

Pačesová, Jaroslava

Parts of speech

In: Pačesová, Jaroslava. *The development of vocabulary in the child*. Vyd. 1. Brno: Universita J.E. Purkyně, 1968, pp. 114-116

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/119983>

Access Date: 24. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

PARTS OF SPEECH

What follows will consist of a brief outline indicating which of the word-categories are preferred by the child and which are still ignored by him in the second stage of his speech development.

For comparison, a survey of the existing word-categories as found in the first-fifty-word period is given showing their order of frequency: interjections (56.9%), substantives (23.8%), verbs (7.2%), particles (7.2%), adverb (2.8%), adjectives (1.4%), and pronouns (0.4%).

The same word-categories appear in the second developmental stage: their order of frequency, however, differs. The highest ratio relates now to substantives (37.4%), while the interjections come second, accounting for 36.1%. Verbs are the next frequent category. Their 13.1% represent almost twice as frequent distribution compared to the previous stage. There follow the pronouns (5.3%), particles (3.4%), adjectives (2.6%) and adverbs (2.1%).

As in the first-fifty-word period, so too in the first-one-hundred-word period the numerals, prepositions and conjunctions are absent from the child's vocabulary.

Interjections, especially those of onomatopoeic origin, are in most instances preserved unchanged in the form they have acquired in the previous stage. Some of them, however, have accepted suffixes and have gone over to the other word-categories. The former interjections and the forms derived from them do exist as parallels in the child's vocabulary at this developmental stage. A few examples follow for illustration:

the interjection	[bak]	—	the adjective	[bakani:]	(ugly)
the interjection	[ham]	—	the verbal form	[hama:m]	(I eat)
the interjection	[hu:]	—	the verbal form	[hu:ka:m]	(I am making noise)
the interjection	[čiči:]	—	the substantive	[či:ča]	(a cat)
the interjection	[pipi]	—	the substantive	[pipuška]	(a hen).

The interjectional form [haf] has been used so far in the function of an appellative (*a dog*) and in the function of a verb (*to bark*) as well. The proper name of a dog, *Asta*, however, enters newly into the child's vocabulary and is equipped with the function of designating any dog the boy meets. The interjection [haf] still fulfils the function of a verb.

As in the previous stage, so too in the present one, the substantives have above all the function of assigning names to those objects which represent the child's needs and interests. Most of them are in the nominative form. Not exceptional are, however, other cases; their endings are, as a rule, identical with those the child hears in his

linguistic environment. The prepositional constructions are, nevertheless, ignored by him as yet. As for number, the child has both singular and plural forms in his vocabulary. There are, however, no data which would illustrate his awareness of the plural endings as the two items of the pair are often used interchangeably. On the other hand, the child seems to be aware of *-ček*, *-čka*, *-čko* as diminutive suffixes.

As before, the verbs are mostly used in their infinitive form, which is either positive or negative. This quality is expressed by means of the positive or negative particles *ano* (yes) or *ne* (no) which are added in postposition. In inflected forms, however, the negative form has the correct realization as compared to Standard Czech, cf. [*mema:*] *nemá*, [*mema:mé*] *nemáme*, [*nepe-ši:*] *neprší*.—The first person plural, both in present and preterite, is another frequent form in verbs (the auxiliary verb *jsme* which is obligatory in the preterite, is however ignored by the child, cf. [*papali*] with the Standard Czech [*papali jsme*]). The first person singular fluctuates with the third person, the latter being more frequent. This is due to the fact that the child—in speaking of himself—still prefers the construction [*jiži:ček papa:*] to [*papa:m*].

With adjectives, the nursery form *malá* *malá* is preserved in the imperfect realization [*maja: maja:*]. The same adjective, however, has found its distribution in other situations and has acquired the attributive function. In such cases the more refined realizations viz. [*mala:*, *mal'a:*, *majinta:*] appear (the last of the forms represents the diminutive form).—As to gender, most of the adjectives have feminine endings,

indicating perhaps that the persons in the child's environment were foremost women. As for the masculine and neutral gender, they appear with the child too, having however, an identical ending, cf. [*bakani: jiži:ček*] *bakany Jiriček* and [*bi:ško napapani:*] *napapané břiško*. Two explanations might be offered here: either the child imitates the Colloquial Czech which has the same ending in neutral gender as compared to Standard Czech masculine ending; or he is not yet aware of the existence of the three genders in his mother tongue and the forms are the more or less precise imitations of the models given him for imitating.

Word-Categories	
2.1 %	adverbs
2.6 %	adjectives
3.4 %	particles
5.3 %	pronouns
13.1 %	verbs
36.1 %	interjections
37.4 %	substantives

Figure 131

We have mentioned in another place that the attempts to express the question in a grammatical way were noticed in the child at this stage of speech development. The thorough analysis of the various types of questions as they appear gradually in children in their speech development may be found in T. Cazacu's study cf. *Dialogul*, § 3.7.2. In accordance with her findings we can say that the child in his first developmental stages uses primarily those questions which connote a person or thing in the answer, i.e. *kdo to je* (who is it) and *co to je* (what is it). Only later on he starts using those questions which relate to place, time, manner and cause.