Title: How Can Vocabulary Determine Grammar Teaching? An Example of the Croatian Language

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Abstract:
In 1990's vocabulary gained more central role in studies on second language acquisition and language teaching: from investigating vocabulary features and quality of learners' lexicon to researching vocabulary teaching and learning strategies (Schmitt and McCarthy 1997, Schmitt 2000, Nation 2001, Laufer 2003). Being "at the interface between phonology, syntax and semantics" (Spencer and Zwicky, 2001: 17), known/taught words determine required knowledge of grammar, which is particularly important for Slavic languages as morphologically rich languages. This paper presents research of vocabulary features of the Croatian language (Cvikic 2005; Cvikic and Jelaska 2007, Cvikic 2009, Cvikic 2018) and implications that these findings have on teaching Croatian as L2. Namely, research on Croatian vocabulary show that very few numbers of words are used in texts in various morphological forms and that different word types are not equally represented in texts, which questions the traditional grammar teaching approach (learning word paradigms and inflectional rules). Based on the findings, the paper will propose approach to grammar teaching that is more usage-based.