

VU Research Portal

ITHAKA gaf je de reis

van Oeveren, C.D.P.

2019

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

van Oeveren, C. D. P. (2019). *ITHAKA gaf je de reis: Op weg naar reflectie op het eigene en het vreemde in het literatuuronderwijs klassieke talen.* [, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam].

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Summary

Within the curriculum for the school subjects of Greek and Latin Languages and Culture (GLLC), *reflection on the self and other* has been a main educational objective since the 1970s. The vast majority of classic language teachers subscribe to this objective, but the actual form and shape of implementation into the daily educational practice has failed to materialise properly, as yet. The present study aimed to solve the longstanding gap between the theory of the school subject (the GLLC curriculum as intended) and the educational practice of the school subject (the GLLC curriculum as implemented). The research question was: *Which design criteria must a disciplinary instructional instrument for GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection fulfil in order to bridge the gap between the intended and implemented curricula?*

To answer this question, an educational design study was conducted within the domain of curriculum development. The structure of this thesis follows the various stages in this type of investigation. Context and problem analyses were conducted in the preliminary study. Based on a theoretical review, a conceptual framework was developed. In this thesis, this framework comprises two parts. In Part A (Chapters 2 and 3), six preliminary design criteria for integrated literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection were determined on the basis of research into reading and associated instructional methods (Chapter 2), as well as a review of the role of literary texts in the development of intercultural awareness (Chapter 3). In Part B (Chapter 4), these design criteria have subsequently been specified in terms of disciplinary content on the basis of the objectives, which have been made explicit in the final attainment targets – the intended GLLC curriculum. This specification eventually rendered three design criteria as the basis for a implemented curriculum for integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection. These three design criteria were concretised into a disciplinary instructional instrument whereby teachers could put the curriculum into daily practice. In collaboration with GLLC teachers, successive versions of (elements of) this instrument were tested in four development studies. These are discussed in Part C (Chapters 5-10). The main research question is answered in Chapter 11, which also includes the evaluation of the research design and recommendations for further investigation. A summary per chapter is provided below.

Problem analysis - Chapter 1

Chapter 1 provides the answer to the question of which factors within the current curricula for Greek Language and Literature (GLL) and Latin Language and Literature (LLL) stand in the way of teachers delivering an integrated literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection. Research into curriculum design helped analyse this problem.

Classic language teachers have two official curriculum products that should help them deliver education for Latin and Greek: the examination programmes and the national final (school-leaving) examinations for GLL and LLL. The examination programmes reflect the content of the intended curriculum. The national examinations are the only official curriculum products for assessments within the implemented, perceived curriculum. The class methods for the senior years are publications by educational publishers and, therefore, not official curriculum products. Moreover, they provide the teachers with little reference on the actual design of the senior GLLC curriculum. That is why teachers

in the senior years mostly default to the solution of making their classes coincide with the shape and form of the national final examinations. The national final examinations are thus the most guiding representation for the delivery of both the school and final examination programmes within the GLLC curriculum right now. Given the national examinations' emphasis on language and text comprehension at the surface level, these have the teachers' primary focus. Other disciplinary objectives that do come to the fore in the examination programmes for GLL and LLL, e.g. contextualisation, reception, actualisation and personal reflection, receive far less attention. It seems that the current educational practice is (perhaps as a consequence) far more about delivering a *combination* of much language and little culture than the *integration* of language and culture. This explains why integrated literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection often fails to materialise.

Part A - Chapters 2 and 3

Part A of this dissertation provides the theoretical justification of the design criteria as foundations for a implemented, perceived GLLC curriculum. These emerged from a study of reading and associated instructional methods (Chapter 2) and of the role of literary texts in the development of intercultural awareness both in- and outside the educational setting (Chapter 3). Partial Question 1 was: *Which design criteria follow from research into reading and associated instructional methods on the one hand, and from research into literature and associated instructional methods on the other, as foundations for a implemented, perceived curriculum for integrated GLLC education aimed at self- and other-reflection?*

As an answer to this partial question, six preliminary design criteria were formulated in Part A:

A GLLC teacher gives form and shape to an integrated literary education aimed at reflection on the self and other by:

- 1) shaping the reading process before, during and after reading
 - a) Before reading: focusing on an outline of the basis of the text
 - b) During reading: emphasising the construction of the text basis by making certain extracts more accessible
 - c) After reading: concentrating on the summary of the entire text basis and subsequently on the integration with other knowledge for (further) integration with the reader's pre-existing knowledge and, as such, on the creation of a rich(er) situation model
- 2) approaching the reading process as an interaction between bottom-up and top-down reading processes
- 3) providing declarative, procedural, conditional language and cultural information focused on the content of the text throughout the reading process
- 4) paying attention to culture-specific and general cultural learning throughout the reading process
- 5) paying attention to both *effereent* and *aesthetic* reading throughout the reading process
- 6) encouraging dialogue between the student and the text, as well as with others about the text throughout the reading process

Design criteria 1-3 were based on research into reading and associated instructional methods. Design criteria 4 and 5 were based on research into the possibilities of creating or stimulating intercultural awareness through the reading of literary texts in- and outside the educational setting. Design criterion 6 emerged from both approaches into the design of text comprehension education and literary education aimed at intercultural awareness.

Part B - Chapter 4

The six design criteria determined in Part A, however, were not adoptable in the GLLC educational practice as yet. They were subsequently specified in terms of disciplinary content on the basis of the objectives for GLLC as specified in the intended, written curriculum. This process is described in Part B (Chapter 4) of the thesis. Part B provided an answer to the second partial question: *Which design criteria follow from the application of the design criteria established in Part A to the disciplinary objectives for GLLC as determined in the intended, written curriculum for GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection?*

The GLLC objectives were used to add disciplinary content to Part A's first four design criteria, which were then combined into design criterion 1. These objectives of the intended, written GLLC curriculum are text unlocking, contextualisation, reception, actualisation and personal reflection. A Latin or Greek text forms the link between these different objectives. All of the objectives were incorporated in a process-based approach to the reading process. To this end, the reading process was divided into three stages: before, during and after reading. Based on design criterion 1, the GLLC teachers shape the reading process and determine the place of each of the objectives in this process.

A GLLC teacher gives form and shape to integrated literary education aimed at reflection on the self and other by:

- 1) taking the content of the entire Latin or Greek text as a guideline for a journey that starts with unlocking the text and contextualization, and ends with personal reflection possibly via reception or actualisation:
 - a. Before reading: focusing on the comprehension of the global content of the entire text
 - b. During reading: emphasised comprehension of the text content at the word, sentence and paragraph levels in relation to the entire text
 - c. After reading:
 - I. summarising the entire text
 - II. demonstrating the understanding of the other through comprehension of the text content within its context (contextualisation)
 - III. conducting an the evaluation of the other through the perspective of another (reception) or different perspective (actualisation)
 - IV. emphasising the understanding of the self vis-à-vis the other (personal reflection)

Design criterion 5 that emerged from Part A, which is to pay attention to both *effere* and *aesthetic* reading throughout the reading process, was concretised in Part B by determining a theme. In GLLC literary education, assigning a theme to a text renders connections in different ways. Firstly, determining an appropriate theme serves to connect the various disciplinary objectives and the Latin or Greek text. To this end, a teacher decides on a theme that corresponds to the content of the entire text within the context of antiquity. This theme subsequently directs the teacher's choices in the content-specific information they provide. In that sense, the process of deciding on a theme can also help to break the teachers' focus on language. Secondly, the choice of a theme enables the teacher to make the link between the text and the student explicit. A theme that aligns with an instructional approach aimed at intercultural awareness has meaning outside the context of antiquity and allows

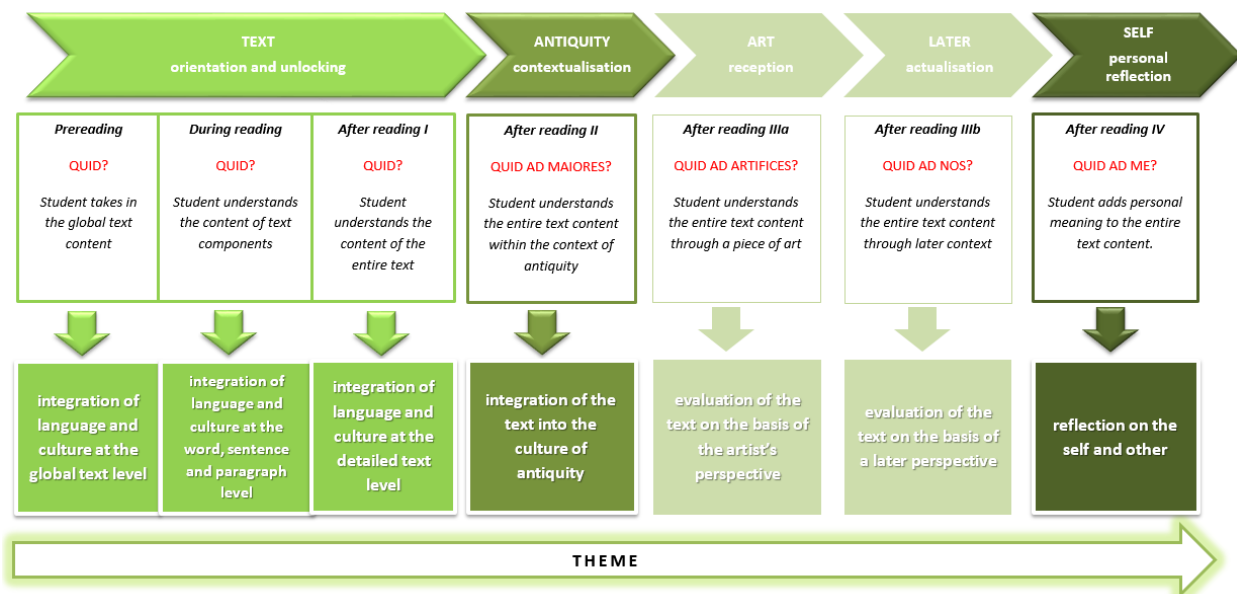
the student to reflect on the text in context personally. Theme-based literary education ensures that the implemented curriculum is concentrated on topics that are valuable, in terms of both disciplinary content and education. They also provide a focus for the teacher's choices in disciplinary content. Design criterion 2 was formulated as follows:

A GLLC teacher gives form and shape to integrated literary education aimed at reflection on the self and other by:

- 2) deciding on a theme that aligns with the content of the text, the student's world, disciplinary and educational objectives and determines the focus of the journey towards personal reflection throughout the reading process.

Design criteria 1 and 2 have been visualised in a model for GLLC literary education: the ITHAKA model (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Model for GLLC literature education (ITHAKA model)



The concretisation in Part B did not alter Part A's design criterion 6. It has been included as the third design criterion for a implemented, perceived curriculum for GLLC:

A GLLC teacher gives form and shape to integrated literary education aimed at reflection on the self and other by:

- 3) encouraging dialogue between the student and the text, as well as with others on the text throughout the reading process.

Part C - Chapters 5-10

The three design criteria that emerged in Part B were concretised into a disciplinary instructional instrument: the ITHAKA instrument. Various groups of GLLC teachers used the successive versions of (components of) this ITHAKA instrument in the empirical stage of this study to give form and shape to the focus on the self- and other-reflection in their literary education. Based on their evaluation of the curriculum materials and their experiences, the third partial research question answered in Part C (Chapters 5-10) was: *What is the true usability and effectiveness of the design criteria for a*

implemented, perceived curriculum for the implemented, operational curriculum in terms of the design of integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection?

- **Chapter 5: Model of the educational design study**

The general research design was described in Chapter 5. The research approach that was adopted concerned an educational design study within the curriculum domain. Successive versions of (parts of) the ITHAKA instrument were tested in four development studies. In dialogue with GLLC teachers, the researcher continuously sought compelling arguments to determine the usability and effectiveness of the disciplinary instructional instrument. The close collaboration with teachers throughout this study was necessary to ensure that the instrument in development would meet the requirements of the educational system in which it had to function – besides the fact that teachers have a pivotal role in educational innovation.

In this study, priority was given to the development of a ‘stable’ version of the disciplinary instructional instrument to be used by teachers. Results of students were not involved in the study, except for when the participating teachers included their observations about these results in their personal evaluations of this approach. In each of the four development studies, the available data were formatively evaluated on the basis of qualitative analyses, which made it possible to evaluate and make further adaptations to the successive versions of the ITHAKA instrument.

The setting of the study increasingly resembled the reality of the educational practice over the course of the four studies as the strongly controlled context in Studies I and II developed into a progressively unrestrained context in Studies III and IV. In Study I (Chapters 6 and 7), three different focus groups led by the researchers considered the conditions for a thematic reading process in GLLC. In Study II (Chapter 8), four of the researcher's direct school colleagues were involved. The researcher trained these GLLC teachers in the use of version A of the ITHAKA instrument. Together with the researcher, they also decided on a theme and thematic learning goals. They themselves shaped and formed the reading process in the classroom. In Study III (Chapter 9), 16 teachers working in other schools were trained by the researcher in the use of version B. In Study IV, version C of the ITHAKA instrument was tested by yet another group of 13 teachers. The latter received the details of the ITHAKA instrument (version C) only in writing, explaining the points of departure for the approach and the approach itself.

- **Chapter 6 - Study IA**

Study I comprised two partial studies. Study IA was to investigate whether teachers were able to set thematic learning objectives based on version A of the ITHAKA instrument. It involved 28 teachers in two focus groups led by the researcher. The teachers brought their own text, decided on an associated theme, composed the relevant learning goals and discussed their experience with the process in a group interview.

Study IA clearly demonstrated that GLLC teachers distinguish two disciplinary objectives for determining the other as opposed to the self, namely the unlocking of the text and the subsequent contextualisation. The teachers in Study IA also made an explicit distinction between actualisation and personal reflection. They believed personal reflection not to be an automatic consequence or part of actualisation, but a disciplinary objective in its own right.

The teachers participating in Study IA subscribed to the importance of thematic reading, as they believed it would render a more focused reading process. They also recognised their lack of experience with thematic reading and their need for more support in gearing their education to thematic learning goals. The analysis of the learning goals they composed showed that the help provided with the composition of these objectives within the ITHAKA instrument (version A) itself was inadequate. For that reason, Study IB was conducted.

- **Chapter 7 - Study IB**

Study IB looked into the disciplinary instructional criteria for thematic learning goals in integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection. The aim was to use the result of IB to design a tool for teachers that would help them determine a theme and relevant learning goals. Five direct colleagues and the researcher's daily supervisor participated in Study IB. Based on the analysis of the thematic learning goals composed by the teachers in Study IA, as well as a focus group interview on these goals, eight disciplinary instructional criteria for the determination of a theme were defined and divided into three categories: focusing on the text, emphasising the disciplinary objectives, and concentrating on the student.

- **Chapter 8 - Study II**

In Study II, the instructional concretisation of design criteria 1 to 3 were tested by investigating in what sense the teachers working in the same school as the researcher believed the ITHAKA instrument (version A) to be truly useable and effective for the design and implementation of integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection.

In the ITHAKA instrument, the dialogue between the student and the text (design criterion 3) prior to their reading begins when the teacher focuses on explicating the global text content and introducing a theme (design criterion 1a and 2). During and after reading, the class dialogue with the text (design criterion 3) within the theme is primarily aimed at determining the text basis (design criterion 1b and 2). The ITHAKA instrument includes a summarising assignment as the first step after reading. This assignment gives the student the opportunity to take in the entire text that was just unlocked immediately after reading (design criterion 1c-I). Once the text basis has been determined, the dialogue with and about the entire text continues. This continued dialogue after reading (design criterion 3) is aimed at giving every student the possibility to construe an as rich as possible situation model, which they integrate with the pre-existing knowledge they acquired. Within the ITHAKA instrument, the teacher gives actual shape and form to this dialogue with the text using *the step-by-step plan for the design and execution of a text assignment*. In this text assignment, the student takes into account the entire text within the theme according to various disciplinary objectives (design criteria 1cII-IV and 2).

To direct the dialogue between the text, student and learning environment (design criterion 3) from the beginning of the reading process, the teacher ideally designs a text assignment in preparation of the class. For the students, this text assignment should be an open and complex task that allows for multiple solutions. The students must bring these solutions to the fore through the creation of an actual, joint product. In the execution of the assignment, the student must first relate to the text within the theme individually, before they do so jointly with at least one other student and, finally, in a conversation with the rest of the class under the guidance of the teacher.

The results of Study II showed that the ITHAKA instrument's version A was usable and effective in practice, as three of the four teachers managed to design a thematic learning track which eventually culminated in self- and other-reflection in the text assignment. It was mostly contextualisation that was used to introduce the theme during the reading process. The primary focus during reading was on the unlocking of the language of the text. Just one teacher administered a summarising assignment, and this was also the only moment in the various series of classes that the disciplinary objective of reception was pursued. The text assignments met the criteria for design and execution, but the assignment of one of the four teachers highly focused on the cultural framework transgressing the text rather than on the theme. A proper time planning for the design and execution proved to be an important issue, both during the preparation and the reading process itself. The teachers were content with the involvement of the students and the fact that the text was not dismissed after translation. They also indicated that this approach might contribute to the appreciation of GLLC.

- **Chapter 9 - Study III**

Study III examined what the teachers believed to be the true usability and effectiveness of the ITHAKA instrument (version B) for the design and implementation of integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection after training by the researcher. The results of Study III showed that version B was largely useable and effective. Before and during reading in 19 of the 24 test rounds, the theme received attention. In 23 test rounds, the text assignment involved the contextualisation of, and personal reflection on, the text within the theme. A full thematic learning track during the reading process emerged in 16 test rounds: the teachers in these test rounds referred to the theme in all stages of the reading process, including those of contextualisation and personal reflection in the text assignment. This demonstrated that most teachers had been able to use the ITHAKA instrument (version B) to design a text assignment that led to self- and other-reflection. For the comprehension of the text and the theme, the teachers pursued various disciplinary objectives: this mainly concerned contextualisation before and during reading with more focus on actualisation and personal reflection after reading.

The criteria for the instructional design in the after-reading stage hardly required modification after Study III. A summarising assignment formed part of the reading process in more than 50% of the test rounds. For the larger part, the text assignments fulfilled the criteria for design and execution. The teachers were content with the fruits of their classes based on the disciplinary instructional instrument. They believed that the *quid*-questions provided a clear framework and felt that the preparations for their classes had improved. They were also satisfied with their own professionalisation and thought that their students had a better understanding of the translated texts. To help students gain a better grasp, they said, it was important to explain the objective of this approach.

The main bottleneck was time, both in making the preparations and the executions. The teachers were expected to invest a great amount of time in the design of the classes and the text assignment. This way of working also required planning skills in order to be able to implement all of the stages of the reading process in the available period, including the text assignment.

- **Chapter 10 - Study IV**

Study III assessed the true usability and effectiveness of the ITHAKA instrument (version C) for the design and implementation of integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection by means of written curriculum materials. The results of Study IV showed that, for the larger part, version C of the disciplinary instructional instrument was useable and effective to this end without any training by the researcher.

Most of the teachers addressed the theme in the various stages of the reading process, but in only nine of the 20 test rounds did they conceive a full thematic learning track. Conforming to a thematic learning track that would lead to self- and other-reflection proved to be a challenge, especially after reading: in six text assignments, the link with the text was not explicitly retained. The focus in these assignments had been on the theme and the text that had been read faded into the background.

For the students' comprehension of the text and the theme, the teachers focused primarily on contextualisation before and during reading. In ten test rounds, the contextualisation of the text within the theme had already taken place during reading.

The (more) explicit place of the summarising assignment in version C of the ITHAKA instrument seemed to have contributed to the teachers asking the students to summarise in any which way in 19 of the test rounds. For the larger part, the text assignments fulfilled the criteria for design and execution. The importance of the class conversation to finalise the reading process required more attention in the curriculum materials. Two other issues also came to the fore as bottlenecks. Firstly, the teachers had found that the preparations took quite some time. This was partly due to the extensiveness of the materials the researcher supplied, although they did find them clear and well-considered. Secondly, some students had not grasped the reason as to why they had worked with the texts in this way. For advantages of the method, the teachers mentioned the variety in the subject matter and the motivation of their students. They also liked the fact that, due to the pursuit of various disciplinary objectives, the content of the text continued to receive attention after reading.

Chapter 11 - Conclusion and discussion

In Chapter 1, a gap was observed between the curriculum for integrated GLLC literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection as intended and implemented. Literary education that is designed on the basis of the three design criteria may bridge this gap. With the ITHAKA instrument, GLLC teachers have a theoretically justified and empirically tested disciplinary instructional instrument to design and implement integrated literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection.

This study found that, in the reflection on the other, the unlocking of a text is a prerequisite for the contextualisation of the entire text. It was also observed that reception and actualisation could be applied to have a student evaluate the other. Personal reflection, on the other hand, only emerges when a student relates the text to their own beliefs. This means that, in literary education, the student's intercultural awareness does not so much arise from reflection on the self and other as from reflection on the self *via* the other.

This study also revealed that regarding the design of literary education aimed at intercultural awareness, it is essential to determine a theme for the text that is valuable in terms of both disciplinary

content and education. Within literary education aimed at intercultural awareness, a theme provides a content-based link between disciplinary objectives and educational goals, between the different disciplinary objectives themselves, and between the text in context and the student's world. The teachers involved in the four developmental studies of this research have confirmed that the determination of a theme gave them a content-based focus in class and helped them make well-founded choices in the content-related information they would provide.

The wide implementation of this working method in the educational practice requires peer support, especially in the design of the stage after reading. The explicit and intensive focus on this stage forms the greatest difference between the traditional approach in GLLC literary education and the method proposed in this study, apart from thematic reading. The ITHAKA instrument's guidelines for making purposeful choices – in the provision of text-relevant information during the reading process, for theme-based working and for the shape and form of the dialogue between student, text and learning environment – are intended not only to deepen the comprehension of a text through focus, but also to give teachers the opportunity to shape the after-reading stage in practice. On the other hand, the development studies have shown that, according to the teachers involved, the preparations for this stage takes quite some time and its implementation is sensitive to class cancellations. The importance of schooling in this way of teaching was also mentioned by the teachers. They felt the need to be able to consult with others, not only an expert but also with fellow GLLC teachers, in order to give shape and form to this instructional approach. To design the entire journey, it is essential, therefore, that teachers have sufficient time for development or sufficient disciplinary support.

In its 2010 report *Het geheim van de blauwe broer*, the Fact-Finding Commission for Classical Languages summarised the problems in GLLC education as:

"In the Commission's view, therefore, language and culture both deserve attention, and preferably in combination. This view fully coincides with the intended educational objectives and attainment targets for Classical Languages. The problems lie mainly in the *practical implementation* of these goals in the curriculum." (Kroon & Sluiter, 2010, p. 19, translated)

The design criteria for the implemented curriculum determined in this study equips GLLC teachers with the tools whereby they can put integrated literary education aimed at self- and other-reflection into practice. The ITHAKA instrument provides a possible concretisation. The practical implementation of the educational objectives for GLLC this study pursued has hereby been realised.