

Do we all have to study American textbooks?

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We review the factors that have contributed to an increased use of American textbooks in higher education. These are (1) better knowledge of English as a second language, (2) the fact that English has become the lingua franca in science, (3) the conviction that from a certain proficiency level, learning in a second language is as easy as learning in the mother tongue, (4) the higher quality of American textbooks, and (5) the international mobility of students. We then review the disadvantages of exclusive reliance on American textbooks. They are: (1) the overestimation of L2 proficiency in students, (2) the high language switching costs that occur when studying has to be based on both L2 and L1 information, and (3) the loss of culture-specific information that is needed in later professional life. We end with a plea for more non-American high-quality textbooks so that lecturers have a wider choice, and a thoughtful consideration of the learning objectives when a textbook is selected. (*Netherlands Journal of Psychology*, 63, 58-67.)

In recent years there has been a massive shift towards American (and to a lesser extent British) textbooks in Dutch higher education. In Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, the shift has been less spectacular but this has led to the following assessment of psychology degrees by the official five-yearly quality assurance committee, an organisation that has an important role in the decision whether a degree can be continued or not:

‘... As far as study resources are concerned, the committee has noticed *with approval* that Ghent University uses few of its own workbooks but mostly international textbooks, so that students from an early stage in their education are confronted with original texts and recent literature.’ (De Onderwijsinspectie Psychologie, 2004, p. 22, translated from Dutch, italics added).

No wonder then that when the universities in the Netherlands got their visit from the quality assurance committee, they were quick to point out that in their departments extensive use was made of recent, international textbooks.

In this article, we first look at the factors that led to the dominance of American textbooks. We then discuss some problems with the development, and we end with a few conclusions.

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Factors contributing to increased use of American textbooks

Knowledge of English

A first reason why more English textbooks are used nowadays is the growing knowledge of English among Dutch students. Second language (L2) teaching in the Netherlands is now largely confined to studying English (at the expense of French and German). Children in the Netherlands start learning English from the age of 10 and continue to do so until they reach university. In Flanders students are less proficient in English, because non-native language teaching is still dominated by the study of French (the language spoken in the Southern part of the country). The better knowledge of English by Dutch students may be one of the reasons why the use of English textbooks is more widespread in the Netherlands than in Flanders.

English sources

There is a consensus among Dutch-speaking academics that university students should be able to read English texts, given that a lot of scientific knowledge is only available in English (including the present article). For instance, the ratio English vs. Dutch books bought by Dutch university libraries in the human sciences changed from 1:3 before 1950 to 2:1 in 2000 (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2003). Academics are convinced that students will continue to consult English sources if their studies are based on English textbooks.

Studying in L2 is not a problem

Another assumption is that as soon as one has reached a certain level of L2 proficiency, studying in L2 is not different from studying in the native language (L1). The origin of this assumption is the conviction that information in the semantic memory is stored in a language-independent way based on abstract concepts and propositions. Because information in the human semantic system has been stripped from the input language, information acquired in L2 can easily be integrated with information previously acquired in L1. All problems related to books and lectures in L2 are due to a suboptimal proficiency in L2 and not to the fact that knowledge from different languages has to be integrated. Similarly, there is no loss of information when L2 textbooks are combined with L1 lectures and L1 exams, because once the information is understood it is stored and retrieved in a language-independent way.

American textbooks are better

The Anglo-Saxon world has a long tradition of high-quality textbooks that rarely have to com-

pete with an alternative of equal quality in the Dutch language. The idea of a textbook as a helpful, self-explaining and independent source of information for beginning students came from the US. On the Dutch market 'textbooks' were largely confined to edited lecture notes, written for a particular course and given by a particular lecturer. Other scientific books were either aimed at the general public or were written for advanced students and colleagues.

The American textbooks galvanised the teaching of psychology and have never really been challenged by competitors from other markets, not even from the UK. One of the reasons for the continuing dominance is probably the high-level of competition on the American market. A review of the existing textbooks reveals that slightly less than 60 introductory textbooks of psychology were published or revised between 2003 and 2006 by the leading American companies (Koenig, 2006). The resulting struggle for survival has led to constant improvements, such as an accessible writing style, a better organisation, lists of summaries and keywords, a glossary, colour printing, study and teaching guides, the availability of supporting audiovisual materials (now increasingly including websites), the addition of validated test items, printing on demand, and so on. Whereas European textbooks still look very much like they did in the 1970s, American publishers have embraced the new opportunities made possible by the recent advances in printing techniques, in particular for those areas where competition is high.

International mobility

A final factor that encouraged Dutch-speaking academics to use English handbooks is that it increases the possibility of international mobility. Few non-native Dutch speakers are interested in studying psychology (or any other science) in Dutch and this limits the number of international students one can attract. By using the lingua franca of science, Dutch-speaking students are not only better prepared for international careers, but also the Dutch education system improves its position within the international context. The use of international handbooks further makes it easier to compare the Dutch curriculum with, for instance, the American and the British curricula.

The downside of relying on American textbooks

Difficulty in studying in L2

Even though the knowledge of English has improved in recent decades, lecturers are likely to overestimate the proficiency of their students. In general, lecturers are a biased sample with a high intelligence and a high commitment to hard

work. Therefore, they are not the best people to judge how difficult a particular course is for the average student, let alone for a weak student. (Incidentally, those characteristics are also the main reason why many lecturers are convinced that the average student they are teaching is worse than the students they knew in their own cohort.)

A good indication of the extra workload caused by the use of an English textbook for a particular course is to look at how many students actually make use of the book. In each class, a considerable number of students pass their exams on the basis of their lecture notes, the handouts provided by the lecturer, and information obtained from fellow students. A phenomenon we experienced when we were teaching with an English textbook was the popularity of student summaries in Dutch. The 10% best students made their own summaries on the basis of the lecture notes and the textbook, but the vast majority simply bought a summary from fellow students. In many cases there was a flourishing market of an 'officially approved' translation sold by the student union for a price that came close to the price of the original book and of a quality that was far below what would be accepted from edited lecture notes. A glance at the students waiting for their exam strongly suggested that the majority of them had used these Dutch summaries when preparing for their exam. The number of second-hand books that are sold with the qualification 'no writing in them' is another good indication of the actual use of a textbook.

Higher costs due to language switching

Confronted with the suboptimal use of English textbooks, it is tempting to blame it on the 'laziness' of the students, who are not willing to make the effort that would give them access to the international scientific literature. We had done so for some time, but gradually we began to doubt the wisdom of this appraisal. One of the factors that contributed to our change of mind was the extra effort we experienced when we were asked to judge PhD theses in French (MB) or to lecture in German (FD). Despite the fact that (1) we are reasonably proficient in these languages, (2) we know a lot about the topics, and (3) we are both fluent in a non-native language (English) for the topics, we still discovered that this activity took us quite some extra time and that we seemed to forget faster what we had learned.

So, it would appear that having to study in a language that is not your dominant language (either L1 or a much used L2) involves an extra processing cost that cannot be reduced to a simple lack of language proficiency. A subsequent literature search revealed that very little is known about this particular issue, but that what is known is in line with the conjecture that seman-

tic information may not be stored and retrieved in a completely language-independent way and, therefore, that language switching involves a cost both for the understanding of text and for the retrieval of information from memory.

As stated before, the assumption in bilingual research has been that a distinction must be made between the lexical system and the semantic system (e.g., Kroll & De Groot, 2005). Because words in L1 and L2 are different, they have different lexical representations, but they make contact in a shared semantic system. The connections between L1 words and semantic features are supposed to be stronger than those between L2 words and semantic features, up to a considerable degree of L2 proficiency. This implies that L2 words will partly activate their meaning through co-activation of their L1 translations. Important for the present discussion, however, is the assumption that once the semantic features have been activated, they are language-independent. The semantic features that are activated may differ depending on the language input, but once the meaning has been activated the input language no longer makes a difference. This position is, for instance, defended explicitly by Hernandez, Li, and MacWhinney (2005), when they write: 'We do not predict that this type of code-based separation occurs for underlying distributed conceptual representations, but only for mappings at the levels of lexicon, phonology and parts of speech. Because conceptual systems are grounded on distributed perceptual-motor cycles, they are relatively less affected by bilingual modularisation.'

There is, however, evidence to believe that memories may not be stored in the strongly language-independent way that is generally assumed. Within the memory literature, there is a considerable body of evidence showing that memory retrieval depends on the availability of cues to activate the appropriate memory traces. All types of cues seem to work, because memories are content based, so that any overlap in content of a retrieval cue and a memory trace activates the memory trace. The cues can be divided in meaning-related cues and meaning-unrelated cues. Meaning-related cues refer to the fact that for complex materials one memory trace contains a cue to the next. In addition, these memories are organised within wider schemas, which help to reconstruct the memory on the basis of partially retrieved information. The meaning-unrelated cues are accidental cues that were present at the time of the encoding and that were stored together with the memory trace. Because of these extraneous cues, memory will be better if the retrieval context matches the encoding context (Smith & Vela, 2001).

Extraneous cues are especially important for materials that are unorganised. This can be seen

quite dramatically in the following experiment on bilingual word memory (Sahlin, Harding, & Seamon, 2005). Prolific English-Spanish bilinguals heard a list of 120 words at a speed of one word per 3 seconds, which they were to memorise for a subsequent memory test. Half of the words were in English, half in Spanish. In the memory test, participants received 96 words and had to indicate whether they were part of the studied words (independent of language) or not. The percentage of correctly memorised words learned in Spanish and presented in Spanish during the memory test was 88%; for the English-English condition, the percentage was 85% (confirming that the participants were balanced bilinguals). However, percentage recognition in the Spanish-English condition was a mere 13% and in the English-Spanish condition it was 17%. So, there was a huge cost for conditions in which the language cue of the encoding could not be used in the retrieval.

The importance of language cues for organised memories comes from autobiographical memory. Marian and Neisser (2000) asked Russian immigrants in the US to discuss the first autobiographical memory that came to mind upon hearing a target word. When the interview language was Russian, significantly more memories from a Russian context were retrieved than memories from an English context. The reverse was true when the interview language was English. In a second experiment, the authors showed that both the language of the interview and the language of the target words had an impact. Although strictly speaking these results are limited to episodic memory (memory for personally experienced events that include when and where cues), Marian and Neisser ventured that very much the same effects would be observed in semantic memory.

Research specifically related to studying in L2 is surprisingly limited and does not really allow us to answer the question whether it is more difficult to retain information in L2 than in L1, because short texts were used as stimulus materials and there was no realistic retention interval. The most interesting study was published by Chen and Donin (1997). These authors asked Chinese-English bilinguals to read biology texts in L1 (Chinese) or L2 (English). Half of the students were biology graduates (a lot of background knowledge, biology-related schemas), the other half were chemistry graduates (with the same scientific interest and intelligence but a difference in biology-related background knowledge). Participants read the texts sentence-by-sentence and their reading times were recorded. During reading the participants were asked to tell in their own words what they had read (online recall). The same was asked at the end of the text (retrospective recall). Reading times showed that participants were fastest when both text and re-

call were in L1 (about 2 seconds per proposition). They needed about 50% more time to read the text when it was presented in L2 (about 3 seconds per proposition), independent of whether the recall was in L2 (English) or in L1 (Chinese). As far as recall was concerned, students with a biology background outperformed the students with a chemistry background, but there were no significant differences as a function of text language or test language (it should be borne in mind, though, that the group sizes were small: 18 biology and 18 chemistry students, so that only large effect sizes could be detected). Comparable findings were published by Donin, Graves, and Goyette (2004) who investigated 16 Canadian army officers reading L1 (English) and L2 (French) texts: longer reading times but comparable memory accuracy at the end of the reading. Notice, however, that these studies tell us nothing about the long-term retention of information (e.g., after one week or one month), a situation which may be more relevant to students learning a chapter for an exam in the future.

Another relevant study was published by McElree, Jia, and Litvak (2000). These authors were interested in the speed and accuracy with which Russian-English bilinguals were able to activate semantic information from L1 and L2. On each trial, participants saw two words and they had to indicate whether the words were part of the same semantic category or not (e.g., fruit). The words were either presented in the same language (L1 or L2) or in different languages (hence requiring a language switch). There were three groups of bilinguals: L1 dominant (participants who were more proficient in Russian than in English), balanced (participants who were equally proficient in L1 and in L2), and L2 dominant (participants who due to their long stay in the US were more proficient in English (L2) than in Russian). The data indicated that for the balanced bilinguals there were no differences in speed or accuracy of concept retrieval in L1 and L2 for the same-language word pairs, but that there was a considerable cost for the different-language word pairs (unless they were direct translations). The time cost for different-language pairs was observed in the unbalanced groups as well, but in these groups there was an additional time cost to activate semantic information from the non-dominant language. Interestingly, this meant that participants who had become more proficient in English (L2) could activate semantic information more rapidly from the language they had acquired later in life, a situation that may sound familiar to academics who often find it easier to read and write about their expertise in English than in their native language.

A final relevant study we found looked at the generation of ideas in L1 and L2 during brainstorming sessions (Blot, Zatare, & Paulus, 2003).

In two sessions, English-Spanish and Spanish-English bilinguals thought of uses people could make of an extra thumb (next to the little finger). The number of ideas generated in the first session was substantially larger in L1 (25) than in L2 (20). In the second session, participants either had to continue in the same language or in the other language. The efficiency of session 2 relative to session 1 was comparable for the participants who continued in the same language, increased substantially for those participants who could switch from L2 to L1, and decreased significantly for the participants who had to switch from L1 to L2. This finding agrees with the idea that it is easier to activate semantic knowledge from L1 than from L2. This can be due to the stronger links from L1 words to semantic features and/or to the fact that semantic information is not stored in a format that is completely language-free.

All in all, laziness may not be the main reason why students find it hard to study from an English L2 textbook when they have to prepare for an L1 exam and when they have to combine the information from the textbook with their L1 lecture notes. Maybe their objections to this approach have more to do with the fact that they experience this learning strategy as very inefficient and, therefore, are unwilling to use it unless it is offset by the advantages they expect from mastering the English text (see the learning objectives below).

Relevance for the future

A final limitation we have experienced while using American textbooks is that it seemed harder to convince students about the relevance of the findings for their own lives. In particular for psychology courses this often felt like a missed opportunity. Students duly studied the experiments that were discussed and the concepts that were introduced, because they wanted to pass their exams, but they did not feel that the findings were of much relevance to themselves. Ironically, this was particularly true for those textbooks that –rightly– tried to enhance the bearing of the course information by referring to many everyday (American) examples. Our solution to this problem was to collect our own database of examples, which we found very useful for our own lectures, but which did not help beginning lecturers very much.

Another drawback of exclusive reliance on American textbooks is that students are given the strong impression that all important psychological research after the Second World War happened in the United States, because no other studies are discussed. The best one can hope for is the inclusion of a study from the Netherlands or Belgium as part of a longer reference list, as in the following sentence: ‘Similar findings have been reported by Vroomen and de Gelder (2001), Windmann (2004), and Colin, Radeau, and

Deltenre (2005)’. In general, such sentences are only included because they increase the chances of selling a few hundred extra copies in the target countries. They do not add any new information to the book and they certainly do not do justice to the fact that 10 to 15% of all articles in the English scientific literature come from Dutch or Belgian researchers. In his widely used review of the history of psychology, Leahey (1992) was quite clear about what psychology looks like from the American perspective. When he introduced the part of his book dealing with psychology proper (after an introduction on the developments that made psychology possible), he wrote:

‘It is appropriate to begin the history of modern psychology in 1892, because in that year the American Psychological Association was founded.... Our attention from now on will be fixed on American psychology, for although Germany granted the earliest degrees in psychology, it was in America that psychology became a profession.... For better or worse, and for sometimes extraneous reasons, modern psychology is essentially American psychology. American movements and theories have been adopted overseas - so much so that in 1980 a German text in social psychology was filled with American references and made no mention of Wundt or Völkerpsychologie.’ (Leahey, 1992, p. 272).

Apart from some hurt pride there is also the more important concern that students who get their education mainly from American textbooks finish their studies with limited knowledge of what is actually going on in their own country. A typical example is the use of intelligence tests. Most people who have studied psychology know about the Stanford Binet test and the Wechsler test. They also know about the difficulties of using SAT results as entry requirements in American universities, they know that there is a difference of 15 IQ between Americans from Caucasian origin and Americans from African origin and what might be the causes of this difference. They may also know that there is a difference of 2 IQ between American states in the North and American states in the south, but they have no clue whether any of this has implications for the Dutch or the Belgian situation. They do not even know how intelligence is tested in the Dutch-speaking part of the world (hopefully, there will be a translation of the American tests they have learned about). The same story can be told about personality questionnaires, quality of life questionnaires, the availability of counselling services, and so on. Sure, this information can be found if you delve deep enough, but our own experiences have convinced us that few people are willing to sift through the scattered research reports in order to obtain the overview one would expect to get from a good textbook (it also seems a big waste of effort if every individual psychologist is forced to do so).

Where to go from here?

Having dissected the pros and cons of extensive reliance on international (mostly American) textbooks, the question arises how to take this further. We see two main action points.

More high-quality Dutch textbooks

Given that the Dutch-speaking market includes some 22 million customers and that neither the Netherlands nor Flanders have a shortage of publishers, it is amazing to see that so few good Dutch textbooks are published. For a long time we thought this had to do with the unwillingness of academics to write books. Now, having experienced some of the other side, we are becoming convinced that the publishers deserve much of the blame. The only thing they seem to be able to do is to wait for authors and then to print their manuscripts in the cheapest possible way. It is no coincidence that a constant stream of good (and increasingly better) books is coming from Anglo-Saxon companies. These are their secrets:

- 1 Reps visit lecturers on a regular basis to ask which books they use and why, what could be improved and which books are found missing.
- 2 As soon as an opportunity for a new book is perceived, an editor contacts a number of specialised lecturers and asks what they think should be included in such a textbook.
- 3 On the basis of the interviews (and sometimes some further surveying), a detailed table of contents is compiled.
- 4 The editor contacts a potential author or group of authors and explains the basis of the suggested table of contents.
- 5 When the first draft of the manuscript is finished, a number of reviewers are contacted and asked about ways to further improve the product (these include reviewers with editorial experience, e.g. journal editors, and other writers).
- 6 The author adapts the text on the basis of the reviews.
- 7 The design and typesetting of the book is initiated.
- 8 Depending on the ambitions and the competition of the book, further ancillaries are added.

The usual argument of Dutch publishers has been that the Dutch market is too small for this type of (expensive) approach, but this does not strike us as particularly compelling. Most of the steps outlined above are work intensive but not expensive (scientists usually do quite a lot for a small remuneration). In addition, if 60 books are competing for a market of 500 million customers, there should be room for at least two equivalent books on a market of 20 million customers.

Also, the experiences with the few good books that have been produced on the Dutch market have not been bad. Many of these books have had four or more reprints and/or editions.

Another possible source of new books is the academics themselves. In the past, the Open University has been one of the most active initiators of good Dutch textbooks, largely based on the sequence of steps outlined above. Another possible initiator could be a learned society or an association of professionals. For instance, one could imagine a group of test psychologists sitting together and working out the table of contents of a good introductory book. What do we want all psychology students to know about testing in the Netherlands and Flanders? When the first draft is finished, the user group would meet again to review the result and suggest further improvements. All this is normal and perfectly accepted practice in scientific journals. It just needs to be transplanted to the process of introductory text writing.

Finally, individual authors can also make use of the above approach. Rather than relying entirely on their own judgment, they should realise that their output is likely to improve if they do proper research about what potential users are looking for in the book.

Whoever initiates a new book, they should know that the book is likely to fail if it does not meet the standards of an average American textbook. For too long publishers have mollified us by claiming that a simple, cheap book is good enough for the Dutch market. In the end, this has led to the present disastrous situation. When asked what exactly led the quality assurance committee to write the assessment mentioned at the beginning of this article, members referred to the poor quality of the books more often than to the fact that they were written in Dutch. Because Dutch textbooks are in direct competition with their American (and British) equivalents, they will only convince lecturers and education authorities when they are of a comparable level (in the current situation they may even have to be slightly better in order to tempt lecturers and education authorities back from their familiar American books). People who visit a non-English country are not impressed by the use of shabby workbooks in an unknown language. They may be impressed, however, by textbooks that combine the local element with the quality observed in international books. For some books, this will imply the use of full-colour pages and illustrations (e.g. for general introductions to psychology), for others this can still be black and white (e.g., an introduction to cognitive psychology), although the latter is likely to change in the coming years as well.

When negotiating with the publisher it is good to know that the production of books is much cheaper now than it was 20 years ago. A print of a

few thousand books puts you in a good bargaining position, the more because publishing companies should realise that there is little prospect in bringing out yet another mediocre book. Authors and publishers must dare to be ambitious. It is better to publish a few good books than to have a flood of second-rate publications.

In addition to the steps above, we found the following considerations helpful:

- 1 A good textbook is a helpful book. A textbook is a book that explains, not a book that confronts readers with riddles and unclear passages. Difficult topics should be explained and illustrated in such a way that they are understandable for the student the book aims at. A good textbook is also well structured so that students easily see the organisation of the information.
- 2 A good textbook is an attractive book. Some books repel from the moment you see them. It is unlikely that such a book will ever make it to the charts, no matter how good the contents are. Authors should be careful about this, because designers and typesetters are sometimes like architects: They are much more concerned about the conspicuousness of their production than about the user-friendliness. Other designers seem to know only one lay-out, the one they learned 40 years ago. It is a good idea to ask the publisher for samples of recently published books before you sign a contract and/or to give them examples of books you like. It is a bad sign if you are not happy with the lay-out when it is shown to you for the first time. As far as books are concerned, the gut feelings are rarely wrong (because this is what potential customers rely upon when they buy a book).
- 3 Europeans have a remarkable attitude towards the use of pictures in textbooks. On the one hand they resent them and think they diminish the scientific value of a book; on the other hand they massively turn to American textbooks that are full of them. We found pictures useful for the following reasons. First, pictures are a real help to make the information more digestible. For instance, in current textbooks quite a lot of reference is made to the localisation of functions in the brain as revealed by brain imaging techniques. It is a good idea to accompany each of these passages with a small image of the brain highlighting the structure that is involved. This makes it so much easier for the students to understand what they are reading about. Pictures are particularly helpful when they are clear and easy to understand and it is worthwhile to do several quality checks (e.g., by reviews) to ensure that this is indeed the case. Second, we found pictures helpful to summarise the main points of a text. What is the take-home message of this book section? How can it be combined with a picture to make it easier for the students to remember? Third, we found that pictures are a powerful tool either to reinforce or to counteract stereotypes. When the publisher of our book insisted that each chapter should start with an opening picture, we at first thought this was of no concern to us ... until we saw which pictures were proposed by the illustrators. For a start, all psychologists were men and all clients were women (e.g., the opening of the chapter on therapy consisted of a picture of a couch with the menacing image of Freud hovering above it). In addition, nearly all the people in the pictures looked gloomy or scared, as if psychology had nothing to say about happy and content individuals (e.g., the woman from the first chapter was looking in a mirror and seemed scared of what she saw, and the face on the cover looked as if the person had been seriously ill for some time). Also the suggested opening of the chapter on applied psychology was a real eye opener of what this topic evokes in the mind of an illustrator: It merely consisted of two lines scribbled on an empty whiteboard... While struggling with the pictures of our book, we discovered yet another principle that is used in good handbooks. By positioning the figures in such a way that they never interrupt the text, it is possible for readers to ignore them if they want to focus on the text. So, figures must be placed at the top of a page, at the bottom, or in a dedicated column next to the text column, but never within the text column itself. In that way, readers can opt to blank out the figures if they want to concentrate on the text.
- 4 A good textbook makes it easy for students to study. One thing all lecturers agree upon is that studying involves more than simply reading a text. However, only good textbooks incorporate this requirement in their lay-out. How can you help students to remember the information that is presented? Options are the inclusion of a summary at the end of the chapters, review boxes in the text whenever an important topic is covered, and the insertion of questions next to the text in order to direct the reader's attention. Another interesting option is to make a study guide that accompanies the book and that allows students to take a number of tests and check their answers (either online on a website or offline in a book). A recent review of the literature has shown that answering questions and taking tests are the best ways to remember information and, thus, to prepare for an exam (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006).
- 5 A good textbook requires regular revision and updating. For commercial reasons (in particular to counter the problem of second-hand books) American textbooks are revised every two to four years. This seems to be slightly over the top (the more because the changes are

often minimal), but as a rule of thumb six years can be considered as the maximum lifetime of an edition. A great deal changes in research and in society in a period of six years and students also hate to study from books that were published when they were in primary school (they are so prehistoric!)

The learning objectives

The availability of good Dutch textbooks will not change much if lecturers and educational authorities are convinced that only English books are acceptable for higher education (for the reasons outlined above) and if this practice is further imposed (or at least strongly encouraged) by quality assurance authorities (see also the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2003 for a further discussion of the use of Dutch in higher education and science).

The authors of the present article have both taught on the basis of American textbooks and decided that under some circumstances this was not the right choice, whereas in others it was the perfect pick. Let's start with the latter. One of the courses we taught was psycholinguistics to fourth-year students of theoretical and experimental psychology. These students wanted a research-related career and, hence, were very motivated to read original articles. They very much appreciated having an English textbook and a selection of recent English journal articles. It would have been against all reason if in this context the lecturer had opted for a Dutch textbook.

The clearest example of a situation in which the use of an English textbook turned out to be strongly opposed by the students involved a psychology course taught to first-year law students. This course was one of the minor courses in the curriculum (it only comprised half of the hours of many of the law-related courses) and was mainly meant to acquaint the students with

the major findings in psychology and also to make them aware of the contributions psychologists could make to their profession. These students did not understand why the course had to be based on an American handbook, and it gradually became clear to the lecturer as well that by using such a book he was actually hindering one of his main learning objectives (i.e., 'to give the students a positive picture of psychology and what it can offer in judicial contexts').

The above two examples illustrate the point we want to make: The use of an American or Dutch textbook should not be knee-jerk reaction, but a result of a careful consideration of the learning objectives of a particular course. For some courses we did not feel that 'being confronted with an English text and reading recent American literature' were the core learning objectives that compensated for the drawbacks associated with the use of an American textbook. For other courses, we had no doubt that a good international book was essential to achieve the aims of the course.

Although not everyone will agree with us, we also had the feeling that the first introduction to a new research area (be it psychology, sociology, statistics or chemistry) is best done in L1. In that way, students can optimally profit from the links that exist between their existing knowledge and the new knowledge. This lays a nice foundation for subsequent elaboration in English, either by the use of higher-level English textbooks or by the use of journal articles. For instance, one of us (FD) found that in an introductory course, students were more eager to write a paper based on original English journal articles when this was combined with the use of a Dutch textbook than when it was combined with the use of an American textbook. In the appendix we include a list of Dutch textbooks to illustrate that at least for introductory psychology there is an alternative.

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Appendix: Dutch textbooks on introductory psychology over the years

The list below was compiled on the basis of the catalogues of the university libraries and the national royal libraries of the Netherlands and Belgium. We also include old books, so that the reader can put the current efforts in their historic perspective.

- Adams, L., Preter, de, K., Devroye, M. (1963-1981). *Algemene psychologie*. Deurne (Belgium), Plantyn. 155 p.
- Beirnaert, R., Hove, van, W., Verstuyf, H. (1961). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Antwerpen, Plantyn. 152 p.
- Bergsma, A. (1998, 2004). *Psychologie van A tot Z, Ruim 4.000 begrippen op alle terreinen van de psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum. 373 p.
- Berryman, J. et al. (1998). *Psychologie van alledag, een informele inleiding*. Amsterdam, Boom/Nieuwezijds. 299 p.
- Bigot, L. C. Th. et al. (1946/1953, 1954). *Leerboek der psychologie/Beknopt leerboek der psychologie*. Groningen, Wolters. 450 / 267 p. (see Duijker et al.)
- Breeuwsma, G. (2004). *Psychologische zaken, wegwijs in de werking van de geest*. Amsterdam, Prometheus. 248 p.
- Brybaert, M. (2006). *Psychologie*. Gent, Academia Press. 900 p. (+ oefenboek 404 + 243 p.)
- Craeynest, P. (1996). *Algemene psychologie. De basisbegrippen van het menselijk gedrag. Deel 1: Opbouw van de gedragsituatie. Deel 2: Factoren in het organisme?* Leuven, Acco. 209 p.
- Craeynest, P. (2002). *Focus op gedrag: inleiding in de algemene psychologie of functieleer*. Leuven, Acco. 420 p.
- Cuyvers, G. (2000). *Gedrag als menselijke ervaring. Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Antwerpen, Plantyn. 372 p.
- Duijker, H. C. J. et al. (1976-1981). *Leerboek der psychologie*. Groningen, Wolters-Noordhoff (Published earlier by L. C. T. Bigot, Ph. Kohnstamm en B. G. Palland). XII + 590 - 704 p.
- Fischer, A. & Metaal, N. (1987). *Psychologie: de stand van zaken*. Lisse : Swets & Zeitlinger.
- Hahn, J. F. (1964-1979). *Algemene Psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum. Prisma-compendia 11. 192 p.
- Hartig, M. (1994). *Het zit allemaal in je hoofd. Kennismaken met de psychologie*. Averbode, Altiora. 124 p.
- Heuvelman, A., Gutteling, J. & Drossart, A. (1997-2004). *Psychologie [Theorieboek en Werkboek]*. Amsterdam, Boom. 248, 277, 304 and 95 p.
- Hilst, van der, K. (1986). *Psychologie voor opvoeders en hulpverleners*. Baarn, Nelissen
- Hilst, van der, K. (1991). *Psychologie voor beroepsopleidingen*. Baarn, Nelissen.
- Holzhauer F., Minden van J. (1975-1991). *Psychologie, theorie en praktijk*. Leiden, Stenfert Kroeze. 478 p.
- Hulst, van der, M. (2004). *Wolters' Compact Psychologie*. Groningen, Wolters Noordhoff. 100 p.
- Ingleby, D., Spruyt, E. (1992-2002). *Ontdek de psychologie*. Utrecht, Tijdstroom / Lemma Teleac. 312 p.
- Jonges, J. (1959). *Algemene psychologie*. Groningen, Wolters. Serie: De nieuwe kweekschool 2. Leerang voor opvoedkunde en psychologie. vii + 215 p.
- Kijm, J. (1960). *Psychologie. Inleiding voor zielzorgers*. Roermond/Maaseik, Romen en Zonen. 218 p.
- Kluytmans, G. J. G. (1976). *Menselijk gedrag : een beknopte inleiding in de psychologie*. Deventer: Van Loghum Slaterus 111 p.
- Kouwer B. J. & Linschoten, J. (1951-1965). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Assen, Born, Pallas Reeks. 168 p.
- Kuypers, A. & Bavinck, H. (1926-1953). *Inleiding in de zielkunde*. Kampen : Kok 440 p.
- Langeveld, M. J. & Kohnstamm, Ph. et al. (1955-1961). *Inleiding in de psychologie*. Groningen: Wolters X + 485 p.
- Lens, W. et al. (1988). *Handboek psychologie. Deel 1 en 2. Algemene en experimentele psychologie*. Leuven, Acco. 255 p.
- Lens, W. et al. (1996). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Leuven, Universitaire Pers Leuven. 469 p.
- Lievens, S. (1976). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Gent, Story Scientia. 186 p.
- Lievens, S. (1992-2004). *Veldverkenningen in de psychologie*. Antwerpen, Garant. 215 p.
- Metaal, N. et al. (1987-2002). *Psychologie: de stand van zaken*. Swets & Zeitlinger. 293 p.
- Michotte van de Berck A. E. (1948). *Universitaire bibliotheek voor psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum / Antwerpen, Standaard-boekhandel.
- Mietzel, G. (1988-1996). *Wegwijs in de psychologie. Psychologie voor de praktijk*. Bruna / Thieme / Meulenhof. 675 gram.
- Neer, van, R. (1979, 20th edition). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. 's-Hertogenbosch, Malmberg.
- Nuttin, J. (1981). *Psychologie*. Leuven, Wouters. 404 p.

- Orlebeke, J.F. et al. (1981-1989). *Compendium van de psychologie. Deel 1-10*. Muiderberg: Coutinho.
- Praag, van, H. (1958). *Psychologie in theorie en praktijk*. Zeist/Antwerpen, De Haan/Standaard. Phoenix pocket. 160 p.
- Rigter, J. (1992-1998). *Psychologie voor de praktijk*. Bussum, Coutinho. 394 p.
- Rigter, J. (1996-2002). *Het palet van de psychologie, Stromingen en hun toepassingen in de hulpverlening*. Bussum, Coutinho. 404 p. (+ short manual for teachers)
- Roels, F. (1934-1947). *Handboek der psychologie. Deel: I-II: Algemeene psychologie. III: Genetische psychologie (eerste deel): psychologie der rijpende jeugd. IV: Genetische psychologie (tweede deel): kinderpsychologie (de eerste kindsheid). V: Genetische psychologie (derde deel): kinderpsychologie (de tweede kindsheid)*. Utrecht, Dekker en Van de Vegt.
- Rombouts, Fr. (1925-1939). *Zielkundige begrippen: een inleiding in de psychologie*. Tilburg, Drukkerij van het R.K. Jongensweeshuis. VIII + 197 p.
- Roorda. (1849). *Zielkunde of beschouwing van den mensch als bezielde wezen*. Leeuwarden, Suringat. 176 p.
- Ruarus, D.G., Raalte, C.R., Hart, W.A. & Dantzig, van, A. (1954-1958). *Psychologie voor de praktijk*. Leiden, Stenfert Kroese. 848 p.
- Schouppe, H. (1998). *Psychologie in kaart gebracht*. Utrecht. Antwerpen, Het Spectrum.
- Schouppe, H. (2006). *Algemene psychologie: Een inleiding in de functieleer*. Assen, Van Gorcum. 228 p.
- Schreuder Peters R.P.I.J. & Boomkamp, J.W. (1994-2004). *Psychologie de hoofdzaak, basisboek*. Wolters Noordhoff / Bruna. 244 p.
- Soonius, J. (1992). *Psychologie in leven en wetenschap*. Baarn, Nelissen. 343 p.
- Soonius, J. (2005). *Psychologie in hoofdlijnen. Een overzicht van deelgebieden*. Baarn, Nelissen. 296 p.
- Soudijn, K (1990). *Psychologie à la carte*. Amsterdam/Lisse, Swets & Zeitlinger. 208 p.
- Starr, B. (1978). *Psychologie voor verpleegkundigen*. Sint-Stevens-Woluwe, Elsevier. 205 p.
- Verhulst, J.C.R.M. (1985). *Algemene psychologie voor onderwijsgeevenden*. Groningen, Wolters-Noordhoff. 270 p.
- Verhulst, J.C.R.M. (1990). *Psychologie voor dienstverleners*. Groningen, Wolters Noordhoff
- Verhulst, J.C.R.M. (2002). *Algemene psychologie voor de gezondheidszorg*. Groningen, Wolters Noordhoff. 275 p.
- Verstraten, Fr. (2006). *Psychologie in een notendop. Alles wat je altijd al wilde weten over psychologie*. Amsterdam, Bakker Prometheus Vassaluci. 202 p.
- Vingerhoets, A. et al. (1995). *Psychologie in de gezondheidszorg. Een praktijkoriëntatie*. Houten, Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum. 430 p.
- Zwanenburg, S. (1926). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Utrecht, Oosthoek. 238 p.

Appendix: Translations

- Beloff, J. & Scheltens, J (1976). *Overzicht van de moderne psychologie*. Utrecht: Spectrum, Aula-boeken 571.
- Beneke, E. (1864). *Beneke's Zielkunde: voor onderwijzers bewerkt / naar den derden druk uit het Hoogduitsch vertaald*. Amsterdam, Brinkman. 267 p.
- Butler, G., McManus, Fr. (2003). *Psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum. Original: Psychology. 176 p.
- Cash, A (2004). *Psychologie voor dummies*. Pearson Education Benelux / Bruna boeken. 395 p.
- Demal, W. (1952). *Psychologie in de zielzorg*. Roermond/Maaseik, Romen en Zonen. 343 p.
- Dirks, H. (1962). *Handboek der psychologie. 2 delen*. Baarn, Bosch en Keuning. 400 p.
- Geldard, F.A. (1970-1973). *Handboek psychologie (2 vols)*. Utrecht; Antwerpen: Het Spectrum Reeks: Aula-boeken. 435 + 436 p.
- Gleitman, H. et al. (1987-1993). *Inleiding in de psychologie. Deel 1-9*. (with tutorial and audiocassettes). Heerlen, Open Universiteit. 30 + 142 + 228 + 64 + 131 + 149 + 177 + 112 + 79 = 1141 p.
- Herbert, M. (1984). *Psychologie voor sociale beroepen*. 's-Gravenhage, Vuga.
- James, W. (1992). *De hoofdsom van de psychologie*. Amsterdam, Swets & Zeitlinger. 272 p.
- Legewie, H. & Ehlers, W. (1974). *Moderne psychologie*. Naarden: Strengholt.
- Lersch, Ph. (1974). *Algemene Psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum, Aulapocket. 703 p.
- Mander, A.E. (1948). *Psychologie voor iedereen*. Amsterdam: Luitingh. 104 p.
- Morf, G. (1967). *Inleiding tot de psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum.
- Morgan, R.L. (1975-2003). *Hedendaagse psychologie: een leer- en werkboek voor individueel gebruik en gebruik in groepen*. Utrecht, Lemma / 's-Gravenhage, VUGA / Utrecht, Tijdstroom. 500 p.
- Mueller, F.L. (1966). *De hedendaagse psychologie*. Utrecht, Spectrum, Aula-boeken 292.
- Nicholson, J. (1978). *Praktische psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum, Prismaboek. 192 p.
- Peterson, K. (1992, 1994). *Prisma van de psychologie*. Het Spectrum.
- Roediger, H.L. et al. (1998-2003). *Psychologie: een inleiding*. (with study guide). Gent, Academia Press. 916 + 300 p.
- Woodworth, R.S. & Marquis, D.G. (1951). *Psychologie*. Utrecht, Het Spectrum. 693 p.
- Zimbardo, Ph. et al. (2005). *Psychologie een inleiding*. Pearson Education Benelux.