? Very few questions seek to address the students' own experiences; an exception is the framing of a discussion of nature, where the students are asked to compare the textual expressions with both ancient mythology and their own experiences. This is an example of expanding the students' knowledge about literature and encouraging them to reflect on the connections between life and literature: However, as already mentioned, this is not followed by further interpretative discussions or tasks. To sum up the analytical work, the teacher is supposed to test the students via a spelling test with selected words from the text, which means that there is more focus on spelling than on understanding. Finally, the students are encouraged to read more books by Astrid Lindgren in their spare time. This is a way to combine classroom reading with reading for pleasure, but the students are not encouraged to share their reading experiences.

Aim: As shown, this textbook/learning material contains a paradox in that very many of the work sheets in the folders are aimed at individual performances and consist of tasks where the students are supposed to expand their knowledge of words, including spelling and grammar, with almost no connection to the literary texts and the view on literature teaching explicitly presented in the textbook. The student tasks are predominantly on an elementary level, often with a multiple-choice structure, and very few tasks or questions are aimed at interpretation. The paradox can be explained by the fact that the authors of this material intend to integrate the different disciplines in the teaching of Danish, and that they aim at addressing both language and literature teaching; as a consequence, the latter has more or less disappeared as an interpretative discipline. To use Witte & Sâmihaian's concepts, the personal development paradigm seems to dominate in the textual choices, whereas the linguistic paradigm, with focus on specific competences, is more dominant in the pedagogical approach.

With reference to Langer's concepts, the students are supported in their environment building in that they are helped (and tested) in their basic understanding of the texts. However, it is mainly the first and only partly the second and third stances that are supported. The reading of literature is reduced to basic understanding, and the students are not encouraged to take notice of or reflect on the textual messages concerning existential themes such as love, friendship, childhood, independence, etc. Nor are the students encouraged to integrate their reflections on the texts in their thoughts on reading or life experiences in general, and, therefore, Langer's fourth and fifth stances are almost non-existing. The openness to the children's lives that the textual choices and the concept of literature indicate is not mirrored at all in the pedagogy.

4.2 *Work with Danish! Rhymes and chants—glue and thingies*

Work with Danish! is the title of a larger book concept consisting of twelve books aimed at the teaching of Danish from grades three to seven. The books are written by different authors, and they address different themes and genres. The general principle in all the books is integration of the different disciplines in L1. The approach to teaching is theme-based, and the teacher is expected to combine practical and theoretical perspectives. Literature plays an important role, but the teaching of literature is never isolated or looked upon as something exclusive. Here, focus is on one small part of the whole system—the book called *Work with Danish! Rhymes and chants—glue and thingies* (Moos & Hansen, 1986).

Text selection criteria: The literary texts in the book are connected to rhyme and chants, as already promised in the title, and the genre is understood in both a historical and a contemporary context. It is explained how rhymes and chants are rooted in an oral tradition and written down in the 19th century to be preserved for later generations of readers. This originally oral tradition is represented in the book together with texts by Danish writers such as H.C. Andersen (1805-75) and Halfdan

Rasmussen (1915-2002). These examples of historical and contemporary children's literature are combined with examples of children's play built around the oral tradition through history. It is explained how this tradition is used in schoolyards and spare time, and the students are encouraged to experiment with poetry in their own play. Although the textual choices are limited by the genre perspective, the view on literature is inclusive since folklore, children's own texts and canonised authors are represented.

Approach: The subtitle of the textbook is a little rhyme in itself: "Rim og remser. Lim og dimser". This draws attention to rhymes and other poetic features that are important parts of the analytical work in the book, and it furthermore points to the practical and creative dimension ('lim og dimser' meaning glue and thingies). The focus in the book is on the students' creativity, and the activities are combined with a varied pedagogy with many different tasks, including both individual and collective processes. Several times, the students are encouraged to write their own poetry, for example in their work with alphabet rhymes, which entails writing small stories where all words begin with the same letter. They are also encouraged to find and use different kinds of rhymes in their own texts. As another example of the combination of analytical and creative tasks, the chapter on poetry books could be mentioned. After an introduction to the genre and history of private poetry books, the students have to produce their own books.

Aim: Moos & Hansen's pedagogy is partly inspired by the so-called poetic play, described by the Swedish author Key-Åberg in *Poetisk lek* [Poetic play] (1961). The aim is to develop the students' literary understanding and personal relationship with literature through a creative process. In general, *Rhymes and chants—glue and thingies* contains many different tasks and questions that support the students' contextual understanding, reflection and interpretation, and the students are activated and encouraged to use literature (poetry) in their daily life. According to Witte & Sâmihaiian's concepts, Moos & Hansen's book belongs to the cultural paradigm (because the students are given a lot of cultural and historical information), but also to the paradigm concerning personal growth.

Remembering Langer's terminology, this textbook helps the students in their envisionment building by using different strategies that correspond to different stances in Langer's understanding. The first stance, i.e. the students' basic understanding of the texts, is not supported much, but this can be explained by the relative simplicity of the texts. The second stance, which implies analytical work on the texts, is supported by tasks and questions about the use of language, for example different types of rhymes, the use of rhythm and the variety of metaphors. The third stance, which addresses the comparison of text and life experience, is supported by the inclusion of the students' own play (for example, they have to draw on their own experiences with so-called counting and teasing chants). Stances four and five can be recognised in tasks and questions where the students have to reflect on their own criteria for choosing and bringing texts into their personal poetry books. However, the students

are not introduced to questions where they have to meta-reflect on their own literary interpretations in the context of other interpretations or reading perspectives, which Langer identifies as characteristics of the last two stances. Compared to *Yourself and your imagination* (Jeppesen, Visby & Voss, 1983ab), the textual focus in *Rhymes and chants* is more limited, but the pedagogy is more varied and flexible, and the literary reading strategy is based on an aesthetic approach (as it is understood by Rosenblatt). Both the textual choices and the pedagogy consider the students' own experiences and expressions.

4.3 *Literary work and Danish*

Literary work and Danish. Literature for the fourth grade (Kurth et al., 1995a) is a textbook accompanied by a supplementary student book with tasks and questions (Kurth et al., 1995b) and a teacher's guide (Kurth et al., 1995c). These books have their parallels in books for grades three to ten, and they were originally published in the period 1989-2002. Although the focus is literature, the teaching of literature is integrated with other disciplines in L1 (as seen before in *Yourself and your imagination*). The teaching of literature in grade four is combined with the teaching of reading, writing and spelling, and especially the student book contains many assignments focused on training different kinds of writing skills.

Text selection criteria: The texts vary in terms of genre and period, and as a supplement, there are also many paintings from different periods. The literary content in the textbook is mostly fiction that is acknowledged in literary institutions. The only exceptions are three very short factual texts about cycling. The many historical texts are connected to a Danish canon of literature (at that time an unofficial part of curriculum, but mandatory from 2004). These canonical texts are folk tales, fairy tales by H.C. Andersen and hymns by B.S. Ingemann and N.F.S. Grundtvig. Interestingly, the paintings are by international artists, i.e. Jan Breughel, Caspar David Friedrich and Edvard Munch. A chapter of 30 pages is dedicated to Nordic perspectives and contains primarily historical texts. The relatively few newly published texts are mainly written by well-known Danish authors such as Johannes Møllehave and the Faroese writer William Heinesen. Children's literature by well-known authors is also included, for example book chapters and short stories by the Swedish Astrid Lindgren, Finnish Tove Jansson and Danish Bent Haller. In these textual choices, the Nordic dimension is consolidated, and so is the principle about the representation of texts with aesthetic qualities. The concept of literature is exclusive and the students are presented with texts considered to be historically durable. The students in grade four are presented with texts for children written by adults, but mass literature or children's own productions are not included, as they were in *Yourself and your imagination* (Jeppesen, Lisby & Voss, 1983ab) and *Work with Danish! Rhymes and chants—glue and thingies* (Moos & Hansen, 1986).

Approach: As mentioned earlier, the student assignments are found in a supplementary book (Kurth et al., 1995b), which has the same cover as the anthology (Kurth

et al., 1995a). The cover is illustrated with Franz Marc's painting *The little blue horse* from 1912. By quoting this symbolist painting, the two books indicate a unity, and the supplementary book is clearly structured according to the anthology; however, the focus on literature and art in the anthology is partly abandoned in the assignment book. Here, it is rather language skills that are prioritised, as very many tasks and questions are directed towards language awareness (knowledge about word classes, phonemes, spelling, punctuation, etc.). The literary texts are used as a point of departure for the teaching grammar and related subjects in L1. For example, Tove Jansson's *Vintersøvn i Mumidalen* [Winter sleep in the Moominvalley] is used for working with word classes and sentence length. The students are asked to register the length of sentences in a bar chart, and furthermore they are asked to categorise the sentences in groups according to their style and function in the text. Finally, they are asked to compare different versions of the text, do a spelling test and mark the root morphemes in ten words that they have selected themselves. The assignments for Jansson's text also include a discussion of the characters and reflection on the phenomenon of winter sleep, but these tasks do not change the overall impression that the training of basic skills overrides the interpretative work with the literary texts. The training tasks are mainly individual and written, and maybe the authors have expected the teachers to work with classroom dialogue based on the literary texts without further instruction. In the teacher's guide, it is emphasized in a long chapter on literature teaching that it is very important to work with the students' own reading experiences and address their interpretations of the texts in different ways. Unfortunately, the pedagogy presented in the student book only addresses the students' perspectives to a very limited extent, and there are very few connections between the detailed work on language and the interpretation of the literary artworks.

Aim: The title *Literary work and Danish. Literature for the fourth grade* (Kurth et al., 1995a) indicates a textbook where literature plays a central role and the concept of literature is relatively narrow. Literature is understood as artwork, and the teaching of literature is connected to cultural heritage. The students are exposed to literature in order to become familiar with the national tradition and be able to take part in a Nordic language community. According to the Witte & Sâmihaian's concepts, the textbook is dominated by the cultural paradigm, but the student book also includes clear and strong references to the linguistic paradigm, and the teacher's guide bears traces of the paradigm concerning personal growth.

It appears that the authors of the teacher's guide support a flexible and, to some degree, reader-oriented attitude to the teaching of literature, and they are very much in line with both Rosenblatt and Langer regarding their view on literature pedagogy. They stress the integration of different types of reading (efferent and aesthetic) and point to the inclusion of different contexts (information about authorship, genre, literary history, etc.) when relevant. These discussions and dimensions have disappeared from the student book, and it is up to the teacher to incorporate a nuanced environment building with elements from Langer's stances three to five.

4.4 *Read for Life 1*

Read for life 1 consists of a textbook anthology (Toft, 1998a) and a teacher's guide (Toft, 1998b) with suggestions and instructions. The target group of the anthology is students in grades three to five. *Read for life* was published in the same period as the previous textbook, and both materials follow the conceptions about the importance of literature in the L1 subject as emphasised in the National Curriculum from that time, *Dansk 1995* (Undervisningsministeriet, 1995). Nevertheless, the two textbooks are very different. *Read for life* is not part of an integrated system of materials, and the books are only intended for literature teaching.

Text selection criteria: The textual choices in this textbook are different from the previous textbooks, since the book is dominated by children's literature with a special focus on contemporary texts. These texts are written by Danish authors as well as acknowledged international authors such as the Norwegian Jostein Gaarder, British Tony Ross and American Nathan Zimelman. Apart from this focus on children's literature written in the readers' own lifetime, the anthology also contains classical myths and fairy tales, some images and literary texts written originally for adults.

Approach: The suggestions for tasks span from classroom discussions of interpretative aspects to creative exercises (i.e. drama) and written assignments with, for example, the possibility to create a new version of a text. The teachers are also encouraged to arrange special reading events such as late-night reading and library exhibitions. It is evident that this textbook is influenced by both reader-response theory and the ensuing discussions in Denmark in the 1990s of a literature pedagogy that could embrace the 'head, hands and heart' of the student (Keinicke, 1994). What is lacking, compared to the previous learning materials, are questions and tasks addressing the basic understanding of the texts (Langer's first stance). The more systematic work with textual understanding and the use of analytical concepts is not prioritised, although the teacher is given analytical perspectives in the teacher's guide. An important part of the literature pedagogy is left on the teacher's desk, and many of the tasks are ideas without further framing and without concrete instructions for the work. The teacher needs to be very conscious about the planning and allocate time to work with the pedagogical framing.

Aim: *Read for life* is characterised by an experimental and experience-based view on literature, and is clearly influenced by reader-response theory in line with Rosenblatt's thinking. This view is explicitly described in the textbook and the teacher's guide with tasks and instructions. According to the author, reading of literature differs a lot from teaching of reading in general. She differentiates between teaching culture (i.e. teaching literature) and teaching technique (i.e. teaching reading), and she stresses that it is only a nice side effect when reading skills are improved by the teaching of culture/literature (Toft, 1998b, p. 7). This is very different from the previous textbook, which emphasised a synergy between teaching reading and teaching literature. Furthermore, the author of *Read for life* has a specific focus on the reader's individual experience and realisation of the textual expression. In the

teacher's guide, the author refers to Umberto Eco's theory about the open work, and reader-response theory is briefly explained to the teacher. Many of the suggestions for the teacher are clearly rooted in reader-response theory, and the possibility of many different interpretations is stressed a few times.

Given that a large number of texts from different areas are presented, *Read for life 1* can be placed in the cultural paradigm (with reference to Witte & Sâmihaiian's concepts), but the paradigm concerning personal growth is also clearly represented in the textbook, since the students are reading 'for life'.

In an overall perspective, Langer's thoughts about envisionment building are supported by the textual choices and, especially, by the aims and suggestions in the teacher's guide. The most important aim is clearly to support the students in their development of different envisionments and interpretations, and the teacher's guide offers many suggestions for different activities that make room for interpretation and self-expression. Langer's second stance is supported by many questions, but it is quite characteristic that the use of analytical concepts is limited; instead, the students are encouraged to use their own words. In correspondence with Langer's third stance, the students have to draw on their own experiences and make comparisons between the texts and their own thoughts. There are no tasks where the students have to reflect on their own interpretations in a broader perspective.

4.5 *Fandango 4*

Fandango is a system for teaching Danish that consists of textbooks, different booklets and teacher's guides for both primary and lower secondary school, the Danish 'grundskole', which includes preschool to grade ten (see introduction article in this special issue, Fougt, Bremholm & Buch, 2020). The concept of *Fandango* was originally developed for grades three to six but later expanded to all grades. *Fandango* is the name of a traditional Spanish dance, but in the Danish language the word is often used as a synonym for something wild, bold and exiting. For use in the fourth grade, there is a textbook (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a), two workbooks (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008b) and a teacher's guide (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008c), and in 2015 a supplementary teacher's guide was published, describing the principles of working with learning goals (May & Arne-Hansen, 2015). The primary textbook consists of texts and tasks for literature teaching. In the workbooks, there are supplementary tasks and questions as well as a selection for the integration of literature teaching with other disciplines in L1 teaching. Similarly to the analysis of the other textbooks/learning materials, literature teaching is at the centre of this analysis, and therefore the examples are taken from the sections of the textbook where the literature is represented and framed.

Text selection criteria: Compared to the previous textbooks, especially *Literary work and Danish* (Kurth et al., 1995a) and *Read for Life 1* (Toft, 1998), the textbook *Fandango 4* has a more comprehensive representation of contemporary Danish chil-

dren's literature. The included texts could be placed in the category of children's literature with aesthetic ambitions. This kind of children's literature has very much in common with literature for adults, since it is remarkably complex in terms of both form and content. Many of the texts deal with difficult issues like death, betrayal and abuse, and the textual form is sophisticated with, for example, many intertextual references, lack of chronology, different narrators and genre experiments. In *Fandango 4*, literature is described as word art and defined as being about existential questions (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a, p. 6-7), which is in line with the chosen texts. It is worth mentioning that despite the compulsory canon from 2005, only one canonised author, H.C. Andersen (1805-75), is represented with two original texts (a poem and a fairy tale). Another canonised author, Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754), is represented with a retelling. A painting from the Renaissance is also included, but the rest of the literary texts and images are contemporary works.

Approach: The textbook has ten chapters, each containing two to six texts, and most of the chapter titles refer to concepts of text analysis. The first seven chapters are titled "Characterisation", "Environment", "Composition", "Instruments" (referring to language), "Narrators and views", "Theme" and "Intertextuality". In addition, there is a chapter on an important Danish authorship for children (Kim Fupz Aakeson), a chapter about a short film and, finally, a chapter with picture analysis and a portrait of the Danish graffiti artist *HuskMitNavn* [RememberMyName]. The structure of the textbook indicates that it is important for the students to learn and use concepts of text analysis, and many of the student tasks address the use of concepts. The explicit progression is that the students learn a repertoire of concepts from the first seven chapters of the textbook, which, in the last three chapters, they are supposed to be able to use in an integrated manner. In the beginning of chapter eight, the students are met with the following sentence:

In this book, you have learned a lot of literary concepts [...]. In this chapter, you are going to read texts by the author Kim Fupz Aakeson. At the end of the chapter, you will find a non-fiction text about him. The tasks are related to all the concepts that you have heard about while working with *Fandango* (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a, p. 182, our translation).

In that way, the textbook argues explicitly for the focus on analytical concepts. A similar statement can be found in the original teacher's guide. In the supplementary workbooks, there are other tasks that are not aimed at the use of concepts, but are connected to a more experimental and reader-oriented pedagogy. In the primary textbook (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a), the classroom conversation about textual analysis is the primary activity.

Aim: The aims of literature teaching are explicitly described in the teacher's guide. Literature is stressed as art, and the teaching of literature is regarded as a way of potentially developing the student's personality and social and cultural awareness (May & Arne-Hansen 2008d, p. 7). In that way, the teacher's guide refers to the cultural, personal and social paradigm (according to Witte & Sâmihaiian's concepts). At the same time, it is relevant to notice the very structured and schematised work with

literature. The students' literary analyses and interpretations are guided by the use of concepts, and there is limited room for individual and different interpretations. These tasks aim at developing academic skills and refer to the linguistic paradigm, but in a slightly different way than the above examples. The *Fandango* system is influenced by the way literature is taught in further education and not—as some of the previous textbooks—by a discourse of learning to read.

With reference to Langer's terminology, this textbook especially supports the students' envisionment building in the second stance, which implies analytical focus and preliminary interpretations. There are also tasks and questions relating to the third stance, but not many. For example, the students are encouraged to mention other texts or life experiences that remind them of the textual dilemmas identified in the textbook. On the whole, the authors of *Fandango 4* want to present children's literature of a high quality (often texts by well-known and awarded authors and illustrators), and children's literature is ranked on a par with literature for adults. This view on literature was also present in *Read for life 1*, but in *Fandango* the pedagogy has changed. The authors have opted for a pedagogy that is influenced by literary studies at universities. The terminology applied to the texts comes from text analysis research (especially New Criticism and Narratology). Teaching and reading literature are stressed as serious disciplines with many aims. This is an interesting contrast to the previous textbooks, where the structure was quite loose and creativity was prioritised.

5. DISCUSSION

Regarding the development in the analysed textbooks over the selected period, the study shows both constants and clear changes as to the choice of texts and the pedagogical orchestration of literature teaching. A significant constant is that the textbooks across this period introduce fourth-grade students to texts from different historical periods. The historical dimension and the ambition to introduce students to an unofficial (and, from 2005 onwards, official) canon has been present throughout the entire period, as fourth-grade students have encountered and still encounter folk tales, fairy tales and popular verse (e.g. rhymes and chants) along with older poetry, hymns and songs. However, one thing is the historical variety in the choice of texts, another thing is the diversity in concepts of literature. The selection of texts in the earliest textbooks, that is *Yourself and your imagination* (Jeppesen, Lisby & Voss, 1983a) and *Work with Danish* (Moos & Hansen, 1986), is broad but with a clear emphasis on texts that address the child as reader. Through the chosen texts, the fourth-grade student is addressed as a child interested in societal and social conditions, and as a child to whom literature serves an external purpose. Literature is seen as texts about lived life that affect the reader's own life. When we get to the materials from the 1990s, we see a more exclusive understanding of literature. Over time, the concept of text becomes more oriented towards literature that is acknowledged

(by literary critics), and often also awarded. The most recent learning materials maintain this conception of literature, but at the same time, children's literature represents a more substantial part of the content in *Fandango 4* (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a). However, the chosen children's literature in this textbook highly resembles literature for grown-ups. It is literature that treats existential and often quite serious subjects, and it is literature characterised by often quite complex narration. Nevertheless, there are also examples of humorous texts and images that contrast the seriousness. Through the chosen texts, the fourth-grade student is addressed as a child who is able to relate to the complexities of life and different living conditions, and capable of reading and understanding texts written in quite complex forms.

Looking at the literature pedagogy in the textbooks, the learning designs have generally become increasingly extensive. The most recent textbooks include more assignments to the texts, and the activities are more detailed than in the earliest materials. At the same time, the work on literature has become more conceptually informed, and literature pedagogy has turned towards the teaching of literary language, fictional structures and genre characteristics. Furthermore, the academic terminology and concepts of literature studies are used to a larger extent than in the earlier textbooks. In the latest textbook, the fourth-grade students are taught to use concepts like metafiction and intertextuality, and they are supposed to learn to distinguish between different types of narrators, e.g. to identify a meta-fictional narrator.

In the analysis of different textbooks, we have tried to apply Witte & Sâmihaiian's four paradigms concerning the social, personal, linguistic and cultural aims of reading and teaching literature in European classrooms. It is quite clear that the linguistic paradigm is dominant in the period we cover in our analysis, which is consistent with the general tendency in European literature curricula (Witte & Sâmihaiian, 2013). The paradigm of personal growth is also quite important, and almost all the materials stress literature reading as cultural (and national) heritage: the students are introduced to primarily Danish and Nordic children's literature. We have not seen any traces of the social paradigm, which is remarkable. Collaborative work, group activities and classroom discussions are included in the tasks and activities in all the materials, but literature teaching is not framed directly with social aims.

The differences between the textbook tasks and activities in this study are identified by use of Langer's model of envisionment building, which she regards as the very essence of literature reading (as mentioned in the theoretical part). While the early textbooks framed approaches and activities that correspond to the first and third stances in Langer's model (i.e. basic understanding and addressing students' life worlds), the latest textbook focuses especially on analysis and partly on interpretation, which corresponds to the second stance in the model. However, it is significant that all the textbooks, regardless of their differences, concentrate on approaches and activities that match the first three stances in Langer's model. None of them, to any noticeable extent, frame students' own positions, metacognition and reflections on how they may use their knowledge about the texts or their interpretations prospectively. In this way, the study confirms tendencies pointed out in other

studies concerning text and/or reader orientation as the basic dilemma or problem in literature education in a Nordic and European context (see ‘State of the art’ above). However, if literature offers new perspectives on existential questions and potentially has an influence on how human beings understand their own lives and the lives of others (Schrijvers et al. 2019b), it is highly relevant for students to reflect on the relevance of the text and their own reading of it—and to discuss this with others. The authors of the textbooks apparently find this level irrelevant or too difficult or abstract for fourth-grade students, and a pedagogical framing of activities equivalent to reflections and actions in the fourth and fifth stances in Langer’s model is absent.

Of course, there may be more complicated reasons for why none of the selected textbooks from the period seek to support students’ access to understandings and reflections similar to the envisionments of Langer’s fourth and fifth stances. One reason might be what Faust and Corcoran both describe as an unbalanced understanding of the interplay between text and reader(s) in literature teaching. Faust and Corcoran both argue for integrating text, reader and social and cultural contexts when framing literature teaching, and suggest a combination of phenomenological and sociocultural approaches to transgress the text versus reader and reader versus context dichotomies (Corcoran, 1994; Faust, 2000). These suggestions are based on semiotic and poststructuralist approaches to language, and do not directly correspond to the conception of text, language and reader in the dominant linguistic paradigm in Witte & Sâmihaiian’s and the present study. Faust argues that the aesthetic experience of literature is to be regarded as dynamic, temporal and situated within historical and sociocultural contexts. Pedagogical framings on such a basis may be able to consider reflections on the aesthetic experience and on cultural and historical contexts of understanding. However, reconceptualising *the intentions* of future textbooks based on phenomenology and cultural studies or recent literature theories will not, in our view, be sufficient to give students access to the understandings and practices equivalent to the fourth and fifth stances of Langer’s model. Future textbook developers must consider the framing of students’ work and learning activities, and take into account different modes of reading as well as individual and dialogical work processes. Just to mention one crucial point, students’ encounters with, and reflections on, readings by other readers (Langer’s fourth stance) are to be framed in the textbooks/learning materials, as along with reflections on the sociocultural context of different readers’ readings.

6. CONCLUSION

Our study has pointed out changes and constants in the framing of students’ encounters with literature in selected Danish textbooks/learning materials: from the playful and aesthetic framings of students’ practices in the textbooks of the 1980s and their orientation towards society, over reader orientation in the textbooks of the 1990s, to more analytic and conceptually driven literature instruction in the latest textbooks

from 2008. While the earliest textbooks integrated literature teaching in other disciplines and areas of L1, literature teaching from the 1990s onwards has become a more and more independent discipline with its own legitimacy and terminology. While the textbooks of the 1970s and early 1980s involved a risk of transforming literature teaching into camouflaged social studies or, in some cases, badly concealed language teaching, the risk in the 2000s is rather that literature teaching becomes (too) isolated from the other dimensions of L1, and that it is seen as an autonomous, intellectual exercise. Likewise, the pedagogical framing in the textbooks of the 1980s and until the end of the 1990s is still aimed at students' life worlds in a way that places play and students' expressions at the centre of literature teaching, whereas in the 2000s, we see a shift away from these creative activities. Literary reading has become professional and academic in such a way that students are to learn a scientific conceptual framework and transfer it into analytical practice. When comparing the latest textbook, *Fandango 4* (May & Arne-Hansen, 2008a), to the earliest one, *Yourself and your imagination* (Jeppesen, Lisby & Voss, 1983ab), it is remarkable that the focus has changed from reading literature with the purpose of gaining knowledge and developing students' stance towards the outside world, to reading literature (both individually and collectively) with an emphasis on developing academic skills and building a conceptual framework for literary analysis.

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