

Analysis of Texts in the Field of Education: A Regulation on Textbook Approval and a History Textbook

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Abstract

The educational discourse is one of the primary places where numerous dominant ideological premises are established. These discursive constructions are usually not expressed explicitly but are tacit or covered. In other words, ideological premises are not conveyed via ideational (dictionary) meaning of utterances. The analysis therefore has to tackle not the grammatical or logical layer of the text but has to look into the pragmatic aspect of discourse or text in the social communication. In this way, Grice developed his idea of cooperative principle in the analysis of pragmatic rules (maxims) that speakers use in head-to-head interactions to make themselves understood. The violation of those rules usually means that the speaker is making a “conversational” implicature, that is, an implication that cannot be inferred from his spoken contribution but assumes some common knowledge or presupposition. Conversational implicatures are therefore the places where ideological presuppositions can be detected. Grice’s maxims are used in the analysis of two distinct types of texts in the field of education—a regulation on textbook approval and a history textbook. In both texts, Grice’s principles are used to uncover ideological premises.

Keywords

social sciences, education, educational research, history and sociology of education, history, humanities, textbook analysis

Introduction

Textbooks are core learning materials or documents within the field of education both in printed but also more and more in electronic form. They are aimed at two crucial groups, namely those to be educated (pupils and students) and also the educators (teachers and professors). Therefore, they are of immanent research interest as one of the instruments that teachers use when trying to achieve curricular objectives, but they are also often teaching devices on their own as in the last instance the use of textbooks could theoretically replace instruction itself. With regard to this powerful role, it is not unusual that textbooks are a matter of regulation within numerous educational policies—they are more or less tightly controlled texts. Both the ways in which textbooks are regulated and the regulated texts themselves are places where various ideologies are invested. As put by Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) in *The Politics of the Textbook*, “. . . texts are not simply ‘delivery systems’ of ‘facts.’ They are at once the results of political, economic, and cultural activities, battles and compromises” (p. 1).

In this article, we will explore the analytical possibilities of Grice’s general cooperative principle and the maxims connected with it, mainly the maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation/relevance, and the maxim of manner for the analysis of ideologies that are a part of different texts

within the field of education. This theoretical frame will be used for the textual analysis of samples from two specific types of documents: a legal text of a regulation and excerpts from a textbook. The first set of examples stem from a Slovenian regulation on textbook approval, the second set from a history textbook. In both cases, Grice’s ideas will be used to identify implicatures within texts that act as indices of underlying ideological premises.

Our aim is to present an analysis based on Grice’s ideas in a manner that should allow for the application of those and similar principles in the everyday teacher’s task of evaluating the numerous educational texts, but especially in the process of choosing the textbooks the pupils have to buy and use for instruction.

Grice’s General Cooperative Principle

Grice (1989/1991) defined the cooperative/general principle in the following way: “Make your conversational

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contribution such as is required, at the stage at which occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (p. 26). In other words, he offered a general principle that participants in conversation should follow. Therefore, he introduced the term *implicature*. Conversational implicature helps us so that our clauses succeed more than if they were actually “told,” because our verbal exchanges are, at least to some degree, a cooperative effort—“every participant in their recognizing of a common purpose, mutually received direction etc.” (Kante, 1998, p. 24). Consideration maxims (and sub-maxims), represented in the execution, contribute to results with regard to general cooperative principle.¹

Conversational Implicature

The notion of conversational implicature (shortly implicature) “is one of the single most important ideas in pragmatics”: (a) stands as a paradigmatic example of the nature and power of pragmatic explanations of the linguistic phenomena (offers some notable functional explanation of linguistic facts), (b) provides some explicit account of how it is possible to mean more than what was actually said, (c) effects substantial simplification in both the structure and the content of semantic description (Levinson, 2007, pp. 97-98).

It is necessary to differentiate between explicit messages or explicatures (as in statements actually said) and implicatures (author’s implicit messages), “which are inferentially reconstructed from readers,” that is, indirectly accessible over operational inferences. Grice depicts the notion of explicatures in terms of a speaker who “said that, . . .,” and implicatures in terms of a speaker who “gave me to know” (Justin, 2001, as cited in Čepič & Vogrinčič, 2003, p. 320).

Grice’s example:

A and B are talking about mutual friend C, who is now working in a bank. A asks B how C is getting on in his job, and B replies:

“Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues and he hasn’t been to prison yet.”

Upon hearing that, we could ask what does B want to hint at, suggest or even what did he mean when he said that C had not yet been to prison. The answer might be different but “*it is clear whatever B implied, suggested, meant/ . . . /it is distinct from what B said.*” (Grice, 1989/1991, p. 24)

The basic notion of Grice’s conceptual “apparatus” therefore is implicature, which has one of two forms: conventional or conversational. Conventional implicatures, with simple inferential operations, are attached to the conventional meaning of words, and they are based on a multitude of rules and principles (cooperative principle and maxims; Čepič & Vogrinčič, 2003). In the presence of single conversational

implicature, the listener will respond with regard to the following data: conventional meaning of the words used, cooperative principle and its maxims context (linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance), background knowledge, and the fact that all of the relevant items under the previous headings are available to both participants (Grice, 1989/1991).

Maxims

“/M/axims specify what participants have to do in order to converse in a maximally efficient, rational, cooperative way” (Levinson, 1983/2007, p. 103). Grice identifies basic maxims of conversation and, in echoing Kant, calls these categories quantity, quality, relation, and manner.² In addition, all of these categories have their analogies in a field that is not talk exchange.

The maxim of quantity. This relates to the quantity of information to be provided, with two sub-maxims:

- Make your contributions as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange);
- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

The maxim of quality. Under this category falls the supra-maxim:

- Try to make your contribution based on that is true.

and two sub-maxims:

- Do not say what you believe to be false;
- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The maxim of relation. Under this category, he placed a single maxim:

- Be relevant.

The maxim of manner. For Grice, the category of manner is not related to what is said but rather (differently from other categories) *how* what is said is to be said. Under that category, he includes the sub-maxim:

- Be perspicuous.

and various maxims:

- Avoid obscurity of expression;
- Avoid ambiguity;
- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity);
- Be orderly.

Participants in a verbal exchange may fail to implement a maxim because of various reasons: the violation of maxims, opt out, clash, or flout of maxim (Grice, 1989/1991).

In short, obeying the cooperative principle and the Gricean maxims is necessary to ensure that the human interaction by means of linguistic exchange is based on the explicit meanings of the utterances within the particular exchange. But the cooperative principle is not to be read as a human ideal—it is a set of presuppositions on the properties of utterances used to convey explicatures. Much of human interaction involves breaches of Gricean maxims as it involves implicit meanings, be it intentional or unintentional. In the next section, we will try to demonstrate how Grice's maxims and implicatures, which are accessible over inferential operations in the analysis of texts, can be used to get to those implicit meanings. But let's first address the question, why is the textbook still so important in schools?

Textbooks in Schools

Textbooks among other didactical materials are an important element of the school system. In many cases, they provide the supporting point for arranging teacher's schoolwork and are, however, part of the pupil's everyday life (Barle & Bezenšek, 2006). The curriculum, its "factual" dimension, the methods of content adaptation are in fact finalized and fortified with textbooks. In the process of acquiring new knowledge, "textbooks/. . . /are usually the first and the most important textual material" for pupils (Barle & Bezenšek, 2006, p. 109). Still they are by far not the only means of support for teachers; neither is their use mandatory nor even uniform as a decision-making tool that helps deciding when and how the teachers will use one or another learning device that remains within the domain of their autonomy (Justin, 2003). Normally, the choice of a particular textbook for a particular subject is also within a teacher's autonomy as teachers today³ have the opportunity to choose from a number of different textbooks on the market.

Although textbook publishing in developed countries is mostly in the domain of market-driven publishing business, this segment of book production and distribution still differs from other segments of the (book) publishing industry. The textbooks for primary and secondary education—the majority of school-age population today go through these segments of educational systems—are in many (but not all) countries submitted to various degrees of public regulation. Slovenia has a system of textbook licensing, whereby a textbook manuscript (in fact, it is a set of workbooks complete with illustrations and layout) is approved for use in primary and secondary schools. This does not mean that other textbooks cannot be used in the classroom but teachers are not allowed to demand the purchase or lease of unapproved textbooks from the pupils. However, there is no requirement for teachers to use textbooks in the first place. The licensing system is accompanied with the system of book funds in schools

through which pupils lease the textbooks required for a year, returning them to the fund for further use. School book funds are not allowed to buy books that are not officially approved.

The school book regulation is as said not a Slovenian specialty. We will just take a look at a few examples of large markets. The textbooks go, for example, through the approval process in neighboring Austria but also in Germany where every federal state has its own regulation. Mostly, the textbooks are approved by the relevant ministry. In these cases, the approval procedure is aimed at the quality of textbooks, but the selection process is left to the teachers. But the approval (or adoption) processes can also be found in the United States, where as many as 19 federal states have the system of providing free textbooks in public schools. Here, the adoption process is actually the process of selecting the textbook to be prescribed for the pupils. This selection process can be accompanied by fierce ideological debate; for example, the Texas Textbook debate that revolved around the issue of creationism and the interpretation of history had the most media coverage.⁴

Returning to Slovenian example, such a system creates limitations to a teacher's autonomy in textbook selection and, more importantly, shapes the editorial and business policies of textbook publishers. The system of school funds requires that only a single title of a textbook for a subject per school should be purchased for a certain period. The duration of this period was not explicitly set by the regulation, but the same regulation includes the provision under which the lease of the textbook should not exceed one third of the purchase price. As school funds are for the greater part self-financed (partially they are subsidized by the Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport), this provision effectively means that the teacher has the option to choose another textbook only after a minimum period of 3 years. The one textbook per subject also means that teachers who teach the same subject have to negotiate which textbook to choose, thereby further limiting their individual autonomy in shaping the learning process. The 3-year rotation period (or longer) also seriously influences the market conditions for publishers. As a vast majority of pupils lease rather than buy textbooks, that *de facto* means that the textbook market size is only about one third of the target group and that holds only for the compulsory subjects. Regarding the small size of the Slovenian primary and secondary school textbook market, the economics of textbook production is tight. Still at least in the segment of textbooks for compulsory curriculum in primary schools, several textbooks from different publishers are available for every one of the subjects.⁵

As excerpts of the rules on approving textbooks will be a matter of closer text analysis later, the procedure and its requirements will be only outlined here. In short, publishers have to submit a finished textbook, set in total with proofread text and illustrations to a commission named by the Ministry of Education and Sport.⁶ The commission sends them for reviews (by outside experts) concerning linguistic adequacy

and scientific accuracy and compliance of the textbook with the curriculum for the relevant subjects, assessing its methodical and didactical approach, the quality of layout and illustrations, and suitability of the textbooks for the developmental stage of pupils. This part of the assessment process is carried out by state-run institutes working in the field of education. Formally, according to the regulation, the assessment process ends either with approval or rejection of the proposed textbook; in other words, there is no formal way to amend the textbook according to the comments by the reviewers within the approval process itself. In practice, however, suggestions for improvements are submitted to the publisher to be implemented within the same approval procedure.⁷

The legal framework of textbook publishing provides some boundaries and directions to the process of creating textbook content. Within these limitations, the distinction between textbooks and other textual media concerns the specifics of the transformation of scientific content, which is, in a textbook, suitably structured, remodeled, and simplified. The transformation is understandable under the presupposition that pupils (for whom the textbooks are designed) are not able to learn the scientific content in a no-remake form, as this would be first an unaccomplishable cognitive process and second they do not have enough previous knowledge necessary to read those kinds of texts. A textbook therefore serves as an agent (Kovač, Šebart, Krek, Štefanc, & Vidmat, 2005).

Kuhn, who had already thought about the popularization of science, was convinced that scientists, as laymen, draw a large part of their own conceptions about creative scientific activity from authoritarian sources (which systematically conceal existence and a sense of scientific revolutions). From the authority point of view, he thought about three categories of publications: scientific textbooks, popularization, and philosophical works. All of them have one common link which the scientific society presently acknowledges—the starting point of their writing are problems, data, and theories laid out most frequently within the particular complexity of the paradigm (Kuhn, 1962/1998). The aim is the transmission of vocabulary and syntax of contemporary scientific language. It is important “that scientific concepts are made accessible to the students in a number of different ways,” both in teaching and in textbooks (Ahtineva, 2005, p. 26).

The process of vulgarization of the scientific discourse into the more generally comprehensible and didactically useful textbook discourse is a necessarily ideological one. For our purpose, we will define ideology as

the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group. This means that ideologies allow people as group members to organise the multitude of social beliefs about what is good or bad, right or wrong, for them, and to act accordingly. (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 8)

In the context of science vulgarization, those actions include the choice of knowledge permitted into the curricula,

the methods of vulgarization, the question of appropriateness of knowledge for certain groups (i.e., age or gender) of pupils, and the relationship between scientific knowledge and other types of knowledge (i.e., beliefs be it religious or political). At the same time, we must see the textbook—as the prime example of vulgarized science and accompanying ideologies—in (at least) two different functions: the function of teaching and the function of learning. In the function of learning (pupils learning activity), the focus is on the vulgarization of scientific paradigms (meaning the transformation of scientific knowledge into school subjects). In the function of teaching, the focus is on the evaluation of the transformation of scientific paradigms in the context of teacher’s educational practices.⁸

Cooperative Principle Applied

In our analysis, we will first take one step back in trying to identify the ideological presuppositions of what a textbook is in the first place, by analyzing its legal definition. After that, examples from history textbooks will be analyzed. In both cases, Grice’s theory of cooperative principle will be utilized as a tool for discerning implied content (implicatures) that is often a good vantage point in finding ideological premises underlying the text.

Analyzing the Legal Definition of a Textbook

We will start our analysis with the legal text, namely the *Pravilnik o potrjevanju učbenikov* [Regulation of Textbook Approval]—one from 1996 and the other the present one from 2010. The regulation from 1996 is the first under the then new law on primary and secondary education under which the reform of Slovenian educational system was carried out. It is also the first regulation pertaining to an exclusively market-driven textbook production. We chose the comparative approach to show the crucial changes in the period but also to demonstrate the ideologies accompanying the textbook market regulation. We will focus on one important part of both regulations, namely the paragraph in which the materials that are under the regulation are defined. We can begin with a simple juxtaposition:

Regulation of 1996, Paragraph 1:

In accordance with this regulation the following learning materials are approved that are aimed at primary and secondary school pupils, apprentices, students of post-secondary education and participants of adult education (further: the participants of education) for the mastering of educational goals stated in curricula or catalogues of knowledge:

- textbooks,
- worksheets or workbooks,
- exercise compendia,

-atlases,

-other learning materials that complement the textbook or are its integral part (further: the textbook).

The provisions of this regulation are also used for the approval of handbooks aimed at kindergarten personnel. (Regulation of textbook approval, 1996, p. 5787)

Regulation of 2010, Paragraph 1:⁹

This regulation determines the way and procedure of the approval of textbooks, aimed at primary and secondary school pupils and participants of adult education (further: the participants of education). Textbooks can be made for use in printed, electronic or printed and electronic version. (Regulation of textbook approval—Amendments, 2010, p. 6783)

Regulation of 2010, Paragraph 2:

The textbook is a basic learning material for achievement of educational aims and standards of knowledge, defined in the curriculum or in the catalogue of knowledge. It supports teaching and learning with didactic-methodical organization of content and adapted illustrations and graphical layout. The content and the structure of the textbook allow for independent learning of the participants of education and the acquisition of different levels and categories of knowledge. The textbook should not require any direct insertion of answers or solutions either written or drawn, save in the case of the textbook, designed for the use in electronic form (further e-textbook), that can allow for the direct insertion. The textbook is tied to the school subject or a topical-didactical set, grade and the level of education. A reader as a compendium of texts chosen in accordance with the aims of curriculum is also a textbook. (Regulation of textbook approval—Amendments, 2010, p. 6783)

Already this simple juxtaposition shows important differences in the two documents. For this section whose function is to define the matter (textbooks) entering the approval procedure, two strategies of definition are used. The earlier one is simpler with three elements. Textbooks which are approved are defined by (a) intended audience or in other words grade and level of schooling, (b) content—adhering to curricula, and (c) taxonomically listing the members of the category textbook. The regulation of 2010 retains the first two characteristics but omits the third. This simply reflects the change in the textbook licensing policy. In 2010, only textbooks and “readers”¹⁰ were licensed, which means that the range of learning materials controlled by the state narrowed substantially during the last two decades.

What is of more interest for our purposes is the addition of the fourth element, namely the attempt to define the textbook through its textual characteristics (didactical-methodical organization of content, illustration, layout) and even more curiously through its intended effects on its users (the acquisition of different levels of knowledge, supporting teaching

and learning). In Gricean terms, the attempt at such a definition of the textbook represents both the violation of the maxim of quantity and the maxim of manner. To begin with the latter, one must first note that the attempted definition hardly contributes to the clarification of the specific difference between “book” and “textbook,” that is, a didactical-methodical organization is a generalist term, which is already strongly implied by the context (learning material for primary and secondary schools), thus providing no further clarification. The same can be said of the requirement that textbooks should support teaching and learning. In both cases, we could speak of unnecessary prolixity, stating the obvious or repeating what is already implied a few lines earlier.

What is even more problematic is the requirement that textbooks should allow for the acquisition of different levels or categories of knowledge. The obvious implication is that there is a common understanding (at least in the context of [Slovenian] education) of what those “levels” and “categories” are as the regulation itself does not provide or at least hint at the definition of any of those terms. However, without explication both can be understood in a myriad of different ways, which de facto renders the clause unusable for the purposes of the regulation itself, namely providing relevant and, in the first place, equal criteria for the textbook assessment. This interpretation, which applies the charity principle, presupposing that other principles use the words in an ordinary way, has to give way to the interpretation more in line of Grice’s implicatures that there is a specific meaning to these terms known to addressees of the regulation. In this specific meaning, “levels” or “categories” of knowledge pertain to Bloom’s taxonomy of learning, which is according to Justin (2008, p. 16) heavily misused in the Slovenian educational discourse. We will not go into the details of Bloom’s taxonomy or its (mis)use in Slovenian pedagogy as for the present purpose a more generalist critique should be sufficient. Bloom’s taxonomy (or any other attempt to categorize different types of learning) is a specific theoretical tool that was not designed for the purpose of evaluating textbooks and therefore such a specific framework should not be a constitutive element of the regulation that defines the licensing of textbooks in general.¹¹ The fact that the reference to Bloom is not explicit constitutes the violation of Grice’s maxim of manner: avoid the obscurity of expression.

All in all, the entire attempt at defining the textbook also amounts to the violation of the maxim of quantity. The contribution—in this case the definition—is more informative than required in the context of textbook licensing regulation, as the criteria for the textbook assessment are clearly laid down in latter paragraphs of the regulation. Trying to define a textbook in this odd manner does not add much if anything at all to the information within the regulation itself.

What implicature do we read from these violations of Grice’s maxims? The attempt at closely defining the textbook indicates a certain misunderstanding of the general

concept of the “rule of law” in present day Slovenia. It is often thought that most, if not every social and political issue, should be solved by passing a law or regulation, written in a detailed manner, that allows those affected by the law to fulfill what is stated in it by simply putting checks for each prescribed requirement. This means that the responsibility of the individual before the law is guaranteed by a largely automated process of simple “do’s” and “don’ts.” The problem is that lawmakers cannot foresee all of the concrete situations, that the law or regulation will be applied to, which leads to a never-ending flood of amendments (also true for analyzed regulation). As the case of textbook definition shows, many things in the social world cannot be easily defined in a simple, taxonomically correct manner suitable to legal texts. As we demonstrated, attempts at such definitions easily end in a paradoxical mess.

From these implications, it can be inferred that there is a tacit tendency to closely control the textbook production which has to be tacit because it opposes the idea of decentralized and market-driven provision of learning materials. The idea of the state provision of the unified learning materials has some currency in Slovenian public (and media) discourse on education. It rests on the perception that there are too many different textbooks for one subject that teachers are supposedly overwhelmed by the abundance of materials offered and that publishers are exerting pressure on teachers with aggressive marketing. These perceptions are mostly unfounded or lacking in perspective. On average, there are only three or four different textbooks for one subject and they are revised infrequently. In neighboring Austria, for example, there are usually more than 10 textbooks for one subject, and this is not seen as a problem. Although these ideas are not part of the Slovenian educational mainstream, they seem to have some influence that can be seen in the analyzed regulation, especially in the increased level of control from the regulation of 1996 to the current one.

Analyzing a History Textbook Parts

Furthermore, we will illustrate the violation of maxims by analyzing a history textbook (Mirjanić, Razpotnik, Snoj, Verdev, & Zuljan, 2006) for eighth grade of elementary school.

Example 1

Chapter: The Reasons for the Rise of Liberal and National Movements

Section: Europeans Fought for Freedom and Their Independent State

Ethnic groups that were subordinated to others [ethnicities, nations op. auth] wished for a state in which they could live in liberty and independence. Their gaining of independence was long and difficult often accompanied by war. In the course of independence struggles the masses often developed strong emotions that led to the glorification of their own ethnicity and

belittling and oppression of others. This point of view is called **nationalism**. Its consequence was the support for the assimilation policies toward smaller ethnic groups and minorities, that haven’t won their own state yet. (Mirjanić et al., 2006, p. 103)

This example has several instances in which the maxim of manner is violated. First, the maxims “be orderly” and also “avoid the ambiguity of expression.” Are we presented with a kind of circular narrative where ethnic groups struggle for independence, thereby developing nationalist prejudice against other (presumably smaller?) ethnicities within them, or are “nations” developing those notions toward ethnic groups within their state, or perhaps both? It is not clear from the text, who is the object or target of nationalist stance or emotion; object in this case is defined solely by ethnicity, and that is clearly ambiguous. The possibly circular explanation is also not orderly as it proposes smaller and smaller divisions within ethnicities perhaps *ad absurdum* to the situation of one person’s ethnicity.

What is even more important in this case is the violation of the maxim of quantity as the contribution is not informative enough for the context in which it occurred. In contrast to the explanation of other political stances, movements, ideologies, or events, nationalism is not attributed to a named movement, group, or individual but to the masses, whereby this term is not only unclear but also degrading as “masses” are usually regarded uncultured, uneducated, and dangerous.

In this example, we see the attempt to strongly divide national movements as positive political forces from nationalism as a negative phenomenon. This is done implicitly as explicit division would be a falsehood both in terms of political theory and historical fact. However, this division is in accordance with the myth that the Slovenian independence from Yugoslavia in the late 20th century was gained without nationalist ideology or excesses, in contrast to, for example, the Croatian independence war or Serbian expansionism. Paradoxically, this contrast itself is a demonstration of a nationalist stance. In this case, the application of Grice’s maxims is instrumental in uncovering hidden ideological presuppositions in a history textbook.

Chapter: How the revolution changed France

Section: Revolutionary orders of the national constituent assembly

The position of the Catholic church also changed:

- church’s properties were nationalized, profits from the sale of estates was spent on the repayment of national debt,
- civil weddings and divorces were put into law, thereby enforcing the separation of church and state,
- the borders of dioceses were rearranged in order to adhere to the borders of French departments,

- Priests were assigned a state salary and they had to swear an oath of loyalty to the state.

The members of the national assembly were not against religion, but by passing such laws they took away the privileges of the church for the sake of the equality before law. (Mirjanič et al., 2006, p. 88)

Again this is an example of the violation of the maxims of quantity and quality. To explain the position of Catholic Church in post-revolutionary France, the bulleted text is informative enough, especially if the relation between religion (church) and revolution is not to be further investigated. It simply enumerates the changes in the church's position as stated in the new constitution and laws. Still the authors added another sentence whose validity cannot be easily supported. It is impossible to say whether all of the national assembly members were not opposed to religion, and so this statement cannot be proved and it constitutes the violation of the maxim of quality.

What implication is uncovered by the analysis of this violation? It seems that what has to be negotiated is a positive stance against both: the French revolution and the Catholic Church. The fact that the revolution, in which contemporary Western and also Slovenian democracy and citizen's rights are rooted, brought harsh or even hostile sanctions toward the religious institution to which most Slovenian citizens belong seems to call for an explanation that, so to say, brings both on the "same side of history." This happens in the context of the recent process of Slovenian democratization, in which the Catholic Church gained the status of the defender of democracy and it tried to establish itself as a leading moral force in the society. In this example, the fortifying of this ideological position can be inferred.

This example can also be used, albeit this would require further investigation, in examining the interpretation of socialist revolution in Slovenia during and after World War II (WWII). The fact is that the socialist revolutionary government made laws similar to those of the French National Assembly 150 years earlier: nationalization of property, separation of church and state accompanied in the first years after WWII with sometimes violent persecutions. It is also true that religion itself was explicitly criticized ("opium for the people") by the governing communist party. However, it is also true, for example, that the state paid for the health care and social security of priests. Still one of the arguments in denouncing socialism is its stance toward the church and religion. When interpreting one revolution as positive and another as negative, such similarities in revolutionary practices need to be explained in some way and the last sentence of the example could be seen as an attempt at such implicit explanation. We say implicit because no actual attempt at comparing bourgeois and socialist revolution is made. The point is that the last sentence of the example is a curious *contra factual* addition to some factual information on French

revolution. As this is a textbook, where factuality is a (legal) requirement, there certainly have to be very powerful reasons to include a sentence that is in its present form impossible to prove. And it seems that these powerful reasons lie not in the French revolutionary but in the Slovenian contemporary history.

Conclusion

The analysis of written text, in our case texts in the field of education—one example of legal regulation another textbook excerpts—by applying the Grice's conversational maxims is a demonstration of one method of close reading by which tacit presuppositions within the text can be identified. Often these presuppositions are ideological in the sense that they are generalist notions instrumental in interpreting the social world. Schools are named ideological state apparatuses for precisely this reason—they provide mainstream ideological interpretations through didactically transformed scientific texts. What is even more unexpected is the ideology accompanying the textbook market regulation.

In the first part of analysis, we analyzed the legal regulation. For that, we chose the comparative approach to show crucial changes in the period and also to demonstrate ideologies accompanying the textbook market regulation, both in meaning and in reflecting the changes in textbook licensing policy (using the analytical tool of Gricean maxims). The case of two textbook licensing regulations that were enforced in 1996 and 2010 exemplifies this type of addition (in this case, the addition is an overblown definition of the textbook) and its implication. Regarding that which is crucial, this reflection contains the violations of some Gricean maxims, which also has some other implications for school knowledge. This seems to be connected to one of the most problematic requirements, being that "textbooks should allow for acquisition of different levels or categories of knowledge." The regulation itself does not provide or at least hint at the definition of any of those terms. However, without explication, both can be understood in a myriad of different ways, which *de facto* renders the clause unusable for the purposes of the regulation itself, namely providing relevant and, in the first place, equal criteria for textbook assessment. This interpretation, which applies the charity principle, presupposing that other principles use the words in an ordinary way, has to give way to the interpretation more in line of Grice's implicatures that there is a specific meaning to these terms known to addressees of the regulation. In this specific meaning, "levels" or "categories" of knowledge pertain to Bloom's taxonomy of knowledge, which is according to Justin (2008) heavily misused in Slovenian educational discourse. Another reason is that Bloom's taxonomy (or any other attempt to categorize different types of learning and the resultant knowledge) is a specific theoretical tool that was not designed for the purpose of evaluating textbooks and therefore such a specific framework should not be a constitutive element of the regulation that defines the licensing of

textbooks in general. The fact that the reference to Bloom is not explicit constitutes the violation of Grice's maxim of manner: avoid the obscurity of expression. Also other Gricean maxims are often violated, namely the maxim of quantity (in the definition of textbooks). The attempt at closely defining the textbook indicates a certain misunderstanding of the general concept of the "rule of law" in present day Slovenia. It is often thought that most, if not every social and political issue, should be solved by passing a law or regulation, written in a detailed manner, that allows those affected by the law to fulfill what is stated in it by simply putting checks for each prescribed requirement. As the case of textbook definition shows, many things in the social world cannot be easily defined in a simple, taxonomically correct manner suitable to legal texts. As we demonstrated, attempts at such definitions easily end in a paradoxical mess.

In the second part of the analysis, we focused on illustrating the violation of maxims by analyzing a history textbook. In the first example, we used the paragraph that describes the point of view called nationalism. It is an example that has several instances in which the maxim of manner is violated. What is even more important in that case is the violation of the maxim of quantity as the contribution is not informative enough for the context in which it occurred. In addition, the national myth from independence is also contained. The application of Grice's maxims therefore uncovers hidden ideological presuppositions in a history textbook. The next example also shows the violation of the maxim of quantity and quality in the area where the text explains the position of the Catholic Church in post-revolutionary France, by adding another sentence whose validity cannot be easily supported. As the analysis revealed, the didactical transformation in the case of textbook might bring about more than an explanation and rewording of scientific text, itself prone to introducing ideological content. Explicit additions were spotted in the cases analyzed that are not based on the science transformed, namely history. These additions seem to have a role of negotiating between propositions of science and (national or nation making) myths that obviously have to be preserved. The case of two textbook licensing regulations that were enforced in 1996 and 2010 also exemplifies this type of addition (in this case, the addition is an overblown definition of the textbook) and its implication.

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Notes

1. Grice's theory of cooperative principle and its maxims have been applied in textbook analysis before (Čepič and Vogrinčič, 2003).

2. In the continuation of Chapter 2 (named Maxims), we will use Grice's definitions with quotations (Grice, 1989/1991, pp. 26-29).
3. This situation is relatively recent in Slovenia; until the 1990s, there was a single prescribed textbook for each subject in both primary and secondary schools.
4. To illustrate the extent of textbook approval mechanisms, we looked at several examples: In Austria, the textbooks are approved by the Ministry of Education and Women—a simple description is to be found on the page of the Veritas publisher (<http://www.veritas.at/about/schulbuch#einreichung>). In the neighboring German state of Bavaria (as an example), the regulation is similar (the regulation on the textbook approval is at <http://www.gesetze-bayern.de/jportal/portal/page/bsbayprod.psm1?showdoccase=1&st=lr&doc.id=jlr-LernMZulVBVY-2009rah-men&doc.part=X&doc.origin=bs>). For a current discussion on the situation in the United States focusing on Texas curriculum and textbook adoption system, see Erikson et al. (2012).
5. From the *Pravilnik o upravljanju učbeniških skladov* [Rules on Management of textbook Funds], *Uradni list Republike Slovenije* [Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia], 43/2002, amendments in Journal 65/2007. The paragraph is based on the School book fund regulation, which was valid from 1994 to 2010. In 2010 (Journal 37/2010), the regulation was amended allowing the funds to replace the textbooks only after the license for the respective textbook expires. As the licenses are renewed routinely, this means that teachers will not be able to change the textbooks for quite some time. The amendment provoked vocal protest from publishers. The Ministry of Education, it seems, made these changes because of pending curricular renewal, trying to prevent the purchase of books that will be used only for a year. It is expected that the regulation will be changed again.
6. The description is based on the current regulation from 2011. The regulation is renewed relatively frequently every 2 or 3 years. Some of the changes were fairly substantial (i.e., until 2006 publishers only had to present five typical—set—pages and a manuscript with the description of illustrations).
7. Rules on approving textbooks, *Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia*, issue 57/2006, amendments issues 45/2010 and 52/2011.
8. Despite that we must be aware that the authors of textbooks have their own vision of contents and teaching methods, which should lead to a higher level of scientific thinking and that the textbook alone is not a guarantee for expected results (Ahtineva, 2005).
9. In 2010, the Ministry of Education issued the amendment to the regulation of 2006. For this purpose, the amendments of 2010 are collated in 2006 version. The changes pertaining to cited paragraphs concern the electronic versions of textbooks.
10. "Reader" in the context of Slovenian primary school is a collection of (canonical) literary texts of Slovenian and world literature.
11. We should still be careful about identifying Bloom's taxonomy in the analyzed text. This decision is based on the numerous references to Bloom in a wide variety of texts on Slovenian educational system. Still as a backup, we will develop a critique of this clause in the regulation in the manner of *reductio ad absurdum*, showing that the clause is obsolete. The reasoning is that no text exists that would allow the acquisition of a

single level or category of knowledge. On the lowest level, there are words with their dictionary meanings as a type of knowledge to be acquired. Words combined are an example of another level of knowledge. Therefore, there is no text that does not have the property that defines a textbook, from which it follows that the property (different levels and categories of knowledge) is useless in defining a textbook. This reasoning uses an arbitrary and a common sense conception of levels of knowledge, but even if using Bloom's taxonomy, one can prove that there is no text in which only a single category could be identified.

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