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## **A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EFL TEXTBOOKS USED IN THE THIRD GRADE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

As a result of ever-growing changes affecting educational discourse, the roles and importance of textbooks have often been reexamined and redefined. This article reports the findings obtained from a comparative analysis of three English language textbooks used in the third grade in primary school. The main criterion used for the selection of these textbooks relates to the cultural and linguistic background of their authors. This study examines the complex nature of textbooks and the multifaceted perspectives involved in the evaluation of their quality and purposefulness within the learner-oriented teaching framework. It compares structural organization and linguistic devices used in three English language textbooks written by authors coming from different backgrounds, intending to establish differences or similarities in approaches and methods utilized to present a certain content. This article also aims at drawing attention to the importance of employing textbook theory knowledge while selecting a textbook to be used in English language teaching.

**Keywords:** English language textbook analysis, Communicative Approach, cultural background, textbook theory

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Textbooks are widely used in teaching and learning practices, representing an unavoidable and useful tool and guidance for both teachers and learners. Although textbooks and various teaching materials have been accompanying teaching and

learning for centuries, there were not many systematic studies on materials development until the last quarter of the twentieth century. Various developmental courses in education have changed our perception of textbooks, their form, content, and function. As regards foreign language teaching, in the 1990s a systematic and scientific approach to this aspect developed within applied linguistics, when “materials development began to be treated seriously by academics as a field in its own right” (Tomlinson 2012: 144).

The textbook as one of the main components in English foreign language instructional contexts, its role and importance have occupied researchers studying this integral element of foreign language teaching from various perspectives. The focus in applied linguistics is not only on the selection of material but also on the careful application of theory in practice.

Textbooks have been analysed and evaluated from various perspectives, one of which includes the methodology used and the approach adopted by their authors. According to Hutchinson, textbooks reflect the author’s adopted approach to foreign language teaching, and language teaching material represents “an implicit statement about the nature of language learning” (Hutchinson 1987: 38).

From a socio-cultural perspective, a textbook is influenced by the cultural and social background of the learners it is intended for on one hand, and of its authors on the other. According to Antić (2016: 23), textbook authors have their cultural and social background which intertwines with the content and organisation of materials and tasks incorporated in the material. This article provides a theoretical background related to various aspects of textbook evaluation and analysis and focuses on the comparison of structure, organisation, and linguistic devices used in three English language textbooks written by authors with different backgrounds. Starting from the assumption that authors coming from different backgrounds, in terms of language and culture-related experiences, might regard language teaching, learners, as well as linguistic disciplines in different ways, we aimed to shed light on the structure and components of three textbooks widely used in the English language classroom in the third grade of primary school in the Republic of Serbia. This paper aims at studying differences and similarities in approaches and methods utilised by different authors in order to present the aimed content.

## 2. TEXTBOOK STUDIES - THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Being a part of a wide scope of teaching materials, textbooks have been in use for centuries and are defined as an important educational tool representing “an almost universal element of teaching” (Hutchinson and Torres 1994: 315). Not only do textbooks provide helpful guidance for teachers to cover what is prescribed by the national curricula and syllabi (Nordlund 2016: 48), but they are also beneficial for various reasons. In the first place, they provide a structured and coherent framework with control over the content presentation which helps both the teachers and the students to navigate through the process of teaching and learning more effectively. A carefully designed textbook also provides a supporting tool and stimulus for methodological development (Harmer 2007).

Textbooks should be created in such a way as to encourage students’ cognitive abilities, arouse their curiosity, and enhance motivation for learning and acquiring new knowledge and skills. Modern textbooks also aim at promoting cultural and social values and creating a good environment for the proper functioning of members in a particular community in the modern world (Trebješanin and Lazarević 2001: 15).

Regardless of ever-growing Information and Communication Technology tools and possibilities utilised for educational purposes, it is indisputable that textbooks still provide a keystone in teaching and learning practices. Diverse developments occurring within reformed educational systems and paradigms inevitably affect theories and methods of textbook studies and research whose aim is to evaluate the approaches to textbook design. In the Republic of Serbia, systematic and empirical textbook studies were initiated towards the end of the 1970s, and the corpus of empirical studies and research papers has been growing ever since (Pešikan 2016: 12).

The traditional framework of textbook study emphasises the importance of textbook content and its compliance with the curriculum. Nonetheless, the constructivist approach acknowledges the importance of the textbook content, but it also emphasises the process of learning itself – we are witnessing the shift from “how” to “what” - in other words, “we are now not only concerned with the content itself, but with how this content is mediated” (Ivić, et al. 2013: 33). Another change that came about towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the use of the term “textbook” in literature more often to refer not only to a book exclusively based on texts and content, but also a book comprising a wider range of elements.

The purpose textbooks have in the modern schooling system goes beyond these traditional roles and it implies the creation of such a discourse that allows for

interaction and construction of knowledge. In other words, not only do textbooks convey content but they also provide a stimulating input for students to be actively engaged in the process of learning (Antić 2016: 25). This approach reflects the changing educational paradigm wherein the focus of the teaching and learning process moves towards students and their active engagement in all aspects of this process. According to Pešić (2016: 37), what characterises the new generation of textbooks is their focus on learners and their cognitive engagement which can be achieved through a variety of critical thinking and problem-solving tasks.

The function textbooks need to fulfill today is complex – the role of textbooks as self-contained resources of knowledge, has been complemented by inductive strategies (Pešić 2016: 39) whose aim is to help learners construct knowledge and develop competences. The function of the textbook is to engage a learner not only cognitively but also psychologically and socially.

Intensive study of textbooks started in the 1970s and Lazarević (2009: 9) reviews the textbook literature concluding that the dominant framework of investigation and research relies on Vygotski and his socio-cultural approach to education. Textbooks are an inseparable part of culture and reflect the values of a society, a group of people, and beliefs and are in accordance with the scientific content and findings from a certain area of study.

Psychological and cognitive developmental characteristics of learners to a great extent influence the way textbooks are written and organised. Young learners are characterized by imagination, spontaneity, intuitive learning, and oral communication (Končarević 2010: 10). The level of intrinsic motivation decreases as one grows older. One of the strategies employed in designing textbooks/textbooks is to create the teaching and learning process around topics and experiences that are relevant for children, within the framework in which they feel confident and stimulated to accomplish self-actualisation.

The importance of creating textbooks that would respond to current educational needs is often emphasised within reformed educational systems. In the Republic of Serbia, the process of creating national quality standards of textbooks started in 2001. As of 2004, the new legislation regulating textbook production and distribution in schools resulted in a more varied offer of textbooks on the market, issued by various publishing houses, not only domestic but foreign ones as well (Lazarević 2009: 11). The number of textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development has significantly increased, and both schools and teachers were given the freedom to make their own choices about what textbooks to use. Laws

regulating textbook policy were changed and modified, and the last version of the Law on Textbooks was approved in 2018. In order to ensure the quality of textbooks, Textbook Standards have been defined. These standards provide a framework regulating content, pedagogical and psychological practices, language-related requirement, theory, methodology, and didactic application, as well as the quality of graphic representations, illustrations, and technical characteristics (Pravilnik o standardima udžbenika/The Rulebook on Textbook Standards, Article 4).

### ***2.1. The use of textbooks in foreign language teaching***

Although textbooks share some common features in terms of the standards quality they need to meet, their differences arise from the nature of the subject matter they encompass. Thus, the type of knowledge belonging to a certain scientific field studied within a given subject will determine the methods employed for conveying this knowledge. Foreign language teaching, with its nature, apparatus, and methods to a great extent influences the way the textbooks are organised and written.

Theories investigating the development of foreign language textbooks date back to the 1970s (Lee 2013). Not only do textbooks play an important role in the process of foreign language teaching and learning, but also the analysis and evaluation of their quality contribute to the creation of better textbooks that will enhance more effective cognitive, social, and psychological development of the learner. According to Hutchinson (1983), the evaluation of textbooks contributes to the area of English language teaching in two aspects. By acknowledging the value and quality of certain textbooks over the other ones, the language instructor gives his/her contribution to the selection process. Moreover, through this process, the instructor also enhances his/her understanding of teaching practices, methods, and beliefs.

Textbooks have been designed to be in conjunction with the new teaching practices. The roles they have today aim at supporting the cognitive, psychological, and social development of learners. As teaching tools, textbooks not only contain content but serve as “the organisation of students’ learning” (Ivić and Pešikan 2013: 46). In order to reach learners and help them organise their learning process more effectively and meaningfully, textbooks need to respond to the learners’ cognitive abilities, age, needs, the social and cultural context where they come from. Along the changes happening within current trends in modern language teaching, the roles textbooks have today are also being modified, and one of these changes refers to the

need to connect academic and systematic educational discourse with the learners' everyday life and objectives for their personal growth (Ivić, et al. 2013: 47).

In the 1970s, the purposes and ways of foreign language teaching were reexamined and a new approach – the Communicative Approach – emerged, developing from the need for enhancing language learners' communicative competence. The approach gained prominence and has been developing its tenets ever since, becoming a dominant foreign language paradigm in applied linguistics. Perspectives on foreign language teaching were broadened, and apart from teaching structures – grammar and vocabulary – communicative functions were highlighted because the aimed learning outcome – gaining communicative competence – was redefined (Littlewood 2010: 1). Within the Communicative Approach, social interaction and social meaning are brought into the focus of language teaching and learning, and the learners' needs, interests, and background are taken into consideration while planning and organising the teaching process. The learner-centered approach emphasises the need to employ all possible resources in order to make the learning process more effective and meaningful. The development of the Communicative Approach in foreign language teaching, with its focus on enhancing learners' communicative competence, has brought along structural and functional changes of textbooks used for foreign language learning. The very definition of foreign language textbooks also changed, and this change can be illustrated with the definition Sheldon provided back in the 1990s, stating that “a textbook may be loosely defined as a published book, most often produced for commercial gain, whose explicit aim is to assist foreign learners of English in improving their linguistic knowledge and/or communicative ability” (Sheldon 1987: 1), whereby the last part of it containing “and/or communicative ability” has gained priority in textbook evaluation.

The endeavours to describe and standardise language competence resulted in the creation of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR)*, a pivotal document providing valuable support in writing and creating textbooks. In the CEFR it is stated that “any act of language learning or teaching is in some way concerned with each of these dimensions: strategies, tasks, texts, an individual's general competences, communicative language competence, language activities, language processes, contexts and domains” (CEFR 2018: 10). According to Mikić (2010: 89), these elements define to a great extent the function of textbooks and influence the way a foreign language textbook is structured. The framework of foreign language textbooks should provide enough opportunities for learners to rely on their own experiences, but they should also encourage curiosity and

create incentives for new experiences (Končarević 2010: 12) What characterises textbooks which effectively respond to the aforementioned framework is a personalised approach, accompanied by stimulating social-oriented tasks, learning through play, characters with whom the students can identify, as well as visual attractiveness. Research has shown that the use of illustrations motivates learners, helps them understand the delivered content better, and, overall, can improve learning (Pešikan 2017: 8).

In addition to the above-mentioned roles and characteristics of modern textbooks, it is indisputable that the interaction between the learner and the textbook, particularly at earlier stages of education, is highly affected by the pedagogical practices the teacher employs when using the textbook. A good textbook should also support one of the main aims of foreign language teaching to young learners – developing love for foreign languages and thus reinforcing learners' motivation.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The 2020 revised edition of the *Catalogue of Approved Textbooks for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Year of Primary Education* lists 13 different textbooks for use in the third grade of primary school, issued by both domestic and foreign publishers and authors. They are all in compliance with the national curriculum and respect the defined standards of textbook quality as it is defined in the legal documents regulating the education system in the Republic of Serbia.

This study aims at investigating what differences and/or similarities exist among these approved textbooks if the main criterion for the selection of textbooks for comparison and analysis relates to the authors' different backgrounds in terms of their first language and culture-related experiences. To achieve the stated goal, three textbooks, approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development for use in the third grade of elementary school have been analysed. All three of them do address, to the greatest extent possible, similar language competences and skills, aligned with the envisaged teaching-learning outcomes pertinent to the English language course. Anyhow, despite the common ground, what makes a prominent difference among them is the background of the authors, from the perspective of language *heritage* and habits. Namely, one of them, titled *Easy 3* (hereinafter referred to *domestic*), was written by Serbian authors, that is authors whose native language is Serbian (Nenezić and Dimitrijević); the other two sources are characterized by foreign authors' fingerprint, while *Playway to English 3* (hereinafter referred to *bilingual*) was written by bi-multi-lingual authors, i.e. authors

(Gerngross, Puchta and Atanacković) being native speakers of another international language, writing in English and about English, the third title, *Family & Friends 1* (hereinafter referred to *native*) was authored by a native English speaker (Simmons).

With a view to illuminating the similarities and differences in the approaches the above-mentioned authors might favour and use, we have conducted a multi-level content analysis, attending to:

- textbooks' structure/organisation,
- topics/language versatility,
- language skills addressed,
- culture-related notions/pragmatics awareness, assessment/tasks/complementary material

Given the fact that the compared textbooks have been approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, i.e., that they can be found in the *Catalogue of Approved Textbooks for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Year of Primary Education*, they all conform to the relevant curricula and syllabi and, as such, follow the *CEFR*-based guidelines on A1 level skills and competences. For that very reason, the qualitative analysis we have conducted for the purpose of this study shall not *test* the textbooks' compliance with the official framework, but shall rather focus on whether (and to what extent) authors coming from different language backgrounds leave different fingerprints in a pretty restricted area of subject matter.

## 4. RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Structure/Organisation

Though their contents might appear similar at first glance –a second glance shows they are quite different, as illustrated in the table below:

*Table 1. Textbooks' Structure*

Title	Pages/Units	Structure
Easy 3 (domestic)	88/16	Lexical Areas+Language+Function/Skills
Playway to English 3 (bilingual)	83/10	Structures+Vocabulary
Family & Friends 1 (native)	130/15	Words+Grammar+Phonic+Skills

The data presented confirm that the most elaborative resource, both from the perspective of length and complexity, is the native textbook, followed by the domestic one, whereas it is the bilingual one which is characterised by the most linear nature. Analogically, the number of clusters are different in their contents respectively – both in terms of terminology and the logic they follow. What is, however, prominent is the fact that all three textbooks include sections dedicated to vocabulary (named - lexical areas, vocabulary, words, respectively), and are in compliance with the descriptors stated in the CEFR for A1 level:

“Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help” (CEFR 2018: 24).

This description also points to the introduced vocabulary range – in receptive and productive sense with less emphasis on formulating grammatically correct constructions and putting them to use.

#### 4.2. Topics/Language Versatility

*Table 2. Topics Covered*

<b>Title</b>	<b>Topics/Language Versatility</b>
Easy 3	Numbers, Greetings, Colours, Furniture/Objects, Age, School Subjects/Timetable, Week, Face/Body, Maths/Numbers, Job, House, Birthday, Months/Seasons, Holidays, Kitchen, Phone, Food, Shops, Clothes, TV/Games, Village/City, Animals, Seaside
Playway to English 3	Objects, Animals, Time, Colours, Food, Games, Days, Months, Seasons, Birthday, House
Family & Friends 1	School, Toys, Body, Jobs, Family, Clothes, House, Lunch, Friends, Shops, Zoo, Drinks, Bedroom, Numbers, Beach

As noted before, the topics examined in the textbooks follow the suggestions of the *CEFR*. Anyhow, the ways in what they are organised vary. Both within the domestic and native textbook, the presented vocabulary chunks appear in specific groups, relying on the similarities among the presented items. On the other hand, the bilingual title, though examining a similar range of entries, opts for a random

presentation – which might resemble the scheme in which a mother tongue is acquired (children are surrounded with a number of different, unrelated objects they learn how to name). However, given their age (around 9), grouping entries on the basis of their similarity, thus creating well-organised semantic fields (and sub-fields), aligned with cognitive models, might lead to success in terms of the wanted output.

### 4.3. Language Skills Addressed

*Table 3. Language Skills Addressed*

<b>Title</b>	<b>Language Skills</b>
Easy 3	Listening, Reading, Writing (restricted)
Playway to English 3	Listening, Reading, Writing
Family & Friends 1	Receptive vs. Productive Skills (clear-cut differentiation)+Grammar+Phonics (as separate sections)

Expectedly, all the books do favour receptive over productive skills, at least in terms of the order of appearance and emphasis put. Namely, audio-visual prompts are dominant all over the three titles, supported by instructions based on TPR (total physical response) principles – and we can notice (but not restricted to): matching, pointing, colouring, singing, miming, as well as some writing, if nowhere else - then in the revision sections.

As regards the skill of writing, it seems that it is used occasionally in the domestic textbook(applied when revising takes the stage), whose instructions are mainly rooted in listening and reading (repeating, singing).

Unlike the previous one, the bilingual title, apart from the instructions including listening and pointing (singing, reading, miming), does opt for paying more attention to writing, as well as matching, thus activating a number of students' cognitive abilities.

Last, it should be noted that the native textbook offers an impeccably structured and easy-to-use classification of the skills addressed – the clear-cut differentiation between receptive and productive notions could be very helpful for the teachers, guiding them through the areas where more attention is needed for production on one hand, or where reception should be brought into play. Furthermore, it is the native title which sheds specific light on the area of phonetics and phonology (titled Phonics); the mentioned portion, given the students' remarkable ability to acquire

foreign language sounds (sounds/patterns surrounding them in general) at that age (Singleton and Ryan 2004: 198-199), will undoubtedly unlock and develop that potential of theirs – which could be of paramount importance, as these students are on the verge of the critical period (further reading on the Critical Period Hypothesis - Lenneberg 1967, Singleton 2005).

With regard to the target expressions, i.e., patterns used in everyday communication (e.g., *This is a book*, *The house is green*, *There are two boys*, etc.), it could be said that they represent a common ground among the three textbooks; namely, although titled differently (domestic –*Language*, bilingual – *Structures*, native –*Grammar*), all of them comprise the sections dedicated to fixed expressions via which the students (in a subconscious manner) acquire some grammar-relevant mechanisms

#### 4.4. Culture-related notions/pragmatics awareness

*Table 4. Culture-related notions (Pragmatic perspective)*

<b>Title</b>	<b>References to Culture</b>
Easy 3	British Variety preference, explicit reference to London (no other areas mentioned that way), foreign names (anglophone nature)
Playway to English 3	References to the UK, but also to Canada, Ireland, Australia, etc.; dominantly anglophone personal names - but other names included as well
Family & Friends 1	No explicit culture-related references, anglophone personal names

Culture represents an inherent part of the language teaching process – and the textbooks we use can strongly influence the attitudes of our students towards the target culture/-s (further about the sociocultural aspect of language-related textbooks in Komadina 2021). In this regard, the phenomenon of world *Englishes* is not a novel one anymore - not only in the sphere of everyday language performance but also in the field of ELT. Notwithstanding the fact, it seems that the textbook analysed still depicts the traditional approaches as regards the inclination to one of the two most wide-spread English varieties (the UK or US one).

The domestic title follows in the footsteps of its predecessors in the area - and sticks to the British variety of the language. Also, it introduces a number of well-known personal names of anglophone origin, without any reference to any other

belonging to different languages (including the L1 of the territory, that is, the Serbian language).<sup>1</sup>

In a similar vein, the bilingual one favours anglophone names, but does include some others, which may be regarded as the representatives of foreign origin. Apart from that, the also aims to mention some other English-speaking territories, but the United Kingdom, which, with no doubt, broaden students' horizons regarding the spread and potential of the language.

As for the native resource, it should be noted that there is a separate *Culture section* provided; anyhow, it cannot be said that it sheds light on culture-related awareness, but serves some other purposes, i.e., expanding the vocabulary basis related to family, animals and school.

#### 4.5. Tasks and Accompanying Material

*Table 5. Tasks & Accompanying Material*

Title	Tasks	Accompanying Material
Easy 3	Simplified, addressing listening and reading; audio-visual prompts, such as listen & read, ask your friend, rhyme; revision includes more complex instructions, such as write, match, complete, etc.	Bilingual lexicon/glossary (Vocabulary), Picture, alphabet-based dictionary, Additional Songs & Rhymes
Playway to English 3	Listen & Write dominate, true-false tasks, matching tasks; point, mime, sing, read	Extra Units, Show what you can do (additional tasks related to the final pair of units), Word List (picture dictionary)
Family & Friends 1	Listen, chant, point, repeat; sing, tick, ask & answer; act; join, circle, etc.	Fluency time, Review, Project (following each of the units), Culture, Grammar reference

The domestic textbook, as illustrated in table 5 above, exhibits a traditional approach with regard to the tasks included – given the age and background (in relation to other courses, schooling in general) of the learners – dominantly addresses listening, speaking, and reading skills – while writing activities could be found in the sections dedicated to the revision of the subject matter. The end of the textbook contains the Vocabulary section, i.e., a bilingual lexicon of keywords, as well as some additional

<sup>1</sup> Though the paper analysed the books from the catalogue available in the Republic of Serbia, the series *English is Fun*, aimed at the territory of the Republic of Srpska, is worth reading, as the authors paid much attention to the contrast between cultures, and included a number of symbols, names, customs, etc. coming from both source and target culture (further reading: Prodanović 2016).

materials comprising songs and rhymes (following suit of the previously illustrated in the textbook). Despite the fact that the bilingual nature of the given lexicon could be regarded as a trait belonging to the Grammar-Translation Method, the very approach applied, characterised by numerous drills, should lead to acquisition from a communicative perspective.

The bilingual resource – apart from attending to listening, singing, and reading prompts, also aims to address writing to a significant extent, as well as some more challenging tasks, i.e., matching or true-false ones. Its content is enriched by additional units (which may come in very useful, in case teachers do have more time at their disposal than planned, or as supplementary material for more advanced students, and for those who would simply like to broaden their horizons in relation to the subject matter). Apart from that, a word list could be found at the very end, i.e., a picture dictionary – supported by some common structures in which keywords could find their place (which could enhance/simplify the acquisition and organisation process).

The book authored by the native English speaker displays a spectrum of tasks eliciting versatile activities – e.g., chanting, pointing, repeating, asking-answering, acting, circling, etc. which may affect students characterised by different personality traits and learning styles. Its content strongly supports the communicative model, fostering different levels of communication/pronunciation via its *Fluency time* additional sections, and those dedicated to phonics. Furthermore, apart from reviews provided on a regular basis, the fact that each unit is followed by a project (task) makes it not only up-to-date, answering to the needs of modern educational (including language-related) policies which point to project-oriented teaching-learning practices<sup>2</sup>, but also represents an exciting resource, engaging students' collaborative, problem-solving (critical thinking) and decision-making skills. Last, despite the fact that the approach utilised favours implicit rather than an explicit illustration of grammar, it worth noting that the textbook ends in a section dedicated to grammar – primarily of practical nature, but also transparently pointing to the most important notions (rules/principles to be followed).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The role textbooks have in modern foreign language teaching practices is indisputably important; apart from introducing us to specific content, textbooks, via their

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<sup>2</sup> Further reading on the utilisation of projects in language teaching-learning practices – see Prodanović and Gavranović 2020

organisation also reflect the teaching approach their authors have adopted. In this paper, we analysed three textbooks widely used in the third grade of primary schools across the Republic of Serbia, all of which are approved for use by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. The main criterion for the selection of these textbooks for comparison and analysis is the cultural and language-related background of their authors. The textbooks were analysed and compared in terms of their structure/organisation, topics/language versatility, language skills addressed, culture-related notions/pragmatics awareness, and assessment/tasks/complementary material.

All three textbooks, regardless of the authors' background and the publishing houses – whether these textbooks were published by domestic or foreign publishers – show many similarities in terms of content and its delivery. They are all in compliance with the national curriculum, respect the *CEFR* principles, and support the Communicative Approach to foreign language teaching. The analysis has shown that all these textbooks contain a variety of tasks and questions which engage students in the process of learning and knowledge creation, thus supporting the learner-centered approach to foreign language teaching.

While an author's fingerprint, irrespective of their background (in both the broad and narrow sense) is a phenomenon we can always identify, and it thus comes as no surprise, that the analysis has also noted a number of similarities, at all the examined levels. However, notwithstanding the common ground, and positive sides, as well as some space for debate and/or improvement, within each of the resources, it appears that its components put the native one at the forefront of the line – seen from different angles, including the organization, the skills covered, competences assessed, and engaging nature.

However, there are some limitations which should be taken into consideration when stating all the mentioned – the analysis has included a limited number of textbooks (there may be different content offered in some other resources, irrespective of their *origin*); then, the analysis has not included the total sets some teachers may have at their disposal (e.g., Teacher's book, Workbook, CDs, Flashcards, etc.), and the reason behind this lies in the fact that a number of teachers and students do rely on the textbook only (it is envisioned that they all have and use it actively, which may not be the case for any of the accompanying resources/tools); last, external factors which may influence the selection of the textbook to follow have not been taken into account but in the future, some new insights may shed more light on the issue.

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## KOMPARATIVNA ANALIZA UDŽBENIKA NAMENJENIH NASTAVI ENGLESKOG KAO STRANOG JEZIKA U TREĆEM RAZREDU OSNOVNE ŠKOLE

### Sažetak

U nastavi stranog jezika često se ističe uloga i značaj udžbenika, a različitim aspektima, ulogama i karakteristikama udžbenika bavi se i teorija udžbenika koja se vremenom modifikuje shodno istraživanjima iz oblasti primenjene lingvistike. Komunikativni pristup, koji trenutno dominira u nastavi stranih jezika, i koji za cilj ima da promovise organizaciju nastave koja je usredsređena na učenika i poboljšanje njegove komunikativne kompetencije, uticao je u velikoj meri na strukturu i organizaciju savremenih udžbenika. Ovaj članak ispituje složenu prirodu udžbenika kroz analizu tri udžbenika engleskog jezika, odobrena od strane Ministarstva prosvete, nauke i tehnološkog razvoja Republike Srbije. Cilj ove studije je da analizira i upoređi organizaciju i jezičke segmente analiziranih udžbenika koji se koriste u trećem razredu u osnovnim školama u Republici Srbiji. Glavni kriterijum za odabir ovih udžbenika za analizu odnosi se na jezičku pozadinu njihovih autora, kojima je engleski maternji, prvi ili drugi jezik. Ova studija ima za cilj pronalaženje razlika i sličnosti u pristupima i metodama koje su autori koristili u svrhu predstavljanja određenog jezičkog sadržaja. Predstavljani su rezultati dobijeni uporednom analizom tri udžbenika engleskog jezika na osnovu strukture/organizacije udžbenika, tema, obrađenih jezičkih veština, pojmova vezanih za kulturu/svest o pragmatici i ocenjivanja / zadataka / dopunskog materijala. Analiza pokazuje da se sva tri udžbenika bave sličnim jezičkim kompetencijama i veštinama koje su u skladu sa predviđenim ishodima nastave i učenja u vezi sa predmetom. Osim toga, oni se takođe u najvećoj mogućoj meri oslanjaju na ključni dokument koji se koristi kao smernica za učenje stranih jezika – Zajednički evropski referentni okvir za jezike. Analiza pokazuje da su svi ovi udžbenici organizovani na takav način da uključe učenika u process učenja i usvajanja znanja kroz različite, pažljivo osmišljene zadatke i pitanja. S druge strane, osim karakteristika koje u zajedničke ovim udžbenicima, analiza pokazuje fine različitosti prisutne u svim aspektima o kojima se raspravlja, koje mogu dovesti do diferenciranih pristupa u realizaciji određenih sadržaja u organizaciji i realizaciji nastave engleskog jezika.

**Ključne reči:** analiza udžbenika; engleski jezik; komunikativni pristup; kulturni kontekst; teorija udžbenika

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