

Projektname	Competence and Academic orientation in History Textbooks (CAOHT)
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Projektbeschreibung

A paradigm shift within history didactics from a focus on content to a domain-specific competence orientation was implemented in the first decade of the 21st century. In this context, the challenge for history textbooks is that they are potentially to prepare the ground for the development of historical competencies and, in the process, contribute to the development of a reflected historical consciousness. This project pursues three main objectives. Firstly (1), it will be determined using qualitative/quantitative triangulation methodology how teachers and pupils of secondary schools (grades 5-8) in Austria use the textbook and what role the competence orientation demanded by curricula and by history didactics plays in this context. An observation of textbook use in classrooms will be conducted, which will be followed by both in-depth-interviews with teachers about the motives of their approaches and a subsequent quantitative survey about textbook use directed to both teachers and pupils. It has been pointed out for decades that there is a research gap about the use of textbooks in classroom instruction, and this study aims to fill part of this gap with respect to the use of history textbooks in Austria.

Secondly (2), extensive textbook analyses of selected historical chapters in all approved Austrian secondary school (grades 5-8) history textbooks will determine how advanced the shift toward a domain-specific competence orientation in Austrian textbooks is and whether textbooks provide materials and approaches that potentially help students to learn to think historically. In this context different elements by which a textbook is constructed (author's text, images, sources, work orders, etc.) will be taken into consideration. It will be asked how ongoing discussions in the didactics of history with respect to the requirements of a domain-specific competence orientation are reflected in textbooks.

The final objective (3) is to determine whether there is a positive correlation between a competence orientation and an academic orientation, in the sense of Jörn Rüsen's theory of the three plausibilities, in textbooks. By comparing the manifestation of the academic orientation and the competence orientation, it is possible to check the hypothesis that a higher degree of competence orientation in a textbook correlates with a higher degree of empirical, narrative and normative plausibility. The hypothesis assumes that the academic quality rises as a result of the disclosure of the structure of the historical narratives in textbooks that is required in competence-oriented approaches.