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A Retrospective View of English Language Learning Materials Produced in Slovenia from 1945 to the Present

Summary

Taking a historical perspective, this article documents the development of domestically produced English Language Learning (ELL) materials in the period between 1945 and 2013. To this end, reference is made to milestones that marked shifts in linguistic and foreign language teaching paradigms, including aspects of *Method* and the underlying conception of language. The analysis will draw on aspects of *Method* in relation to language policy documents (i.e., curricula) and the course books in which these principles are embodied. Through the analysis of these factors we trace the evolution from Grammar–Translation methodology to Communicative Language Teaching in locally produced textbooks which are representative of various historical periods.

Key words: English Language Learning materials, local textbooks, historical perspective, language policy documents, language teaching methods

Retrospektivni pregled v Sloveniji ustvarjenih učbenikov za učenje angleščine v obdobju od leta 1945 do danes

Povzetek

Pričujoči prispevek z zgodovinske perspektive dokumentira razvoj domačih učbenikov za učenje angleščine, ustvarjenih v obdobju od leta 1945 do 2013. V ta namen so obravnavani tisti mejniki, ki so ključno zaznamovali spremembe na področju jezikoslovja in poučevanja tujih jezikov. Analiza bo obravnavala vidike *Metode* z ozirom na dokumente tujejezikovne politike (tj. učne načrte) in učbenike, ki ta načela utelešajo. Z analizo teh dejavnikov v domačih učbenikov, značilnih za posamezna zgodovinska obdobja, bomo sledili razvoju, ki je potekal od nekdajne slovnično–prevajalne metode do današnjega komunikacijskega pristopa.

Ključne besede: gradiva za učenje angleščine, domači učbeniki, zgodovinska perspektiva, dokumenti jezikovne politike, metode poučevanja jezikov

A Retrospective View of English Language Learning Materials Produced in Slovenia from 1945 to the Present

1. Introduction: broad-brush history of english language teaching in Slovenia from 1945 to the present

Taking a historical perspective, this paper sets out to review the development of EFL textbooks for school use in Slovenia published from 1945 to the present. To this end, the discussion will draw on milestones that marked shifts in linguistic and foreign language teaching paradigms, including the underlying conceptions of language formulated and articulated in foreign language policy documents (i.e., syllabuses) and accompanying textbooks in which these principles are embodied.

During the second half of the 20th Century, changes in the field of Applied Linguistics resulted in a shift of approach both in the change in *theory of language* (e.g., structuralist, functional), and in the *theory of learning* (e.g., behaviourist, cognitive). The influence of these shifts and changes is recognized as having had a major impact on the teaching of foreign languages as they translated into new methods and approaches, and eventually into the design of instructional materials. Through the analysis of these factors we will try to establish whether the past and current textbooks conform to the developments resulting from applied linguistic debates of the last seven decades.

A historical review is, however, almost always fraught with problems. Firstly, the field is immense. A drastic selection has had to be made, which besides being subjective, has also led to omissions and some degree of simplification. And secondly, the current state of historical documentation of EFL learning/teaching in Slovenia is far from satisfactory, meaning that certain important data are either still missing or they have to be laboriously (re)discovered.

Locally produced foreign language course books have not been the subject of much research to date. Three early contributions that need to be mentioned are Umek (1988), who first traced the development in English Language Teaching in Slovenia from 1945 to the late 1980s, reviewing foreign language curricula, syllabuses and English course books published during that period, and Kožar (1991), who in her MA Thesis analysed the elements of the American culture in secondary-school ELL materials used in Slovenia between the 1950s and the late 1980s. Additionally, Skela (2000, 2008) outlined and reviewed national foreign language syllabuses, educational reforms, documents, publications, projects and events affecting foreign language teaching in Slovenia.

The teaching of English in the Slovenian primary and secondary school context has a relatively long tradition, and so does the domestic production of English Language Learning (ELL) textbooks for school use. The school year 1945/46 is taken as a starting point as it marks the beginning of the official introduction of English as a school subject into Slovenian schools. Before World War II, English was not a curricular subject at any Slovenian school (Umek 1988, 26).¹ This does not mean, of course, that there was no English learned/taught, or that there were no ELL materials published in Slovenia in the pre-World War II time. In 1930, for example, *Učbenik angleškega*

¹ Judging by the overview of published teaching materials in the period between 1919 and 1944, Umek's statement is most probably accurate. During this period (1919–1944) the only authorized publishing house for school materials, *Pokrajinska šolska založba*, published course books for the following modern and classical languages: Serbo-Croatian, German, French, Latin and Greek (Planina 1944).

jezika (Mulaček 1930) appeared.² And then, interestingly, in 1943 (i.e., during wartime), two ELL course books were published – an exercise book/workbook (*Učbenik angleškega jezika. I. del. Vadnica*, Kotnik 1943),³ and a grammar reference book (*Učbenik angleškega jezika. II. del. Slovnica*, Kotnik 1943)⁴. The questions as to who these two course books were intended for and in what teaching contexts they were used remain unanswered.⁵ The question, too, as to which languages besides German and Italian were taught and learned in war-time Slovenia/Yugoslavia, remains unclear. The earliest instance of ELL materials intended for Slovenian users we could trace is *Slovensko–angleški razgovori* (Kubelka 1912). Published in New York, it is basically a phrase book intended for travel purposes and, sadly, Slovenian immigrants to the USA.⁶

In sum, however poorly documented the pre-war and interwar period may be concerning ELT in Slovenia, some ELL activity can be observed. However, more detailed and more objective investigation of this period will be needed in the future.

For these reasons, and with the caveats mentioned above, dating the birth of English Language Learning/Teaching in Slovenia to the immediate post-war year (1945) does appear to be justified. The trial syllabus (*Začasni učni načrt na gimnazijah in klasičnih gimnazijah*)⁷ issued in 1945 marks the emergence of ELT in Slovenia, with publishers and teacher training institutions beginning to operate in tandem and thus placing ELT on a firm institutional footing.

Between the years 1945 and 1996 the structure of the Slovenian education system, types of schools and school curricula underwent different changes, many of which had a strong impact on the teaching of foreign languages. In 1945, there were two types of grammar schools, i.e., the ‘general’ grammar school (*splošna gimnazija*) and the classics–programme grammar school (*klasična gimnazija*). They were both 8-year secondary schools to which students progressed after a four-year primary school (see *Figure 1*). The 8-year grammar school was divided into two four-year education cycles: *nižja gimnazija* (junior high school/grammar school) and *višja gimnazija* (senior high school/grammar school). The first four-year education cycle (i.e., the first four grades) of the grammar school would conceptually correspond to the last four grades of today’s primary school (i.e., the subject level). Parallel to this, there was also a regular 8-year primary school attended by students who either could not or did not want to continue to the grammar school (see *Figure 1*). When English was introduced in 1945, it was offered only as a *second* foreign language and only to senior grammar school students, i.e., from age 15 to 19. In the school year 1948/49, the

² In fact, it is not a textbook (as the title implies) in modern terms, but plain (supplementary or self-study) grammar material, with explanations of the grammar in Slovenian. It might be the first grammar reference book of the English language written in Slovenian. As such, it could be considered as a predecessor of Kotnik’s (1943) *Učbenik angleškega jezika. II. del. Slovnica*, and of the later *Angleška (Nemška, Italijanska, Francoska) slovnica po naše* series (Komac 1983, Muster Čenčur 1985, Berce 1986, Jereb 1995), which continues to be very popular due to the fact that the grammar of a certain foreign language is explained in Slovenian.

³ Although it is called *vadnica* (i.e., exercise book/workbook), it is in fact a *textbook* in modern terms.

⁴ The *Slovnica* volume complements the textbook (i.e., *I. del. Vadnica*), as no grammar explanations are included in the textbook itself. Instead, the textbook is interspersed with cross references that help the students find grammar explanations in the grammar book. The grammar book is written in Slovenian, with bilingual (i.e., English and Slovenian) grammatical terminology. Both *Vadnica* (i.e., an exercise book/a workbook) and *Slovnica* (i.e., a grammar reference book) were re-published as *Angleška vadnica* and *Angleška slovnica* in 1952.

⁵ Given the war-time conditions it is reasonable to believe that they were intended for informal and individual study.

⁶ The contents is organized around 16 clusters or situations, which chronologically reflect the immigrants’ ‘language needs’ from the moment of their arrival in the USA (e.g., *On Ellis Island*) to taking lodgings, looking for work, etc. Each chapter/unit consists of a list of phrases organized into three columns – a Slovenian phrase (e.g., *Imam tri otroke.*) in the first column is followed by translation into English (e.g., *I have three children.*) in the second, and in the third column the pronunciation is given. Similar phrase books became very popular in the 1970s and 1980s, when the *Engleski (Francuski, Talijanski, Njemački, Grčki, Madžarski ...)* *s izgovorom* series was being published and sold across former Yugoslavia (Vitas 1970 onwards).

⁷ Temporary/Trial Syllabus for secondary schools and classics–programme secondary schools.

boundary line between the junior and senior grammar school was lowered by one year, so that the 4th grade now belonged to the senior grammar school, whereas the duration of the primary school changed from 8 to 7 years, i.e., the 7-year primary school was introduced. However, the curriculum issued in 1958 introduced a unified 8-year primary school from which students would continue to different types of secondary schools, including the four-year grammar school (see *Figure 2*). The last change concerning the structure of the education system was introduced by the curricular reform of 1996, which established a 9-year primary school, lowering the beginning of compulsory education to the age of six.

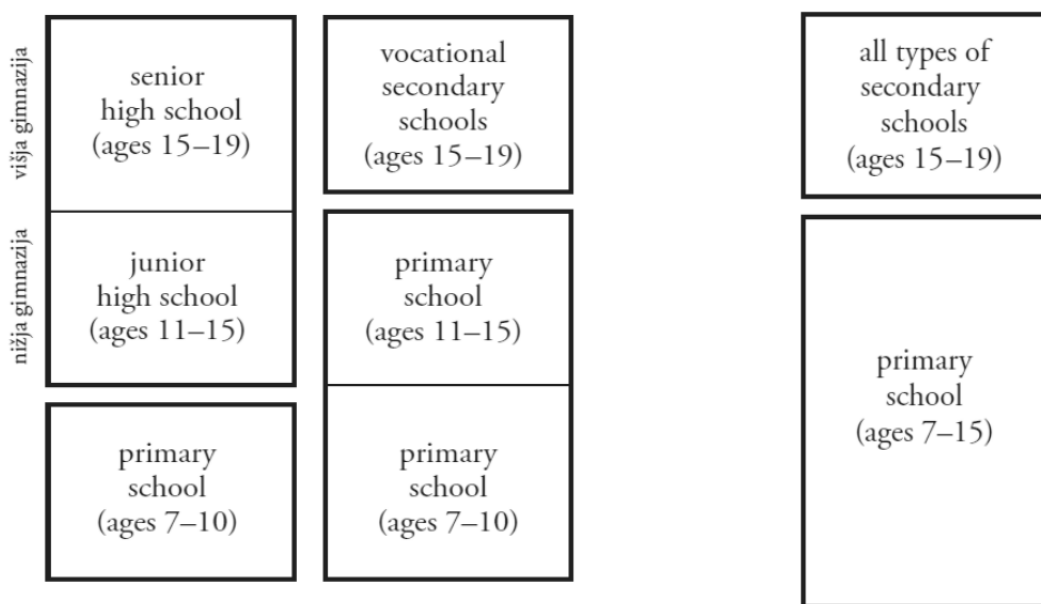


Figure 1. Education system in Slovenia in 1945. Figure 2. Education system in Slovenia in 1958.

During the seventy-year period covered in this paper it was not only the structuring of the education system that underwent different changes, but also national foreign language curricula. These changes, in turn, were reflected in the design of the textbooks conceived for school use, as these had to conform to the curriculum. This meant that existing textbooks were reformed to keep pace with curriculum changes, or that new course books were published in answer to new demands. When English teaching emerged in 1945, the teaching approach adopted was that of grammar–translation, and was at least to some extent subjugated to ideological demands. After all, from the end of the Second World War until 1991 Slovenia was part of Yugoslavia, which belonged to the Eastern–Bloc communist/socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe. Although Yugoslavia was only aligned with the Soviet Union for three post-war years (1945–1948) and steered an independent course throughout the Cold War period, ideological demands were nevertheless present everywhere. Therefore, textbooks of the time were (slightly) politically charged, and this continued well into the 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1945 curriculum there was no overt statement of methods policy, but rather a covertly assigned preferred method of language teaching inherent in the textbooks of the time and mandated by the political context. Throughout this ‘Yugoslav’ and ‘socialist’ period, language education policy was strongly centralized with the aim of controlling educational content and ensuring the quality of teaching via unified curricula and textbooks. The ELT textbooks used between 1945 and 1989 were all locally produced and

there was usually only one book prescribed and used at a time. The situation changed in 1989, when the school authorities lifted the restriction and granted freedom of choice regarding the selection of textbooks. This led to the development of multiple textbooks, including the British-produced or global ones and thus marking a sharp contrast to the times when the educational authorities exercised tighter control over the use of instructional materials.

From the 1990s national curricula began to promote the development of ‘communicative competence’ and the development of all four language macroskills. The latest national syllabuses for English, those of 1998 and of 2008, both strongly promote Communicative Language Teaching as the norm of teaching foreign languages in Slovenia.

2. Working assumptions

To carry out our analysis, we need to make some working assumptions, which will, despite some slight oversimplifications, serve our purpose.

The first assumption concerns the relationship between ELL materials and applied linguistic thought (with all its feeder disciplines). Most (retrospective) accounts of foreign language teaching methodology and textbooks recognize and note the ways in which ‘theoretical and ideological beliefs about the nature of language, and as well the results of empirical research, have been realized at the level of textbook production’ (Nunan 1991, 228). The assumption is, put simply, that foreign language textbooks reflect developments in the theory of (language) teaching and learning. How they look and what they contain goes hand in hand with the prevailing contemporary ideas about how languages are best taught and learned at the time they were published. But the extent to which the materials reflect ideas within Applied Linguistics and thus the extent to which their nature may be explained by reference to those ideas can be questioned. And indeed, some researchers, such as Littlejohn (1992), have noted that a comparison between the nature of the materials and the applied linguistic ideas can and does show a degree of matching in some areas but also a significant degree of mismatch in other areas. There are other experts who recognize a relatively weak link between Applied Linguistic discussion and the nature of the materials. Ellis (2010, 52–3), for example, points out that ‘the proposals emanating from applied linguistic thought are no different from the proposals that originate from any other source’. Tomlinson (2013, 2) speaks of ‘big gaps between applied linguistics theory and materials development practice’ and of ‘disconnections between theory and practice’ (ibid.), suggesting that a more fruitful line of explanation may lie elsewhere – with the textbook writers themselves. This means that ELT materials represent the personal perceptions of authors to a much greater extent than we might suppose. It is very revealing to look at how materials writers actually go about designing materials. Some talk about applying theoretical principles to the development of their materials but many report ‘replicating previous materials and relying on creative inspiration’ (Tomlinson 2013, 2–3). Despite the fact that today there is a lot of literature on principled advice for materials developers (e.g., McGrath 2002), materials development, to a large extent, continues to be something of a ‘black art’, i.e., ‘a strange mixture of imagination, insight and analytic reasoning, and this fact must be recognized when the materials are assessed’ (Low 1989, 153).

For present purposes, and with the caveats mentioned above, we shall assume that ELL materials *do* reflect ideas within Applied Linguistics and that their nature may be explained by reference to those ideas.

The second assumption concerns the relationship between syllabus and materials. There are two basic ways of representing the relationship between materials and syllabus. In the first and still

more common, the syllabus determines the way in which textbooks will be designed and later exploited for teaching purposes. McGrath (2002, 214) refers to this approach as a *syllabus-driven approach*. In the second, materials are selected first, for their intrinsic interest and general linguistic appropriateness, and a specific language syllabus is then derived from them. We can refer to this approach as a textbook-driven approach.⁸ Hutchinson and Waters (1987, 93), however, suggest a third possibility of representing the relationship between materials and syllabus, which they call a *materials-generated syllabus*. In this approach, ‘instead of using the syllabus as the initial and once-and-for-all determiner of the content of materials and methodology, syllabus and materials evolve together with each being able to inform the other’ (ibid.). In this way, the syllabus is used creatively as ‘a generator of good and relevant learning activities rather than as just a statement of language content which restricts and impoverishes the methodology’ (ibid.).

Because education policy in Slovenia used to be, and still is, strongly centralized, with unified curricula and textbooks centrally controlled by the Ministry of Education, this article will, in examining the relationships between language policy documents (i.e., syllabuses) and course books, assume a *syllabus-driven approach*.

The third assumption concerns the notion of *Method* and its relationship to both language policy documents (i.e., syllabuses) and ELL materials. We will assume that *Method* has always significantly influenced the ways in which course books, and consequently classroom practice, have been conceptualized. The reason for this assumption lies in the fact that ‘language teaching theory over the decades since the end of the last century has advanced mainly by conceptualizing teaching in terms of teaching *methods*’ (Stern 1983, 452). The search for the ‘best method’, which dominated thinking in ELT and applied linguistics for much of the twentieth century, has resulted in a range of approaches, the most common being Grammar–Translation, Direct Method, Audio–lingual, and Communicative. As such, methods are, in fact, ‘products of their times’, that is, individual methods emerged at particular moments and in particular places as a result of the social and academic philosophies that were current in those contexts (Hall 2011, 102). Although more recently the search for a ‘best’ method has receded in importance and some researchers have noted that we are now in a ‘*Postmethod era*’ (Kumaravadivelu 2003, 2006, qtd. in Hall 2011, 60), language teaching methods can still be examined as a source of well-used practices that became translated into teaching materials. Nevertheless, numerous titles and/or subtitles of textbooks bear witness to this close relationship between *Method* and teaching materials, e.g., *A Direct Method English Course* (Gatenby 1952), *Situational English* (Commonwealth Office of Education 1965), *Target 1: An Audio–Visual English Course for Secondary Schools* (Alexander and Tadman 1972), *Notions in English* (Jones 1979) among others.

The traditional view of the development of methods over time is that ‘it has been cumulative, progressive, and relatively linear’ (Hall 2011, 79), developing from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’. An example of such simplified chronological method development, with dates suggesting periods of greatest dominance, would be as follows: Grammar Translation Method (1800–1900) → Direct Method (1890–1930) → Structural Method (1930–1960) → Audio–lingual Method (1950–1970) → Situational Method (1950–1970) → Communicative Approach (1970–2000) → Postmethod (2000 – present). Although the idea of language teaching methods as making ‘continuous upwards progress through history’ (ibid.) is an oversimplification, we will, in our analysis, adopt this ‘traditional’ and linear view for the sake of clarity. It is, namely, not possible within the scope of this paper to set out all

⁸ Hutchinson and Waters (1987, 94) refer to this approach as *the post hoc approach*. In this approach, materials are written (or chosen) first, and then a cosmetic syllabus is written to satisfy teachers, students and school authorities. Using the syllabus in this way is probably more widespread than we might suppose.

of the many ramifications of *Method* as these are highlighted in numerous well-known sources, e.g., Mackey (1965), Titone (1968), Kelly (1969), Prebeg–Vilke (1977), Bell (1981), Rivers (1981), Stern (1983), Howatt (1984/2004), Bowen et al. (1985), Richards and Rodgers (1986/2001), Chastain (1988), Douthwaite (1991), Brown (2001), Celce–Murcia (2001), etc.

In sum, in our analysis we will assume that the foreign language textbook has served as the stage for many methodological approaches (i.e., methods), which is why its nature may be explained by reference to *methods*.

The fourth assumption concerns surveying ELL *materials* from a *historical* perspective. The rationale in surveying ELL materials from a *historical* perspective is not to review the failings of certain language teaching practices of the past. Nor is it to chronicle past methodologies simply because, like Everest, they ‘are there’ (Bowen et al. 1985, 3). The aim is to broaden the language teacher’s range of resources and enable them ‘to evaluate contemporary methodologies more knowledgeably and honestly, and therefore more effectively’ (ibid.).

As to the question why to survey materials, Stern (1983, 78) argues that ‘a historical survey should (but rarely does) distinguish between the history of ideas on language teaching and the development of practice, because evidence from theoretical writings cannot be treated as the same as evidence from language teaching materials’. Thus, a widely used textbook, such as *Headway*, can give better clues to current practice, whereas ‘the reflections [...] on how to learn a language provide evidence for the parameters of thought but do not necessarily describe common practice in a given period’ (ibid.). Therefore, course books from past times can be said to ‘document’ common practice in a given period and as such act as some sort of ‘time capsules’ which afford an invaluable insight into what language teaching/learning looked like at a given time.

Figure 3 summarizes our working assumptions. It should be noted once again that major relationships and the interdependence of the components in the diagram are symbolized by unidirectional (instead of bidirectional) arrows for purposes of our analysis. The principle of interaction implies that the initiative in theory development, for example, does not flow only from the disciplines downwards, but may come from any of the positions indicated. Or, as Brown (2000, 13) puts it, ‘pedagogical innovation both contributes to and benefits from theory development’.

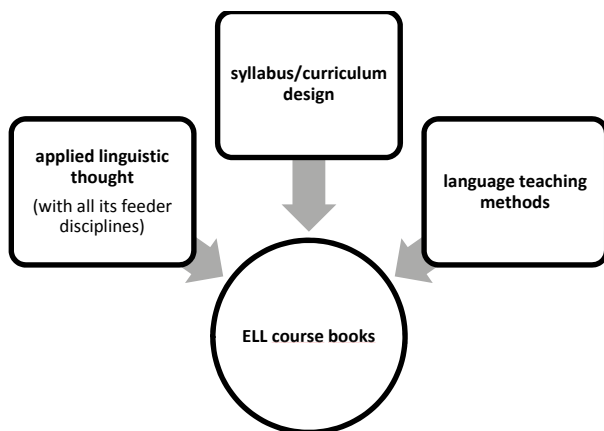


Figure 3. Inputs to ELL materials.

3. English language learning materials produced in Slovenia across seven decades (1945–2013)

Course books do not constitute a closed category but can be classified according to different criteria. López Barrios and Villanueva de Debat (2011, 22) have developed a typology whereby they classify ELL course books as *international* (i.e., global), *localized* and *local* (i.e., domestic or home-grown). The first are centrally produced in English-speaking countries, notably the UK and the USA, and used worldwide, whereas the last are specifically designed and produced for use in a particular country or region. By the second type they mean adapted versions of international or local course books produced for a major market such as Slovenia ‘so that they adjust to the school curriculum of a specific country or to special learner characteristics and needs’⁹ (ibid.).

A glance at the list of all domestically produced ELL materials between 1945 and the present (see *Table 1*) reveals some interesting facts:

- So far, most course books produced locally have been intended for the primary–school level. What is really striking about secondary–school ELT materials is that only three main course books have been written to date. The first was Žgur et al.’s *Angleška vadnica* series (Žgur et al. 1945ff), and then it was not until 1972 that the next, the *MAP* series, started off (Knight et al. 1972ff). If this is true, then there was obviously an almost–thirty–year gap in secondary–school ELT materials production.¹⁰ The third, and the last, secondary series started off in 1981 (Knight et al. 1981ff). Since then, not a single local main course book intended for the secondary–school level has been produced. There have been, however, instances of *localized* materials (Wilson and Taylor 1999, Collie 2010), and those intended for the ESP context (Potočar 1995, Dobrajc 2002, 2004).
- As to the primary–school ELT materials production, there have been six course book series produced so far (two of them in their second editions), i.e., Grad’s *Angleška vadnica* (1952ff), Pestotnik’s *Angleška vadnica* (1959ff), Kos and Pilgram’s *Angleška vadnica* (1967ff), Kos and Pilgram’s *English* series (1974ff), Skela et al.’s *Touchstone* series (1991ff), the new edition of Skela et al.’s *Touchstone* series (2003ff), the *Reach for the stars* series (Mihelač and Novosel 2006ff), and finally, Škulj et al.’s *Itchy Feet* series (2007ff). Although the process of primary–school ELT materials production seems to have been slightly more cumulative and progressive, there were still periods during which the production of local course books plummeted. For example, Kos and Pilgram’s *English* series (1974ff) was merely a cosmetically modified second edition of Kos and Pilgram’s *Angleška vadnica* (1967ff), which means that virtually the same textbook was in use for twenty–two years when, in 1989, the *English* series fell out of use.

⁹ Examples of localized ELL course books used in Slovenia are, for instance, *Way Up Intermediate* (Collie 2010); *Prospects Intermediate* (Wilson and Taylor 1999, with Marjeta Peterlin as the local advisor); *Angleško brez težav* (Chérel 1970); and many course books produced in former Yugoslavia, notably Croatia (by Školska knjiga) and Serbia (by Kolarčev narodni univerzitet), especially ESP course books for vocational secondary schools during the so-called *vocationally oriented education* period (i.e., usmerjeno izobraževanje) in the early 1980s (e.g., Kipčić et al. 1981).

¹⁰ Apart from Žgur et al.’s *Angleška vadnica* course (i.e., *Angleška vadnica II* and *Angleška vadnica III*), Grad’s *Angleška čitanka za 1. in 2. razred gimnazij* (1953), and Grad’s *Angleška vadnica IV* (1959), there were also some *localized* materials used during this period, e.g., *English for Today, Book Three: The Way We Live* (published by The National Council of Teachers of English, 1964, and adapted by M. Kos, A. Goričan and I. Rode), and Brihta and Grgič’s series (*A Fifth–Year English Course*, 1965, *A Sixth–Year English Course*, 1966, *An English Reader: A Seventh–Year English Course*, 1967, *An English Reader: An Eighth–Year English Course*, 1968), published by Školska knjiga, Zagreb.

- The decades between the 1990s and the 2000s register the highest number of Slovenian ELT textbooks. This is surprising if we know that since 1989, when the first British-produced course books were introduced in Slovenian schools, the global ELT course book has had a very strong presence and dominated the local educational landscape. The fact that the global ELT course book has recently been challenged by locally produced materials can be summed up as ‘the tension between global spread and local needs’ (Prodromou and Mishan 2008, 193), or as an example of ‘the local determining the global, the periphery fighting back against the centre’ (ibid., 203).

Authors	Title	First published	Level
Žgur, Pestotnik, Skalickž	<i>Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja</i>	1945	secondary
Žgur, Skalickž, Kos	<i>Angleška vadnica. Druga stopnja</i>	1947	secondary
Žgur, Skalickž	<i>Angleška vadnica. Tretja stopnja</i>	1950	secondary
Kotnik	<i>Angleška vadnica</i> ¹¹	1952	adults (used on language courses); self-study
Kotnik	<i>Angleška slovnica</i> ¹²	1952	adults (used on language courses); self-study
Grad	<i>Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja. Za I. razred nižjih gimnazij</i> ¹³	1952	primary (secondary)
Grad	<i>Angleška vadnica. Druga stopnja. Za II. razred nižjih gimnazij</i>	1952	primary (secondary)
Grad	<i>Angleška vadnica. Tretja stopnja. Za III. razred nižjih gimnazij</i>	1953	primary (secondary)
Grad	<i>Angleška vadnica. Četrta stopnja. Za IV. razred nižjih gimnazij</i>	1954	primary (secondary)
Grad	<i>Angleška čitanka za 1. in 2. razred gimnazij</i> ¹⁴	1953	secondary
Grad	<i>Something to Read. Sodobno angleško berilo. Izvlečki iz časopisov in revij</i>	1952	primary (secondary)
Grad	<i>Vesela angleščina</i>	1958	primary
Grad	<i>Angleška vadnica IV</i>	1959	secondary
Pestotnik	<i>Angleška vadnica za 5. razred osnovne šole</i>	1959	primary
Pestotnik	<i>Angleška vadnica za 6. razred osnovne šole</i>	1960	primary
Pestotnik	<i>Angleška vadnica za 7. razred osnovne šole</i>	1962	primary
Blaganje	<i>Angleščina za vsakogar</i>	1962	adults (used on language courses)
Kos, Pilgram	<i>Angleška vadnica za peti razred osnovne šole</i>	1967	primary

¹¹ Reprint of Učbenik angleškega jezika. I. del. Vadnica (Kotnik 1943).

¹² Reprint of Učbenik angleškega jezika. II. del. Slovnica (Kotnik 1943).

¹³ As Grad's *Angleška vadnica* series (1952ff) was used both in the junior grammar school (ages 11–15) and the ‘regular’ 8-year primary school (ages 11–15), the same books were published with different subtitles. For example, *Angleška vadnica. Četrta stopnja. Za IV. razred nižjih gimnazij* (1954) was also published as *Angleška vadnica. IV. za 8. razred osnovnih šol* (1959).

¹⁴ Intended for senior grammar school students (ages 15–19).

Kos, Pilgram	<i>Angleška vadnica za šesti razred osnovne šole</i>	1968	primary
Kos, Pilgram	<i>Angleška vadnica za sedmi razred osnovne šole</i>	1969	primary
Kos, Knight, Pilgram	<i>Angleška vadnica za osmi razred osnovne šole</i>	1970	primary
Blaganje	<i>English For All Occasions</i>	1969	adults (used on language courses)
Knight, Knight, Kobilica	<i>MAP 1</i>	1972	secondary
Knight, Knight, Kobilica	<i>MAP 2</i>	1973	secondary
Knight, Knight, Kobilica	<i>MAP 3</i>	1974	secondary
Kos, Pilgram	<i>English 1. Angleški učbenik za 5. razred osnovne šole</i> ¹⁵	1974	primary
Kos, Pilgram	<i>English 2. Angleški učbenik za 6. razred osnovne šole</i> ¹⁶	1977	primary
Kos, Pilgram	<i>English 3. Angleški učbenik za 7. razred osnovne šole</i> ¹⁷	1979	primary
Kos, Pilgram	<i>English 4. Angleški učbenik za 8. razred osnovne šole</i> ¹⁸	1982	primary
Knight, Kobilica, Knight, Kožar	<i>Angleški jezik 1</i>	1981	secondary
Knight, Kobilica, Knight	<i>Angleški jezik 2</i>	1982	secondary
Skela, Berce	<i>Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1</i>	1991	primary
King–Videtič, Mavrič, Skela	<i>Angleški jezik 2. Touchstone 2</i>	1992	primary
King–Videtič, Skela	<i>Angleški jezik 3. Touchstone 3</i>	1993	primary
Marendič, Skela	<i>Angleški jezik 4. Touchstone 4</i>	1994	primary
Potočar	<i>English for hairdressers: učbenik za angleščino v 3. letniku srednje frizerske šole</i> ¹⁹	1995	secondary – vocational (ESP)
Gvardjančič, Marguč, Skela	<i>Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1. New</i> ²⁰	1996	primary
Skela, King–Videtič	<i>Touchstone 7 – angleški jeziki za 7. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i> ²¹	2003	primary
Skela	<i>Touchstone 8 – angleški jeziki za 8. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i> ²²	2005	primary

¹⁵ 2nd ed. of *Angleška vadnica za peti razred osnovne šole* (Kos, Pilgram 1967)

¹⁶ 2nd ed. of *Angleška vadnica za šesti razred osnovne šole* (Kos, Pilgram 1968)

¹⁷ 2nd ed. of *Angleška vadnica za sedmi razred osnovne šole* (Kos, Pilgram 1969)

¹⁸ 2nd ed. of *Angleška vadnica za osmi razred osnovne šole* (Kos, Pilgram 1970)

¹⁹ In 2003, it appeared in its 2nd ed.

²⁰ 2nd ed. of *Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1* (Skela, Berce 1991)

²¹ 2nd ed. of *Angleški jezik 2. Touchstone 2* (King–Videtič, Mavrič, Skela 1992)

²² 2nd ed. of *Angleški jezik 3. Touchstone 3* (King–Videtič, Skela 1993)

Skela	<i>Touchstone 9 – angleški jeziki za 9. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i> ²³	2006	primary
Skela, Gvardjančič, Marguč	<i>Touchstone 6 – angleški jeziki za 6. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i> ²⁴	2009	primary
Dobrajc	<i>English for Nurses</i>	2002	secondary – vocational (ESP)
Dobrajc	<i>English for nursing assistants</i>	2004	secondary – vocational (ESP)
Jesenik, Milijaš, Skela, Šavli	<i>My sails 1: učbenik za pouk angleščine v 4. razredu devetletne osnovne šole</i> ²⁵	2002	primary – young learners
Jesenik, Skela, Šavli	<i>My sails 2: učbenik za pouk angleščine v 5. razredu devetletne osnovne šole</i>	2003	primary – young learners
Jesenik, Šavli	<i>My sails 3: učbenik za pouk angleščine v 6. razredu devetletne osnovne šole</i>	2005	primary
Novak, Nuč	<i>Reach for the stars 4: učbenik za pouk angleščine v 4. razredu osnovne šole</i>	2003	primary – young learners
Novak, Nuč, Novosel	<i>Reach for the stars 5: učbenik za pouk angleščine v 5. razredu osnovne šole</i>	2004	primary – young learners
Mihelač, Novosel	<i>Reach for the stars 6: učbenik za pouk angleščine v 6. razredu osnovne šole</i>	2006	primary
Škulj, Pačnik, Talt Lah	<i>Itchy Feet 1: Učbenik za pouk angleščine za 7. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i>	2007	primary
Škulj, Pačnik, Intihar Klančar	<i>Itchy Feet 2: Učbenik za pouk angleščine za 8. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i>	2009	primary
Škulj	<i>Itchy Feet 3: Učbenik za pouk angleščine za 9. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i>	2010	primary
German Velušček, Avsenik	<i>My fairyland 1. Učbenik za zgodnje učenje angleškega jezika</i>	2009	primary – very young learners
German Velušček, Avsenik	<i>My fairyland 2. Učbenik za zgodnje učenje angleškega jezika</i>	2011	primary – very young learners
German Velušček, Avsenik	<i>My fairyland 3. Učbenik za zgodnje učenje angleškega jezika</i>	2012	primary – very young learners

Table 1. A review of domestically produced ELL textbooks between the years 1945 and 2013.

4. Course book analysis

For this analysis we have chosen eight local course books for both primary and secondary school use that we consider to be representative of different foreign language teaching and learning paradigms or methodologies. All the course books analysed here show some degree of contextualization, meaning that they conform to the national curriculum requirements (i.e., they are ‘authorised’),²⁶ contain references to the local culture, and take into some consideration the students’

²³ 2nd ed. of *Angleški jezik 4. Touchstone 4* (Marendič, Skela 1994)

²⁴ 3rd ed. of *Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1* (Skela, Berce 1991)

²⁵ In its 2nd ed. published in 2009.

²⁶ It needs to be pointed out that, in Slovenia, course books for school use have always had to go through official scrutiny and be

Authors	Title	First published	level	In accordance with the curriculum of
Žgur, Pestotnik, Skalickž	<i>Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja.</i>	1945	primary (secondary)	1945
Grad	<i>Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja. Za I. razred nižjih gimnazij.</i>	1952	primary (secondary)	1951
Pestotnik	<i>Angleška vadnica za 5. razred osnovne šole</i>	1959	primary	1958
Kos, Pilgram	<i>Angleška vadnica za peti razred osnovne šole.</i>	1967	primary	1966
Knight, Knight, Kobilica	<i>MAP 1</i>	1972	secondary	? (1964; 1975)
Knight, Kobilica, Knight, Kožar	<i>Angleški jezik 1</i>	1981	secondary	1980
Skela, Berce	<i>Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1</i>	1991	primary	1983
Skela, Gvardjančič, Marguč	<i>Touchstone 6 – angleški jeziki za 6. razred devetletne osnovne šole</i> ²⁷	2009	primary	1998; 2008 (2011) ²⁸

Table 2. Course books analysed.

mother tongue, Slovenian. Besides, all of them were created by teams made up of exclusively or predominantly local authors. In the case of multi-volume courses, only the first book of the series has been analysed. *Table 2* indicates the course books selected for analysis, including also reference to the syllabus/curriculum to which a particular textbook conformed, or rather had to conform. In reviewing the course books, we will focus on aspects of *Method* and its underlying theory of language. This will be analysed at two levels: 1) at the policy level, i.e., in relation to methods policy documents (curricula), and 2) at the materials level. Questions of *method* may be dealt with overtly in language policy documents by an overt statement of preference of one method over another or covertly through requirements for curriculum, and for the use of certain materials (Liddicoat 2004, 156). In the latter case, when *Method* is not overtly stated in a language policy document, it will be inferred from materials. In analysing the underlying view of language at both policy and materials level, we will draw on two main shifts in the conception of language: a) as a formal system (i.e., as Traditional Grammar) or b) as a means of communication (i.e., functional or communicative). This dichotomy sets the foundation of the methods and approaches and the way these are translated into the course books analysed.

This view of language is made evident in the kinds of activities included so that a broad difference can be established between those that focus on the language system and those that focus on communication.

approved by the Ministry of Education. What did change in 1989, however, was that the one-single-book-for-one-subject restriction was lifted and freedom of choice granted regarding the selection of textbooks. Teachers can now choose from among several, though still 'authorized', course books for a particular school subject. Currently (i.e., in the school year 2013/14), primary-school teachers of English can, for example, choose from among 8 course books for the 6th grade (*Cambridge English for schools Starter, English Plus Starter, Hot Spot 1, Messages 1, My sails 3, Project 1, Reach for the stars 6, Touchstone 6*) – Katalog učbenikov za osnovno šolo 2013/14 (Primary-school Textbooks Catalogue 2013/14)

²⁷ 3rd ed. of *Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1* (Skela, Berce 1991)

²⁸ The 2008 curriculum came in force only in 2011.

4.1 The first generation of ELL course books in Slovenia: the 1940s and the 1950s

There were two textbooks analysed/reviewed for this period: *Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja* (Žgur et al. 1945), and *Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja* (Grad 1952).

From the Trial/Temporary Curriculum for grammar schools and classics–programme grammar schools of 1945 (*Začasni učni načrt na gimnazijah in klasičnih gimnazijah*) we can deduce that the syllabus for the first four–year education cycle of the ‘general’ grammar school (i.e., *nižja gimnazija*) included 16 subjects, among which there were the following languages: Slovenian (6 6 4 4),²⁹ Serbian and Croatian (– 2 2 2), and Russian as the first foreign language (4 3 3 3), which continued to be taught with the same number of periods throughout the second four–year education cycle of the ‘general’ grammar school (i.e., *višja gimnazija*). The classics–programme grammar school language syllabus was slightly different: Slovenian (4 4 5 5), Serbian and Croatian (– 2 2 2), Russian (3 3 3 3) and Latin (5 5 4 4). In the second four–year education cycle of both types of grammar schools, Serbo–Croatian was omitted, while Slovenian had 5 hours a week, and Russian 3 hours per week. The syllabus included a second foreign language with 3 hours per week, and in classics–programme grammar schools Greek was taught too. As second foreign languages English, French and German were offered. In any case, the introduction of English was at that time definitely something of a novelty.

The 1945 curriculum states that ‘in the case of modern foreign languages, all learners from the fifth to the eighth grade of grammar schools are considered as beginners meaning that the same subject matter is covered in all four years except that, in the last two years, the grammatical content is treated more comprehensively and systematically’. The only textbook available to all four levels/grades of beginners (i.e., from the 5th to the 8th grade of grammar school) was *Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja* (Žgur et al. 1945).³⁰ It came out on time for use in autumn 1945.

The course book consists of an introductory part, 21 main units (called ‘lessons’), 3 review units (called *Examination Paper*), some short extracts from Marshal Tito’s Speeches, a unit–by–unit English–Slovenian vocabulary list (with about 1,250 words), a list of irregular verbs, and an Appendix containing additional short texts to supplement individual units. The introductory part starts with a short historical review of the development of the English language, which indicates the authors’ commitment to a diachronic view of language.

Following this is an extensive overview of English orthography and pronunciation rules, short chapters on word and sentence stress, intonation, punctuation, and syllabication. All 21 units are interspersed with additional pronunciation exercises, which indicates that great care was given to pronunciation – something that was not typical of the Grammar–Translation Method but rather of the Reform Movement (i.e., Direct) Method. The course book thus combines characteristics of both methods, and Umek (1988, 29) lists several names given to this mixture that developed at the turn of the century as a fusion of the ‘old’ grammar–translation and the new direct method: a modified grammar–translation method, an eclectic method, a compromise method, and a progressive method. It should be noted that this 25–page introduction on pronunciation was aimed more at teachers than students as, at that time, there was not a sufficiently large pool of teachers qualified to teach English.

²⁹ The figures indicate the number of lessons per week over a period of four years.

³⁰ It was reprinted five times, with the last reprint in 1966. Interestingly, the reprints are always named ‘editions’ by the Slovenian editors, which can be rather confusing.

The textbook is far from visually appealing. No artwork is included, i.e., there isn't a single picture or drawing included in the book.

The syllabus type is grammatical, as a list of grammatical structures is divided into sections and graded according to difficulty and/or importance. A glance at the table of contents confirms this focus (e.g., *Sixth Lesson: Our Family / Svojljni zaimki – Stopnjevanje pridevnikov – Plural of Nouns*).

Each unit has a uniform and stiff outline. The course book reflects what Low (1989) calls a traditional four-phase unit structure: (a) a reading text; (b) treatment/explanation of grammar; (c) treatment of unknown vocabulary from the reading text; (d) practice exercises.

Angleška vadnica – Prva stopnja incorporates this four-stage procedure as it typically takes a reading text (usually a prose narrative) as its point of departure and as the main vehicle of language learning. Immediately following the opening text, and without any reference to it, is a pronunciation exercise; then there is a short text (a proverb, an anecdote or a poem) to liven things up a bit, then grammar explanations (written in Slovenian), and finally (controlled) practice exercises (both written and spoken, including comprehension questions, repetition and grammatical drills, and finally one L1-to-L2 translation exercise).

The course book is characterized by deductive teaching techniques of grammatical explanation and translation (i.e., analytic activities), and by its reliance on texts. It was probably intended as preparation for the actual use of language, but in fact it mostly helped 'create linguistic competence in students' minds' (Cook 1991, 133) as it did not directly practise communication in the classroom. Its view of learning emphasizes the teaching of grammatical competence as rules of a traditional type and as lists of vocabulary. The linguistic content is traditional grammar, and the treatment of vocabulary is mostly unsystematic. In sum, the course book contains activities that focus on the language system. Their aim is for learners to verify a grammar rule. The learner contribution in these activities is limited to the completion of missing forms in sentences ('fill in the missing preposition') or by providing them on the basis of their knowledge of the language ('put into the negative form'; 'add question tags', etc.). Translation into L2 ('translate into English') is also frequent, as there is one exercise of this type in every unit.

Neither productive nor receptive skills were specified in the syllabus of 1945 when *Angleška vadnica – Prva stopnja* appeared. In fact, in the syllabus of 1945 the contents were not spelled out but specified solely in relation to the existing textbook. The first document to outline the general objectives of English as a school subject was the syllabus of 1948. It lists as the first of the general objectives 'the development of the ability in the learners to independently, and with the help of a dictionary, read newspapers, literary and technical/study texts of a medium-level difficulty' (49). Others were as follows:

- to develop the ability in the learners to understand and use everyday speech in conversation about everyday matters;
- to develop the ability in the learners to use written language grammatically and orthographically correctly;
- to offer insights into the culture and civilisation of English-speaking countries. (49)

If, therefore, the development of different macroskills is analysed according to their presence in the course book, we can establish that listening in *Angleška vadnica* is entirely absent, whereas other three skills (reading, speaking, writing) can be rated as subsidiary, since they are not being

developed as an end. Even reading serves a subsidiary purpose because reading texts simply set the basis for language learning and did not develop reading skills. Learning grammar and vocabulary was achieved by reading and writing exercises.

In sum, *Angleška vadnica – Prva stopnja* is most probably a typical exponent of the post-war ELT methodology in Europe. It combines characteristics of the Grammar–Translation Method and the Reform (i.e., Direct) Method, moulded together into what in those days' terms could be called teachable and well-laid-out subject matter. Apart from the explicit endorsement of the principles of the Grammar–Translation Method (i.e., deductive grammar teaching in Slovenian, translation, etc.), a highlight of the course is the 'phonetic start', i.e., the early stages of the course are devoted to the teaching of the sounds of the language (together with phonetic script).

It remains unclear whether the authors were applying any conscious theoretical principles to the development of their materials and how much knowledge of theory they had, or whether they were relying primarily on their experience of practice. It is also not known whether they were replicating or cloning any previous, successful non-Slovenian materials when producing their textbooks.

The second course book analysed is also a representative of the eclectic method combining characteristics of the grammar–translation and the direct method. When *Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja* (Grad 1952) first appeared, the curriculum of 1951 (*The curriculum for the four-year junior grammar school, UN za I. in II. razred nižje gimnazije*) was in force. The curriculum adopted the view of language as a formal system, and the recommended teaching methodology was indeed the eclectic method. According to this syllabus, 'the student should be able to read easy everyday texts, develop a vocabulary size of about 1,800 words, read, write and speak within the scope of this vocabulary size, and use grammar rules accurately' (*UN za I. in II. razred nižje gimnazije*, my translation). It is obvious that neither the curriculum nor the textbook following the curriculum guidelines introduced any innovative changes in English language teaching. As the course book was basically replicating its predecessor (Žgur et al. 1945), the question why it was needed and produced requires clarification. As mentioned before, English as a school subject was launched by the 1945 curriculum, but it was offered as a second foreign language only at four-year senior grammar schools, i.e., to students aged between 15 and 19. In the school year 1948/49, the boundary line between the junior and senior grammar school was lowered by one year, so that the 4th grade belonged to the senior grammar school, whereas the duration of the primary school changed from 8 to 7 years, i.e., the 7-year primary school was introduced. In 1950, a new curriculum for the 1st and 2nd grade of junior grammar schools (*UN za I. in II. razred nižje gimnazije*) was introduced, and I assume that it also referred to the 5th and 6th grade of the primary school. In this syllabus Russian was completely abandoned, offering English, French and German in its place with 3 hours a week. As a course book for teaching English *Angleška vadnica* (Žgur et al. 1945) was prescribed. This meant that a book which was initially intended for students aged between 14 and 19 was now used with ten- and eleven-year-olds. And this is the difficult situation to which the new course book *Angleška vadnica* tried to respond. Burdened with the same title as its predecessor, it was known universally as 'the Grad course'. The book was drawn up in strict accordance with the syllabus of 1951, and published in four levels between 1952 and 1954 (Levels 1 and 2 were released in 1952, Level 3 in 1953, and Level 4 in 1954.)³¹

Both textbook series, the *Angleška vadnica* series by Žgur et al. (1945ff) and the *Angleška vadnica* series by Grad (1952ff), share a lot of similarities: their reliance on reading texts, the central role

³¹ Level 4, for example, was intended for the 4th grade of junior grammar school (i.e., *nižja gimnazija*) and the 8th grade of primary school.

of grammar taught deductively and the types of practice activities. Unlike Žgur et al.'s book, Grad's *Angleška vadnica* makes use of illustrations (restricted to black-and-white line drawings) that liven things up a bit. Not exactly thrilling, but serviceable enough. Most illustrations aid the understanding of vocabulary items (e.g., school objects), and some convey a distinctly Slovenian/Yugoslav setting, revealed in the looks of the schoolroom (e.g., Tito's picture hanging on the wall, p. 28), the Yugoslav coat of arms (104), a co-operative farm (115) among other things. Some illustrations aid sound practice depicting the vocal organs and pointing out how a particular sound is produced (7). The inclusion of chants, riddles, games, jokes, printed music (melodies) and brief and easy poems by English-speaking poets should also be mentioned. Compared to Žgur et al.'s book, Grad's *Angleška vadnica* contains shorter units, the reading texts are shorter too and there is less grammatical content.

4.2 The second generation of ELL course books in Slovenia: the late 1950s and the 1960s

There was one textbook analysed/reviewed for this period: *Angleška vadnica za 5. razred osnovne šole* (Pestotnik 1959).

The third book analysed is a representative of the Direct Method. This method, based on the view of language as a means of communication rather than as a formal system, was adopted by the curriculum of 1958. In that year, the new educational reform was put in place, which brought about a unified 8-year primary school transferring to different types of secondary schools (e.g., two- and four-year vocational secondary schools and, of course, both types of the grammar school). The timetable hours allotted for foreign languages were as follows: 3 hours a week in grades 5 and 6, and only 2 hours a week in grades 7 and 8.

The syllabus of 1958 put forward the requirement that 'foreign language learning should start on the basis of pure direct method whereby, at least during the first half-year, only mimics, gestures, realia, pictures, the flannelograph, the record player and other audio-visual aids should be used'.³² It goes on to state that all work should stem from conversation, reading and writing should be postponed to later stages, the student imitates the teacher's speech, and there should be no use of the mother tongue. It is not difficult to recognize the structuralist theory of language which underlies the materials. It concentrates on three fundamental features – pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. As the syllabus adhered to the tenets of the Direct Method (or rather audio-lingual), it made Grad's course inappropriate and it became clear that new teaching materials were urgently needed. Sonja Pestotnik responded to this demand and created the *Angleška vadnica za osnovne šole* series, published in three parts between 1959 and 1962.³³

The highlights of the course are the consistent ban of the mother tongue (there is also no glossary in the book), focus on spoken language, reading and writing being sidelined, no explicit grammar, and strictly controlled vocabulary (the book contains only 370 new words).

³² Umek (1988, 45) believes that the term *direct method* was used erroneously in the syllabus of 1958, and that *audio-lingual method* should have been used instead. That she ascribes to the fact that the flow of information between the West and Yugoslavia in the early 1950s was very poor. An additional reason for the supposedly wrong assumption made by the syllabus designers might have stemmed from the fact that the direct and the audio-lingual method share some important features (e.g., focus on spoken language and no use of the mother tongue).

³³ *Angleška vadnica za 7. razred* was released in 1962, but it remained in a stencil-duplicator form and was never used in schools.

4.3 The third generation of ELL course books in Slovenia: the late 1960s and the 1970s

There were two textbooks analysed/reviewed for this period: *Angleška vadnica za peti razred osnovne šole* (Kos and Pilgram 1967), and *MAP 1* (Knight et al. 1972).

There is one word that sums up the English language teaching panorama in 1960s and early 1970s – ‘patterns’ or ‘structures’. The syllabus of 1966 lists as the first of the general objectives of English as a school subject the acquisition of the fundamental structures of the foreign language as an instrument for effective communication (*Predmetnik in učni načrt za osnovno šolo*). That behaviourism is the language teaching theory on which language learning should be based is made explicit. Oral and written drills, question and answer and dramatization of dialogues, supported by the extensive use of visual aids, are suggested in the syllabus guidelines. The change of linguistic paradigm that makes a structural description of language the organizing principle of course books is clearly shown in Kos and Pilgram’s *English* series (1967ff).³⁴

Apart from the explicit endorsement of the principles of the audio–lingual method, a highlight of the course is the ‘audio–lingual’ start, i.e., the first six units are devoted to developing listening and speaking skills. Reading is first introduced in Unit 7. The recommended approach in the classroom (as expressed in Teacher’s guide) was to begin with a ‘pre–reading’ period during which the books were withheld from the students. It was felt that seeing the written word interfered with the development of proper habits of pronunciation.

After the students received their books, the class followed a sequence of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Typical of this course is a tabular style of presentation and an inductive approach to grammar (i.e., teaching to a grammar syllabus but otherwise not making any reference to grammar at all). The focus is clearly on the form of the language rather than meaning, use or context. Lesson planning was a relatively simple process of Presentation, Practice, Production of the forms through a variety of controlled or, at best, guided activities.

A further step towards uniformity of English language teaching in primary and secondary schools was made when the *MAP* series³⁵ was released in 1972. Adhering to the principles of the audio–lingual method, its main highlights are the use of short dialogues, the emphasis on spoken language, the value attached to practice, the division into four skills, the importance of vocabulary control, the step–by–step progression, and so on. There is little grammatical explanation and what there is follows the drills as a summary of the grammar involved.

The theory of language underlying both courses is pure structuralism with its ‘slot–and–filler’ grammar and commitment to the description of language as form.

The less positive aspects of audio–lingual courses, which may have had in turn negative consequences in the classes where the materials were implemented as sole teaching resources, are related to the overemphasis on language structure to the detriment of the contents conveyed by the target language. The writers of these two audio–lingual courses tried to cover up this poverty of content with humorous situations and different ‘bits and bobs’ (jokes, songs, riddles, proverbs). These ‘entertaining’ devices were designed to lighten the load of the dreary drills that characterized

³⁴ Published in four levels between 1967 and 1970. The other components of the course were Teacher’s Book, tape recordings, flash cards and wall pictures.

³⁵ MAP stands for *Moderniziran angleški pouk* (Modernized English Teaching). The course remained in use until the late 1980s.

nearly every lesson in this paradigm. Although these books were popular with some students and teachers, the audio–lingual structural approach had reached its limits.

4.4 The fourth generation of ELL course books in Slovenia: the 1980s and the 1990s

There were two textbooks analysed/reviewed for this period: *Angleški jezik 1* (Knight et al. 1981), and *Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1* (Skela and Berce 1991).

As Prodromou and Mishen (2008, 196) point out, the late 1970s saw the beginnings of a paradigm shift in ELT towards the Communicative Approach, and ‘functional’ textbooks, such as the *Strategies Series* (Abbs and Freebairn 1977ff) and Leo Jones’ *Functions of English* (1982). Many of the tenets of the structural audio–lingual approach were overturned and reversed: the syllabus was meaning–focused (everyday functional expressions, making invitations, requests, and so on), all the skills were given their due, ‘authentic material’ expressed the reaction to the artificiality of language in the structural syllabus. But teachers began to feel that these books were ‘too much like phrase books in disguise, with lots of useful expressions from which it was difficult to make generalizations about language’ (ibid.).

In Slovenia, the fruits of the new approach came into the ELT classrooms in 1981, when *Angleški jezik 1* (Knight et al. 1981) was released. It was the first course book using the new notional and functional categories. At the beginning of each unit, there is a brief summary/announcement of the aims of the unit expressed by means of language functions and structures (e.g., making an enquiry by telephone). The course was designed in accordance with the syllabus of 1980 that had adopted the new functional–notional approach.³⁶ The ‘functional’ spirit of the 1980s was evident also in the production of supplementary materials, e.g., *A Collection of Functional Dialogues* (Berce 1986), and in theoretical writings of the time – in 1982, Wilkins’ *Notional syllabuses* (1976) got translated into Slovenian.³⁷

As to the primary school, the syllabus of 1983 (*Predmetnik in učni načrt za osnovne šole* 1983) had adopted the new functional–notional approach but it was not until 1991 that the first primary–school course book to use the notional and functional categories was released (the *Touchstone* series by Skela et al. 1991ff).³⁸ This means that until that time Kos and Pilgram’s *English* series had remained in use. This course book series, which started off in 1967, appeared in a new edition as the *English 1–4* series between 1974 and 1982. The new edition was a response to the changes introduced by the curriculum of 1973 (*Predmetnik in učni načrt za osnovno šolo* 1973) that gave some cause for worry concerning the foreign language. Specifically, the time allotted for foreign language study had been reduced by one hour a week in grades 5, 7 and 8 so that the weekly timetabled hours for English were 3 3 2 2.

This caused a considerable setback to teachers striving to attain the same standard of knowledge within a teaching time reduced by 23%. The authors’ (Kos and Pilgram) response to the demand for new classroom materials was to adapt the existing *Angleška vadnica 1–4* series, since its methodological concept was still suitable. In more affluent times, when there is no shortage of authorial talent and new technologies allow variation to be accommodated more easily, the

³⁶ The syllabus of 1980 for secondary schools was established within the educational reform that introduced the so-called *vocationally oriented education* (usmerjeno izobraževanje).

³⁷ *Pojmovno–funkcijski učni načrti* (Wilkins 1982).

³⁸ The four–level *Touchstone* series was published between 1991 and 1994.

decision to adapt materials rather than create them from scratch each time looks like penny-pinching (Howatt 2004, 244). But times were hard in Slovenia/Yugoslavia in the 1980s, making adaptation a sensible if not an ideal policy. The most considerable change in the *English 1–4* series was its division into two components – the students' book and the workbook. In its previous edition the course consisted, at each level, of a single textbook including the workbook component in one volume. Other changes were relatively minor. The range of the subject matter was slightly reduced and rearranged, and some ideas for improvements from teachers' feedback were taken into account. The last book of the series came out in 1982 when new paradigm changes had already been taking place. Teachers began to realize that it was becoming increasingly difficult to teach a language in the new functional and communicative spirit using books that were conceived in the spirit of the audio–lingual and structural paradigm. The *Angleška vadnica 1–4* series, together with its second edition, the *English 1–4* series, had been in print for more than twenty years and had obviously reached its limits. The growing dissatisfaction of teachers led to something which was to become a milestone in the Slovenian foreign language course books policy. In 1989, the Ministry of Education lifted the restriction and granted freedom of choice regarding the selection of textbooks.³⁹ In this year, the first British–produced (i.e., global) course books were introduced in Slovenian primary and secondary schools – *Project English 1* (Hutchinson 1985), and *Headway Intermediate* (Soars and Soars 1986), both by Oxford University Press. Both textbooks had an immediate appeal that many other works (especially locally produced ones) could not match. The response from teachers and students was extremely positive, showing once again the importance of motivation in foreign language learning. Prodromou and Mishen (2008, 196–97) summarize the reasons for the success of *Headway* as follows:

There was a strong grammar–based syllabus after the communicative focus on functions and notions. [...] Methodology was easy; not innovative, with lots of controlled exercise. [...] It was one of the first to integrate skills and language. It had interesting topics. [...] It had authentic–looking reading texts, but was still reassuringly traditional. [...] It looked different from what had gone before. It was teacher–friendly – even an untrained or inexperienced teacher could have successful lessons if they followed the steps. It was bright and cheerful–looking. It had real pictures. It had a detailed Teacher's guide.

Both British–produced course books, *Project English 1* and *Headway Intermediate*, adopted for use in Slovenian schools in 1989, had to officially meet the requirements of the national syllabuses of 1980 (secondary schools) and of 1983 (primary schools). By 1989, when *Project English 1* and *Headway Intermediate* were introduced in our schools, both syllabuses had become rather outdated and they played only a cosmetic role. In other words, the textbook, in the hands of the teacher, was effectively the syllabus.

It was important to highlight this background context in order to understand the climate in which, in 1991, a new primary–school course book series, *Touchstone*, started off. With the 'If–it's–British–it–must–be–good' attitude on the part of the teachers, the circumstances for home–grown ELL materials were far from favourable. It was, of course, understandable that teachers were delighted to be able to replace the drab state–produced course books they had been obliged to work with for so long. But this was, as Bolitho (2008, 215) puts it, a 'honeymoon period' that could never last.

³⁹ 'Freedom of choice' did not (and still does not) mean that course books didn't need to meet the national syllabus requirements and pass official scrutiny. Today, publishers are obliged to print on the inside cover of course books a statement saying that the course book was designed in accordance with the current syllabus. In this way, authors and publishers want to reassure potential users as regards its suitability for a specific school type.

4.5 The fifth generation of ELL course books in Slovenia: the 2000s and the present

There was one textbook analysed/reviewed for this period: *Touchstone 6* (Skela et al. 2009).

The 2000s saw a period of complex debate. López Barrios and Villanueva de Debat (2011, 24) describe the characteristic signs of foreign language teaching at the turn of the century as follows:

The emergence of pragmatics, the concept of communicative competence, Notional–functional approaches to syllabus design and the breakthrough produced by Communicative Language Teaching were the characteristic signs of foreign language teaching at the turn of the century. (López Barrios and Villanueva de Debat 2011, 24)

Howatt (2004, 250) points out that the field of ELT has simply grown too large and diverse, and goes on to say that

[t]he intellectual unity that had characterized the earlier decades of the century had disintegrated and in its place there were competing ‘schools of thought’ promoting more or less incompatible models of language and learning. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) represented a conscious choice between competing models, not as in the old days of behaviourism, the scientifically attested ‘best model’. (Howatt 2004, 250)

Communicative language teaching can be seen as an umbrella term that describes a move from teaching language as individual linguistic structures to teaching people how to use language effectively when communicating, in effect a move from teaching *linguistic competence* to *communicative competence* (Hall 2011, 93). But the question arises whether communicative competence as described, for example, extremely comprehensively by the *Common European Framework of Reference* (2001) is ‘teachable’ at all. Has today’s mainstream foreign language teaching pedagogy (i.e., the communicative approach) developed systematic means for teaching it? As Brown (1987, 215–6) points out:

[c]ommunication in a foreign language is something so complex that it will probably never be reduced to a simple formula or a neatly packaged syllabus. Communication is qualitative and infinite; a syllabus is quantitative and finite. [...] communicative competence is such an intricate web of psychological, sociocultural, physical, and linguistic features that it is easy to get entangled in but one part of that web. And it is probably impossible in the near future to describe the whole of human discourse in such a way that language teachers are provided with ready solutions to the teaching of a foreign language. (Brown 1987, 215–6)

There are numerous other (crossover) educational trends, many of which have sprung from the notion of *learner-centredness*, that keep shaping the teaching of foreign languages in the ‘Postmethod Era’ of the new millennium: learning strategies training, cooperative learning, multiple intelligences, task-based learning, CLIL, humanistic approaches, autonomy, self-directed learning, the Lexical Approach, and so on.

From the 1990s national curricula began to promote the development of ‘communicative competence’ and the development of all four language macroskills.⁴⁰ Continuing this line of development, the national syllabus for English, which was introduced in 1998 (following the

⁴⁰ The notion of ‘communicative competence’ was first articulated in the 1992 syllabus (32).

Year of publication	Textbook	Method	View on language	syllabus
1945	<i>Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja.</i>	Grammar–translation & Direct Method (i.e., Eclectic Method)	Formal Traditional Grammar + Focus on pronunciation	1945
1952	<i>Angleška vadnica. Prva stopnja. Za I. razred nižjih gimnazij.</i>	Grammar–translation & Direct Method (i.e., Eclectic Method)	Formal Traditional Grammar + Focus on pronunciation	1951
1959	<i>Angleška vadnica za 5. razred osnovne sole</i>	Direct Method (and Audio–lingual)	Structuralism + Focus on pronunciation and vocab	1958
1967	<i>Angleška vadnica za peti razred osnovne šole.</i>	Audio–lingual / Situational Language Teaching	structuralism	1966
1972	<i>MAP 1</i>	Audio–lingual / Situational Language Teaching	structuralism	? (1964; 1975)
1981	<i>Angleški jezik 1</i>	Notional–Functional / Communicative	functional	1980
1991	<i>Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1</i>	Notional–Functional / Communicative	functional	1983
2009	<i>Touchstone 6 – angleški jeziki za 6. razred devetletne osnovne sole</i>	Communicative approach + <i>Postmethod</i> features (task–based, CLIL)	functional	1998; 2008 (2011)

Table 3. *Method and view of language.*

1996 curricular reform), strongly promotes Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the norm of teaching foreign languages in Slovenia. As such, at the level of method policy, CLT is well enshrined as the norm in language education, which can also be seen in the latest national syllabus for English of 2008 (2011).⁴¹ Both documents list as the first of the general objectives of English as a school subject the acquisition of communicative and intercultural competence.

The last course book analysed, *Touchstone 6* (Skela et al. 2009), constitutes an attempt to interpret CLT for the local context. It is part the *Touchstone* series (a four–level primary–school course) published between 2003 and 2009.

The course recognizes the need to develop both receptive and productive skills. Additionally, the course attempts to appeal to adolescents by the inclusion of full–colour illustrations and the use of graphic devices. The contents play a more substantial role in this course book, and many references to local and global culture relevant to the learners of the beginning of the new millennium are present. It portrays characters learners can easily identify with. A mixture of fictional and factual in the texts provides varied and interesting input. A further feature is the inclusion of a task/project in each unit, thus incorporating a task–based element to the course. In later volumes of the course some *Postmethod* features are evident, especially CLIL.

⁴¹ The curriculum of 2008 was actually never in force, but after some changes were made it came into force in 2011.

5. Analysis

In our analysis, we can distinguish five generations of foreign language textbooks for teaching English as a school subject in Slovenia. The first generation, dominating the 1940s and the 1950s, followed the Grammar–Translation Method and included deductive teaching techniques of grammatical explanation and translation. The second dominated the late 1950s and the 1960s, and combined characteristics of the Direct Method and the Audio–lingual Method. The third generation, dominating the late 1960s and the 1970s, was influenced by linguistic structuralism and behaviourism and was characterized by (monolingual) audiolingual/structural and situational approaches focusing on drilling spoken language patterns. The fourth generation, dominating the 1980s and the 1990s, was characterized by functional–notional communicative approaches. The fifth generation (the 2000s and onwards) is characterized by Communicative Language Teaching, and currently attempts to incorporate different crossover educational trends (e.g., task–based learning) of the *Postmethod* era into ELT.

During the seventy–year period covered in this paper, the locally produced books show two main trends as regards the underlying view on language: a) as a formal system or b) as a means of communication. However, the textbooks analysed show that the transition from Traditional Grammar towards structuralism was gradual. For example, *Angleška vadnica* (Grad 1952), combines characteristics of the Grammar–Translation and the Direct Method with its ‘oral’ or even ‘audiolingual’ start, still includes a deductive approach towards grammar.

The other view on language evident in the books studied is language as an instrument for the expression of functional meaning. The focus lies mainly on the semantic and communicative dimensions of language. We have taken *Angleški jezik 1* (1981) for secondary–school level and *Angleški jezik 1. Touchstone 1* (1991) for primary–school level as milestones that marked a shift in this respect. The change of focus is evident in the table of contents that lists communicative functions (giving orders, asking where buildings are) rather than grammar structures.

6. Conclusion

This retrospective study of eight course books produced in Slovenia demonstrates a progression or change in emphasis over the seven decades beginning with grammar–translation materials which were, as we have seen, typified by creating linguistic competence in students’ minds, moving on through equally formal structuralist materials from which meaning and context were excluded, to our final examples, the notional and communicative materials, in which the content was, by contrast, semantic rather than syntactic. The eight samples also demonstrate a shift of approach both in the change in theory of language and the theory of learning espoused by the authors. What is really striking is that the major change over the decades spanned by these examples has been in the area of syllabus content; a change which has reflected clearly and relatively consistently the changes in applied linguistic thought over the same period (though, as in all application of theoretical work, with a time–lag).

There has been a considerable production of textbooks in Slovenia. Although this production diminished during certain periods in our history, since the 2000s it has regained momentum due to the need to adapt textbooks to the local context. We can claim that local course books have always attempted, to different degrees, to adapt the general approach and the content of the course books to the needs and characteristics of the local context.

We hope that this brief survey will serve as a modest contribution to the understanding of the teaching of foreign languages in Slovenia. However, if we wanted to arrive at a truly satisfactory panorama of ELT in Slovenia in the past, more detailed and more objective investigation than is available at present would be needed, for example, in-depth studies treating specific problems, settings or periods, or identifying events or the work of the small number of pioneers who produced the first local ELL materials – in particular, Adela Žgur, Eliza Skalickž, Janko Kotnik, Anton Grad, Sonja Pestotnik, Milena Kos, Lučka Pilgram, and others.

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