

## SYNONYMY IN TEXTBOOKS FOR SERBIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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**Abstract.** *This paper is about synonymy in Serbian as a foreign language. In Serbian vocabulary, which is represented in the textbooks for Serbian as a foreign language, there are many synonymous lexemes, and occasionally we come across lexical exercises with synonyms. We want to research whether all the synonyms that appear in textbooks for a certain level of learning are justified, and how much attention is paid to their learning. To that end, we will present a textbook lexicon of Učimo srpski 2 (2023), made for A2 and B1 levels of learning. The thematic organization of this textbook and the richness of the vocabulary and exercises provide an opportunity to explore an approach to synonymy in teaching Serbian as a foreign language. We will also look at the textbook Učimo srpski 1 (2020), to give an insight into the synonymous lexemes at the very beginning of the course of Serbian as a foreign language.*

**Key words:** *lexis, synonymy, textbooks, Serbian as a foreign language*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we will present an approach to the synonymy of one accredited institution for teaching Serbian as a foreign language by analyzing current textbooks that are used in many schools and centers for studying Serbian as a foreign language. First, we present which lexemes we consider to be synonyms to begin with. We will cross-reference the lexical structure through the thematic fields, as well as the lists of synonym pairs, or chains. We will comment on the selection and organization of synonyms, as well as on the lexical exercises that follow them, and whether their relation is proportional. Finally, we will give examples of lexical exercises that we think can contribute to learning about synonymous relations.

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## 2. SYNONYMY IN TEACHING SERBIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

It has been already pointed out in the glottodidactic literature that the mastering the lexicon also implies knowledge of paradigmatic lexical relations, one of which is synonymy (Krajišnik 2016). In teaching Serbian as a foreign language, synonyms are initially avoided in order not to overload the memory of students who have yet to master the vocabulary needed for the simplest communication. Nevertheless, in the textbooks for Serbian as a foreign language, even those intended for absolute beginners, you can find synonyms. It is natural to ask ourselves if we should introduce these lexemes as synonymous. If the answer is 'yes', that triggers many other questions, some of which we would like to try to answer in this paper: how to point out the synonymy in lexemes in the most approachable way, to deal with the different types of synonymous relations and polysemy within synonymy. So the problem of synonymy in the teaching of Serbian as a foreign language appears at the beginning, although synonyms themselves are generally avoided at this level of learning.

We believe that the complexity of this paradigmatic relationship requires a thoughtful approach, both in the choice of synonyms and in their presentation and adoption. It has been stated that students do not show much interest in synonymy (Krajišnik 2016, 25), but also that there is justification to introduce synonyms at the beginners level of learning because of their frequency (Dražić 2008, 48). Also, Dražić presented how collocations can be used to explain the synonymous relations between individual lexemes (2014). We believe that by using an appropriate methodological approach, we can spark an interest in our students for the synonymous relations, especially since the similarity of meaning can lead to using the lexeme in an inadequate context. We think that the knowledge of synonymy contributes to the overall mastery of vocabulary, and therefore to better communication. Synonymy between two lexemes can be very complex, especially when it comes to polysemic lexemes, which is why the teacher, even if he is a native speaker, often needs to consult a dictionary to give precise explanations. Therefore, it is best to be familiar in advance with synonym pairs and chains that appear in the teaching materials.

The subject of our interest is not so much the synonyms with which the speaker displays the richness of his vocabulary or the extraordinary sense of nuances of meaning, but those synonyms that can be used inadequately. By that, we mean that a speaker, by misusing a synonymous word, could make a sentence that no native speaker of the Serbian language would ever make. For example, a student needs to distinguish the adjective *velik* from the adjective *krupan*, so that he does not make a mistake like this: *Njena kuća je krupnija od moje*<sup>1</sup>. The adjective *velik* has many other synonyms, such as: *golem*, *kabast*, *zamašan*, *grandiozan*, *bezmeran*, *džinovski*, *basnoslovan*, etc. (Lalević 1974). We consider their knowledge and use to be a characteristic of the C level by CEFR<sup>2</sup> at which the student is capable of independently noticing the nuances of meaning.

## 3. THEORETICAL APPROACH TO SYNONYMY

Synonymy is a paradigmatic relation that has received a lot of attention in linguistics, although there are great differences in how it is approached. Although much has been written about synonymy, it is still a field that needs further research. Some authors believe that

<sup>1</sup>This is a sentence of one Romanian student who speaks Serbian at the B1 level.

<sup>2</sup>Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

synonymy does not exist (Bloomfield), that there is only one type of synonyms (Tafra), that there is a binary division of synonyms, and that a scale of synonymy exists (Dragićević 2010, 244–245). Zgusta states that the identity of meaning, which two lexemes must have to be considered synonyms, can be understood in two ways: as absolute identity and great similarity (1991, 88), which in Serbo-Croatian literature corresponds to the division into lexemes of the same meaning – ‘istoznačnice’ and lexemes of similar meaning – ‘blisko značnice’. Cruse (2001, 157–160) introduced a scale of synonymy, thus distinguishing between absolute synonymy, propositional (cognitive) synonymy and approximate synonymy. If we want to consider synonymous lexemes when acquiring the lexicon of a foreign language, we must take into account all the possible complexity of synonymous relations. For example, the synonymy that occurs in the synonym pairs *interesantan* and *zanimljiv* and *siromašan* and *skroman* cannot be explained in the same way. That is why we prefer approaches such as those of Zgusta and Cruse, according to which there are different types of synonymous relations and not just one type in which two lexemes are interchangeable in all contexts.

In addition to considering the fact that there is a scale of synonymy, we also would like to include Zgusta’s thoughts on components of lexical meaning (1991). According to Zgusta, those components are designation, connotation, and range of application (1991, 32). The designation is the relation between a lexeme and a corresponding segment of the extra-linguistic world (eg. lexeme *sto* and a class of objects denoted by it or a lexeme *velik* and existing quality of some objects, beings, or phenomena). This segment of the non-linguistic world is called denotatum. The second segment of lexical meaning — connotation consists of all components that add some contrastive value to the basic, usually designative function (e.g. *pas* and *džukela*). The range of application is particularly noticeable in the case when two lexemes have almost identical designata and there are no noticeable differences in connotation, but it is obvious that we do not use them in the same way (e.g. the adjectives *crven* and *rujan*).

#### 4. TEXTBOXES FOR SERBIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

##### 4.1. Učimo srpski 1 (2020)

We found 30 synonym pairs and two synonym chains in the textbook *Učimo srpski 1* (2020), which is used in the beginner’s course of Serbian as a foreign language and covers A1 and A2 levels of learning, according to the authors.

**Table 1** Synonym pairs in *Učimo srpski 1*

<i>sada</i>	<i>trenutno</i>	<i>upaliti</i>	<i>uključiti</i>	<i>uvek</i>	<i>stalno</i>
<i>studirati</i>	<i>učiti</i>	<i>zakazati</i>	<i>rezervisati</i>	<i>krasti</i>	<i>opljačkati</i>
<i>zato što</i>	<i>jer</i>	<i>topao</i>	<i>vreo</i>	<i>dobro</i>	<i>kvalitetno</i>
<i>čuvan</i>	<i>poznat</i>	<i>velik</i>	<i>krupan</i>	<i>pametan</i>	<i>mudar</i>
<i>zanimanje</i>	<i>posao</i>	<i>mali</i>	<i>sitan</i>	<i>bojati se</i>	<i>plašiti se</i>
<i>zanimljiv</i>	<i>interesantan</i>	<i>ukras</i>	<i>dekoracija</i>		
<i>naporan</i>	<i>težak</i>	<i>bogat</i>	<i>raskošan</i>		
<i>novac</i>	<i>pare</i>	<i>bogatstvo</i>	<i>raskoš</i>		
<i>kuća</i>	<i>dom</i>	<i>pokušati</i>	<i>probati</i>		
<i>praktičan</i>	<i>koristan</i>	<i>velik</i>	<i>ogroman</i>		
<i>prodavnica</i>	<i>radnja</i>	<i>provaliti</i>	<i>obiti</i>		

**Table 2** Synonym chains in Učimo srpski 1

<i>puno veoma jako</i>
<i>čuvati paziti štiti</i>

Since it is a textbook that should introduce students to the basic vocabulary, we consider that there are lexemes, and therefore synonym pairs, which are redundant, i.e. their learning should be left for higher levels. At this level, what is most important is the selection of the necessary vocabulary, which will enable students to communicate more successfully using a foreign language in everyday situations. Each synonym pair requires a certain amount of attention for the student to master this relation. This is why, at the very beginning, there is room only for synonym pairs or chains of lexemes that are frequent and closely related to the thematic fields of the basic vocabulary, such as: *studirati – učiti, zanimanje – posao, upaliti – uključiti, zakazati – rezervirati, velik – krupan, mali – sitan, uvek – stalno, dobro – kvalitetno, zato što – jer, koristan – praktičan, puno – veoma – jako i čuvati – paziti – štiti*. There are also synonym pairs that are very easy to adopt because one member of a synonym pair or a chain comes from the English language, so it is most likely that the meaning of this lexeme will be transparent. So there is no reason to delay their adoption, e.g. *zanimljiv – interesantan*.

#### 4.2. Učimo srpski 2 (2023)

The textbook *Učimo srpski 2* contains 9 lessons: “Prijateljstvo”, “Kuvanje”, “Običaji kod Srba”, “Dome, slatki dome”, “Put putujem”, “Moj prvi posao”, “Tajni svetovi”, “Krv nije voda” and “Prirodne lepote”. Each lesson represents one thematic field, which is sometimes obvious from the title itself. It can be said that the authors of the textbook selected semantically various and productive thematic fields. We will present thematic fields and situational sequences, as well as the synonym pairs that appear in the lessons in the tables, for greater transparency. In presenting the thematic fields, 17 thematic fields of V. Krajišnik will serve as a model (2016, 42-68).

##### 4.2.1. Lesson “Prijateljstvo” (thematic field: prijateljstvo)

**Table 1.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson “Prijateljstvo”

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>prijatelj</i>	<i>vrline, mane, ponašanje, osećanja...</i>
<i>upoznavanje prijatelja</i>	<i>društvene mreže, putovanja, posao, izlasci, interesovanja, detinjstvo...</i>
<i>druženje</i>	<i>slobodno vreme, zabava, ćaskanje...</i>

**Table 1.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Prijateljstvo”

<i>prijatelj</i>	<i>drug(ar)<sup>3</sup></i>
<i>prednost</i>	<i>vrlina</i>
<i>nesebičan</i>	<i>velikodušan</i>
<i>razgovarati</i>	<i>komunicirati</i>

<sup>3</sup> According to RSJ, there is no difference in meaning between the lexemes *drug* and *drugar*, so these lexemes would then represent morphological doublets (see Dragičević 2010, 246).

**Table 1.3** Synonym chain in the lesson “Prijateljstvo”

poznat čuven slavan popularan poštovan

All synonym pairs are connected with the thematic dominant *prijatelj* (*prijatelj* and *drugar*), that is with situational term *vrlina* (*prednost* and *vrlina*, *nesebičan* and *velikodušan*) and *ćaskanje* (*razgovarati* and *komunicirati*).

*Prijatelj* i *drug* are approximate synonyms. There's a difference in their designata. In a different dictionary, Lalević emphasizes the component of intimacy; it is said that *prijatelj* is a close friend (1974, 2786). The RSJ does not make this distinction: The other one is said to be a “close, intimate, benevolent and loyal person” (309), and after the descriptive definition of the designatum, *drug* appears as a synonym. The native speakers feel the difference between these lexemes exactly as explained by Lalević. We'll give some thoughts from the native speakers on this subject:

- 1) *Prijatelj je neko sa kim se družiš više godina i poznajete se bolje. Drug ili drugar je neko sa kim ti je lepo da se družiš, provodiš malo više vremena sa njim i ako potraje, postaće ti prijatelj*<sup>4</sup> ([www.polyglotclub.com](http://www.polyglotclub.com), 12.8.2023).
- 2) *Elem, rekao bih da je prijatelj u gradaciji intimnosti ipak najbliži i najvažniji. PORODIČNI je samo prijatelj. Kao i PAS. Drug je prisutan, ali više opšti*<sup>5</sup> ([www.polyglotclub.com](http://www.polyglotclub.com), 12.8.2023).

In order to adopt this synonym pair, it is necessary to highlight the component of intimacy possessed by a lexeme *prijatelj* versus the lexeme *drug*. This can be done by collocations *pravi prijatelj*, *najbolji prijatelj*, *dugogodišnji prijatelj*, *porodični prijatelj* (see the example number 2). It should also be noted that this difference is present in adult speakers. For speakers of school age, it is quite common to say *pravi drug* and *najbolji drug*, and it is not expected to use the lexeme *prijatelj* for a person belonging to their circle.

*Prednost* i *vrlina* are also approximate synonyms. Their designata differ because, although both lexemes have positive properties, the lexeme *prednost* has a more prominent component of supremacy, precedence (RSJ, 992). There is also a difference in the range of application: *vrlina* is typically, but not always, used for human characteristics (Same, 163). So we can explain that it's common to talk about the advantages (*prednostima*) and disadvantages of an object or phenomenon, when we compare them with other objects and phenomena, while we talk about the virtues (*vrlinama*) and disadvantages of a person.

The synonym pair *nesebičan* and *velikodušan* would represent cognitive synonyms because their designation is the same. We're going to illustrate this with the test of replacing lexemes in pairs of sentences, which will only be different because there's one member of a synonym pair, and the other one has another member.

- I *Petar je dao sav svoj novac beskućnicama, jer je on nesebičan čovek*  
*Petar je dao sav svoj novac beskućnicama, jer je on velikodušan čovek.*
- II *Ona je tako nesebična da će ti uvek pomoći.*  
*Ona je tako velikodušna da će ti uvek pomoći.*
- III *Bio je velikodušan čovek, uvek spreman da deli sa drugim.*  
*Bio je nesebičan čovek, uvek spreman da deli sa drugim.*

<sup>4</sup> *Prijatelj* is someone you hang out with for many years and you know each other better. *Drug* is someone you enjoy hanging out with, spend a little more time with him and if it lasts, he will become your *prijatelj* (translated by the author).

<sup>5</sup> Anyway, I would say that *prijatelj* is the closest and most important in the gradation of intimacy. PORODIČNI is just *prijatelj*. As is the PAS. *Drug* is present, but more general (translated by the author).

As can be concluded from the above examples, the same truth conditions apply to the first and second sentences within each pair of examples.

*Komunicirati* and *razgovarati* are only approximate synonyms. The verb *komunicirati* has a more general meaning, while *razgovarati* refers to a type of communication, which uses speech, words (RSJ). Nevertheless, the two lexemes are interchangeable in certain contexts and that is why Čosić lists them as synonyms in his dictionary (see P. Čosić 2008). Consider the following examples:

*Radnik obezbeđenja mora ljubazno da razgovara sa strankom.*

*Radnik obezbeđenja mora ljubazno da komunicira sa strankom.*

*Ne želim više sa tobom da razgovaram.*

*Ne želim više sa tobom da komuniciram.*

But:

*Kada možemo da razgovaramo o tome?*

*\*Kada možemo da komuniciramo o tome?*

*Računari komuniciraju razmenom podataka.*

*\*Računari razgovaraju razmenom podataka.*

In the first two pairs of sentences, these synonyms are interchangeable, because the meaning of the lexeme *razgovarati* approaches the more general meaning of the lexeme *komunicirati*. In the other two pairs of sentences, the speech component implied by the lexeme *razgovarati* is more prominent, and it cannot be replaced by the lexeme *komunicirati*.

#### 4.2.2. Lesson “Kuvanje” (thematic field: hrana i piće)

**Table 2.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson “Kuvanje”

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>hrana</i>	<i>voće, povrće, meso, mlečni proizvodi, riba, hleb i peciva, testenina, slatkiši, začini, ukusi</i>
<i>piće</i>	<i>voda, sok, alkoholna pića, kafa</i>
<i>pripremanje hrane</i>	<i>kuvati, pripremati, spremati, praviti, pržiti, seći, peći, mazati, dodavati, stavljati, mešati, ocediti, meriti, izlupati<sup>6</sup></i>
<i>bonton za stolom</i>	<i>postavljanje stola, serviranje hrane, služenje hrane, jedenje hrane</i>
<i>vrste jela i obroka</i>	<i>doručak, ručak, večera, salata, predjelo, supa, glavno jelo, prilog, desert</i>
<i>predmeti za spremanje, serviranje i čuvanje hrane</i>	<i>pribor za jelo, kuhinjsko posuđe, kuhinjski aparati, bela tehnika</i>
<i>ishrana van kuće</i>	<i>ugostiteljski objekti za ishranu i piće, naručiti, rezervirati, platiti</i>

<sup>6</sup> The mentioned verbs also have their counterparts when it comes to verbal aspect in this lesson (e.g. *kuvati - skuvati*). We decided not to list them, because there are no differences in lexical meaning even though they are considered to be separate lexemes.

**Table 2.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Kuvanje”

<i>jelo</i>	<i>obrok</i>
<i>jesti</i>	<i>gristi</i>
<i>služiti</i>	<i>servirati</i>
<i>parče</i>	<i>komad</i>
<i>odjednom neočekivano</i>	
<i>proslava</i>	<i>slavlje</i>

**Table 2.3** Synonym chains in the lesson “Prijateljstvo”

<i>kuvati</i>	<i>spremati</i>	<i>pripremati</i>
<i>razni</i>	<i>različiti</i>	<i>drugačiji</i>

*Jelo* and *obrok* are thematic dominants; *jesti* and *gristi* are connected with the situational term *jedenje hrane*, while the synonym pair *parče* and *komad* are about the situational term *jelo*, but there is no direct associative link between these lexemes. Synonym chain *kuvati*, *spremati* and *pripremati* are part of the situational sequence of the thematic dominant *pripremanje hrane*.

*Jelo* and *obrok* are in the dictionary of synonyms by P. Ćosić (2008) and RSJ lists them as synonyms, but their designata are different. *Jelo* is anything made from food (e.g. *paprikaš*, *pomfrit* etc.), while *obrok* is all the food and drink we eat and drink at one time (e.g. *doručak*, *ručak*, *večera*). *Jelo* can mean a meal, as in the example of *spavati posle jela* (RSJ), which is a secondary meaning developed by metonymy, and only then is a synonymous relation established with the lexeme *obrok*. This information should perhaps be left for higher levels of learning, but it is desirable to delineate the meanings of these lexemes.

The verb *jesti* has many cognitive synonyms that differ in associative meaning or connotation. Their adoption is left for higher levels. In the lesson, there is only an approximate synonym *gristi*, with which there is a partial overlap of meaning. *Gristi* involves tearing food with the teeth while *jesti* has a wider range of application that includes biting, in addition to putting in the mouth, chewing and swallowing (Lalević 1974; RSJ). The explanation can be supported by (im)possible collocations: *jesti jabuku*, *puding*, *supu* and *gristi jabuku*, *\*puding*, *\*supu*. In addition to the lexemes *jesti* and *gristi*, we think that an approximate synonym *hraniti se* could be added, because it is a frequent lexeme and is needed to talk about nutrition (*Ćime se hraniš?*; *Da li se hraniš zdravo?*; *Kako se hrane Srbi?*).

The verb *služiti* has a more developed polysemantic structure than the verb *servirati*. Only in one of the secondary meanings does it establish a synonymous relation with *servirati*, and that is the meaning: “to bring and give (guests) food and drink”<sup>7</sup> (RSJ). As a reflexive verb, it has the opposite meaning: “to take (at the table) food and drink” (Same). *Služiti* and *servirati* are only approximate synonyms, because their designata are slightly different: *servirati* refers to bringing food to the table and preparing it, while *služiti* also includes giving food and drinks to guests. Thus, the dish can be served (*servirano*) without the guests being served with it (*posluženi*). Differences in designata also affect differences in collocations: *servirati sto*, *ručak*, *tortu*, *\*goste*; *služiti \*sto*, *ručak*, *tortu*, *goste*. A note about the verb rection in collocations *služiti se kolačima*, *kafom* and similar is also useful for students.

<sup>7</sup> “доносити и давати (гостима) јело и пиће” (RSJ, translated by the author)

Synonyms *parče* and *komad* should be brought in connection with another synonym of a more general meaning - *deo*. All three lexemes oppose the notion of a whole, but there are differences in meaning and usage. *Deo* denotes an element of a whole (RSJ), but does not indicate whether it is separated from the whole. *Parče* is a separate part of the whole, whether it is cut off, broken off, rejected, torn off, etc. *Komad* means the same thing as *parče*, with the exception that it has a few more meanings. That's why we can say *parče* and *komad pite, zemlje, hleba* but only *dva komada jajeta, komad odeće, nameštaja, zatim pozorišni and muzički komad* (RSJ).

When it comes to the synonym chain *kuvati, pripremati* and *spremati*, all three verbs can refer to making a meal, but *kuvati doručak* and *kuvati večeru* are not as common collocations as *kuvati ručak*. We made a small research about this by using the Corpus of the Contemporary Serbian Language (SrpKor2013). Among 1782 concordances with the lexeme *kuvati* the collocation *kuvati ručak* appears 36 times, *kuvati večeru* only four times, and *kuvati doručak* just two times.

#### 4.2.3. "Običaji kod Srba" (thematic field: običaji)

**Table 3.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson "Običaji kod Srba"

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>venčanje</i>	<i>upoznavanje, zaljubljanje, veridba, svadba, kumstvo</i>
<i>rođenje deteta</i>	<i>slavlje, babine, poklon</i>

**Table 3.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson "Običaji kod Srba"

<i>venčanje</i>	<i>svadba</i>
<i>bidermajer</i>	<i>buket</i>
<i>burma</i>	<i>prsten</i>
<i>kuća</i>	<i>dom</i>
<i>kititi</i>	<i>ukrašavati</i>
<i>svečano</i>	<i>praznično</i>
<i>trpeza</i>	<i>sto</i>
<i>izbor</i>	<i>odabir</i>
<i>obavljati</i>	<i>raditi</i>

The first three synonym pairs (*venčanje* and *svadba*; *bidermajer* and *buket*; *burma* and *prsten*) are directly connected to the situational term *svadba*, as well as all other synonym pairs, or at least one of their members, although these lexemes can also be found within some other thematic groups.

*Kuća* and *dom* are approximate synonyms. In the paper of Sanja Đurović (2013), we can see how for the synonymous relation of these two lexemes, the semantical component of providing help, warmth, and safety is important, which is the semantic component possessed by the lexeme *dom*, hence the expressions *Dom za nezbrinutu decu, Dežji dom, Dom penzionera*. In the contemporary Serbian language, however, this component is not exclusively linked to the lexeme *dom*, so we say *Sigurna kuća*, not \**Sigurni dom* (332–335).



*Venčanje* and *svadba* have meanings that are clearly different: *venčanje* is a “marriage ceremony”<sup>8</sup>, while *svadba* is “a wedding celebration”<sup>9</sup>, although *venčanje* is also cited as a synonym for *svadba* (RSJ). That is because of a secondary meaning developed by metonymy. So we can say: *pozivnica za svadbu/venčanje*, *poklon za svadbu/venačanje* and *Bio sam na svadbi, ali nisam bio na venčanju*.

*Bidermajer* and *buket* are approximate synonyms because *bidermajer* is a special type of bouquet: “a bouquet of circularly arranged flowers worn by a bride at a wedding”<sup>10</sup> (RSJ). Because of that, if we want that *buket* refers to *bidermjaer*, we need to say *svadbeni buket*.

The relation between the lexemes *burma* and *prsten* is similar. *Burma*, according to RSJ, is an engagement or wedding ring. However, we are sure that most native speakers of the Serbian language only refer to a wedding ring by the lexeme *burma*. This is evidenced by these examples, from which it is clear that *burma* and *verenički prsten* have different designata:

1. *ŠTA RADITI SA VERENIČKIM PRSTENOM KAD NA RED DOĐE BURMA?*<sup>11</sup> (www.zlataratanasovic.com, 19.8.2023)
2. *Ako i vi nosite zajedno verenički prsten i burmu zapravo jako grešite, a evo i zašto*<sup>12</sup> (www.telegraf.rs, 19.8.2023)
3. *Još u drevnom Egiptu je postojao običaj da verenički prsten i burma treba da se nose na domalom prstu*<sup>13</sup> [...] (www.miticdiamonds.rs, 19.8.2023)

*Kititi* and *ukrašavati* have a primary meaning related to beautification. However, designata of these verbs differ in that *kititi* refers to putting decorations on someone or something, while *ukrašavati*, in addition to putting decorations, can be drawing decorations on something, painting something, etc. That’s why we say *kititi svatove*, *jelku*, *kititi se tuđim perjem* and *ukrašavati kuću*, *zidove*, *uskršanja jaja*, *torte*, etc. So, *ukrašavati* means creating decorations that will be inseparable from what is decorated.

*Svečano* and *praznično* are cognitive synonyms: *obući se svečano/praznično*, *biti praznično/svečano raspoložen*. We think that when processing these lexemes, it is necessary to introduce synonym pairs *svečan* and *prazničan*, so as *svečanost* and *praznik*. The relation of the last pair is somewhat more complicated, because *svečanosti* are not the same as *praznici*, but are organized on the occasion of them.

*Trpeza* and *sto* have identical primary meanings, so in RSJ when referring to *trpeza*, instead of defining the primary meaning, reference is made to *sto*. However, these synonyms are used differently. Most often, *trpeza* means a meal on the table, which is a secondary meaning developed by metonymy, so we can speak about, for example, *bogatoj*, *slavskoj*, *božičnoj*, *novodogodišnjoj*, etc. *trpezi*. If the *trpeza* means *sto*, it will be “a table in the temple, in the church, behind the altar” (RSJ). Related to customs is the meaning of a feast for the repose of the soul, which is otherwise called *daća*.

*Izbor* and *odabir* denote the same actions, but there are differences in collocations, so these lexemes are not interchangeable in sentences such as *Sutra su predsednički izbori* or *To je tvoj izbor*, *nemoj sada da kukaš*. *Izbor* can also mean assortment, while *odabir* does

<sup>8</sup> “обред склапања брака” (translated by the author)

<sup>9</sup> “веселје povodom venčanja, прослава” (translated by the author)

<sup>10</sup> “букет кружно аранжираног цвећа који носи невеста на венчању” (translated by the author)

<sup>11</sup> What to do with the engagement ring when it comes the time for the wedding ring? (translated by the author)

<sup>12</sup> If you wear an engagement and wedding ring together, you actually make a big mistake and here it is why (translated by the author)

<sup>13</sup> Even in ancient Egypt there was a custom that the engagement and wedding ring should be worn on your fourth finger (translated by the author).

not have this meaning (*U ovoj prodavnici je veliki izbor nameštaja*). These lexemes are interchangeable in collocations like: *izbor/odabir partnera, venčаницe, burme, smeštaja, nameštaja, destinacije za letovanje*, etc.

#### 4.2.4. Lesson 4 “Dome, slatki dome” (thematic filed: *prostor za život*)

**Table 4.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson “Dome, slatki dome”

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>vrsta stambenog objekta</i>	<i>kuća, dom, stan</i>
<i>vrste stambenih prostorija</i>	<i>dnevna soba, spavaća soba, trpezarija, hodnik, kuhinja, kupatilo, terasa, špajz...</i>
<i>kućni poslovi</i>	<i>čišćenje, brisanje, usisavanje, pranje, peglanje, krećenje, zalivanje, košenje, nameštanje, hranjenje kućnih ljubimaca, bacanje smeća...</i>
<i>popravke i renoviranje</i>	<i>elektroinstalacije, vodoinstalacije, stolarija, izolacija, rasveta...</i>
<i>kupovina</i>	<i>kupiti, sniženje, cena, garancija, polovan, nov, skup, jeftin, promeniti novac, račun...</i>
<i>tehnički uređaji</i>	<i>televizor, frižider, zamrzivač, veš-mašina, mašina za sudove...</i>

**Table 4.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Dome, slatki dome”

<i>kuća</i>	<i>dom</i>
<i>spremiti</i>	<i>srediti</i>
<i>promeniti</i>	<i>zameniti</i>
<i>besplatno</i>	<i>džabe</i>

**Table 4.3** Synonym chain in the lesson “Dome, slatki dome”

<i>čistiti</i>	<i>brisati</i>	<i>prati</i>
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*Kuća* and *dom* appeared as a synonym pair in the previous lesson, but their explanation is best left for the lesson whose thematic field is *prostor za stanovanje*. They refer to the living space itself, while the next synonym pair is within the thematic group *kućni poslovi*. *Promeniti* could be in the thematic group *popravke i renoviranje*, but in *kupovina* as well, while the verb *zameniti* appears only in the first group. In *kupovina* is a pair *besplatno* and *džabe*. The synonym chain represents the synonym members of the thematic dominant *kućni poslovi*.

The lexeme *spremiti* is already known to students from the lesson “Kuvanje”, but now it appears in meaning ‘urediti’, which is its primary meaning. It is a synonymous lexeme to the verb *srediti*, so we can say *spremiti* and *srediti sobu*. We believe that collocations are also important at this level *spremiti se za put/ispit/posao*, as one another meaning of the verb *srediti se* – ‘doterati se’.

*Promeniti* and *zameniti* mean the same thing, but there are big differences in the range of application. First, the difference in rection should be highlighted: *promeniti nešto* or *nekoga* and *zameniti nešto nečim* or *nekoga nekim*. We will provide examples of the use of these lexemes that we consider necessary at the B1 level.

*Majstor je promenio motor (ili zamenio stari motor novim) i sad sve dobro radi.  
 Treba da promeniš tri autobusa da stigneš tamo.  
 Promenili smo evre u dinare, jer neće da ih prime u prodavnici.  
 Moram da promenim košulju. Ova koju nosim je prljava.  
 Zamenio sam roman za zbirku pesama u knjižari.  
 Moram da zamenim košulju. Treba mi veći broj.  
 Kolega će me zameniti na poslu dok sam bolesna.*

All these examples illustrate everyday situations (at home, in traffic, in the store, exchange office, at work). However, these many examples, not all of which are related to the subject area being covered, can overwhelm students. That is why it is good to leave some of them for other thematic fields with which they are directly related.

*Besplatno* and *džabe* are cognitive synonyms. We can say that we are working somewhere or that we have received something *besplatno* and *džabe*, with addition to the fact that *džabe* is usually used with the preposition *za*: *Dobio sam kartu za džabe*. It should be noted that if something for sale is said to be *džabe*, it means that the price is very low, not that the item is free. Also, *raditi nešto džabe* can mean 'uzalud'.

The members of the synonym chain are only approximate synonyms. What they have in common is that they refer to the removal of dirt. *Čistiti* has a more general meaning than the other two listed synonyms. *Prati* involves washing in a liquid, while *brisati* means rubbing. We think that it is most appropriate to show the differences in meaning and use with verb complements: *čistiti cipele četkom; pod metlom; sudoperu vrućom vodom; fleku sunderom* etc; *prati toplom vodom odeću/sudove/kosu/lice/zube* et al; *brisati krpom prašinu; telo peškirom; suze maramicom* et al.

#### 4.2.5. Lesson 5 "Put putujem" (thematic field: putovanje)

**Table 5.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson "Put putujem"

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>vrste saobraćaja</i>	<i>drumski/vazdušni/vodeni/teretni/putnički saobraćaj, vozač, konduker, saobraćajni prekršaj</i>
<i>javni prevoz</i>	<i>gradski/međugradski/međudržavni/transkontinentalni prevoz, vrste prevoznih sredstava</i>
<i>stajališta</i>	<i>stajališta za gradski prevoz, aerodrom, železnička stanica, luka/pristanište, parkiralište, granični prelaz</i>
<i>svrha putovanja</i>	<i>svakodnevno putovanje, poslovno putovanje, turističko putovanje, ekskurzija</i>
<i>destinacije</i>	<i>posao, more, planine, selo, poseta, inostranstvo</i>
<i>dokumenta za putovanje</i>	<i>karta, pasoš, viza, lična karta, osiguranje</i>
<i>prtljag</i>	<i>ručni prtljag, putna torba, kofer</i>
<i>uslužni objekti</i>	<i>benzinska pumpa, motel, hotel, kamp, menjačnica</i>

**Table 5.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Put putujem”

<i>put</i>	<i>drum</i>
<i>ići</i>	<i>putovati</i>
<i>krenuti</i>	<i>poći</i>
<i>doći</i>	<i>stići</i>
<i>pravac</i>	<i>smer</i>
<i>časovnik</i>	<i>sat</i>
<i>uzak</i>	<i>tesan</i>

**Table 5.3** Synonym chain in the lesson “Put putujem”

pogotovo osobito naročito posebno

The first synonym pair (*put* and *drum*) is connected to the situational term *drumski saobraćaj*, while the next four (*ići* and *putovati*, *poći* and *krenuti*, *doći* and *stići*, *pravac* and *smer*) can be found within most of the mentioned thematic groups. The synonym pair *časovnik* and *sat* is related to situational terms *međudržavni* and *transkontinentalni prevoz*. We note that the synonym chain that appears in the lesson is not connected to the thematic field, so the question is whether it is justified to introduce all members of the synonym chain.

The lexemes *drum* and *put* are only approximate synonyms. According to Lalević (1976), *drum* is: “wide, paved, compacted, often paved, bordered, hard road for vehicle traffic and pedestrians”<sup>14</sup>. It should be noted that *drum* is archaic lexeme and should be connected with the collocation *drumski saobraćaj*. The connection with the lexeme *podrum* (*pod* + *drum*) can also be pointed out, although it does not belong to the thematic field *putovanje*, but it is convenient to use the opportunity to explain its origin and to make both lexemes easier to remember. As far as the lexeme *put* is concerned, one can point to a metonymically developed secondary meaning ‘putovanje’: *ići na put*, *spremati se na put*, *biti na putu za neko mesto* et al.

The next synonym pair are the verbs *ići* and *putovati*. *Ići* can mean “to move with a means of transport”<sup>15</sup>, and it is also used in contexts when it means traveling to distant regions (RSJ), so it is synonymous with the verb *putovati*: *ići/putovati u Španiju*; *ići/putovati avionom*; *ići/putovati od Beograda do Niša*. The verb *ići* has a more developed polysemy and there are many contexts in which it cannot be used instead of *putovati*: *Idem na posao*; *Autobus ide za pet minuta*; *Idi kuda želiš* et al. That's why it is needed to master the verb *ići* first, and only then *putovati*.

The verbs *krenuti* and *poći* are cognitive synonyms, with the fact that the verb *krenuti* has some secondary meanings that the verb *poći* does not. There are many contexts in which it does not matter which member of the synonym pair we use. We have selected those that we consider suitable for the B level.

*Krenuli/pošli smo kući/u prodavnicu/u grad.*

*Krenuo/pošao je autobus za Beograd.*

*Moja deca su pošla/krenula u školu/na fakultet/na plivanje.*

*Krenula/pošla mu je krv na nos.*

With the verbs of movement *doći* and *stići* there is an overlap of meaning in the sense of ‘getting to a certain place’ and that is why they are approximate synonyms: *Stigao/došao*

<sup>14</sup> “širok, utaban, nabijen, često popločan, oivičen, tvrd put za kolski saobraćaj i pešake” (translated by the author)

<sup>15</sup> „кретати се превозним средством” (translated by the author)

*sam na posao/ kuću/ u školu*, etc. However, the expression is *dobro došli*, not *\*dobro stigli*. We notice that we use *stići* more often than *doći* for objects: *Stigao je paket; Stiglo je pismo*. We will indicate some other frequent uses of these verbs in which they are not interchangeable. The verb *stići* primarily means to catch up with someone: *Stigni me ako možeš*. It is also often used in the sense of 'doing something on time': *Ne mogu da stignem da uradim sve zadatke*. When it comes to the verb *doći*, we would emphasize the meaning of "acquiring or acquiring something"<sup>16</sup> (RSJ): *doći do novca/ posla/ slobode* etc.

Although it would seem to some speakers that there is a clear difference between the lexemes *pravac* and *smer*, in the sense "pravac čine dva suprotna smer"<sup>17</sup>, in the Serbian language, these lexemes are cognitive synonyms, because we can say: *Idete u pogrešnom pravcu/smeru; karta u jednom pravcu/smeru; Otišao je u nepoznatom pravcu/smeru*. However, when it comes to secondary meanings, we are only talking about *smerovima na fakultetu* and *pravcima u umetnosti*.

The lexeme *časovnik* is monosemic, and it shares its meaning with the lexeme *sat*, so we can say: *zidni/ručni/ džepni/peščani/sunčani sat* or *časovnik*. It should be noted that *sat* is used far more often. However, when it comes to repairing this device, the term *časovničar* is usually used, not *sajdžija*. The relation between the lexemes *sat* and *čas*, which do not appear in this lesson as a synonym pair, would be much more useful to students.

#### 4.2.6. Lesson 6 "Moj prvi posao" (thematic field: *posao*)

**Table 6.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson "Moj prvi posao"

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>vrste poslova</i>	<i>prvi posao, dodatni posao, volontirati</i>
<i>zanimanja</i>	<i>prodavac, konobar, bebisiter, bloger, dostavljač, berač voća i povrća, šetač pasa...</i>
<i>traženje poslova i davanje otkaza</i>	<i>oglas, radna biografija, radno iskustvo, radno mesto, preporuka, diploma, lični podaci, biti primljen, kandidat, zaposliti se, intervju, dati otkaz, poslovne obaveze</i>
<i>zarada</i>	<i>plata, zarađivati, bakšiš</i>
<i>ljudi na poslu</i>	<i>poslodavac, šef, tim, mušterija, klijent, kolega</i>
<i>poželjne osobine radnika</i>	<i>radne navike, odgovornost, vredan, organizovan, otvoren, iskren, imati samopouzdanja, dolaziti na vreme...</i>
<i>organizacija rada</i>	<i>raspored, godišnji odmor, smena, sastanak, slobodan dan, radni dan, radno vreme, zamena</i>
<i>radno mesto</i>	<i>firma, salon, kancelarija, radionica, restoran...</i>

**Table 6.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson "Moj prvi posao"

<i>posao</i>	<i>rad</i>
<i>umeti</i>	<i>znati</i>
<i>nuditi</i>	<i>davati</i>
<i>presudan</i>	<i>odlučujući</i>

<sup>16</sup> "прибављања или стицања нечега" (translated by the author)

<sup>17</sup> See the article "Правац или смер?" at [www.srpskijezickiatelje.com](http://www.srpskijezickiatelje.com).

The first synonym pair (*posao* and *rad*) is directly subordinated to this thematic field. *Umeti* and *znati* can be viewed in connection with situational terms *radna biografija* or *poslovne obaveze*. *Nuditi* is connected with the situational term *oglas*, while *davati* can be found within various situational members (e.g. *dati slobodan dan/ platu/ preporuku...*).

*Posao* and *rad* are only approximate synonyms. *Rad* presents any conscious activity aimed at achieving an useful effect: for example, *fizički i umni rad* (RSJ), while *posao* is “work as a permanent occupation”<sup>18</sup> (Same). That's why in collocations *dobiti posao*, *ostati bez posla*, *zakasniti na posao* et al, we cannot use the lexeme *rad*. Nevertheless, lexeme *posao* can mean 'rad', so it is possible to say *Hajde da počnemo sa poslom* or *radom*. Also, it denotes a task or an obligation, like in a sentence: *Moj posao je da perem čaše*. As far as the lexeme *rad* is concerned, collocations such as *radovi na putu* or, for example, *građevinski radovi*, where *rad* means the performance of a specific job, are also important; then, *pustiti mašinu u rad* (*rad* is the functioning of the device), *naučni rad* and *ručni rad*.

The verbs *znati* and *umeti* are interchangeable only in certain contexts. One proverb contrasts their meanings: *Napred ide onaj koji ume* (who is skilled at something), *a ne koji zna* (who knows the facts). Nevertheless, *znati* can mean 'to be skilled at something', like in the example from RSJ: *Igrao je kako je najbolje znao*. On the other hand, as one of the secondary meanings of the verb *umeti*, it is stated: “to be familiar with something, knowledgeable about something”, which is similar to the definition of the primary meaning of the verb *znati* (RSJ). In adopting these verbs, the verb *znati* should be processed first based on the meaning coverage criteria. We can say: *Ko zna odgovor na ovo pitanje?*; *Ivan zna engleski* and *Marija zna da vozi automobil*.<sup>19</sup> Then it should be shown that in the last example, instead of *znati*, you can use *umeti*, which also applies to examples like: *Tvoja mama zna/ume odlično da kuva*; *On još ne zna/ume da čita ćirilicu*; *Moja baka ne zna/ume da koristi kompjuter*. The verb *umeti* can be left for a high level of learning. In addition, it is irregular in conjugation in the present tense forms (*umem: umeju*).

*Davati* is listed as one of the synonyms for the verb *nuditi* in the dictionary of synonyms by P. Čosić (2008), which is not the case with the one of M. Lalević (1974). In the RSJ, *davati* and *nuditi* appear as synonyms in the meaning: “to offer each other a drink, a meal, etc.”. We believe that *davati* and *nuditi* are approximate synonyms due to overlapping meanings. *Dati* can mean “to make available to someone” (RSJ) and it is a semantic component that it shares with *nuditi*. It should be emphasized what would be the difference between sentences: *Dao sam ti novac* and *Nudio sam ti novac*. In the first sentence, someone received money from the speaker, while the second sentence does not claim that. Because there are no contexts suitable for intermediate level in which these two verbs are interchangeable, we would not treat them as synonyms, but only emphasize their differences.

<sup>18</sup> “рад као стално занимање” (translated by the author)

<sup>19</sup> At some point in the learning process, the use of the verb as a postman should be illustrated and known: *Znaš, i meni je teško*.

## 4.2.7. Lesson 7 “Tajni svetovi” (thematic field: životinje)

**Table 7.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson “Tajni svetovi”

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>divlje životinje</i>	<i>lav, zmija, tigar, medved, žirafa, slon, jelen...</i>
<i>domaće životinje</i>	<i>kokoška, krava, ovca, svinja, jagnje, konj, koza...</i>
<i>kućni ljubimci</i>	<i>pas, mačka, brinuti se, hrana, vlasnik, veterinar, udomiti, kupiti</i>

**Table 7.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Tajni svetovi”

<i>inteligentan</i>	<i>pametnan</i>
<i>brinuti</i>	<i>čuvati</i>
<i>sviđati se</i>	<i>dopasti se</i>
<i>radost</i>	<i>sreća</i>
<i>topao</i>	<i>nežan</i>
<i>stalno</i>	<i>uvek</i>
<i>komplikovan</i>	<i>složen</i>

**Table 7.3** Synonym chain in the lesson “Tajni svetovi”

<i>fraza</i>	<i>izreka</i>	<i>izraz<sup>20</sup></i>
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In this lesson, most of the synonyms are unrelated to the topic field. Those who have a closer connection with it are *inteligentan* and *pametnan* (when describing animals); *brinuti* and *čuvati* concerning pets. We would propose to give space in this lesson to the following synonym pairs, which we think are more interesting to deal with: *debeo* and *krupan*, *mršav* and *tanak*, *mali* and *sitan*, *jak* and *snažan*, *udomiti* and *usvojiti*, *krdo* and *stado*<sup>21</sup>.

*Inteligentan* and *pametnan* are cognitive synonyms. This synonym pair is easy to adopt because one member of the synonym pair is an Anglicism. *Pametnan* has more meanings, so in addition to intelligence, it can also mean being filled with wise thoughts, knowledge, ideas, etc: *pametna knjiga* (RSJ), which is a meaning that can be processed at a high level of learning. At this level, we should highlight the currently very common collocation *pametni telefoni*. The synonym pair *brinuti se* and *čuvati* is joined by the lexemes *paziti* and *štititi*. They do not appear in the lesson, but they are present in the textbook that precedes this textbook (*Učimo srpski 1*), so we think that these four verbs should be processed as a synonym chain. The first thing to emphasize is the difference in the rection of these verbs: *čuvati* and *štititi* + accusative, *brinuti se* + *o* + locative, *paziti* + *na* + accusative. All these verbs have in common that they imply an agent who provides someone or something with what it needs to be maintained in a desirable state. However, there are semantic components that differ, which leads to differences in usage.

<sup>20</sup> Note that in RSJ *fraza* and *izraz* are listed as synonyms, but not the *izreka*. We can testify that all three lexemes are used as synonyms. Check out the example: “Ali dve su verzije nastanka ove fraze. Izreka potiče iz Prvog svetskog rata, u kom je postojao izvestan artiljerac Maksim [...]” (www.portalmiladi.com, retrieved 30.8.2023).

<sup>21</sup> The first member of each given synonym pair is already present in the lesson.

*Brinuti (se)* primarily means, as stated by Lalević (1974): “to be so occupied in one's thoughts with someone or something, to be restless because of someone or something so that everything else is more or less neglected”<sup>22</sup>. In an example like: *Ne brini, biće sve u redu*, no other verb from the synonym chain can be used instead of *brinuti*. However, when *brinuti* means ‘to take care of someone or something’, this verb is interchangeable with verbs *čuvati* and *paziti*.

*Roditelji brinu o svojoj deci/paze na/čuvaju svoju decu.*

*Ne pijem alkohol i ne pušim jer brinem o svom zdravlju/pazim na svoje zdravlje/čuvam svoje zdravlje.*

The verb *štiti* cannot be used in these contexts as a cognitive synonym. It would make a difference in the meaning of the sentences, because it implies protecting from some unfavorable influence. However, the verb *čuvati* is synonymous with it, so in the following examples, it is possible to use both verbs.

*Kišobran nas štiti/čuva od kiše.*

*Alarm nas štiti/čuva od lopova.*

*Zakon štiti/čuva ljude od diskriminacije.*

The verb *čuvati* has a few more secondary meanings of its own, which we would introduce at this level of learning or a little later: *čuvati novac/energiju* (‘to save’), *čuvati lekove na suvom/novac u sefu* (‘keep in a certain place, under certain conditions’), *čuvati stara pisma/knjige* (‘keep for a long time, don't waste’), *čuvati uspomenu/tajnu/običaje/tradiciju* (‘to adhere to something, to respect’), *čuvati se lopova/opasnosti/loših ljudi* (‘to protect yourself from someone, something’), *čuvati ovce/guske/goveda* (‘to look after cattle, poultry on pasture’) and there is also the meaning (‘avoid danger’) which is often expressed at parting: *Vidimo se, čuvaj se*. We notice that in the meaning of ‘to protect oneself from someone, something’, it is also possible to use the verb *paziti se*: *pazi/čuvaj se loših ljudi*, although it is not common to say *štiti se loših ljudi*. The primary meaning of the verb *paziti* is to concentrate on something: *paziti na času, paziti na put, paziti na svaku svoju reč*. Another meaning that distinguishes it from the other listed verbs is ‘watch, guard’: *paziti da niko ne pobegne; paziti da ručak ne zagori*. We also use this verb as a “call for attention, caution”<sup>23</sup>: *Pazi(te) se!* (RSJ).

When it comes to such complex lexical units, we believe that the students should be gradually familiarized with the members of the synonym chain. It is best for students to first master the primary meanings of these lexemes. Only when they know the primary meanings of the verbs *brinuti (se)*, *paziti se*, *čuvati* and *štiti* and learn their reactions, then we can start presenting their synonym relations:

<sup>22</sup> „biti toliko u mislima nekim ili nečim zauzet, biti nespokojan zbog nekoga ili nečega da se sve drugo više ili manje zanemaruje” (translated by the author)

<sup>23</sup> “позив на пажњу, опрезност” (translated by the author)



## 4.2.8. Lesson 8 “Krv nije voda” (thematic field: zdrav način života)

**Table 8.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson “Krv nije voda”

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>životni vek</i>	<i>starost, mladost, rođendan, živeti, dugovečan, dug, prosečan, godina</i>
<i>sport</i>	<i>teretana, sportski klub, reprezentacija, kondicija, takmičenje, vežbati, sportista, uspeh, košarka, fudbal, aerobik, plivanje ...</i>
<i>rekreacija</i>	<i>putovanje, planinarenje, trčanje, priroda, kretati se, vežbati, trenirati</i>
<i>ishrana</i>	<i>brza hrana, doručak, ručak, pekara, umerenost</i>
<i>izgled</i>	<i>dobro, genetika, ličiti, biti u formi, jak</i>
<i>zdravlje</i>	<i>fizičko zdravlje, mentalno zdravlje, pregled, lekar, zubar, jak, zdrav, bolest, lek, stres</i>

**Table 8.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Krv nije voda”

<i>umerenost</i>	<i>mera</i>
<i>napredan</i>	<i>razvijen</i>
<i>kretati se</i>	<i>ići</i>
<i>vežbati</i>	<i>trenirati</i>
<i>jak</i>	<i>snažan</i>
<i>udarati</i>	<i>šutirati</i>
<i>buditi (se)</i>	<i>ustajati</i>
<i>pažnja</i>	<i>briga</i>
<i>krenuti</i>	<i>poći</i>
<i>barem</i>	<i>makar</i>
<i>prići</i>	<i>približiti se</i>
<i>izuzetan</i>	<i>fantastičan</i>
<i>neobičan</i>	<i>neuobičajen</i>
<i>osobina</i>	<i>crtā</i>
<i>poznat</i>	<i>slavan</i>
<i>tužan</i>	<i>utučen</i>
<i>srećan</i>	<i>zadovoljan</i>
<i>ushićen</i>	<i>oduševljen</i>

The synonym pair *umerenost* and *mera* belongs to the thematic group *ishrana*. The verb *kretati se* is within the thematic dominant *rekreacija*, while the verbs *vežbati* and *trenirati*, like *krenuti* and *poći*<sup>24</sup>, also belong to the thematic group *sport*. Synonym pairs *buditi (se)* and *ustajati*, like *pažnja* and *briga*, are not directly subordinated to any of the mentioned thematic dominants. They belong to a given thematic field. It also has a synonym pair *udarati* and *šutirati*. The adjectives *jak* and *snažan*, so as adjectives *razvijen* and *napredan* are within the thematic group *izgled*. All the other synonym pairs, including the synonym chain, are not in a strong relation with the thematic dominant.

*Umerenost* and *mera* can have the same meaning. The first member of the synonym pair is monosemic, while *mera* is a lexeme with a highly developed polysemantic structure, and its primary meaning should be emphasized: “a standard size used to determine the quantity

<sup>24</sup> We have already analysed this synonymous pair in lesson 5 “putujem”.

of something (weight, length, area, volume, time, etc.), a unit for measuring something”<sup>25</sup> (RSJ). *Mera* in the sense of ‘temperance’ is used in the expressions *imati meru* and *raditi nešto s merom*, and we can talk about *umerenosti u jelu, piću*, etc. Therefore, there are differences in usage.

The adjectives *napredan* and *razvijen* have similar meanings when referring to physical appearance. For example, we can say *napredno dete*, if a child develops well physically (RSJ). If we say *razvijen čovek*, then we usually talk about a man that is tall, big and muscular. There are collocations in which it does not matter which member of the synonym pair we use, because in them these lexemes mean the same thing, such as: *razvijena/napredna zemlja/grad/firma*; *razvijeno/napredno domaćinstvo* et al. However, we will only say *napredne ideje* or *napredni zakoni*, for example, when *napredan* is used to mean ‘progressive’, which would be a meaning suitable for a high level of learning. There is also a very useful collocation for students: *napredan kurs*.

*Kretati se* and *ići* are synonyms in the sense of ‘being in motion in general’ (*kretati se/ići pešačkom stazom* (RSJ). There are contexts in which they are completely interchangeable in this sense, as well as those in which one member of a synonym pair is more common than the other.

*Oluja se kreće/ide ka Beogradu.*

*Ovaj automobil se kreće/ide brzinom od 150 km na čas.*

*Treba više da se krećete (\*idete). To je dobro za Vaše zdravlje.*

*Zemlja se kreće (\*ide) oko Sunca.*

In addition to the sameness in meaning, specific meanings and collocations for each verb should be highlighted. Thus, the verb *kretati se* is used in the sense of ‘to spend time, to be in connection with social circles’: *kretati se u visokom društvu*, which, of course, should be taught at a higher level of learning. The verb *ići* has several meanings necessary at the beginner and intermediate levels: *ići autobusom*, *ići iz Srbije u Austriju* (‘to travel’), *Idi kud hoćeš* (‘to go away’), *Idu nam gosti* (‘to come’).

Both *trenirati* and *vežbati* have the meaning: “systematically repeating some action in order to learn, improve in it”<sup>26</sup> (RSJ), but they differ in the range of application. *Trenirati* is used in connection with sports disciplines: *trenirati košarku/fudbal/plivanje* et al, while the verb *vežbati* implies a wider range of activities: *vežbati matematiku/pevanje*; *vežbati se u trčanju/govorništvu*, etc.

The primary meanings of the adjectives *jak* and *snažan* match and refer to physical strength and development: *Toliko je jak/snažan da može da radi najteže fizičke poslove*. Though, it is possible to say *snažna/jaka mašina* (‘has a great driving force’), *snažan/jak udarac* (‘fierce’), *snažan/jak vetar*; *snažno/jako osećanje* (‘high intensity’), *snažan/jak temperament* (‘unbridled’), *snažan/jak miris* (‘striking’), *snažan/jak dokaz* (‘persuasive’), *snažna/jaka vlast* (‘powerful’), *snažan/jak most* (‘strong’), *snažna/jaka hrana* (‘caloric, nutritious’). However, in the following expression, we use only *jak*: *biti jak u nečemu* (‘to know about something, to be skilfull in it’): *On je jak u plivanju, ali trčanje mu slabo ide*. As can be seen from the presentation of different meanings, other synonymous lexemes can be used in the explanation provided that they are already known to the students.

<sup>25</sup> „стандардна величина којом се одређује квантитет нечега (тежина, дужина, површина, запремина, време итд.), јединица за мерење нечега” (translated by the author)

<sup>26</sup> „системски понављати неку радњу у циљу учења, усавршавања у њој” (translated by the author)

*Šutirati* and *udarati* are in the dictionary of synonyms of Čosić (2008) cited as synonyms. These are approximate synonyms. *Šutirati* is used primarily when it comes to sending the ball in a certain direction, but it can also mean pushing something away with the foot (RSJ): *Fudbaler šutira loptu; Šutnuo je psa*. We would suggest the following collocations for the verb *udarati*: *udariti nekoga rukom/kamenom, udariti autom nekoga/u nešto; udariti grom*.

The verbs *ustajati* and *buditi se* are approximate synonyms. Although the definition of the primary meaning of the verb *ustajati* in RSJ states: “getting up after sleep”<sup>27</sup>, in the adoption of this lexeme, the general meaning that implies taking an upright position should first be highlighted: *ustati sa zemlje/stolice*, and only then the synonym relation with *buditi se* should be indicated: *Budim se/ustajem rano*. Although *ustajati* retains its general meaning in this context as well, the focus is on the fact that a man is no longer asleep.

The nouns *briga* and *pažnja* are synonymous in meaning ‘care, affection’. However, due to the difference in rection, they are not interchangeable: *pažnja prema starijima – briga o starijima*. There are also collocations with different members when it comes to this meaning: *poklanjati/pružati pažnju nekome* and *voditi brigu o nekome*. Before this, the primary meanings should be adopted: ‘feeling of restlessness, anxiety’ (*briga*) and ‘focus, concentration’ (*pažnja*).

#### 4.2.9. Lesson 9 “Prirodne lepote” (thematic field: priroda)

**Table 9.1** Thematic dominants and situational sequences in the lesson “Prirodne lepote”

thematic dominant	situational sequence
<i>geografski pojmovi</i>	<i>zemlja, planina, reka, klisura, pećina, peščara, jezero, kanjon, vodopad, vetar, naselje, more...</i>
<i>aktivnosti u prirodi</i>	<i>uživati, ribolov, jahanje, pešačenje, plovidba, šetnja, očuvanje prirode, plivati, pecati, kampovati, loviti, spasilačka služba...</i>
<i>turizam</i>	<i>turista, smeštaj, posetiti, posetilac, vodič, vidikovac, razgledanje, izletište</i>
<i>kulturno-istorijski spomenici</i>	<i>palata, mozaik, bazilika, muzej, hram, skulptura, manastir, tvrđava, nalazište</i>
<i>životinje</i>	<i>orao, vuk, jelen, divlja svinja, konj, medved, zmija, papagaj, pas</i>
<i>biljke</i>	<i>orhideja, bašta, omorika, drvo, uzgajati</i>

**Table 9.2** Synonym pairs in the lesson “Prirodne lepote”

<i>znamenit</i>	<i>poznat</i>
<i>glavni</i>	<i>važan</i>
<i>naseobina</i>	<i>naselje</i>
<i>lokalitet</i>	<i>nalazište</i>
<i>obučen</i>	<i>treniran</i>
<i>senzacija</i>	<i>atrakcija</i>
<i>veličanstven</i>	<i>grandiozan</i>
<i>car</i>	<i>imperator</i>

<sup>27</sup> “дићи се после спавања” (translated by the author)

**Table 9.3** Synonym chain in the lesson “Prirodne lepote”poseban jedinstven specijalan

Almost all the synonyms in this lesson are related to its thematical field in some way. Adjectives *znamenit* and *poznat*, *glavni* and *važan*, *veličanstven* and *grandiozan*, as well as all adjectives from the synonym chain, can be used when describing localities, natural phenomena and tourist places, so that they can be connected to different situational members of several thematic groups. The remaining adjective synonym pair *obučen* and *treniran* are connected with the situational term *spasilačka služba*. Synonyms *naselje* and *naseobina* are within thematical group *geografski pojmovi*; *nalazište* and *lokalitet* are within *kulturno-istorijski spomenici*; *senzacija* and *atrakcija* are subordinated to the thematic dominant *turizam*.

The adjectives *poznat* and *znamenit* have the same meaning: “about which everyone knows a lot”<sup>28</sup> (RSJ): *poznat znamenit članak/govor; poznato/znamenito mesto; poznata/znamenita ličnost/teorija/izložba*, etc. The adjective *poznat* has more meanings and therefore should be adopted first. Its primary meaning is: “which is already known”<sup>29</sup> (Same), so for example we will say: *Da li Vam je poznata ova osoba?* or *Ta knjiga mi nije poznata*. In these contexts we cannot use the adjective *znamenit*.

The adjectives *glavni* and *važan* have primary meanings that are very similarly defined in RSJ: both speak of emphasis on importance. However, the adjective *glavni* has a more developed polysemantic structure. It is used in collocations such as: *glavni zadatak/uzrok/predmet/problem* in which the adjective in superlative form *važan* can stand instead (*najvažniji*); then *glavni starešina/sudija/konobar*, in which it means “first in rank, supreme”<sup>30</sup> (Same); next *glavna bitka/rasprava* where it means ‘crucial’. These collocations should also be highlighted: *glavni grad, glavna uloga, glavni lik*. The adjective *važan* we use in the example like: *važan položaj, važna luka/ličnost* and in the expression *praviti se važan*.

The primary meanings of the lexemes *naseobina* and *naselje* are essentially the same, although they are formulated differently in RSJ: both lexemes denote a populated place. However, when we talk about cities, villages, towns, or city districts, we more often use the lexeme *naselje*. *Naseobina* is usually used in the context of old or even ancient places where some peoples lived: *ostaci naseobina afričkog kamenog doma, jezgro civilizacijskih naseobina, stari predmeti prvih naseobina, naseobina Inka, jedna od najstarijih naseobina na Balkanu*, etc (SrpKor2013, 8. 9. 2023). This lexeme also denotes the place where some people settled from other regions or countries, as well as the group of these people (RSJ): *prva engleska naseobina na mestu gde je danas grad Madras; romska naseobina; veza između matice i srpskih naseobina po svetu; ta francuska naseobina u Indiji*, etc. (SrpKor2013, 8. 9. 2023). It can be said that when it comes to the primary meaning, the lexemes *naselje* and *naseobina* differ in the range of application, but only in a way that there are contexts in which one member of the synonym pair is more common than the other.

*Lokalitet* primarily means a place that stands out for something special: for its importance, position or other peculiarity (RSJ): *lokalitet Gamzigrad, industrijski lokalitet, lokalitet od značaja za prirodu* (SrpKor2013, 6.9.2023). *Nalazište* is “the place where

<sup>28</sup> “о којем сви много знају” (translated by the author)

<sup>29</sup> “о којем се од раније зна” (translated by the author)

<sup>30</sup> „означава првог по рангу, врховног” (translated by the author)

something is or was found”<sup>31</sup>, so we can speak about, for example, *arheološkim nalazištima* (RMS). Although, we also say: *arheološki lokalitet Lepenski vir* (SrpKor2013, 6.9.2023), which is a confirmation that these lexemes are synonyms. *Nalazište* also means deposits, reserves: *nalazište nafte, zlata, uglja*, etc. and in that context this lexeme is not interchangeable with the noun *lokalitet*.

The adjectives *obučen* and *treniran* we can find it only under the verbs *obučiti* and *trenirati* in RSJ. Like these verbs, even the nouns *obuka* and *trening*, the adjectives *obučen* and *treniran* differ in the range of application. When it comes to sports activities, *treniran* is used: *dobro treniran tim, trenirani pripadnici OVK Janez Drnovšek* (SrpKor 2013, 8. 9. 2023). In other contexts, judging by the examples we came across, it is possible to use both adjectives: *trenirani psi; glas posebno treniranih komentatora; specijalno trenirane snage; trenirani profesionalac; profesionalno je obučen; obučen da gasi požar; obučen da ga sam vozi; pas obučen da ih vodi* (SrpKor2013, 8. 9. 2023). However, when we consult the dictionary, we see that *treniran* is used in the sense of acquiring skills and movements only about animals (RSJ). In this case, we believe that the difference in the range of application should be emphasized, and in this way: *treniran* can refer to sports training and dressage, and *obučen* to other skills and knowledge acquired by humans or animals.

*Senzacija* and *atrakcija* are listed as synonyms in the dictionary of Ćosić (2008). *Senzacija* means primarily news and events that attract a lot of attention, but also sensory experiences. *Atrakcija* implies an attractive power, and thanks to the metonymic extension, it also means objects and phenomena that have such power (RSJ). In this sense, it is synonymous with lexeme *senzacija: medijska/turistička/arheološka/muzička atrakcija ili senzacija* (SrpKor2013; www.google.rs, 8.9.2023).

The adjectives *veličanstven* and *grandiozan* are cognitive synonyms. They differ only in that the second member of the synonymous pair is a loanword. That’s why we can say *veličanstven* and *grandiozan prizor/ spomenik/govor* or *veličanstveno* and *grandiozno veče/delo*, etc.

The adjectives *poseban* and *jedinstven* are synonymous with the adjective *specijalan* in the meaning “which is different from others, special”<sup>32</sup> (RSJ). The primary meaning of the adjective *poseban* refers to separateness, separation from others (Same): *Svako ima svoju sobu*, while *jedinstven* primarily means ‘complete, compact’: *jedinstvena teritorija, država* (Same). Even when used in the same sense, these adjectives are not interchangeable in all contexts. For example, we will say: *Ova devojka ima posebnu/jedinstvenu lepotu*, but not *Ova devojka ima \*specijalnu lepotu*. On the other hand, there are collocations *specijalni efekti, specijalne jedinice/snage, specijalne operacije* et al.

## 5. LEXICAL EXERCISES IN *UČIMO SRPSKI 2* (2022)

The textbook contains several lexical exercises in which synonym relations are practiced in different ways. We will present the lexemes that appear in them and evaluate the productivity of the tasks. Also, we will see how the term synonym is used in the textbook, and whether it is always justified.

The first task is in the lesson “Običaji kod Srba”. We should connect synonyms: *recimo* and *na primer, svečano* and *praznično, kititi* and *ukrašavati, obavljati* and *raditi, burma*

<sup>31</sup> „место где се нешто налази или је нађено” (translated by the author)

<sup>32</sup> „који је различит од других, нарочит” (translated by the author)

and *prsten*, so as *trpeza* and *sto*. Almost all synonyms are related to the thematic dominant *venčanje*. However, apart from the fact that it is up to the teacher to explain synonym relations, we believe that additional lexical exercises are needed in which these lexemes should be put into context. Students will not master synonym relations if they are only told that some two lexemes are synonyms.

The next exercise is in the lesson “Dome, slatki dome”. It is a series of lexemes related to product prices. The lexemes should be put in order from the one that indicates the highest price to the lexeme with the meaning of the lowest price. This means that there would be antonyms at the ends of the sequence, and there would also be synonyms within the sequence. The sequence consists of lexemes and collocations: *papreno skupo – skupo – pristojna cena – jeftino – džabe – besplatno*. This is a good opportunity to point out that *džabe* means a very low price, while *besplatno* means we won’t pay anything. This is one type of task in which, in addition to antonymy, synonymy is also processed. This is possible when it comes to gradual synonyms. They form two synonym chains, which together form an antonym chain (see Dragičević 2010). Through tasks of this type, different degrees of intensity of the characteristic or action that the synonymous lexemes denote are observed. One such antonym chain appears in the exercise that follows the lesson “Krv nije voda”. It is only stated that to the question *Kako se osećaš?* we could answer with: *utučeno, razočarano, tužno, uplašeno, zadovoljno, srećno, ushićeno* and *oduševljeno*.

In the lesson “Put putujemo”, after one text, the synonyms *pogotovo, osobito, posebno* and *naročito* are emphasized, and at the very beginning, it is indicated that the lexemes *put* and *drum* mean the same thing (a sign of equality is placed between them). In the revision test that also covers this lesson, there is an exercise in which the highlighted verbs should be replaced with a synonymous verb. The verbs are: *odlaziti (ići), otići (krenuti), stići (doći), vratiti se (stići/doći), ići (putovati/leteti), ići (odlaziti/voziti se/putovati)*. As can be seen from the presented examples and proposed solutions, synonyms are only *stići* and *doći* and *putovati* and *ići*. Although we expect that the term *synonym* will not be used in a strictly linguistic sense, we still think that it should not be said that e.g. *otići* and *krenuti* are synonymous verbs. Let’s compare the sentence from the task *Svi su već otišli* and *Svi su već krenuli*, which is the answer in the textbook. They do not mean the same thing, and due to the wording of the task, the student could conclude exactly that.

In this lesson there is another lexical exercise: in it you have to choose one of the three offered lexemes for the already written sentence. This task represents an opportunity to practice synonym relations. However, these are the lexemes offered: *prolaziti – polaziti – putovati; poći – proći – stići; kretati se – ukrcati se – usporavati; otići – proći – presesti; uleteti – leteti – izleteti*. Even without synonyms, this kind of exercise is useful, because the participants concentrate on the meaning of lexemes and their usage. However, we think it would be more productive if there were a sequence *poći – krenuti – ići*<sup>33</sup> instead of the sequence *kretati se – ukrcati se – usporavati*.

In the sixth lesson, “Moj prvi posao”, there is a task in which you have to connect synonymous words: *presudan* and *odlučujući, na taj način* and *tako, nuditi* and *davati* and *u potpunosti* and *sasvim*. The verbs *nuditi* and *davati* need additional explanations because they are not cognitive synonyms. We think that in this type of tasks, only those synonyms

<sup>33</sup> In one example, the context is provided: *Ipak nije \_\_\_\_\_ na drugi voz*. Of the offered lexemes *otići, proći* and *preseti*, only *preseti* is given in the key, although in this context the verb *otići* can also be used, which of course would make a difference in the meaning of the sentence.

that are the closest to absolute synonyms should be found. First of all, it is necessary to have the same type of synonyms within this type of task, so that the participants do not draw wrong conclusions. For example, they shouldn't think that it doesn't matter whether we use the verb *nuditi* or *davati*, just as it doesn't matter whether we say *presudan* or *odlučujući*, because that really won't change the meaning of the statement.

The next exercise related to synonymy occurs only in the eighth lesson "Krv nije voda". After processing the first text, you should find synonymous lexemes or expressions. It is about the following lexical units: *svake godine (iz godine u godinu)*, *oduvek (od pamtiveka)*, *stalan (neiscrpan)*, *skoro (gotovo)*, *prosečno (u proseku)*, *mera (umerenost)* and *makar (barem)*. Here, a little more attention should be paid to the synonym pair of *mera* and *umerenost*, and the primary meaning of the first member should be emphasized. In the exercise that follows the lesson, there is a lexical exercise in which synonyms are also present: *buditi se* and *ustajati*, as well as *briga* and *pažnja*. One should choose one of the three offered lexemes to fit them into the text. We believe that this type of exercise is one of the most productive for vocabulary mastery. In them, participants can conclude that it is impossible to say \**Budila sam rano*, because in that context a reflexive verb is necessary, as well as not to say *voditi brige*, but it is common to say *voditi brigu*.

It can be concluded that more attention could have been paid to synonymy in this textbook, considering how many synonyms appear in it. Against 147 synonymous lexemes, there are only a few exercises in which this paradigmatic relationship is practiced, and in them, there are only 30 synonyms. Given how complex synonymous relations can be, we believe that each synonym pair or chain should be found within the lexical exercises at least once so that the students can master synonymy at a satisfactory level. As language learning involves many other lexical and grammatical units and relations, we need to think carefully about which synonyms are needed at a certain level. In our opinion, there are too many of them in this textbook, which is intended for A2 and B1 learning levels. By careful selection of synonym pairs and chains, as well as adequate lexical exercises in sufficient measure, one can improve mastery of synonymous relations, but also lexicon in general. We will present two examples of our lexical exercises. The first example deals with the synonym chain *štiti - paziti - čuvati*, and the second with different synonyms.

Exercise 1: Underline the words that can be used in the sentence. Sometimes more than one solution is possible.

1. Alarm nas štiti/ čuva od lopova.
2. Vidimo se, pazi/ čuvaj se.
3. Šta radiš? – Pazim/ brinem da mi ručak ne izgori.
4. Lekovi se čuvaju/ paze na suvom.

Exercise 2: Use a synonym instead of the underlined word.

Example: Moj brat je mnogo jak. Može da podigne mnogo teške stvari.

Moj brat je mnogo snažan. Može da podigne mnogo teške stvari.

1. Poješću samo jedno parče pite.
2. Ovo je moja kuća.
3. Dobila sam pozivnicu za svadbu.
4. Moram da sredim kuću. Dolaze mi gosti.
5. Dobio sam ovu majicu besplatno.
6. Nismo krenuli na vreme, pa smo zakasnili

## 6. CONCLUSION

Through the analysis of the material, we have established that the problem of synonymy appears already at the beginning of the Serbian as a foreign language courses. We had the opportunity to see how complex the relation can be between two synonymous lexemes, and how much attention should be paid to it for the students to successfully master it. To provide an adequate approach to this paradigmatic relation in teaching, the teacher should be familiar with different types of synonymous relations, which are associated with different types of explanations and tasks.

We noticed that there are synonym pairs that are easier to adopt compared to others, more complicated ones. It is the easiest to adopt a synonym pair in which one member is a lexeme of foreign origin, known to the students. However, even when it comes to such synonym pairs, one should be careful not to transfer how the lexeme is used in a foreign language from which it originates if it is not the same as in the Serbian language.

For the adoption of cognitive synonyms, we believe that it is most appropriate to use sentences to show the sameness of meaning. Due to polysemy, it should be pointed out in which meanings the two lexemes mean the same, and in which they do not. If two lexemes overlap in several different meanings, certain ones should be given priority over others.

The approximate synonyms are perhaps the most difficult to explain. The most precise explanation should be accompanied by adequate examples, and we believe that the best type is collocations.

The knowledge about synonymous relations that we want our students to acquire should be aligned with the level of learning, but also with the lexical topic. All synonym pairs and chains should be accompanied by lexical exercises that will help the student master their usage, in addition to learning the fact that certain lexemes mean the same or that they have similar meanings.

As a result of our analysis of textbook materials, the basis for dictionaries of synonyms was created that could be an addition to textbooks. This kind of dictionary would have several advantages. By looking at the overview list of synonym pairs and chains, the teacher can prepare in advance for explaining synonym relations, and it also represents a good basis for creating additional lexical exercises. Such an addition is also useful for the students themselves to determine synonym relations.

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## SINONIMIJA U UDŽEBNICIMA ZA SRPSKI KAO STRANI JEZIK

*Ovaj rad govori o sinonimiji u srpskom kao stranom jeziku. U vokabularu koji je zastupljen u udžbenicima za srpski kao strani jezik, postoji mnogo sinonimnih leksema, a povremeno nailazimo na leksičke vežbe sa sinonimima. Želimo da istražimo da li su svi sinonimi koji se pojavljuju u udžbenicima za određeni nivo učenja opravdani i koliko se pažnje posvećuje njihovom učenju. S tim ciljem ćemo predstaviti leksiku u udžbeniku Učimo srpski 2 (2023), predviđenom za A2 i B1 nivo učenja. Tematska organizacija ovog udžbenika i bogatstvo rečnika i vežbi pružaju mogućnost da se istraži pristup sinonimiji u nastavi srpskog kao stranog jezika. Analiziraćemo i udžbenik Učimo srpski 1 (2020), kako bismo dali uvid u sinonimne lekseme na samom početku nastave srpskog kao stranog jezika.*

Ključne reči: *leksika, sinonimija, udžbenici, srpski kao strani jezik.*