**"You can't rely on this text"**

**Reading biographical text in history lesson as undermining educational text scheme**

Educational thinker, Yoram Harpaz, wrote in 2009 a statement that seems puzzling: “People learn when they are upset” (Harpaz, 2009; See also Harpaz, 2014). In the educational world, it is common to operate on the basis of an opposite assumption, namely that people better learn in content conditions. Based on this latter hypothesis, educational systems invest in developing satisfying learning conditions, communicative curricula, clear presentations, individual attention and to students well-being. Why, if so did Harpaz argue that people learn when they are upset?

To dispel this puzzling statement Harpaz presents the concept of “undermining strategy.” According to Harpaz Piaget believes that satisfied people have cognitive stability and only when it is destabilized can learning occur (Piaget, 1976). This cognitive destabilization develops meaningful learning of new knowledge, independent and critical thinking. His goal in presenting his puzzling statement is to destabilize his readers' conceptions that people learn when they are content and cause them to learn in a new way (Harpaz, 2014; Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Fosnot & Perry, 2005).

However, even if people learn when they are upset, they presumably prefer to feel satisfied. In his article, "An answer to the question: What is Enlightenment?"  Immanuel Kant attempts to explain why many people avoid actions leading to intellectual independence.

It is so convenient to be immature! If I have a book to have understanding in place of me, a spiritual adviser to have a conscience for me, a doctor to judge my diet for me, and so on, I need not make any efforts at all. I need not think, so long as I can pay; others will soon enough take the tiresome job over for me. The guardians who have kindly taken upon themselves the work of supervision will soon see to it that by far the largest part of mankind (including the entire fair sex) should consider the step forward to maturity not only as difficult but also as highly dangerous (Kant, 1784).

If we convert Kant’s concepts into Piagetian terms we can argue that a feeling of discomfort that accompanies common schematic thinking causes many to avoid the requirement of enlightenment, “dare to know!” (“*sapere aude!*"). This avoidance of knowing is bolstered by “guardians,” that oversee humans and present the undermining as dangerous and difficult. Kant himself believes that an authoritative book prevents humans from intellectual maturity. This kind of a book written in an authoritative tone presents humans from independent thinking and enhances in the readers a feeling that undermines the book’s content, are not only difficult but dangerous.

More than two-hundred-years have passed since Kant wrote his article on enlightenment. Many of the guardians of whom he spoke have been destabilized (e.g. the church) and even dismantled (e.g. the feudalism). In contrast, in educational settings the authoritative text has remained stable and the questioning of it still arouses to this very day resistance (Paxton, 1999; Crismore, 1984; Luke, de Castell & Luke, 1989; Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Wineburg, 1991; Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Bain, 2006). David Olson’s research the compares the status of textbooks in contemporary societies to the status of the ritual speech in traditional societies, exemplifies this ongoing phenomenon of texts having an authoritative power over readers. Olson holds that despite the inherent structural differences between textbooks and ritual speech, exists a strong similarity in the public status of these two ways of expression. In both cases, readers and listeners view the content as trustworthy and accurate, due to either the concealed source of the textbook or the transcendental appearance of the speech (Olson, 1989).

Other studies also demonstrate a close linkage between the properties of the text and reader's treatment of it as authoritative: the distance between reader and writer bestows a commanding power to the text. The disengagement of the writer from the body of the text gives the impression as if the text God given. The author is framed as all knowing. In addition, the authoritative status with which the text is viewed results from the linear, simplified historical development that appears as an absolute truth (Olson, 1989; Podeh, 2000; Peled- Elhanan, 2011, 2012; Bain, 2006)

The focus of this article is on examining what effect biographical texts, in which the protagonist is either speaker or clearly apparent, will have on high school students reading of the text? Will these biographical texts with their forthcoming presentation of the author cause the undermining of students learning of history or of their view of the text as authoritative?

The educational text, the biographical text

In school history classes teachers often use educationally rendered materials, such as textbooks, textual handouts, or texts that appear in board presentations (Bain, 2006; Neumann, 2010). Frequently students are exposed to these kind of texts multiple times within one lesson.

The biographical texts, which is seldomly used in class, received different definition in the research literature (Lee, 2009, Caine, 2010). For our use, we will define the biographical text as a literal text that presents the lifestory of a single person, from his or her stance. This is also true to texts which are not autobiographical which, as Lee argues, present the past from the protagonist's point of view.

For the sake of this study we will distinguish between the common educational text (e.g. textbook) and the biographical text along four major categories: Textual goals; author-protagonist relationship; author-reader relationship; the historical protagonist status (Table 1).

*Textual goals*

Frequently, the educational texts used in history classes are focused on preparing students for the final exam.  Researchers describe one of the prominent types of the educational texts, the textbook, as  a “considerable text”. Its goal is to lead students to understand the historical events and comfortably memorize them in an effective manner (Armbruster, 1984; Back, McKeown & Gromoll, 1989, Paxton, 1997). Based on these goals, the educational texts are formulated in chronological, linear and causal form. They usually contain only elements that progress the description of the development of the historical events, and therefore are absent of elements such as protagonist emotions or landscape portrayals.

The overall goal of the biographical genre is narrating the story of human-beings. The biographical genre has several sub- genres, which implicate different writing goals. For example, political biographies focus on public implications of the protagonist’s actions (e.g.Kershaw, 2008; Best, 2001; Shapira, 2014), while popular biographies focus on the personal life of the protagonist (e.g.Trip, 2005; Fuegi, 2002).  A different distinction among the goals of the biographical genre can be between publicly well-known figures (e.g.Best, 2001; Kershaw, 2008) and biographies that focus on the life of ordinary men and women (e.g.Hillasum, 2002; Ginzburg, 2005; Fallada, 2014). It is also possible to distinguish between types of biography according to disciplinary lines, and to view them as psychological (e.g. Perry, 1991, Wolfenstein, 1989), literary (e.g.Zweig, 2011; Fallada, 2014 ) or historical biographies (e.g. Kershaw, 2008; Best, 2001; Ginzburg, 2005). These examples demonstrate the variety of goals that motivate writers of biography in different sub-genres.

*Author- protagonist relationships*

Assuming that writer's opinion exists in each text, we can argue that in the educational text this position is intentionally blurring. Paxton claimed that textbooks creating blurry distance between the writer and the protagonist by using third person wording, and by presenting the events with no emotional engagement of the narrator. The fact that many textbooks have multiple authors contributes to create the distance between the writer and the protagonist (Paxton, 1997, 1999, 2002(.

In contrast, the biographical text is characterized in clear closeness between the writer and the protagonist. Writing biography describes in the research literature as a process of almost intimate nearing of the author to his protagonist, to the level of questioning the reliability of biographical text (Banner, 2009; Nasaw, 2009; Lee, 2009; Caine, 2010; Leckie, 2004). This closeness does not necessarily involve affection or appreciation of the author to character (e.g. Kershaw, 2008; Mack Smith, 1981), but still writing a biography is based on big involvement of the writer in the life details of its protagonist. Reading in biographical literature detects different patterns of dealing with the issue of close relationship with the protagonist. Those types located on axis that goes between clear and declared emotions expressions of the writer to the biographical figure (e.g. Omer, 1997) to writing that evidencing the clear efforts to avoid detecting a personal emotional connection between the author and the object of writing (e.g. Elon, 1975). But, even when biographers trying to create a distance between themselves and the figures on which they writing, they express in a certain way their connections with the protagonist (Tuchman, 2011).

*Author-reader relationships*

In their description of the triangular relationship between writer, reader and text, Moffett and McElheney argue that the connection between the writer and the reader is effected of the way in which the author represents the situation. When the author express distancing from the events on which he writes, for example through using third person, he creates a distance also between him and the reader (Moffett & McElheney, 1966). According to this we can argue that the rhetoric of educational text creates distance between writer reader text. This claim receives reinforcement in the study of Crismore, that deals with the rhetorical aspects of the educational text. She argues that despite the changes in patterns of textbooks writing over the years, writers of textbooks still adhere anonymous writing style and inconclusive tone, and this way preventing a possible dialogue between the reader and the writer of the text (Crismore, 1989). Focusing on history educational texts paints a similar picture, that despite the changes that occurred in history textbooks over the years, they are still characterized by a decisive ton, and in distantly originating in presenting the writer character as anonymous and all knowing (Porat, 2001).

In the biographical text, on the other hand, there is a clear presence of the author. In some cases, this presence is declared and pronounced directly or through statements a clear writing style. In other cases, the writer's dominance is less clear, but his figure reflects in his writing style and in his approach to the protagonist. The presence of the writer in the biographical text is central, that some researchers claim that every biography contains an autobiographical dimension, in which the writer presents his own life story through the descriptions of the protagonist (Tuchman, 2011; Hamilton, 2007; Leckie, 2004). The dominant presence of the author in the text serves as an infrastructure link between the reader and the writer of the text, and thus creates potential to dialogic space (Paxtone, 1997).

*Historical protagonist status*

Educational history texts rarely deal with historical figures. For example, a comparative analysis of the four Israeli textbooks dealing with Nationalism as historical phenomenon, indicates that three of them were mentioned in the Table of Contents just one human figure. In the text body, historical figures are mentioned from time to time, but usually treated in a limited and generally way (Naave & Vered, 2008; Domka, Urbach & Goldberg, 2008, Kovarsky, 2014). In the fourth book some historical figures are referenced in the outline, but most of them are mention in the text body only through footnotes (Aviely- Tabibian, 2008). All textbooks describing historical phenomena such as wars, political measures or ideological developments. About all these there is virtually no reference to human beings that cause or was involved in those historical phenomena.

 Reading in two American history textbooks dealing with the history of the United States from the colonial era to the end of the twentieth century (total of around 400 years) arose similar but not identical picture. The table of contents in both includes explicit references to historical persons (36 persons in one book, 12 persons on the other one), almost all of them are presidents of the United States that took part in historical events like wars, revolutions or economic and civilian crises. In the text body, historical figures mention through pictures or under titles like "Faces of history", "Key player" or "Personal voice". From those windows of information students can get a brief description of historical figures that connected to the events discussed in the chapter they learn (Ayers, Schulzinger, Teja & White, 2007;\_\_\_\_\_\_). Despite the wider attention of the American textbooks to the historical figure we assert that the absent of historical descriptions from the figure view point is common to textbooks of both countries, and that like the Israeli textbooks, even if in less bluntly way, the Americans place the historical figures on the rim of the text.

Perhaps it is needless to note that biography puts historic character in the center of the text. We can find a symbolic expression to this in the decision of many biography researcher to use images including particularly prominent human element while trying to define biography. Thus, for example, describes David Nasaw's the biography genre as "Unloved stepchild, occasionally but grudgingly let in the door, more often shut outside with the riffraff." (Nasaw 2009, p. 573). Another human aspect of biography we can find in the words of Michael Benton that describe it as "The Cinderella of the literary studies" (Benton, 2005). We think that the decision of those and many other biography researchers to describe the biographical genre by using human images like Cinderella or the unloved stepchild reflect the declared and intensive dealing of biography with the human aspects of the historical events.

Table 1: The educational history text and the biographical text: key characteristic.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The biographical text | The educational text | Category |
| The life story of the historical figure | Description of historical events in alignment with the curriculum and educational tasks | *Textual goals* |
| Proximity: writer seems close to the object of writing | Distance: writer seems externally to the object of writing | *Author- protagonist relationships* |
| Proximity: writer present in the text | Distance: writer absent of the text | *Author-reader relationships*  |
| Present, standing in the core of the text.  | Absent, blurry or standing in the text margins | *Historical protagonist status* |

As we asserted earlier, most of the time students read during history lessons texts that suit the characteristics of the educational text, and perceives authorities. The intensive exposure to text that share similar character lead to establishment of thinking scheme for the phrase "educational text". In this situation, students expect to find in texts they read in history lessons the same character: practical and functional description of the historical events, writing style that indicates distance of the writer from both the subject and the reader, and absent or blurry of the historical figure.

The existence of that conceptual scheme about the character and the authority of the educational scheme is not just trivial matter. Researches indicates that difficulties of student to develop skills of historical thinking is largely an outcome of their adhering to the scheme of the educational text. Those researches shows that students tend to approach the historical text through scanning its content to find the facts and central prosses. They do not tend to look for bias, to find the writer opinions, or to doubt its reliability (Paxton, 1999; Wineburg, 2001; Bain, 2006).

Some researcher have suggested practices through which students can develop a critical attitude towards authoritative sources, and stressed the importance of working with primary and secondary sources according to history research methods (e.g. Bain, 2006; Wineburg, 2001; Waing & Robinson, 2010; Neumann, 2010). Other studies, discussed the educational effect of exposure to texts that do not comply the scheme of the educational text (not only in the study of history) have shown that exposing students to this kind of texts might increase the interest and involvement of students in the studying, through granting a new meaning to the studied materials (Egan, 1989; Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Fertig, 2003, 2008; Metsz, Klassen, McMillan, Clough & Olso, 2007). None of these studies deal with the impacts of undermining the scheme of the educational on the development of analytical and critical abilities of students as part of learning history.

Based on our claim that the biographical text exceeds of the educational text scheme and undermines it, we will examine the impact of this on studying patterns of history classes, focusing on interpretive and critical aspects of learning.

Partially typology of the biographical texts

In the article "The Revival of Narrative" Lawrence Stone distinguish between scientific history and narrative history. He argues that all the biographical genre is part of the narrative history, since it presents historical events in a descriptive way and focuses on the human aspects of history. In contrast, the scientific history is based on the study of historical documents out of critical approach, and shows the broad circumstances of historical events (Stone, 1979).

Based on the Stone distinction we ask to create a basic typology of biographical texts types that we used in the study (chart 1). We will distinguish between "scientific-biographical texts" and "narrative-biographical texts". The "scientific-biographical text" is based on academic research, backed with accurate footnotes, and written out of time perspective (Halamish, 2005), while it also contains narrative elements, like all biographies. The "narrative-biographical text" characterize by a clear emphasis of the descriptive elements and the writer's position in relation to the historical events and to the historical figure (Stone, 1979; Iggers, 1997).

Chart 1: partially typology of historiographic texts

This study focuses on the texts belonging to the three categories highlighted in the chart. As part of the research intervention, some students were exposed to scientific-biographical text, while the other part of them were exposed to narrative-biographical (See details below, under "Methodology").

**Methodology**

This study is based on a qualitative methodology with some quantitative tools (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In the qualitative approach, we used action-research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Nixon, 1987, Winret, 1988; Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). The central reason for our choice to use a qualitative methodology arouses from our intention to connect between the nature of the biography and the methodology with which we are investigate it. The qualitative method that is centered on human language and its interpretation is thus most fitting to the studying of the use of biographical texts and its influence on learning. The quantitative tools are used to both give background about students studying manners and at times to enhance our qualitative findings.

Participants and field

The data was collected in two state schools in Israel (Israel has a centralized education system), two classes per school (a total of four classes). The schools selected for participation in the study were selected based on the following criteria: A. State schools that follow the national history curriculum. B. The schools are non-selective in students admissions. C. Schools that prepare students for the national matriculation exam. D. co-ed schools. E. Classes that include average level students (non-gifted and not special-education classes).

 All classes were both audio and video taped. All lessons were part of preparing for the national matriculation test in history. The number of student participants in the study was 78 students all approximately 16-years of age. 58% were girls (45 students) 42% boys (33 students).

Historical event, historical figure and texts:

In the center of the research intervention stands historical event known as the "Uganda affaire". The sixth Zionist congress that took place in Basel in the summer of 1903 was particularly stormy. Benjamin Ze'ev Theodor Herzl (1840 – 1904), the founder and leader of the Zionist movement decided to arise up to discussion the British offer for Jewish settlement in East Africa, as a substitute for settlement in Israel. This discussion of Herzl sparked major controversy. Some of the congress Delegates looked at the British proposal as an unprecedented achievement of the Zionist movement and its leader, and asked to consider it positively. Others argued that even the fact that the issue brought up for discussion is an expression of defeatism and betrayal of Herzl and his supporters in the basic principles of Zionism. In between were Delegates that were challenged by the British offer. At certain stages of Congress, it seemed that the dispute may lead to the dismantling of the Zionist movement (Avineri, 2014).

The educational text dealing with this historical affair (see appendix 1) describes it in a way seems to be balanced. The historical event presented in this text from the perspective of a know-all and without a position writer. In the text, there is no reference to the characteristics of the figures or to the relationships between the characters. A deeper look on the text arise expressions to a pro-Herzl position, and to the support of the idea of Jewish settlement in Palestine. This tendency reflects, for example in the extensive reference to the reasons of the supporters of the British offer, alongside the relatively short reference to the reasons of its opponents. Moreover, the text emphasizes Zionist elements in Herzl's words, reinforcing his image as a trustee to the Zionist idea, despite his support for Ugandan program. The wide range of arguments presented on the text for and against Uganda plan indicate that it is designed to provide students with information and attitudes that will benefit them in dealing with exam questions that require factual knowledge and basic understanding of the course of events, entitled "Uganda affair". Therefore, it can be argued that the text includes the basic characteristics of the educational text.

All three biographical texts dealing with "Uganda affair" are distinct of the educational text by centering, openly and clearly, Herzl's figure in the text. Character description and method are changing from text to text: In the narrative-biographical text (see appendix 2 and 4) the author position regarding conflicts that stands in the center of the affair is clear, as well as the aspiration of authors introduce Herzl in a positive light. Another notable aspect of these texts are the emotions descriptions, and the mention of items of information that do not promote the plot. In these aspects, the narrative-biographical texts are differing from the conventional educational text.

The scientific-biographical text (see appendix 3) contains emotional descriptions, which distinct it from the educational text. On the other hand, it distinct from the narrative-biographical text in its academic style, that reflects in references to sources, and in cites from first sources. In this text, it is also possible to identify the author position, but this recognition needs an accurate and sensitive reading between the lines of the text.

During the research intervention, each group of students red different mix of texts, in a different sequence.

Data collection/ Study design

The data collected include audio and video records of observation and intervention lessons, field diaries, questionnaires filled by the students, and audio recordings of the interviews.

The study was carried out in six phases spread over a school year:

1. Background observations: The key investigator entered to four history lessons on each one of the classes (a total of sixteen hours of observation).
2. Preliminary questionnaires: Before reading the text the students filled a questionnaire that examined the level of prior knowledge and their early commentary about the affair (a total of 78 questionnaires).
3. Texts reading: Students read one of the four texts prepared for the research. The text was read aloud in the plenary group.
4. Post questionnaires: After reading the text each student answer a post questionnaire, that indicated aspects of knowledge, interpretation and criticism (Total of 78 questionnaires).
5. Group discussion: after filling the questionnaires a group discussion, moderated by research assistants took part. During this discussion, the student read another text dealing with the same historical affair.
6. Interviews: Four students of each class participated in a semi-structured interview (Total of 16 interviews)

Table 3: texts in classes

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Text** | **As first text** | **As second text** |
| Narrative biography 1 | Letters and diary fragments/ Herzl | 19 students | 23 students |
| Narrative biography 2 | Voice in the darkness/ Omer | 22 students | 19 students |
| Scientific biography  | Herzl/ Eylon | 23 students | 20 students |
| Textbook | Journey on time- Nationalism under test/ Avieli Tabibian | 14 students | 16 students |

 Analyze:

All the intervention records were full transcript. Two leading researchers and two research assistants red separately the texts, and wrote notes about the interaction in classes. Then, the readers met each other and discussed the main issues that came out. Subjects that repeated in notes of all four readers marked as base to categories in the code scheme. In several points in which we find disagreements in interpretation, decision about including or excluding a category in code scheme was taken based on discussion results. On the end of this prosses we found three central categories that became the base to data analyze:

1. Efficiency attributed to the text: What efficiency, if any, the students attribute to the text? What in the texts perceived to be useful for learning, and what in it perceived as non-beneficial for learning?
2. Objectivity attributed to the text: Does students notice the position of the author? how can they base their arguments? What significance, if any, they attach to the expressions of the author's position in the text?
3. Truth attributed to the text: Does students trust the content presented in the text as factual? What causes students to trust the content presented in the text as facts, and what leads them to doubt text's content?

Regard to each of those categories all data texts mapped, and observations, questionnaires and interviews reread as a basis for analyzing findings.

**Findings**

Out of the data we collected during our observations we found out that literal texts (to differentiate of visual or audio texts) play major role in history classes. In each one of 36 hours of observation there was a certain use of literal text. A total of 132 literal text were classified by four categories: 39% (=51) computer presentations texts, 24% (=32) class board texts, 20% (=26) textual handouts and 17% (=22) textbooks (see chart 2)

Chart 2: literal text format in observation lessons

As to the content of this texts, most of the texts (74% = 98) were educationally rendered materials. The other text contained historical documents (17% = 22), literature texts (6%= 8) or research texts (3%= 4). This intensive use of rendered texts in history lessons suits to studies pointed that despite the easy access to a wide verity of information sources, the rendered educational texts still serves as central source for history learning (Slater, 1995; Borphy & VanSledright, 1997; Podeh, 2002; Peled- Elhanan, 2011). (see chart 3)

Chart 3: Content of literal texts in observation lessons.

Regarding the statues of the human figures in the educational text we found a very clear picture. Only 11 out of 132 (8.3%) of the texts in history lessons contained reference to a concrete figure. In these eleven cases, there was no discussion on the consideration or view point of the figure on the historical event. Only one of the texts was a biographical text. Given the intense presence of texts that suits the scheme of the educational text, and the notable absence of biographical texts from history lessons, we will examine the reactions of students to undermining the scheme of educational text by exposure them to biographical texts in three categories: learning efficiency, objectivity and truth.

"It is so difficult to learn this way"- The biographical text as an ineffectual text

Some participants viewed the educational text as better suited to their learning needs. Ruth, for example, said during an interview:

 When I take the book, and I have informational texts, it is so very convenient for me to turned them into some kind of summary. It might be that […] I don't know[…] that if I sat at home to read, it would be more convenient for me to read a story of a figure; but if I want to learn, to sit, to make a summary out of it, to get some material out of it, to suddenly extract material helpful for my exam, so it is much more convenient [to do this] out of a third person [text], or from a book written like [a list of] ten facts, because to filter what are feelings, perceptions and what are facts is so hard, and it can create some kind of confusion.

Ruth repeated the word "convenient" three times in this short excerpt, points at the significance Ruth attributes to what she defines as the “convenience” of learning from a textbook.

But what does Ruth mean when she says “convenience”? And what makes a text convenient or not for her? In her words, we can distinguish between two kinds of convenience: the “pleasure reading convenience” and the “learning reading convenience”. The pleasure reading convenience is a more personal, homely reading for pleasure or interest. To enjoy this kind of convenience, Ruth says she can use a text based on the "story of a person" (e.g. biography). The second kind of convenience Ruth references, the learning reading convenience, is learning focused, and centers on studying efficiency. For Ruth to achieves this kind of learning convenience, she prefers an educational text that presents her with written summaries of historical events.

It is important to mention that when Ruth speaks about convenience she does not speak about the content of the text, but rather about its format. She describes the text as "written in the third person" or "*like* [a list of] ten facts". These attributes of the text format allow Ruth to distinguish between a text that suits the schema of the educational text , and a biographical text that does not suit such a schema. Ruth explained that she prefers the educational text schema because when she reads it she does not must distinguish between facts, emotions and opinions.

In her words, Ruth emphasized the effectiveness of the educational text. Also, other students held the narrative-biographical text as ineffectiveness:

Yael: …I mean, I think that if you would have given me this text [=narrative- biographical text], and asked me to answer questions about it… it would have been much more difficult. Maybe it would have been easier for me to answer only the dates’ question, but all the rest, no.

Yael examined the narrative-biographical text via a concrete educational task: The questionnaire she was required to fill out for the research intervention. From her point of view, the narrative-biographical text’s ineffectiveness is evident because it failed to provide her with answers to a simple set of knowledge and understanding questions. She claimed that in this text she only found a few helpful dates from Herzl’s personal diary, implying that the rest was purposeless for her. Yael’s words indicate at the functional terms in which she views the educational text. She too, like Ruth, evaluates a text through its contribution to her success in dealing with her learning assignments. In contrast, the biographical text, does not provide her with enough information to handle this task easily and thus seems inefficient.

Compared to the ineffective learning that Yael and other students attributed to the narrative-biographical text, the scientific-biographical text seemed to many of them as relatively efficient:

Dina: The second text [=scientific-biographical text] is clearer than the first text [=narrative-biographical text], because in the first text… it takes a lot of time until something happens. It takes a lot of time to understand. It is more difficult to understand this. You can understand the second text much faster.

Dina speaks about the pace of historical events description in both texts. Dina prefers to learn from a text that enables her to comprehend the historical events quickly and easily. She believes that she gets this kind of quick and easy understanding from the description in the scientific-biographical text rather than from the narrative-biographical text, which in her view is much slower and harder to comprehend. Therefore, she prefers to use the scientific-biographical text for history classes.

A synthesis between the responses of the students to the different kind of texts allow us to map their positions on the scale of efficient and inefficient (chart 4):

Scientific-biography

Textbook

Narrative- biography

Chart 4: Student's Positions on Efficient and Inefficient Texts

The texts adjacent to the "efficient learning" polar are texts that match, even if only partly, the schema of the educational text. This category may also include biographical texts, if they resemble conventional learning text and describe the historic event in a practical and sharp way (e.g. scientific-biography text). Adjacent to the "inefficient learning" polar stands the narrative-biography, that integrates indistinguishably facts and opinions and slows down the paste of the description by integrating elements that are not essential to the understanding of the plot.

In some cases, the students’ objection to the narrative-biographical texts served as a basis for discussions, that resulted in educational efficiency of a different kind. For example:

Abigail: I don't know, it [seems like] a dairy… He wrote a dairy for himself… He wrote "we sat in Koen's room around a bottle of mineral water." Why should I care if there were mineral water there?

Mira (the teacher): He killed me [Hebrew slang] with this mineral water.

Shira: This way [he wants] that we do not think that he had vodka… to Show that he isn’t sitting and enjoying himself while other Jews are suffering. He sits with mineral water, not with some kind of Vodka Red Bull.

Eli: Yes, but it is also not drink regular water. It's mineral water.

The prompt for this discussion, probably a casual one, was a bottle of mineral water. This kind of casual reference that is typical to a narrative-biographical text, does not necessarily contribute to the development of the central narrative plot. When Abigail asks "Why should I care if there were mineral water there?" she opposes a fragment of information that seems to her inefficient and therefore insignificant. Mira, her history teacher, empowers this opposition. Abigail's question and her teacher’s response resulted in several acts of interpretation, which one can attribute to the nature of the narrative-biographical text.

In the beginning of this excerpt, Abigail claims that the text is taken from a dairy. It is important note the fact that this information was not mentioned or referenced in the text she read. Usually, when students read an educational text they find no interest in classifying it, or in paying attention to the author’s identity. Abigail’s encounter with the narrative-biography text brought her to classify it instinctively as a dairy. This act has educational importance, as it creates in the reader a notion of identifying the writer behind the text and his or her writing goals. Thus, it can serve as the first step for students to critically read a text, by being aware of author motivation.

Beside this basic distinction, Abigail questions caused also other students to try and understand the reasons for the presence of this unimportant bottle of mineral water in the text. Shira claimed that this bottle represents Herzl’s empathy with the suffering of the Jewish people. This view of hers connects with a statement she made early on in the discussion: "What is important for Herzl now is to establish a state because of the problem of the Jewish people… to establish a real state that will save the Jews from their current horrible condition in Europe". It seems that she establishes a connection between the reference to mineral water in Herzl’s diary and the wider context which brought Herzl to arouse the controversial "Uganda- plan" in the Zionist congress (A 1903 British offer to establish a Jewish colony in Uganda that caused harsh divisions within the Zionist movement). In both she finds an expression of empathy to the suffering of the Jewish people.

Furthermore, Shira's words express an implicit argument about the target audience of this text. She implies that Herzl wrote his diary with awareness of its future publication. According to this view, Herzl cared to shape his public image in a manner that will come across of him as a sensitive leader. This implicit argument is important as it may lead students to read the text critically, and consider its content with awareness to the writer’s motivation.

 Eli, the other student who took part in this discussion, looks at the text in a different way. Possibly he too, like Shira, thinks that the reference to a bottle of water is not coincidental, but is deliberately designed to shape Herzl's public image. But unlike Shira, that compared between mineral water and an alcoholic drink, Eli places in opposition to mineral water "ordinary water." Eli might be disputing Shira's view, by arousing the possibility that the bottle of water might to teach us that the leader of the movement, Herzl, was not content with ordinary tap water, and therefore one should avoid attributing to him modesty. In any case, Eli too attributes meaning to a detail that might seem unimportant at all. This way he also opens a gate to a critical reading of the narrative-biographical text.

It is very doubtful whether even one of the interpretations suggested by the students in this short excerpt is related to Herzl's true intentions when he wrote in his diary. However, in their words these students have begun to interpret the narrative-biographical text in three different ways. One thing that is common to all three different forms of interpretation is the attempt to give historical meaning to words that seem unnecessary or even meaningless for effective learning. The words of Abigail, Shira and Eli may arouse in the class a discussion on several important historical questions, such as: Does the reading of a personal text, such as a dairy, contribute to historical understanding? Is it necessary to look for meaning in each small detail while reading a historical text? And how can different interpretations shape our understanding of historical events?

The chance to raise such questions based on the reading an ordinary educational text is very low, as the traditional educational text does not upset the comfort of students in the way that the narrative-biographical text does. It seems this discomfort is created by the narrative- biographical texts and thus provokes students to deepen their classroom discourse and potentially help develop their historical thinking.

"It was not objective"- The biographical text as subjective text

During an interview, Ruth declared a preference for a text in which "things are narrated in a more objective way." In an answer to the question of the interviewer "What is the meaning of ‘more objective’?" she replied "That things are being narrated in third person… it is o.k. if the book says ‘The Jews suffered a lot during the Holocaust,’ in third person… when things are presented in an objective way, that I do not see there to many expressions of opinion or things like that…"

Ruth’s words express a connection between the attributes of the educational text and the perception of it as an objective text. We must notice that Ruth did not proclaim the common educational text as objective. She said that “things are narrated in a more objective way,” or that “things are being narrated in third person.” Her words seem to indicate an awareness to the possibility that text has a presentation of objectivity while it is not. Actually, she unveils writing techniques that authors use to conceal their opinions.   However, Ruth’s careful wording and her possible inferences about the text, do not make her critical of the texts. On the contrary, she embraces the objectively appearing text, and declares that she prefers it over the biographical text.

Ruth words in praise of the educational text are consistent with students' objections to the biographical text because of its seeming subjectivity. For example:

Jonathan: Cool. I didn't like it that the description was kind of not neutral…

Moderator: So, what do you mean when you say "not neutral"?

Jonathan: … He was a writer that wanted to describe Herzl as a really good person, someone pure, as if he was truly outstanding…

Jonathan claims that he did not like the text because it was not neutral. During the conversation, he explains that when he said "not neutral" he meant "not objective". He attributes the writer the intention of designing Herzl as a heroic character, utilizing superlatives like "pure" or "outstanding". Jonathan opposes what he interprets as text bias in favor of Herzl. He maybe, like Ruth, seeking objectivity in educational texts. His objection to the narrative-biographical text results from his scheme of the educational text that he believes requires a distance between writer- object in writing.

Compared to the narrative-biographical text, that prompted Jonathan to decisively criticize it for lack of objectivity, the scientific-biographical text lead another group of students to a more complicated discussion of this category:

Abigail: Someone describes this from the outside, he sees the whole story, the whole picture…He simply describes it, not from a specific standpoint. It is more objective.

Ron: … But he makes here a lot of emotional statements… Some of the statements are not important for the historian, and from the point of view of objectivity it seems that he [=the writer] is not so objective. A lot [of times] he shows here … as if Herzl was the great savior.

Abigail and Ron represent two different positions towards the scientific-biographical text. Abigail claims that this text leans towards objectivity, and even recognizes in it a measure of all-inclusiveness, expressed in combinations like "the whole story" or "the whole picture". Her argument for the text’s objectivity rellies on an external viewpoint that she ascribes to the writer. From her point of view, the scientific-biographical text suits the scheme of the educational text in the category of writer-object relations.

Unlike Abigail, Ron recognizes "emotional statements" in the text, and refers to them at two levels. On the first, he claims that those emotional statements are not important to the historian.  On the second, he asserts that those statements point at the author’s lack of objectivity.  Ron sees the historian as someone who focuses on objective results, and therefore avoids emotional statements. For him, since the scientific-biographical text contains emotional statements, and describes Herzl as "The great savior", it is not objective, and therefore cannot serve historians or history students.

The differences between Abigail's and Ron’s positions can teach us about the complexity of the scientific-biographical text. On the one hand, as a biographical text, it contains emotional aspects that reflect the writer’s opinion. On the other hand, as a research text it leaves an impression of being distanced that is interpreted as objectivity. In comparative perspective students tend to prefer texts that seems more objective, as is reflected in Abigail's words:

Abigail: If I had to I would have choose [text number] two (=scientific-biographical text). Maybe it is not completely objective, but it is much more objective than text [number] four (=narrative-biographical text) …

Moderator: Are you looking for a text that is most objective?

Abigail: Yes, to know exactly what happened, not to know only what one of the sides saw.

Abigail’s preference to the objectivity of the scientific-biographical text indicates her preference to learn from what she sees as an objective text. She pronounces it directly in her aspiration to know "exactly what happened" and not only “what one of the sides saw.” Abigail’s approach reflects the ideal of objectivity in historiography (Novick, 1988), and her preference to the scientific-biographical text steams from its correspondence to that ideal. Chart 5 maps students' positions on the scale of objectivity and subjectivity:

Scientific-biographical text

Educational text

Narrative-biographical text

Chart 5: Student's Positions on objective and subjective Texts

The students placed the narrative-biographical texts far from the ideal of objectivity.  In contrast, the scientific-biographical text seems to them closer to the ideal of objectivity because of its remote and scientific writing style. Even so, emotional expression found in the scientific-biographical text lead some of the students to object to it because of its mismatch with the ideal of objectivity.

The objection of some students to the use of narrative-biographical texts in learning situations because of their non-objective style led them to conduct analytical activities that usually do not occur in history lessons. Thus, for example, in a discussion already quoted above, which we present here in a broader context:

Jonathan: It is written [here] that everybody applauded and it was excellent, and this is how the story ends. But in the end, it did not happen. It was a failure. In the end, he [=Herzl] kind of dies in failure… But this writer wanted to describe Herzl as a really good person, someone pure, as if he was truly outstanding… And he described the people that opposed him like they were bad people; as if they shouted and rebelled; as if they sat and refused in a kind of childish way, and all. And Herzl kind of came, and talked to them, and he was presented like a really really [good man]. I am sure that he wasn't so good.

Anat: All the time they wrote "immediately he gets up and goes" as if…

Jonathan [interrupts]: He heard about the horrors and went to save the world.

Moderator: What does it mean? As a reader, how does it make you feal?

Anat: I don't know it's just that… Like is it so obvious for him to come and help them? Is it so obvious for him to come immediately and to do everything? I don't know…

Jonathan and Anat present doubts about the reliability of the narrative-biographical text, claiming that it is not objective. They are talking about the technics that served the writer in her efforts to support Herzl’s image.  Jonathan claims that the writer opinions reflect in the description of Herzl as a moderate and affable person, while Herzl's opponents described as childish, noisy and stubborn. Furthermore, he claims that the author’s decision to end the text with a description of the applause Herzl received, reflects also on the author’s opinion. Anat adds that the text presents Herzl as an activist that rushes to help persecuted people, and this presentation of him demonstrates the author’s positive attitude toward him.

This exchange between Jonathan and Anat is different in many aspects from the patterns of students’ reading in educational texts (Paxton. 1997). Their interpretation reflects an understanding of how the text design effects the reader’s opinion. They succeed, without the moderator’s intervention, to identify major characteristics of the narrative-biographical text and. Their interpretation emanates from their need to base their arguments of lack of text objectivity.

Besides identifying the author opinion, the students exposed the image the author aimed to give Herzl in the text. Jonathan, for example, said “I am sure that he wasn't so good.” The intensive action attributed to Herzl in the text raised doubts in Anat’s mind. The clear subjectivity of the text allowed identifying the bias of the text easily and enabled students not only to undermine the text’s objectivity, but also the image of its central figure. Another student, that took part in the same discussion, described an even more sophisticated course of thought:

Daniel: I kind of agree that the writer gives an opinion… I don't know if it is, how much it is right to stick to your position in a text that is presumably educational. But I also see the other side, that it might be precisely this that awakens in us critical thinking towards the text.

Daniel's words pronounce his agreement with Jonathan’s and Anat’s claims as well as the add value he sees in reading an overtly non-objective text. He claims that maybe the clear subjectivity of the text awakens the students to critical thinking about it. Such a reflective point of view is very rare, and no other student expressed a similar remark. Nonetheless, it demonstrates the potential of the narrative-biographical text to awaken critical thinking in students’ mind.

"It's Herzl's legend"- The biographical text as suspected of lying

Some of the student claimed that the educational text inspires confidence not only because of the objectivity that they attribute to it, but also because of the perception of its content as true or factually reliable. Ruth pronounced this perception clearly when she said: "I see it [=the textbook] as reliable, especially because it never disappointed me. I never said something and someone came and told me "it isn't true".

Ruth assumes that the textbook is trustworthy, and assumes that it includes facts that there is no need to undermine them. Ruth trust in the text based on lack of doubts: The fact that nobody ever undermined what she learned from the textbook lead her to conclude that the content of the text is factual or true. Lack of doubts characterize the attitude of many students to educational texts at all. In our observations, we saw students dealing with many different educational texts, and we did not face even one response of doubt about the truth of those texts. However, reading in some of the biographical texts raise clear doubts and criticism toward the texts in the truth category. For example, the response in one of the learning groups to the narrative-biographical text:

Moderator: Is it possible to trust this text for history learning?

Many Students together: No.

Moderator: Why not?

Mira: Because it is like you would not teach what happened in the story of the three bears… It's Herzl legend.

Mira explains the negative answer of her classmates to the moderator question. She presents the narrative-biography on a par with folk tales, and thus reflect the traditional distinction between history, that deals with real in events, and literature, legend and myth, that dealing in fiction. It might be that the narrative aspect of this biographical text led the student to associate them with fiction category.

Another expression to this distrust in narrative-biographical texts as suspects of fabrication, reflects in the response of a student to the narrative-biographical text, based on Herzl's diaries:

Neomi: I can write now in my diary "Dina is annoying, Dina is annoying, Dina is annoying", and maybe that she is not truly annoying, but in my privet dairy I don't care.

Neomi consider the possibility that the narrative-biography includes lies, or positions that do not reflects the reality, because of its personal nature, that does not obligate the writer to say the truth. Opposite position to the same text reflects in the words of a student from another group:

Rona: I think that it is good [text] because Herzl wrote it himself. He wrote it, so we can hear what he truly wanted to say and not from another source.

Rona, like Neomi, use the word "truly" regard to this text. Unlike Neomi, she finds in the narrative-biographical text an authentic aspect, that she considers as something that might bring her closer to the historical truth. The differences between the responses of those students relates to the autobiographical nature of this text and reflects different concepts of truth. Neomi believes that there is a stable and clear truth, that biography might miss. Rona recognize truth with authentic, and therefor believe that a narrative- biographical text based on dairies may bring her closer to the truth. Despite of the differences between Neomi and Rona, both reflect common aspiration to get closer to the truth, and examine the text in relation to their concept of truth.

Opposite to the doubts students expressed regard to the narrative-biographical texts, we can find clear trust of students in the scientific-biographical text. This trust is testified out of absence: students reading in scientific-biographical text did not indicate any doubts or concerns as to the aspects of truth in the text. Therefore, we can map the responses of students to different texts in category of truth, on the scale between perceptions of truth and fiction (chart 6)

Narrative- autobiography

Narrative- biography

Scientific-biography

Educational text

 Chart 6: Student's Positions on truth and fiction in the texts

Like we saw above, the scientific-biographical text, that is resembles the form of the educational text, seems to the students as a reliable source that draws the reader closer to the polar of truth. On the other hand, narrative-biographical texts raised doubts based on suspicion of fiction. An exception to this we can find in the words of few students that defined the autobiographical text as authentic, and therefore real and truthful, but usually we have identified tendency of distrust on the factual content of autobiographical text.

The undermining on the truth aspect in the narrative-biographical text served also in this case as the base to a depth learning process, as it comes out of the discussion in one of the learning-groups:

Daniel: But, is it true? All this dinner staff, and so? It doesn't really matter.

Dissection leader: So, you are actually asking kind of a question…

 Lili: If it really happened.

 Daniel: It is a story. It is easier. But I am not sure that all the facts are true.

Uri: O.K. But It does not matter whether there was or was not dinner

Gil: Of course, it matters.

 Daniel: O.K. But not just this, in general…

Eytan: But the factual facts are true, right? Let's say that he said dinner. It is not interesting. But if he really said "If I forget thee O Jerusalem"…

Daniel: Is it true?

Lili: Of course it is!

daniel: How do you know? Have you been there?

Lili: They didn't put here just incorrect details, and they didn't put…

Eytan: But it is a story.

Lili: It is a story that aims to tell you what happened. It is not really a story

Eytan: Is it recorded in a camera? Is it documented that he did it?

Uri: But there are many things that are not documented.

This kind of discussion is very rare in history lessons, especially because it reflects an undermining on the truth aspect of the text. The discussion begins with Daniel's question about dinner in Herzl's home, mentioned in the narrative-biographical text. This is a piece of information does not advance the reader toward better knowing or understanding of the historical event, but it serves as a basis to the narrative format and to the character design. This description might help the reader to imagine the historical situation, but it does not suit the schema of the educational text, since the educational text is almost absolutely based on plot advance elements, that describe the historical events in a chronological and practical way (Vansover, 2012). In this case, the gap between the educational and the biographical text created a dissonance that led the students to undermine the truth of the text. Because of this undermining many questions arose: Did it really happened? Can we trust a text that looks like a story? Which facts in the text should be very accurate and which facts are less important? Is there any different between "really a story" and "story that aims to tell what happened"? How can we distinguish between them? And what is the role of documentation in searching for history truth?

All these questions are related to key features in the historian's work such as evaluating sources, distinguishing between the types of sources or asking questions about the relationship between literature and history. These topics usually not discussed as part of a history lesson or after students' reading educational-historical texts (Wineburg, 2001; Neumann, 2010)

Doubts raised by the students about the aspect of truth in the narrative-biographical text could theoretically come up during discussions in educational texts, since students have no way to know that the educational text is telling the truth. Nevertheless, we found out that texts that adhere to the scheme of the educational text, or looks like it (e.g. scientific-biographical texts), did not lead students to doubt the aspect truth which, while meeting with narrative-biographical text arose seriously doubts in this category.

**Discussion**

Interpretation of research results requires us to recognize the limitations of research design and method. Mere implementation of research intervention, involves violation of classroom learning routine, certainly affected the students' responses. The exposure of students to texts in a different style of the ones they used to, the guiding of the class by an external moderator, and the presence of a camera and a tape recorder in class are all different of the normal learning conditions, and students must have responded to them. In addition, the relatively small number of classes studied, characteristic of qualitative research, gives us just a narrow look on the influence of biographical text as undermining on the scheme of educational text in history lessons. However, we assume that it is possible to assert carefully for meaning our findings.

One of the prominent themes in the research findings is the objection of many students to the use of biographical texts in history lessons. We tried to find out why does biographical texts, and especially the narrative-biography texts, awaked so wide objection, and what is the educational effect of this objection.

From the finding it comes out that many students classified the narrative-biographical text as inefficient for school learning, not objective and even suspects as untruth. In overview we can see that students arguments connected to the disobey of biographical text to the conceptual scheme students hold in mind regard to the phrase "educational text". It is true that biographies, and especially narrative-biographies do not write to fulfill formal demands of history learning in school. They also do not create the distance between writer and object of writing, or between writer and reader, that is built in the educational text. Furthermore, they are largely dealing with the human factor of the historical event. It might be that the deviation from the educational text scheme, that characterize the biographical texts, and especially the narrative arose the objection of students to the idea of using those texts for formal learning goals. The scientific-biographical text, that does not deviate significantly from the scheme of the educational text, usually did not awake in student such an objection.

In a different but not separate level, it is possible to look on the objection of students to narrative-biographical text as an outcome of undermining, not only on the familiar textual scheme, but also on the strategy they usually use when they deal with the educational texts. This strategy describes by Perkins:

Students are not strangers to the token investment strategy. Students' lives are full of demands and desires- some of them academic, many of them not. How to manage the many agendas? Often, token investment (Perkins, 1992, p. 163).

Dealing with the biographical texts demanded from the students an intellectual effort that is over the minimum effort they usually required. In order to explain their position, regard the texts they were forced to do complex analysis and interpretation processes to the text. Such steps are usually not required of them dealing with familiar educational text. In situation like this, we can understand why the students objected the biographical texts and preferred texts that provided them an available and convenient description of events and factual content, without requiring from them any special intellectual effort.

The resistance of students to biographical texts sharpened the question of the educational added value of exposure students to Biographical texts. Indeed, if the purpose of the history study is, as many students claimed, to accumulate organized knowledge about historical events, in a way that will enable them to deal successfully with educational missions, the biographical texts do not serve this purpose. However, if the purpose of history learning is not only collecting items of historical information, but also, and perhaps more importantly, the ability to use that knowledge, and act in relation to it (Parkins, 1992; Paxton, 1999; Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Fosnot & perry, 2005; Harpaz, 2013), exposure of students to biographical texts might have a significant educational potential. Dealing with the biographical texts, and especially with narrative-biographical texts, led students to express abilities of discerning the nature of the text, identifying the author character and the trends in his writing, giving creative interpretation to the meaning of the information referred to in the text, identifying targets of the text and its target audience, and formulating arguments regard to the impact of all these on the nature and content of the text. We argue that those learning products derived largely from the discomfort that the biographical texts create in the students, as a result of his undermining on the scheme of the educational text.

Another educational potential inherent to the biographical text, and in particular to the narrative-biographical text, is its undermining on the ideal of objectivity in the study of history, and on the tendency to ascribe objectivity to educational history texts. Historians aspiration of achieving an objective look at the past characterized the scientific historiography developed in the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century. Since then, under the influence of postmodern atmosphere, the perception of objectivity in history undermined, and a broad consensus that no historian can reach entirely objective description of the events of the past was developed (Novick, 1988; Samual, 1991, 1992; Weinryb, 2003).

Undermining the perception of objectivity in the study of history did not affected significantly on the patterns of history teaching and learning in schools. This is expressed well in curriculum and textbooks, which often presents history as a science based on facts, free of interest effects, personal perspective, ethical attitudes or prepositions of the historiography (Maryinez Shaw, 1998; Weinryb, 2003; Vansover, 2012). The meeting with the biographical text, which does not pretend to show an objective reality, undermined the scheme of the educational text in the category of objectivity, and led to some valuable learning steps.

Students claimed that the narrative-biographical text is not objective saw fit to justify their claim through reference to content of the text, structure of the text and status of the author in the text. This process required them performing analytical and interpretive moves that usually are not required dealing with educational texts. Students noticed the techniques used by writers of biographies, voiced reasoned criticism about the text, and found attitudes and biases in it. We hypothesized that exposing students to biographical texts accompanied by meta-cognitive processes leading by the teacher, will help in the development of interpretive and critical reading skills also on texts in which the author's position is more difficult to detect.

In the category of truth attributed to the text we can find added value to students meeting with biographical text. Along the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century historians, inspired by the historian Leopold von Ranke, aspirated to describe the past "as it really was". Today, inspired by postmodern thought, the perception of absolute historical truth was undermined, and historians doubt their ability to reconstruct the past as it was (White, 1974). Even among critics of the postmodern attitude in history the assumption that a whole and absolute historical truth is exist was undermined. (Himmelfarb, 1997; Seixes, 2000). Non the less, Study of history in schools remained largely loyal to past perceptions, that it is possible and should aim to achieve historical truth (seixes. 2000). This tendency reflects in total absent of students doubts regard to the factual reliability of texts that obey the scheme of the educational text. However, many students tended to doubt the truth aspect of the narrative-biographical texts.

The undermining on the concept of historical truth is an important step towards the development of critical thinking, since it may open the door to cast doubt on the content and controversial ideas, that presented as an absolute truth. Beyond that, we saw that the undermining process led by the students accompanied by consolidation actions and reasoning. They presented formal and contextual aspects that aroused the doubts and asked questions that indicate independently historical thinking (Wineburg, 2001). However, it is worth noting that not all biographical texts aroused doubts on the truth aspects of text. In this context we can distinguish between narrative-biographical texts, that arose many students doubts, and scientific-biographical text did not aroused doubts and led to concrete discussions or theoretical concept of truth in the text.

We argue that the undermining cause by the biographical texts, and especially the narrative-biographical text, on the conceptual schemes that students hold regard history learning and history educational texts led them to deep their learning, and motivated the learners to raise questions, imposing doubts and to develop skills of interpretation and criticism, required in dealing with historical subjects.

**Conclusions**

Adopting a strategy of undermining in learning may be a risky move. It has the potential to Pull the rug under the feet of the learner, or to lead him to adopt radical views such as relativism or comprehensive distrust in sources of information. However, careful, responsible and rational implementation of this strategy may lead the productive and deep study process. This claim is valid assuming that the purpose of the study is not just the accumulation of knowledge, but also, and perhaps more importantly, laying the infrastructure to carry out creative and critical interpretation action regard to knowledge (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Fosnot & Perry, 2005; Harpaz, 2014).

In this study, we found that undermining the assumptions held by students in categories of learning history goals, concept of objectivity, and concept of truth in history texts may simply done by exposure of students to biographical texts, which do not obey the scheme of the educational text. In our opinion, these undermining processes do not necessarily involve in the pulling the rug under the feet of the learner, or under the feet of history as a ​​discipline. On the contrary: the meeting of high school students with biographical texts they usually define as not useful, not objective and even false, lead them to using and improving important analytical capabilities. Exposure of students to various kinds of biographical, and in particular to narrative-biographical texts, led students that took part in the research to find trends in the text and to identify interests guided the writer, to formulate creative interpretation and to examine critically the contents of the text. These capabilities are required to the student deals with the history, and vitality for all contemporary man, exposed to multifaction and complex information daily.

We find few unanswered questions in the end of this study. In subsequent researches, it is worthwhile to determine under what conditions, if any, using undermining strategy leading to resistance level that harm learning processes, and what makes undermining beneficent. Another aspect we did not explored here is whether students that applied critical approach toward biographical text can transfer this attitude to their reading educational or governmental texts, that criticism towards them is maybe not intuitive, but is not less, and even more, required.

 However, at this stage, considering the findings, we can assume that to lead a responsible and careful undermining strategy there is need of meta-cognition steps, leading by teachers. Through those meta-cognitive teaching students should understand why the texts made them objection, what are the differences between the biographical texts and the textual schemes which they use to find in history lessons, and what analytical accomplishments they achieved by confrontation with the text that undermined this scheme. To do this, they need a guiding hand of a skilled teacher, aware of the dangers and the potential inherent in undermining strategy in general, and particular in exposure to biographical texts.