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INDIVIDUAL VARIATIONS IN VERBAL DEVELOPMENT: BULGARIA, 21th CENTURY

Abstract

This article studies the individual variations in the acquisition of Bulgarian by young monolingual children aged 1–3 years. The main topic of interest are the differences in the rate of acquisition according to which children are classified as early vs. late speakers. Empirical data from two sources are taken into account: the Standards for Early Children Development (from birth to 3;0) worked out and evaluated in the middle of the 20th century by V. Manova-Tomova and her collaborates, and the 21st century Standards elaborated by an interdisciplinary academic team under the leadership of M. Atanasova-Trifonova. The author discusses the rate of acquisition presented in these two sources of data trying to answer the question whether the differences found are due to the methodology of data gathering and evaluation, or they reflect important changes in children's environment.

Key words: language acquisition, individual variations in rate and style of acquisition, early vs. late talkers, Bulgarian Standards for Early Children Development (from birth to 3;0)