



Textbooks and Stereotypes

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Abstract. The textbook is the carrier of social contents, relations and values. In the international research it is examined as the document of the era, knowledge carrier, matter of policy, pedagogic device, medium, socialisation factor and as a product. Besides knowledge forming, developing skill and ability, it mediates social values, expectations, plays an important role in socialisation. The world presented in the textbook may develop stereotypes, may contribute to consolidation or losing of the already established stereotypes. Due to the family upbringing and parental authority, generalisations originating from lack of experience and acceptance of the majority's views without supervision, stereotypes already take shape in infancy. In schooling age, in the course of school socialisation learning of the stereotypes created by society continues, inter alia from textbooks as well. In my study I have examined the textbook as a socialisation factor with one of the research methods of textbook theory, content analysis. In my examination I would like to point out the function of the genre stereotypes within primary school Hungarian literary readers in Vojvodina. I compare the results with the results of the reader analyses made in the region.

Keywords: textbook analysis, representation of genders, stereotypes, socialisation, hidden curriculum

Three years ago Serbia's educational ministry proposed an action entitled *Free textbooks for all first-graders*. Beside the first-graders of primary schools, the second- and third-grade students are also receiving free textbooks this year. The

educational ministry defined the conditions the textbooks accepted for publishing have to comply with. At the time of selection they paid attention that the textbooks should not mediate stereotypes and inequalities, namely because the textbook is such a teaching device that, besides forming knowledge, develops skills, abilities, and accomplishes complex educational tasks. It reflects the mentality of the society of a given age, its ideology, level of development, economic relations, and technique (Karlovitz 2001). It is the carrier of social contents, relations and values. In the textbooks the different manifestations of discrimination may appear neither in open, nor in hidden forms (verbally with illustrations and examples)¹ (Ivić–Pešikan–Antić 2009: 87). Textbooks mediating discriminative and intolerant contents may not be put onto the schoolbook list because they would negatively influence the children's socialisation, the formation of their world view.

The development of textbooks is in close connection with the current social relations; the change of the latter brings about the transformation, the paradigm shift of the former. At the very beginning of textbook research, the textbook as a document of the age was analysed with a historical method from an ideological approach. After the 2nd World War evolving textbook theory took into consideration the expertise and subject pedagogy peculiarities of textbooks. A textbook is a multifunctional product, its studying can be done along these main functions. In international research it is examined as the document of the age, knowledge carrier, matter of policy, pedagogic device, medium, socialisation factor and as a product (Dárdai 2002: 13). This study contemplates a textbook as a socialisation factor, and examines it in accordance with one of the research methods of textbook theory, with content analysis. The reader analysis applied all over Europe has been carried out with this procedure.

Textbooks play a considerable role in gender socialisation, and also in the development of gender stereotypes. Due to the family upbringing, as a result of generalisations originating from the experience deficiency and the acceptance of the majority's views without supervision, stereotypes already take shape in infancy (Trebješanin 2002: 92). In schooling age, during school socialisation, learning the gender roles and gender stereotypes created by society continues, among others from textbooks. Examining the social stereotypes established in western type cultures, traceable in textbooks as well, Éva Thun concluded that the scenes of stereotype-learning are primarily the family, school, the media and contemporaries.

¹ Discrimination is the insulting naming and classification of a social group or community, underestimated and disdained manifestations, emphasising negative opinion, negative interpretation contradicting the facts, open and hidden stereotypes and prejudices, exciting intolerance and hatred towards some groups, racist, nationalist, chauvinistic, sexist, religious, ideological exclusivity, ignoring and leaving out some social groups where the context would require their reference, if the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of some group, respectively the human rights established on the basis of the agreement about the children's rights get damaged (Ivić–Pešikan–Antić 2009: 87).

School with the contents of textbooks and curricula influences the socialisation of gender stereotypes because they reflect a given society's gender values being based on stereotypes. Schools strive to offer respect and equal opportunity, equal treatment for genders, but the hidden curriculum proves to be more effective than the objectives: "The children – together with the acquisition of the pupil's role, with learning the behaviour and activity forms expected by school – simultaneously, continuously and firmly get those impulses that control and consolidate the learning of the social gender role." (Thun 1996: 407) The curriculum of the textbooks mediates hidden messages; László Tamás Szabó calls this phenomenon a hidden curriculum. The expression "hidden curriculum" (implicit curriculum) denotes the entirety of experiences, norms, values, the "curriculum" that is unplanned, it is not in the curriculum and not fixed in the substance of the subjects, yet the students acquire it in the organised, institutional teaching-learning process in an implicit manner, with passive learning (Szabó 1988). The hidden curriculum has an identity forming function, "it transmits for both genders the non-specific expectations and system of values of the society, and consequently it contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities in an indirect manner" (Kereszty 2005).

In recent decades more and more studies have appeared with the objective of examining the readers² from a sociological viewpoint (family models, the image of a man and a woman, depiction of society). In Hungary the first analysis with such a sociological viewpoint was made at the end of the seventies, and it appeared in the volume entitled *World with a Textbook Smell* in 1980. The authors of the volume, Judit Háber and Judit H. Sas defined the textbook as a model that conveys values, behavioural rules, and has – together with the educator mediating the curriculum – an outstanding control, informational, emotional and sanctioning power. By examining the primary school readers that appeared in Hungary in 1972 and 1973, the authors were looking for the answer to the question: what kind of values and knowledge does school mediate, namely what kind of world does it build from the knowledge and values obtainable from the readers. The selection of the object of the analysis was justified with the fact that the reader "explicitly assumes the mediation of school, family, historical past, social structure, free time, work, education, with the separate chapters of the normative behaviour of what is proper or not, with the "world view" models for 6–10-year-old children through the characters and roles (Háber – H. Sas 1980: 12). The authors state that men dominate in the world of work, they have an occupation, profession, the women do the housework, and supply for the family, most of them fulfil exclusively the function of a mother or a grandmother. If they work, they do such work that

² In this article, the term "reader" is used to refer to a textbook that teaches young children to read. (Editor's note)

women used to do a long time ago. As opposed to boys, girls receive a much smaller role in textbooks: “The adult society concentrates on boys, suggesting by this their more important role as the girls’. A lot more thing happens to them, a lot more people deal with them, by virtue of their numerical proportion they acquire a distinctive importance by making the girls’ participation, the opportunity of their participation in the world’s important matters more insignificant.” (H. Sas 1980: 77). In 1996 in the thematic issue of the journal *Educatio* Czachesz–Lesznyák–Molnár’s study appeared presenting the different interpretational strategies of the two genders and their textbook representation. The authors took as a starting point the fact that the experiences gathering in the course of human life and their processing is not independent of gender. The primary aims of school equipments and textbooks are to form the subject specific skill, as part of the hidden curriculum mediating the society’s values and world view, respectively forming a real picture – to a certain extent – of the existing society. The textbook may strengthen the already formed stereotypes in the child, or it may reduce them. Their research shows that there are little references in the textbooks and the obligatory readings onto the girls’ experiences; the canon offers few female authors’ creation to the students. In her study entitled *Family Picture in the Pupils’ Textbooks* Klára Dálnokiné Pécsi examined the texts and illustrations of twenty-four readers published in the nineties in terms of the family picture. She concludes that depicting the family members’ features and the construction of the family is stereotypical: “The father, the breadwinner rarely appears; he is the working man, the child looks up to him. The mother is present in everyday life; she does the housework, in the evening she tells tales. The real emotional bond is linked to her. The father is rather distant, ideal-like. However, the notions as divorced, widow, orphan do not appear. There are no stepbrothers at all. An adopted child appears in only one tale. It is also observable that the parents hardly talk to each other; they appear only through their child. The grandparents almost always live in a village and are very old, their depiction is remarkably stereotyped. The grandmother wears unfashionable dresses, headscarf, and knot, she does the housework, or plays with her granddaughter. The moustached grandfather with stick in his hand, in slippers, cares about his grandson, or fusses about the garden, picks fruit. The active grandparents who have a good mental-external state of mind are totally missing.” (Dálnokiné 2001: 103) Ligeti Csákné did the analysis on four different publisher’s first class readers in 2001, among others in terms of educational opportunities. According to her study the “traditional” roles of the parents appear on the drawings and the sentence readings as well. (“Mother is cooking.” “Mother is shopping.” “What is mother buying?”) (Ligeti Csákné 2001) Orsolya Kereszty’s textbook analysis performed in 2005 pointed out that the primary school grammar books depict the gender roles in a “traditional” and stereotypical manner (Kereszty 2005).

The textbook representation of the genders has been examined in Serbia as well. In 2002 in her research Isidora Jarić drew the conclusion that the Serbian textbooks present such stereotypical patriarchal socialisation samples in which there is no opportunity for openness, for the formation of new forms and contents of gender roles, respectively for their decentralisation. The Serbian textbook authors attach to little girls such traditional activities that are associated with responsibility, compliance or mercy. As opposed to this, the boys are characterised by courage, intellectual curiosity and adventurous spirit. Almost all social roles of the female characters can be deduced onto the pattern of the two mythical figures of the Serbian folk poetry *Jugovitys' mother* [*Majka Jugovića*] and *The girl from Kosovo* [*Kosovka Devojka*], with which the modalities of the female roles fatigue in the traditional Serbian culture. The textbook authors spotlight patriarchal stereotypes formerly surpassed and discriminate those achievements of modernisation that women achieved for themselves (Jarić 2002). The latest reader analysis done by the Serbian Helsinki-Committee did not show any change either. The seventh- and eighth grade readers in Serbian language do not support the emancipation of genders, the acceptance of otherness is not encouraged, henceforward man authors and heroes and the traditional family model dominate, the family construction with a new form (e.g., single mother or father bringing up their child) is not even mentioned. The analysed textbooks and the “messages” mediated by them do not comply with the law, which defines the aims of education (Section 3) and with the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (Section 15 guaranteeing for the emancipation of genders, and Section 49 the prohibition of expression and inciting racial, ethnic, religious and other inequalities) (Grahek 2009).

The Croatian organisation named *Ženska mreža* (*Women's network*) initiated a campaign in 2003 with the aim to banish all kinds of discrimination from the curricula and the textbooks, particularly concerning female stereotypes, the woman's social and family role. After carrying out the analysis, the organisation objected that there are no invalid persons in the textbooks with a bad tooth, clean-hocked, jug-eared, bespectacled children; the family model of the textbook is mother-father-two children, which does not correspond to the facts. There are no differences in the textbooks, not talking about morals of difference's normal, nice, desirable and fertile being. The textbook authors depict a false picture about the family and racial idyll in Croatia. The distinctness which cannot be evaded – like the ones between man and woman – are put into the context of the 19th century. The numerical appearance of women and men, and their roles occurring in the textbook show that women are overwhelmingly men's attendants, mothers, wives, co-regents. They are mostly passive, their physical beauty dominates in the descriptions, their depiction is suitable for the expectation what little girls learning from the textbook have to become: devoted, working for others, forgiving, kind and expecting nothing in return for all these. Women do plain manual labours, or

are inactive, decorate the pages of the textbooks. As opposed to this, men are active, possess authority, scholars hold books and tools in their hands (Marković 2003). The results of the latest researches indicate that some improvements happened in the Croatian textbook representation of genders, but not enough (Janušić 2008: 61-80).

(Examination of 5–8. class Hungarian readers in Vojvodina) I applied the aspects of textbook analysis by Czachesz–Lesznyák–Molnár in the course of the reader analysis grouped by the topics: presence/invisibility, work and profession, family and household, work and activities apart from work, man and woman image of textbooks, personality.

The examined textbooks are the currently employed readers in the upper class of primary school, which have been drawn up and written by female authors, except the reader for the 5th class. The examined coursebooks are: Béla Csorba: *Olvasókönyv az általános iskolák 5. osztálya számára* [Reader for the 5th class of primary school]. Belgrád, Tankönyvkiadó Intézet, 2007; Edit Pintér Molnár–Erzsébet Kojić Csákány: *Olvasókönyv az általános iskolák 6. osztálya számára* [Reader for the 6th class of primary school]. Belgrád, Tankönyvkiadó Intézet, 2008; Erika Bence: *Olvasókönyv az általános iskola 7. osztálya számára*. [Reader for the 7th class of primary school]. Belgrád, Tankönyvkiadó Intézet, 2009; Éva Toldi: *Olvasókönyv az általános iskolák 8. osztálya számára*. [Reader for the 8th class of primary school]. Belgrád, Tankönyvkiadó Intézet, 2010.

AUTHORS The authors of the readers' extracts are mainly men. In the fifth-form reader from among the 23 authors only one woman occurs, Ágnes Nemes Nagy. The works of 21 male authors are legible in the sixth-form reader. In the seventh-form textbook 30 male (93,75%) and two female authors, Margit Kaffka and Éva Janikovszky (6,25 %), in the extract substance of the reader of the eighth grade 40 men (88,88%) and 5 women (Krisztina Tóth, Eszter Tóth, Vida Ognjenović, Ágnes Nemes Nagy, Anne Frank) is the authors' proportion (11,12%). In the four textbooks this proportion expressed in percentage is 75% (male authors) and 25% (female authors), namely from the text substance of the readers the children may draw the conclusions that literature belongs to men's scope of activity.

PRESENCE AND INVISIBILITY. In the reader texts the male characters dominate. The difference is most visible in the case of the sixth-form reader: from among the 115 characters ten are women, and in the character structure of the stories these are mostly minor characters. The major part of the readings were written from men's point of view and about men, the upper school students interpret altogether eight texts that have a woman/girl as a main character. We can only find three texts in the 6th class reader, in which girls also act: Pál Böndör's

poem entitled *Regina és a szentelen fiúk* [*Regina and the Cheeky Boys*] displays the school life from girls' viewpoint, Gyula Gobby Fehér's short story entitled *Az ujjak mozgása* [*Motion of the Fingers*] is the story of a girl learning to play the piano, and a mother's who wants to accomplish her juvenile dreams through her daughter, from among the three child actors of Iván Mándy's short story entitled *Kék szőfa* [*Blue sofa*] one is a girl.

The proportion of male and female characters	5th class reader	6th class reader	7th class reader	8th class reader
Men	60.60 %	91.30 %	71.42%	76.70%
Women	39.40 %	8.70 %	28.58%	23.30%

In the illustration base of the readers women are depicted in the midst of some kind of leisure activity – walking, reading, relaxation, etc. – or mostly while doing some kind of housework. We may notice the stereotypical approach in the case of the pictorial elements as well: to the illustration of Kálmán Mikszáth's writing entitled *A pletyka* [*The Gossip*], the image editor employed Berthe Morisot's painting *Nővérek a kanapén* [*Sisters on the Couch*]. 66.63% of the textbook illustrations depict men.

Number of men and women on illustrations	5th class reader	6th class reader	7th class reader	8th class reader
Men	82.45 %	52.77 %	58.33%	72.97%
Women	17.55 %	47.23 %	41.17%	27.03%

OCCUPATION. In terms of our examination, the text selection of the readers in the latest edition hardly differs from the previous ones. The women's role, their occupations are: wife, mother, grandmother, housewife, lover, schoolgirl, (old or nasty) witch, piano teacher, pianist, needlewoman, market-woman, tsarina, nanny, cook, housewife, princess, fairy, woman of pleasure, servant, day labourer. There are altogether five women in employment, Éva, the cook and Julis, the servant, both of them are the minor characters of Géza Csáth's short story entitled *Szombat este* [*Saturday Evening*]; a woman figure works as a secretary, another as a teacher and yet another as a pharmacist.

The men's roles, their occupations: father, husband, pope, king, emperor, grand župan (grand prince), landlord, prince, county earl, doorman, embassy secretary, alderman, official, soldier, gladiator, architect, engineer, student, fisherman, schoolmaster, teacher, headmaster, woodcutter, farmer, servant, day labourer, judge, musician, turner, school-porter, vet, author, poet, magician, bodyguard, spaceman, doctor, ambulanceman, butcher, pharmacist, clerk, footballer, shepherd, coachman, rogue, pandour, bard, Lord Mayor, knight, hoer,

cave guide, track watchman, town crier, innkeeper, postman, remover. Men, as opposed to women, have an occupation, a profession, a workplace at their disposal; however these occupations are strange to the world of today's students.

FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD. The division of labour in the readers takes place according to genders. The woman mostly plays the two traditional female roles, mother (stepmother) and wife; her task is to accomplish the works around the home and the family. The father hardly takes part in the children's upbringing, he does not take his share of the housework, all this belongs to the woman's range of duties, on the other hand there are examples when the parents do not have time to deal with their child: the parents accomplish all of the wishes of the child from Pest, but they do not have plenty of time to raise him (Lajos Nagy: *Pesti gyermek egy napja* [*A Single Day of a Child from Pest*]). In the short story by Sándor Kányádi entitled *Kenyérmadár* [*Bread Bird*] the father takes his seven-year-old son out into the forest to help him chop wood. The boy gets lost, towards evening the father goes home ("He is already a big boy, the wolves will not eat him!"), the child spends the night alone in the forest, but his mother goes in search of him, and does not come home until she finds him. In the texts of the readers the women make the beds, cook dinner (*Tündérszép Ilona* and *Árgyélus*), weave, clean up (*Holle Granny*), lay the table for their husband returning home from the work and for the guests arriving at dinnertime, drain, are on heat (János Arany's *Családi kör* [*Family Circle*]), plant cucumber (Miklós Mészöly's *Tréfás mese* [*Witty Tale*]), bake bread, pack the food into a haversack for their husband, their son (Sándor Kányádi's *Kenyérmadár* [*Bread Bird*]), have a coffee, talk (Iván Mándy's *A kavics* [*The Pebble*]), prepare dinner, set the table, do the washing-up, dry (György Spiró's *Esti műsor* [*Evening Program*]). In the fairy play entitled *A földesúr és az ördög* [*The Landlord and the Devil*] two female minor characters appear: Mother I and Mother II. Both of them are peasants' wives, one of them is nursing a crying baby in her arm. The narrator also mentions the landlord's wife, who similarly pursues a female "occupation", she does the shopping: she buys everything in the city that is beautiful and expensive. Dezső Kosztolányi's short story entitled *Házi dolgozat* [*Written Homework*] is the problematisation of the father-son relation through the test writing. István Németh's narration entitled *Színötös* [*Excellent*] is also built on the father-son relation: the boy feels that his father is an insensitive man without affection, but one night it becomes obvious that in spite of the fact that he cannot reveal it, he loves his son very much. The daughter-mother and daughter-father relation is only presented by a few texts, the rest of them – in which the main character is a boy – spotlight the relationship between the boys and their parents.

The family models have the following construction: father, mother and one, three or four children. In the textbooks there can be found family types different

from the traditional ones: in the Grimm tale entitled *Holle anyó* [*Holle Granny*] the mother raises her daughter and her stepdaughter alone, according to the stereotypes she certainly does not like this latter one. In Miklós Mészöly's tale entitled *Gyigymóka* the father raises his son but he does not have time and inclination to treat his child, he drinks, works all day, and the child finally abandons him. Widows occur three times in the texts (one of them raises her son alone), divorced or persons living in cohabitation do not appear in the readers. Homosexuality is a taboo topic.

ACTIVITIES APART FROM WORK AND LEARNING. Besides the social roles and works attached to women and men the literary and folklore products also reflect the expectations towards them. Men fulfil social functions related to the external world; women's social functions are restricted to the family and domestic tasks. Men and boys live an active life, work, travel, hunt; women's living space is the family home. Boys go to school, play, read, cheer, compete, wander about, play cards, play football, fight, go fishing, while girls' life is passive, help with the housework, wait for their lover to return from the battlefield. As opposed to this boys go to school – the site of eight narrations is boys' school –, invent all kinds of pranks, their father takes them to his workplace, they overcome in various adventures. Reading, as women's leisure activity appears in two texts – in the Csáth short story entitled *Olajág* [*Olive Branch*], in Géza Gárdonyi's short story entitled *Apám* [*My Father*] the father is reading, and tells his wife every morning what he read in the previous night. The wife is curious about the sequel, and reads through the novel: "Consequently lunch got burned and my father was annoyed at the fact that my mother told him in advance what the protagonist's end was. He did not borrow Hungarian books any more only German ones. My mother was not skilled at this"³. In the sixth-form reader both men and women read, we do not receive any information about women's other leisure activities: in *Aranysárkány* [*The Gold Dragon*] the boys fly a send up kite, Gyigymóka breeds a goldfinch, patches a casket, the protagonist, Andreas Sam in Danilo Kiš's writing entitled *A fiú és a kutya* [*The Boy and the Dog*] spends his spare time with his dog, Dingo, J. Burai and his friend tease the postman and go fishing (Nándor Gion's *A postás, aki egy ujjal tudott füttyülni* [*The postman who could whistle with a finger*], *Virágos Katona* [*Flowery Soldier*], *Pál utcai fiúk* [*The Paul Street Boys*] play on the sandlot, the favourite pastime of Géza Színes, Ági Drugics and Csutak is the theatre, they direct plays as well (Iván Mándy's *Kék sofa* [*Blue sofa*]). In the narrations by Pál Békés entitled *Vattacukor* [*Spun Candy*] and that by Vida Ognjenović entitled *Gyermekláncfű* [*Dandelion*] the boys and the girls play

³ The author's translation (editor's note).

together (their ringleader is a boy), they go to the cinema, to the dance-school, to the funfair together.

THE PICTURE OF MEN AND WOMEN. It emerges from some readings that the woman's fate is defined by the man, for example in the Székely folk ballad *Kőműves Kelemenné* belonging to the type where wives are built into the walls, Kelemenné (Mrs Kelemen) falls prey to the greed of her husband and to the ancient belief requiring human sacrifice, she does not have the right of refusal, she may not decide about her own life, she is helpless with regard to the assault of her husband⁴. In the origin-legend entitled *Csodaszarvas* [*The Wonder Deer*], Hunor and Magor capture and drag along the wives of Belár king's sons into the marshes of Meotis together with all of their properties. They obtain their wives alike: they also capture the two daughters of Dula, the prince of the aláns, Hunor marries one of them, and Magor marries the other one. The *Képes Krónika* [*Illustrated Chronicle*] does not mention what the girls say to all of this. On the other hand, in the tale novel by Ervin Lázár, *Szegény Dzsoni és Árnika* [*Poor Dzsoni and Árnika*] we find the contrary of this: King Östör does not allow the guest knights in his court who come to propose his daughter to fight each other, he does not want to decide who his daughter should marry, so he entrusts this decision to Árnika. In the Serbian heroic song entitled *Szent Száva* [*Saint Sava*] one of the most beautiful literary examples of filial affection and appreciation for the mother can be found: in the heroic song presenting István Nemanja Serbian grand župan's (grand prince) faith and the results attained in the field of religious education, Saint Száva mentions that Nemanja built the Studenica monastery in memory of his mother, tsarina Jelena. The 6th class reader begins with the six-line poem by Ferenc Fehér entitled *Padtárs* [*Desk Mate*]. The gender of the lyrical I does not emerge from the poem, however, from among the questions that help in its discussion. The first one asks specifically why the little boy misses the girl, albeit in everyday life two girls may sit next to each other at their desk, namely the lyrical I is not identical with the poet.

We can mention as a positive example that the author of the 8th class textbook quotes Anne Frank's note made on 4 April 1944, in which the girl writes about her literary ambitions: "Apart from my husband and my children, I will need something through which I can realise myself." The explanatory text helping in the interpretation of János Arany's ballad entitled *Tengeri-hántás* [*Corn Peeling*] does not condemn the blotting girl, in connection with the tragedy caused by the communicational disturbance that sets between the girl and the man; the author

⁴ According to Imre Katona the ballad *Kelemen Kőműves* (Mrs Kelemen Kőműves) a gradual feminisation of the genre of the ballad is observable. During the course of time the wife gradually gets into the centre instead of the husband. On the basis of his survey there are more killers among the male characters in the ballads, the female ones are mostly victims. Women's misdemeanours are more strictly punished (Katona 1999: 97).

asks about the correctness of Ferkó Tuba and Eszter Dalos's action, the man's responsibility, about the attitude of the community, about the rigour of its judgement. In connection with the text entitled *Sári bíróné* (*A halálra táncoltatott leány*) [*Mrs. Sári Judge (The Girl Died with Dance)*] the author emphasises that the folk ballads (see above the reference to the woman who was built into the wall, the girl gets seduced or dies with dance) usually depict women in an exposed situation: they are portrayed as sinners. The reason of their sin is to be sought in the man or parent desiring to possess them; still it is frequent that they have to suffer with death. The cheerful counterpart of the ballad with tragic outcome is also represented: the main character of the comic ballad entitled *Kihajtottam ludaimat* (*A gunaras lány*) [*I have turned out my geese (The girl with ganders)*] is a different type of woman. She does not pass over in silence being aggressive against her mood, but turns the experienced insults to her benefit, nevertheless the textbook author makes the students realise that despite this, the girl with ganders is also a victim. In connection with Kálmán Mikszáth's writing entitled *A pletyka* [*The Gossip*] ("But what would many women and old ladies do, if beside the coffee it would be allowed to sop only the buttery croissant into it, they would have to hush up their fellowmen, and it would not be allowed to sop them likewise into a little gossip-sauce.")⁵ the textbook generates a debate on whether the gossip is an activity which can be subjected only to women, or men gossip as well, and points out the hiding stereotype in the text.

In the analysed textbooks we can find examples to otherness as well. Among the characters of the readings there occurs a fat, inflated child, whose mind is like the tripe (Ferenc Karinthy's *Arányi*), a skinny boy (Csutak in Mátyás Iván's short story), a boy complying with everybody (Nemecsek from Ferenc Molnár's novel entitled *A Pál utcai fiúk* [*The Paul Street Boys*]), drunken (the postman in the Gion short story and Gyigymóka's father), foolish (Gyigymóka), little red one (one of the characters of Fränkel *Ákombák tanár úr* [*Teacher Ákombák*]), on the illustration belonging to the Mátyás text, on Mounia Dadi's painting entitled *A kék szőfa* [*The blue sofa*] a bespectacled little girl stretches on the bed. Only one invalid person occurs in the text, the lame fighter in *Családi kör* [*The Family Circle*].

The task of teaching literature is a certain kind of transfer of cultural knowledge – dealing with the culture, social history and history of an age, etc. The readers with the *Olvass még!* [*Read more!*] and *Tudod-e?* [*Do you know?*] labelling convey educational and literary texts, illustrate the lives of outstanding men (Saint Sava, Saint László, János Hunyadi, the English king Edward), folk-tale and folksong collectors (the Grimm Brothers, Elek Benedek, János Kriza, János Erdélyi, Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály), explorers (Henry R. Heyl, the Lumière Brothers, Thomas Edison), painters (Vincent van Gogh, Rembrandt van Rijn),

⁵ The author's translation.

composers, authors, poets. These texts establish a correlation with other subjects, and are meant to expand the students' historical, cultural history knowledge; however women have been completely left out of this part of the textbook's didactic apparatus.

With the content of the curriculum, its construction and base of illustration, the textbook affects the personality of the student: it cultivates for work, regularity, ethical rules, norms, positive view of life, induces emotional and volitional effects, and develops creativity (Karlovitc 2001: 82). The textbook has a considerable function in the school socialisation of genders, in the development of the gender stereotypes, because as part of the hidden curriculum it mediates social values and expectations. The task of the elements of the hidden curriculum "is also to provide a real picture of the world and of the existing society. The world presented in the textbooks may contribute to the fact that the stereotypes formed in the child are allowed to strengthen, to extinguish, or perhaps to take new shape" (Kereszty 2005). Research on the representation of social genders, on the family models, the image of men and women, respectively the depiction of society in school textbooks show that the textbook models and samples do not reflect real life but the scale of values of a given society based on gender stereotypes.

The examination of primary school readers from a sociological viewpoint has revealed that the texts depict a false picture about reality, stereotypical patriarchal socialisation samples are presented. As a result of this, the notions concerning the genders' social and family role are confirmed in a hidden way (how should a man and a woman be in a given society, how do they have to feel, behave, appear). On the other hand, if there is something else in the textbook, then in reality it may cause a considerable educational conflict. The student may question the authenticity of every other information, if in everyday life he experiences something else than what his textbook contains (Ábrahám 2001: 373–374). Despite the fact that the work of the textbook writer is influenced by more than a hundred factors, ranging from social, political, ideological, educational policy, sociological, scientific, educational, pedagogical, psychological, typographical, subjective, etc. (Karlovitc 2001: 58–74) – and here we may not disregard the fact that the textbook implies the curriculum defined by the curriculum makers in school-work –, and that the sociological requirements, viewpoints constitute only one factor group from among the dozens, it is necessary to take into consideration that the world constructed by the curriculum makers/textbook authors strongly affects the children's emotional state of mind. Because of this it is justified to look into what kind of view our textbooks represent, and how they form the students' mentality and view of life.

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