

Katarina ALADROVIĆ SLOVAČEK

University of Zagreb;
katarina.aldrovic@ufzg.hr
ORCID: 0000-0002-0706-9436

Maša RIMAC JURINOVIĆ

University of Zagreb
masa.rimacjurinovic@ufzg.hr
ORCID: 0000-0003-3859-4732

Senka SUŠAC

Elementary School Sesevetski Kraljevec

**THE RELATIONSHIP OF PRODUCTIVE VOCABULARY
AND READING HABITS
OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS¹**

1. INTRODUCTION

We live in a time when it is quite common to observe poor language skills among primary school students, with regard to both writing and speaking. The fact that children of primary school age find it increasingly difficult to express themselves despite abundant incentives they receive through various media content, as well as through interactive textbooks and easily available literature, both compulsory and optional, poses numerous questions for researchers. In teaching the mother tongue

¹ This research is conducted within the framework of the Croatian Science Foundation (HRZZ) project *Development of the Vocabulary of Younger School-Age Children through Innovative, Aesthetic and Embodied Learning Methods* (IP-2024-05-8350).

(Croatian), problems arise in writing on any topic of their choice when students usually do not know what to write and need very clear guidelines or encouraging words that will motivate and guide them. It is precisely because of the guidelines, which are universal for certain topics, that students' written works often lack originality, which is one of the basic requirements when teachers assign writing tasks. What is more, motivation for reading is very low and reading habits are mostly reduced to reading works from the list of obligatory reading. All of the above is also reflected in oral communication, in which the students' speech is full of postcodes, abbreviations, and non-standard words such as foreign words, dialectal and colloquial expressions. Also, due to poor reading habits and high exposure to the media, students often lack words in their mother tongue to express themselves, and their sentences are often unclear and incomplete as a result.

All of the above points to the need to research students' productive vocabulary, since it is fundamental for communication at all levels, but also their reading habits that are closely related to it. Parents and the environment in which a child is growing up, developing his own idiomatic interacting with it, play a key role in the vocabulary development process. Earlier research (Jelaska 2007; Pavličević-Franić 2011 & Aladrović Slovaček 2019) showed that there are numerous factors that influence language development, such as parents' education, the language the child listens to in his environment, the child's reading habits, exposure to different media, but also exemplary speech models that his teachers and educators set for him. The standardised studies of reading competences (PISA 2018; PIRLS 2021) showed that in the ten-year period, Croatian students achieved very similar results on tests of reading abilities, and that although in some categories, such as reading strategy, they showed above-average results on the PIRLS test (2021), their results are below-average when it comes to motivation for reading. This fact speaks for itself and points to a necessary change in the education system in order to provide students with texts suitable for their age and interests. What is more, it is important to make changes in the basic education of teachers and educators so that, by applying different teaching strategies, suitable for future generations, they can better respond to the challenges they are facing. The media are undoubtedly a powerful influence in the life of children today due to the fact that they not only make information constantly immediately available, but also capture children's attention, which is why reforms are

needed that will take into account all of the above and try to respond to contemporary challenges. Equally, it is important to keep in mind that communication is the basis for life, making relationships possible, essential for understanding, presentation and mediation of content and this is why the mother tongue (Croatian), as a basic subject of the primary school curriculum, plays a significant role in this context. Adequate use of vocabulary is essential for communication and students' academic achievements will ultimately depend on the range of their vocabulary, because vocabulary richness is a predictor of the future academic success. Since the vocabulary richness is mostly improved by improving reading habits, the aim of this paper is to examine the connection between the productive vocabulary and language competences on the one hand and the reading habits of primary school students on the other.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Lexical competence is defined as the knowledge and ability to use the vocabulary of a language in different communication situations (CEFR 2018). It implies knowledge of the word form, its content and its use, that is, lexical competence implies the mastery of orthoepic, orthographic, inflectional, syntactic, collocational, semantic and pragmatic norms (Udier 2009). It is about multi-layered knowledge and understanding because this competence implies that the student knows how to write a word in accordance with the spelling rules, how to pronounce it in accordance with the stress norm, how to use it in accordance with the collocational, semantic and pragmatic norms, but also that he knows its grammatical determinants and how to use it correctly in a sentence. Teaching vocabulary has been neglected in traditional teaching and learning for a long time, and much more time has been devoted to learning grammar in the mother tongue teaching (Duan and Da 2015). With regard to teaching Croatian as the mother tongue, we still do not have fully developed strategies and ways of teaching vocabulary, although the outcome related to lexical competence is highlighted in the domain Language and Communication in the Curriculum of the subject Croatian Language (2019). Vocabulary teaching is still traditionally approached by explaining an unknown word from the text read in class and after that, the word is often not revised or given special attention. A mere explanation of its meaning is considered

sufficient, even though we know that a word needs to be repeated seven to ten times in different contexts in order for it to become part of the active lexicon (Laufer 2005: 226–227).

There is passive and active vocabulary, that is, a child often understands and knows a lot more words than he/she actively uses, so productive vocabulary is associated with this, which is defined as knowledge of the vocabulary in use or, in other words, as knowledge of words at all their linguistic and communicative levels (Aladrović Slovaček 2019). The research (Cvikić 2007) has also shown that school children learn from 500 to 1,000 new words and new meanings of already acquired words per year, mostly by reading because key words appear there more than once, but it takes a long time until at least some of those words become part of their productive vocabulary. It is also important to know that in order for a child to understand a text, it should contain 90% to 95% of known words and then the student will understand words that are unknown to him/her from the context (PISA 2018).

In addition to reading works through which students should significantly enrich their vocabulary, there are also textbook texts that should follow the students' developmental language characteristics. However, polysyllabic words that are difficult to understand often appear in textbooks, while unknown words are explained with even more unfamiliar terms, and the enrichment of the vocabulary somehow becomes reduced to acquiring an increasing number of "second order" words² (Beck et al. 2002) which make textbook texts difficult to understand. It is known that the vocabulary of a six-year-old child, that is, a preschool child, includes about 10,000 words, the vocabulary of a nine-year-old one is about 19,000 words, while the vocabulary of an eleven-year-old child includes approximately 40,000 words (Pavličević-Franić 2005 and 2011). Lexical competence itself is a part of the linguistic-communicative competence, and the goal of the overall teaching of the Croatian language is to develop the linguistic-communicative competence, which includes functional knowledge of both vocabulary and grammar, as well as its adequate use in everyday communicative situations. In order to achieve this, it is important to include the lexical competence equally in defining outcomes of all four language activities: listening, speaking, reading and writing in the Croatian

² Words of the "second order" are the words that form a large part of the vocabulary of adult speakers, that are frequent and appear in different contexts.

language teaching. However, it should also be taken into account that the development of vocabulary is influenced by numerous extra-linguistic factors, such as the media that children are exposed to, the number of hours they spend in front of screens in the daily rhythm of life, their language environment, speech that they are surrounded by, the family relationships and the language skills of family members as well as the structure of the family in which they are growing up (Jelaska 2007). Moreover, the reading habits of the parents also have the powerful influence (PIRLS 2021), and so does learning other languages (Pavličević-Franić and Aladrović Slovaček, 2018), institutional education (PIRLS 2018) and parents' education, which is becoming less important, because parents today, regardless of what job they do, have working hours that take up a larger active part of their day (Aladrović Slovaček 2019). Finally, it can be concluded that the development of vocabulary is really a complex process, influenced equally by linguistic and non-linguistic factors. In this respect, it should be emphasised that the way of learning and teaching is an extremely important factor in motivating students and that the final outcome of this process depends to a high degree on the students' level of motivation and on the teacher's approach.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Fifth grade students (N = 18) participated in the research and the mentioned sample was excluded from the corpus of the larger research, which included about 200 students. In the mentioned sample, there were 50% boys and 50% girls. The respondents were also divided with regard to their mark in the Croatian language, so 14.3% of the respondents had a good note (3) in the Croatian language at the end of the fourth grade, 50% a very good note (4), and 35.7% an excellent note (5). The questionnaire for students on reading and the Language Competence Test (linguistic and communicative) were used as research instruments (Aladrović Slovaček 2019). Part of the data from the communication competence test were separated, and these results are presented in the paper as separate results for the lexical competence (understanding the meaning and production of words in concrete communication situations). The data were entered into the SPSS program for statistics, and a descriptive analysis was made at first, and then the flattening of the distribution was tested

with the Kolmogorov z test, the results of which ($p < 0.05$) showed that the data were unevenly distributed, and therefore non-parametric tests were used.

4. RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

Since the intention of this research is to connect the results in the productive vocabulary of primary school children and their reading habits, the following research problems were identified:

- examining the reading habits of primary school students.
- examining the connection between the reading habits of the fifth grade students and the results from the linguistic and communicative competence test and the separate results from the lexical competence test.

With regard to the stated research problems, the following research hypotheses were set:

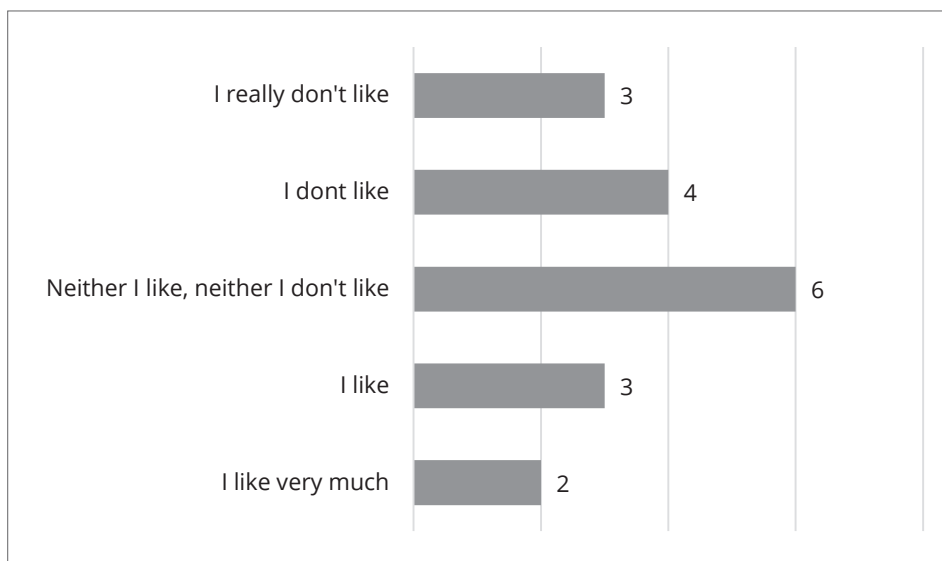
- H1 – It is expected that students have partially developed reading habits, i.e. that only a minority of students regularly go to the school and to other libraries, that the majority of students do not like to read obligatory reading material, that students mostly do not read books other than the obligatory reading material, but that their parents read regularly and have a home library.
- H2 – A mostly positive connection is expected between reading habits and success in the tests of linguistic and communicative competence, and in the separate category of results related to lexical competence.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research problem was to examine the reading habits of primary school students. In order to obtain the required data, the students had to fill in a Questionnaire on reading habits. Our primary goal was to establish whether students read works from the reading list, that is, the obligatory literature, and what their attitude towards reading is. The largest number of students neither like nor dislike reading works from the obligatory

reading list (33%), while 27% of students like or like very much reading books from the reading list, and a little more than a third of the students do not like or strongly dislike reading works from the reading list (38%) (chart 1). The above data show that the Gaussian curve is slightly tilted to the left, which means that students have a more negative than positive attitude towards reading (Graph 1).

Graph 1. How much do you like to read the required reading?

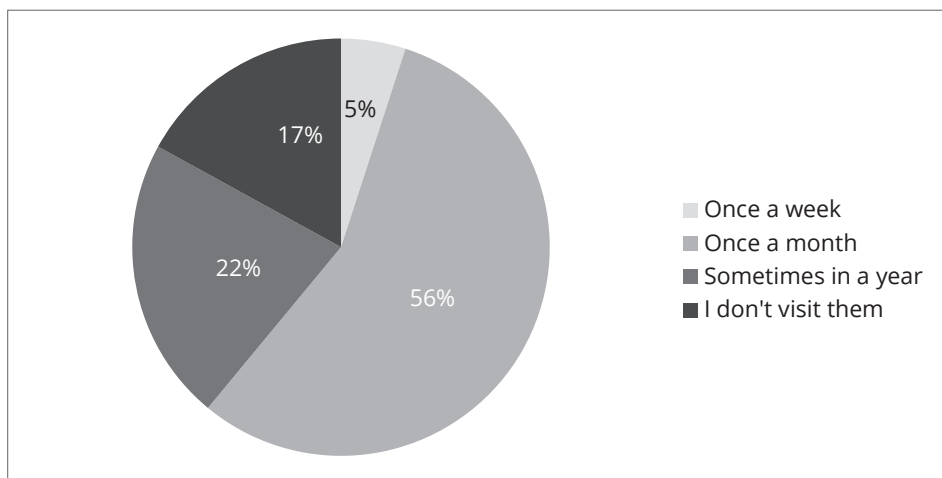


Source: graph made by the authors.

We also wanted to examine how often students visit the school library in order to measure their reading habits and activities. The majority of students, 56% of them, visit the library once a month, 22% of students visit the library several times a year, and only 5% of students visit the library once a week or more often, while 17% of students do not visit the library at all. According to the mentioned data, it can be shown that almost 40% of students very rarely or almost never visit the school library (Graph 2).

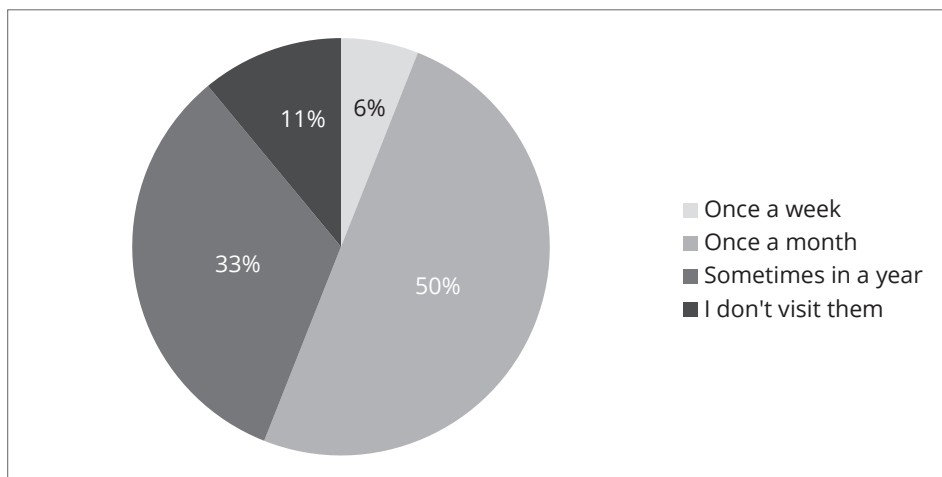
We then examined how often students visit libraries other than the school library. The results showed that half of the students (50%) do not visit other libraries at all, 33% visit them several times a year, and 11% once a month. A very small number of students, 6% of them, visit city and other libraries once a week or more often (Graph 3).

Graph 2. How often do you visit the school library?



Source: graph made by the authors.

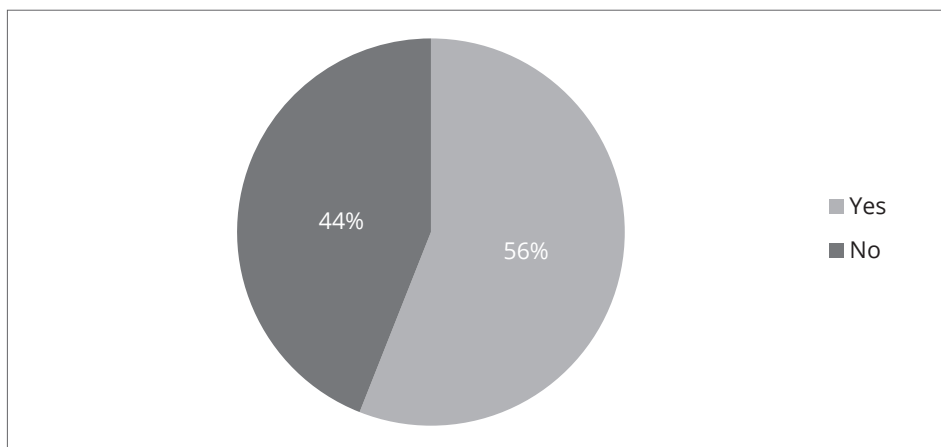
Graph 3. How often do you visit other libraries?



Source: graph made by the authors.

We were also interested in whether students read other books, apart from the ones they have to and which are on the reading list, so 56% of students say that they read other books (not on the reading list), while 44% of students do not read other books (Graph 4).

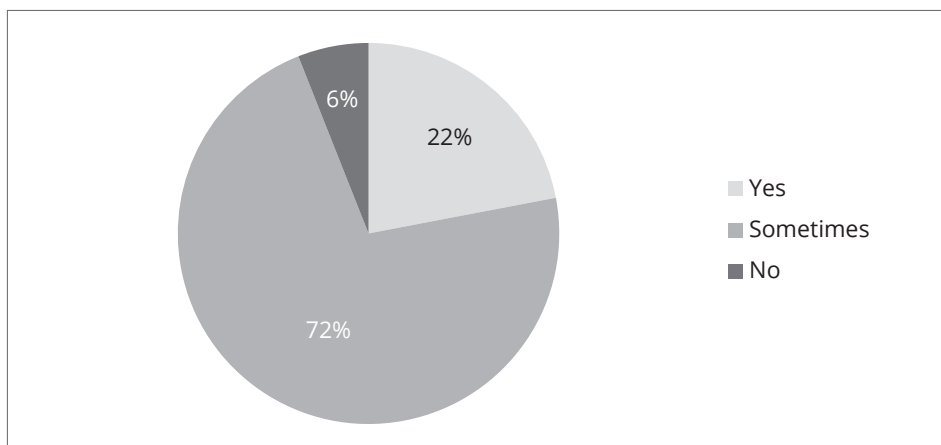
Graph 4. Do you read books other than required reading?



Source: graph made by the authors.

It was the aim of the research to examine the reading habits of the parents of the children involved in the research. The results showed that most parents read sometimes (72%), 22% read regularly, and 6% of students state that their parents do not read books (Chart 5). This component was precisely investigated because the data obtained in the standardised test of reading competences – PIRLS (2021) show that the environment in which students are growing up greatly affects their reading competences, i.e. that students whose parents read more, have better reading competences.

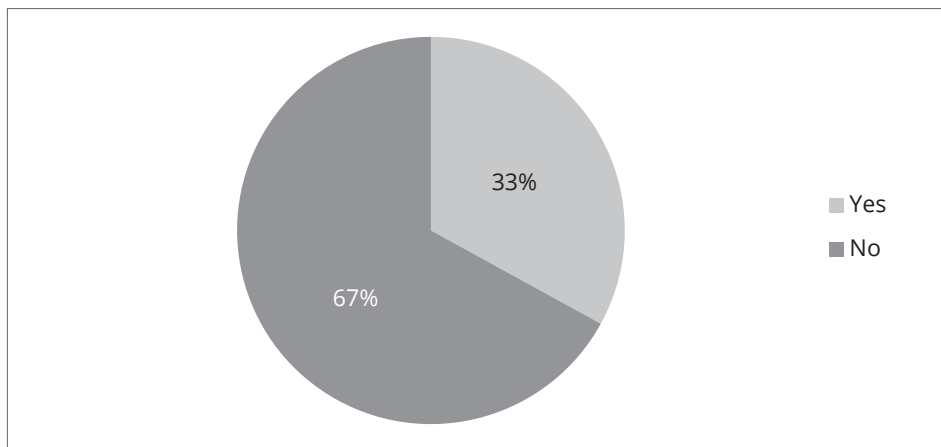
Graph 5. Do your parents read?



Source: graph made by the authors.

Equally, the results of the PIRLS study of reading competences (2021) show that better reading competences are shown by students who own more than a hundred books in their home library, so we chose this question, which shows us that only a third of the students own their home library, i.e. are, in their everyday life, surrounded by books (Graph 6).

Graph 6. Do you have a home library?



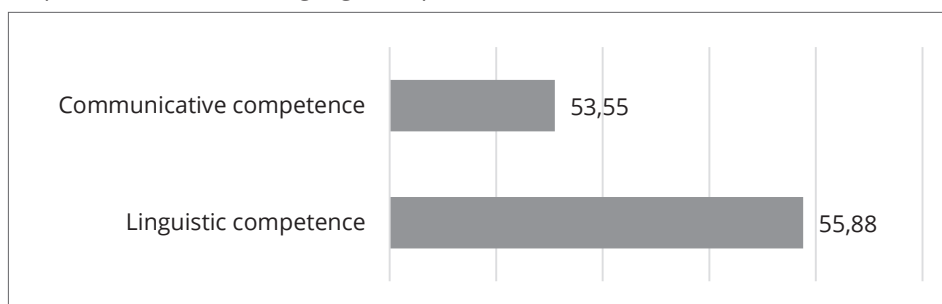
Source: graph made by the authors.

In accordance with the obtained results, the first part of the first hypothesis can be confirmed, in which it is expected that students have partially developed reading habits, that only some students regularly go to the school and other libraries, and that the majority of students do not like to read the obligatory reading material. The second part of the first hypothesis, in which it was expected that students mostly do not read books other than reading material, but that their parents read regularly and have a home library, is refuted because the students claim that their parents read only sometimes, most of them do not have a home library and, apart from the books from the reading list, most of the respondents also read other books.

The second research problem was to examine the connection between the reading habits of the fifth grade students and the results from the linguistic and communicative competence test, with a special focus on lexical competence. In order to obtain the above data, students were given the Language Competence Test, which was divided into two parts. In the first part, the level of their linguistic competence, i.e. knowledge of the

theoretical rules of the language, was measured, while in the second part, their pragmatic or functional language knowledge, i.e. the level of their communication competence, was measured. The results of the conducted test showed that the students solve an average of about 56% of the test at the linguistic level, or about 54% at the communication level (Graph 7). This difference is not statistically significant, as shown by the Wilcoxon test ($p > 0.05$). The results confirmed the results obtained by Aladrović Slovaček (2012 and 2019) in her research, where fifth grade students showed statistically significantly better results on the linguistic level than on the communicative language level.

Graph 7. Results of the language competence test



Source: graph made by the authors.

Since all grammatical cases and all word classes are taught in the fifth grade, mastering all the rules at the theoretical and practical level is very demanding, and good reading habits are necessary, especially in the development of the communicative language competence. In the framework of the communicative linguistic competence, there is also lexical competence, which implies understanding the meaning of a certain word and the use of words in a given context (Udier 2009). This is precisely why the results obtained in language competence tests are related to all the variables which reading habits depend on from the Reading Habits Questionnaire. Spearman's correlation coefficient showed that reading is positively related to the results of the test of the linguistic ($r = 0.236$) and communicative competence ($r = 0.035$), and also to the results that were separated for lexical competence ($r = 0.345$). Also, the results in the part of the test that measured lexical competence were positively related to visiting the school library ($r = 0.032$), other libraries ($r = 0.237$), reading other books ($r = 0.154$), and

having a home library ($r = 0.196$), and are negatively related to parental reading ($r = -0.046$). In other words, parents' reading habits do not affect the lexical competence of their children, which was not expected. The above results show that students who read more reading material, and those who visit the school, city and other libraries more often as well as those who read other books in addition to reading the obligatory material, will have a potentially richer vocabulary. The fact that reading is connected with the vocabulary richness was also shown by the research of the author Cvikić (2008), who states that primary school students acquire 500 to 1,000 new words during one year just by reading. The authors Aladrović Slovaček and Agić (2019) state that the range of children's vocabulary is influenced by various factors, primarily the language environment, the family in which a child is growing up, the number of children in the family, the textbooks used for learning, whereby they emphasise obligatory reading and reading habits including visiting the library. Santrić and colleagues (2019) similarly confirm that reading while speaking is the most important way of indirectly mastering vocabulary, while the author Grosman (2011) points out that vocabulary enrichment is best achieved by reading artistically refined texts.

Finally, Aladrović Slovaček's (2023) research, which examined the usefulness of dialogic reading, also confirmed that the use of different reading strategies in class can contribute to the process of acquiring new words. Furthermore, the results of the research showed that going to the school library is negatively related to going to other libraries ($r = -0.213$), while going to other libraries is statistically significantly positively related to having one's own library ($r = 0.496$). Also, going to other libraries is negatively related to the results of the test of the linguistic ($r = -0.263$) and communicative competence ($r = -0.511$), but also to the separate results of the lexical competence ($r = -0.436$), which means that students who go to other libraries do not have better results in tests of the language competence because of this. However, reading other books is positively associated with the results of the linguistic competence test ($r = 0.145$) and with the results of the communication competence test ($r = 0.166$), but also with the separate results of the lexical competence ($r = 0.345$). The above results point to the importance of the books that students read in their free time because reading several different books is positively related to the development of their language competences, and thus the lexical competences. Both the results of the PISA (2018) and PIRLS (2021) surveys point to the necessity of reflection on the types of texts that are read, but especially

on the vocabulary used in the texts. Namely, in order to reach the highest level of the reading competence – reading with comprehension, it is necessary that the students know 90% to 95% of the words in the text, and it is important to take into account what is given to the children to read, with regard to both obligatory reading and other books that they read in their free time.

On the other hand, parental reading is significantly associated with having a family library ($r = 0.707$), and negatively with the results of the test of linguistic ($r = -0.175$) and communicative competence ($r = -0.141$) and with the separate results of the lexical competence ($r = -0.465$). The above results show that parents who read more probably also have a family library, but whether parents read or not, this will not affect their children's language competence. Also, having a home library is positively associated with reading ($r = 0.094$), negatively with going to the school library ($r = -0.041$), statistically significantly positively associated with going to other libraries ($r = 0.496$), and statistically significantly positively with the category "do your family members read" ($r = 0.707$), and negatively with the results of the test of the linguistic ($r = -0.043$) and communication competence ($r = -0.366$) and the separate results of lexical competence ($r = -0.466$). These results indicate that children who have a home library go to the school library less often, perhaps precisely because they have books at home, but that is why they go to other libraries more often, and all those who have a home library also have family members who read more often. However, having a home library is not a positive predictor of the language competence because it is not enough to have a home library, you also need to read books. All the stated results show that the second hypothesis is confirmed, which assumes a mostly positive connection between reading habits and success in the tests of the linguistic and communicative competence, and in the separate category of results related to the lexical competence.

All of the above data showed that reading habits are somewhat related to the results in the tests of the linguistic and communicative competence, and to the lexical competence, i.e. the results showed that obligatory reading, reading other books, going to the school and other libraries, and having a family library are statistically significantly positively related to the results of the linguistic and communicative competence test and to the separate results of the lexical competence test. This insight confirms the importance of encouraging reading at an early age and working to motivate students

and their parents to continue reading, not only books that are on the reading list, as this ultimately has a positive effect on language knowledge and productive vocabulary, i.e. the development of the lexical competence, which is also a predictor of the future academic success (Martinović et al. 2019 and Wolf 2019).

6. CONCLUSION

Nowadays, when children spend more and more time in front of screens, and less and less time with a book in hand, it is important to examine how this change is reflected in the language development, in the developmental language features and in the language production. Although a small group of the fifth grade students participated in the research, and therefore we cannot draw broader conclusions, the obtained results clearly indicate that a third of the participating students have well-developed reading habits and visit the school and other libraries relatively often and read other books in addition to obligatory reading. However, a third of the students rarely go to the library, they only read obligatory material and there is no encouragement from their families to read regularly. Surprisingly, the majority of the examined students do not have a family library, and their parents also rarely read. If the tests of the language competence are taken into consideration, they achieve better results in linguistics, i.e. in the knowledge of the language theory, while they show worse results in the functional knowledge of the language in concrete examples and situations. Finally, better results in the tests of the linguistic and communication competence are achieved by those students who have a better attitude towards obligatory reading, those who visit the school library more often, and those who read books other than the obligatory reading material, and what is more, the same students have better developed the lexical competence, which confirms the thesis that reading has a very positive effect on vocabulary development. These results show how important it is to encourage and motivate students to read at the primary school age and to nurture their reading habits, which undoubtedly improves the richness of their vocabulary, facilitates the acquisition of grammar and broadens their general knowledge. All this confirms the importance of cultivating reading habits, which are not only a predictor of better language skills, but of the future academic achievements as well.

REFERENCES

- Aladrović Slovaček K., 2012, *Razvojna jezična obilježja ovladavanja hrvatskim jezikom do razdoblja jezične automatizacije*, Doctoral thesis, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu.
- Aladrović Slovaček K., 2019, *Od usvajanja do učenja hrvatskoga jezika*, Zagreb.
- Aladrović Slovaček K., 2023, *Dijaloško čitanje kao poticaj razvoja leksičke kompetencije u djece predškolske dobi*, "Čitatelj i čitanje u digitalno doba. Zbornik radova s međunarodneoga interdisciplinarnoga znanstvenoga skupa", pp. 11–20.
- Aladrović Slovaček K., Agić Ž., 2019, *Umni leksikon djece mlađe školske dobi*, "Um i jezik", pp. 187–200.
- Beck I., Mckeown M., Kucan L., 2002, *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*.
- Cvikić L. et al., 2007, *Drugi jezik hrvatski*, Zagreb.
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion Volume, <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4> (accessed: 18.03.2024).
- Duan J., Da H., 2015, *Semantics and Vocabulary Acquisition and Teaching*, "Studies in Literature and Language" 10(6), pp. 67–71.
- Grosman, M. 2011, *U obranu čitanja*, Zagreb.
- Jelaska, Z., 2007, *Teorijski okviri jezikoslovnoga znanja u novom nastavnom programu za osnovnu školu*, "Komunikacija u nastavi hrvatskoga jezika", pp. 9–33.
- Kokkola L., Van den Bossche S., 2019, *Cognitive Approaches to Children's Literature: A Roadmap to Possible and Answerable Questions*, "Children's Literature Association Quaterly" 44(4), pp. 355–363.
- Kurikulum nastavnoga predmeta Hrvatski jezik, <https://mzo.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/nacionalni-kurikulum/predmetni-kurikulumi/hrvatski-jezik/741> (accessed: 18.03.2024).
- Kuvač Kraljević, J. i Hržica, G., 2016, *Croatian Adult Spoken Language Corpus (HrAL)*, "Fluminensia" 28(2), pp. 87–102.
- Laufer, B., 2005, *Focus on Form in Second Language Vocabulary Learning*, "EUROSLA Yearbook" 5, pp. 223–250.
- Martinović I., Grgić I., Kotromanović E., 2019, *Užitak u čitanju*, "Anafora" 6(2), pp. 287–328, DOI: 10.29162/anafora.v6i2.1.
- Pavličević-Franić D., 2005, *Komunikacijom do gramatike*, Zagreb.
- Pavličević-Franić D., 2011, *Jezikopisnice*, Zagreb. Pavličević-Franić D., Aladrović Slovaček K., 2018, *Razvoj leksičke kompetencije u nastavi hrvatskoga jezika u osnovnoj školi*, "Zbornik radova Šestoga hrvatskoga slavističkoga kongresa, 2. svezak", Botica S., Nikolić D., Tomašić J., Vidović Bolt I., pp. 945–954.

- PIRLS – izvješće o postignutim rezultatima iz čitanja, <https://www.ncvvo.hr/medunarodna-istrazivanja/pirls> (accessed: 18.03.2024).
- PISA – prirodoslovne kompetencije za život – izvješće, <https://pisa.ncvvo.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/IZVJESTAJ-CJELOVITI-PISA2006.pdf> (accessed: 18.03. 2024).
- Read J., 2006, *Assessing Vocabulary*, Cambridge.
- Santrić M., Čavar A., Alerić M., 2019, *Čitanje i rječnik: Povezanost čitalačkih navika i bogatstva rječnika hrvatskih srednjoškolaca*, "Croatian Journal of Education" 21(3), pp. 823–860, DOI: 10.15516/cje.v21i3.3106.
- Udier S.L., 2009, *Pristup obradi leksičkih jedinica u nastavi hrvatskoga kao drugoga i stranoga jezika*, "Lahor" 7, pp. 77–93.
- Wolf M., 2019, *Čitatelju, vrati se kući*, Zagreb.

Abstract

In the last twenty years, difficulties in verbalising one's own thoughts have been noticed more and more frequently among primary school students. With the adoption of the Curriculum for the Croatian language subject (2019) within the Language and Communication domain in each grade, i.e. age group, one outcome is related to the acquisition of vocabulary, and vocabulary enrichment is one of the tasks of the Literature and Creativity domain as well. Bearing in mind that "knowing a word" implies knowledge of its grammatical structure, written form with regard to the spelling rules, its meaning and functional knowledge that implies its use in context, this process is complex and requires a special approach. Since the development of vocabulary is mostly influenced by reading itself and by students' reading habits, it is important to encourage students to read at the primary school age, but also to develop their communication skills and knowledge. In order to examine productive dictionary knowledge, a survey was conducted with the fifth grade elementary school students. In the experimentally selected class, the Test of Communication Skills (Aladrović Slovaček 2012) was conducted, in which lexical competence, i.e. the knowledge of productive vocabulary and its use in context, was examined. Apart from that, students also filled out a questionnaire about reading habits, and the data were interconnected. The confirmed thesis states that students who have better reading habits have better results in the language competence tests and have more developed lexical competence. Moreover, it was established that cultivating reading habits helps the development of the lexical competence, which is also a predictor of later academic achievements.

Keywords: reading, reading habits, productive vocabulary, Croatian language, lexical competence

RELACJE POMIĘDZY SŁOWNICTWEM AKTYWNYM A CZYTELNICZYMI NAWYKAMI UCZNIÓW SZKÓŁ PODSTAWOWYCH

Streszczenie

W ciągu ostatnich dwudziestu lat wśród uczniów szkół podstawowych coraz częściej zauważa się trudności w werbalizacji własnych myśli. W Chorwacji, po przyjęciu Programu nauczania przedmiotu języka chorwackiego (2019) w domenie Język i komunikacja w każdej klasie (grupie wiekowej), jednym z celów tego przedmiotu stało się nabywanie czynnego słownictwa. Inne przedmioty związane ze wzbogacaniem słownictwa to Studium Literatury i Domena kreatywności.

„Znajomość słowa” oznacza znajomość jego struktury gramatycznej, formy pisemnej pod kątem ortograficznym, jego znaczenia oraz wiedzę funkcjonalną, która implikuje jego użycie w kontekście, proces nauczania jest więc złożony i wymaga specjalnego podejścia. Ponieważ na rozwój słownictwa największy wpływ ma czytanie i nawyki czytelnicze uczniów, ważne jest zachęcanie do czytania w wieku szkolnym, ale także rozwijanie umiejętności komunikacyjnych i wiedzy.

W celu sprawdzenia produktywnej wiedzy słownikowej przeprowadzono ankietę wśród uczniów klas piątych szkoły podstawowej. W klasie wybranej do eksperymentu przeprowadzono Test Umiejętności Komunikacyjnych (Aladrović, Slovaček 2012), w którym sprawdzano kompetencje leksykalne, czyli znajomość słownictwa produktywnego i jego użycia w kontekście. Oprócz tego uczniowie wypełnili także ankietę dotyczącą nawyków czytelniczych, a dane zostały ze sobą powiązane. Potwierdzoną tezę jest to, że uczniowie, którzy mają nawyki czytelnicze, osiągają lepsze wyniki w testach kompetencji językowych i mają lepiej rozwiniętą kompetencję leksykalną. Ponadto stwierdzono, że kształtowanie nawyków czytelniczych sprzyja rozwojowi kompetencji leksykalnych, które są także predyktorem późniejszych osiągnięć akademickich.

Słowa kluczowe: czytanie, nawyki czytelnicze, słownictwo produktywne, język chorwacki, kompetencje leksykalne