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TENSE-ASPECT ABSTRACTION IN RUSSIAN-SPEAKING CHILDREN IN THE EARLY STAGES OF NATIVE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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TENSE-ASPECT ABSTRACTION IN RUSSIAN-SPEAKING CHILDREN IN THE EARLY STAGES OF NATIVE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Children, while acquiring their native language, move from linking all their utterances to the “here and now” to more abstract speech structures. The categorical situation reflected in children’s speech develops as they gain more speech experience and as their language system and communicative competencies become established. The transition from the semantics of temporal localization to the semantics of temporal non-localization is gradual. The acquisition of the category of personal attribution and the gradual evolution of understanding of its deictic nature, which happens in parallel with the formation of the meaning of iterativeness, contributes to the detailization of the types of the latter. The individual strategies of acquiring a language demonstrated by different children has an influence on the specific timing of the learning and internalizing of tense-aspect category and on the level of a child’s progress in acquiring new levels of semantics of a language.

Key Words: language acquisition, native language, temporal non-localization, tense, aspect, grammar, semantics
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1. Introduction and background

Children, while acquiring their native language, move from linking all their utterances to the “here and now” to more abstract speech structures. The categorical situation reflected in children’s speech develops as they gain more speech experience and as the language system and communicative competencies become established.

Children’s early utterances relate only to the situation at the moment of speech and are inevitably linked to the fragment of reality observed. This relates to both holophrases:

Сёньцук! [*S'yontsik!*] ‘the sun’ (Zhenya G., running into a room filled with the morning sun, 1.08.23),

and early two-word structures:

Кисень пецька [*Kisin'pets'ka*] ‘*kisel (fruit drink) on the stove*’, (Zhenya G., 1.09.08);
Дядя бадя [*dyadya badya*], ‘*uncle water*’ (about a puddle formed around boots coming into the house after a walk in the snow, Zhenya G., 1.09.08),

and the first elliptical variants of larger syntactic constructions, which often correspond to truncated expanded sentences produced by adults

Сипаць хацю <лучину> [*sipats' hatsyu*] <luchinu> ‘I want to split wood for kindling’, (Zhenya G., 1.10.04).

The gradual increase in the complexity of a child’s cognitive and linguistic systems also facilitates the process of abstraction from the initial obligatory perception. This universal ontogenetic transition from the concrete to the abstract covers all semantic areas and is reflected in the grammar. This development in the speech of Russian-speaking children is illustrated by the stages through which the tense-aspect system develops.

Children’s first utterances reflect a situation that is fixed in time, attached to a certain point or interval on an imaginary time axis. In summary, the early stage of development of the tense-aspect system can be described as follows²:

1) A child uses units of baby talk:

ням-ням [*nyat-nyat*] ‘*yum-yum*’,
кап-кап [*kap-kap*] (about water drops falling),

with vocalizations personal to them:

бруа /*brua*/ meaning ‘to walk’, whereas the actual word is [*gulyat*’]

and unanalyzed verb forms (those that do not become part of grammatical oppositions and are not “created” by the child), which formally coincide with units of adult language or elements of such units with forms of the imperative (*дай* [*dai*] ‘give’),

² This aspect of ontogenetic development of Russian grammar has been discussed in the works of Gvozdev [1949], Pupynin [1996, 1998], Gagarina [2001] and Knyazev [2001]. See also [Akhapkina 2007a, b, c, d and e].

infinitive (*дать* [dat'] 'to give') and perfective past tense verbs (*на* [pa] formed from 'упало' [upala] <something> 'fell down').

At this stage two illocutionary objectives are met, the directive³ and the assertive, with the former being more dominant.

2) The co-existence of two grammatical forms is observed conveying the meaning of the assertion. The present tense of imperfective verbs in the sense of a one-off observed action:

чайник кипит [chainik kipit] 'the kettle is boiling',
снег сыплет [sneg syplit] 'the snow is falling')

and the form of the past tense of perfective verbs in a "quasi-perfective" sense,

сломал [slamal] 'I have broken <something>' (says the subject, while extending a piece of a box he has just torn off);
бумажка моя упала [bumashka maya upala] 'my little piece of paper has fallen down';
Аня музыку включила [Аnya muzyku fklyuchila] 'Anya has turned on the music'.

as in these utterances the time period between the result of an action and its verbal representation is close to zero. In fact, both forms reflect a "here and now" situation⁴;

3) A semantic split of the first two time-aspect forms occurs and a clear perfective meaning of perfective verb forms is observed

повесил папа [pavesil papa] 'Daddy has hung' (referring to a wall clock),

the meaning of an extended present tense in a verb form of the imperfective aspect,

шапка висит [shapka visit] 'the hat is hanging'

and later (after the third tense-aspect form begins to be used) this process continues and the above forms gain new meanings: the present tense of a continuous action,

дерево растёт [deriva rastyot] 'the tree is growing'

and in the case of some children, the aorist past of an imperfective verb,

подул [radul] 'blew/started to blow',
кинул [kinul] 'threw'.

The result of an action in such usage is not a fact that has taken place before the moment of speech, nor is it relevant for the situation, unlike the forms of "quasi-perfective" and perfective usage.

³ In the rest of this discussion we shall neither look into the directive component nor study modal utterances without a formal temporal characteristic.

⁴ In order to describe the meaning of the second form Knyazev suggests past reporting tense as a tense analogous to present reporting tense [Knyazev 2001: 349].

4) The third aspect-tense form appears for some children with a past-tense form of an imperfective verb with the meaning of a specific one-off action

ходил по воде [khadil pa vade] 'he walked on water',

where others will use the future form of a perfective verb with the meaning of intention

возьму [vaz'mu] 'I will take'.

5) A semantic split of the third form is observed, a meaning of the past denoting general facts or of future forecasting is developed

ездил дядя на машинке [yezdil dyadya na mashinki] 'a man was driving around in a car' (as a description of a cartoon movie by the actions of its main character) or of future forecasting (упадет солдатик [upadyot saldatik] 'the tin soldier will fall down').

6) The fourth and fifth tense-aspect forms are added thereby symmetrically filling the gaps of the previous stage and the second future form of an imperfective verb first by stressing the modal component of the meaning (primarily of intention or warning), which is typical for 1st person forms and then in the actual forecasting meaning, which is typical for 3rd person forms

*копать буду [kapat' budu] 'I will dig',
будет плакать [budit plakat'] 'he/she will cry'.*

This is how the opposition of past, present and future tenses and the notion of continuity of an action develop in children's speech. Both these conditions guarantee the possibility that the speech may be detached from the description of a situation taking place here and now.

The next stage of development of tense-aspect semantics and grammar is the idea of a re-current action, of an action that is not "attached" to any particular fragments on the time axis. This recurrence of action in adult speech may have;

1) a quantum nature within the situation being observed if a certain (arbitrary) interval is set between the quanta⁵ for example in the meaning of a simple recurrent action:

мяч прыгает [myach prygayit] 'the ball bounces' (said by a child, who is bouncing a small ball repeatedly);

2) usuality (meanings of something being habitual or typical):

*<у нас> бабушка цветочки поливает [<u nas> babushka tsvitochki palivayit] '<in our house> Grandma waters the plants' (about a typical chore),
совсем не брякает [safsem ni bryakayit] 'doesn't clank at all' (referring to an alarm clock that cannot ring);*

3) or atemporality,

⁵ The types of interval have been described by Smirnov [1992, 1996, 2000].

корова мычит [karova mychit] 'a cow moos' (about the ability of an animal to produce a certain type of sound).

The typology of utterances lacking temporal localization in the Russian language has been developed in detail by Smirnov [1987, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003], who has expanded and added further details to the ideas of Bondarko [1971, 1999, 2001, 2002].

The children's first utterances reflecting an atemporal situation are still extremely concrete. The examples include expressions of the meaning of concrete-subject usuality,

папа читает книги много-много [papa chitayit knigi mnoga-mnoga] 'daddy reads books many-many'

or a characteristic based on the typical function of the perceived object,

<это то, чем> циплют сахар [<eta to, chem> shchiplyut sakhar] '<this is what they use> to cut sugar' (about a sugar cutter).

Let us look at what verbs are the first to be used in the meaning of a temporally non-localized action and what types of temporal non-localization are acquired at the early stages of speech ontogenesis (from two⁶ to three⁷ years) by Russian-speaking children.

2. Data

The research focuses on analyzing data from parental journals, which included the records of speech from 12 children: Anya S., Yegor A., Zhenya G., Maxim E., Nadya S., Natasha Zh., Olya M., Sasha E., Sasha S., Sonya Yu., Vitya O. and Seryozha A., and the audio recordings of one child's speech (Varya P.); these were transcribed and encoded in the system CHILDES (<http://childes.psy.cmu.edu/>).

Some of the journals we used were sporadic, some, more regular and long-term (the latter is true for records in respect of Zhenya G., Anya S., Vitya O. and Seryozha A.). In the case of long-term observation the material was recorded relatively regularly. All the journals were kept by one adult participant either with a degree in language and literature or teaching, or students of these subjects (in most cases, the mother of the child whose utterances are recorded). We analyzed utterances with the semantics of temporal non-localization of action, identified by continuous sampling from the corpus.

Given that the journals were written by parents of young children, there is no guarantee that all, or indeed first, usages were recorded. In addition, in some situations an accurate interpretation of the tense-aspect side of an utterance is hindered not only by the articulation of the child but also by the scarcity of comments written by the adult keeping the journal.

Table 1 below includes the approximate age of the children at the time when the first utterances with the semantics of temporal non-localization of action were observed in their speech.

⁶ In the case of subjects who started to speak early.

⁷ In the case of subjects who started to speak later than usual.

Table 1 Age at which temporal non-localization semantics was first observed in speech⁸

Subject	Age
Anya S.	2.01
Yegor A.	2.02/2.03
Zhenya G.	2.01/2.02
Maxim E.	1.09/1.10
Nadya S.	2.04/2.05
Natasha Zh.	2.07/2.08
Olya M.	2.01/2.02
Sasha Ye.	2.01/2.02
Sasha S.	1.09/1.10
Sonya Yu.	1.10
Vitya O.	2.05
Varya P.	1.07
Serezha A.	1.08/1.09

3. Verbs used in utterances with the meaning of temporal non-localization

In Table 2, we show the full list of verbs used in utterances with the meaning of temporal non-localization at the initial stage of internalization of such a meaning (eighteen months to the early months of the third year; for the context of utterances see [Akhapkina 2007a]). We deliberately excluded from the data utterances with the forms of past-tense and future-tense verbs due to the small number of such instances (in total, 7 utterances in the data of the 13 subjects recorded during the whole period studied).

Table 2 Verbs used in utterances with the semantics of temporal non-localization

Subject	Verbs		
	Simple recurrence	Usuality	Atemporality
Anya S.		терять [tiryat'] – 'to lose', гулять [gulyat'] – 'to go for a walk', глотать [glatat'] – 'to swallow', целовать [tsilavat'] – 'to kiss', биться [bitsa] – 'to fight / to beat oneself against something'	говорить [gavarit'] – 'to speak'
Yegor A.	идти [itti] – 'to go, walk in one direction', давать [davat'] – 'to give', брать [brat'] – 'to take', покупать [pakupat'] – 'to buy (as a process or multiple times)'	входить [fhadit'] – 'to come in', выходить [vykhadit'] – 'to go out', покупать [pakupat'] – 'to buy (as a process or multiple times)', бывать [byvat'] – 'to be somewhere / happen from time to time, to exist', кусаться [kusatsa] – 'to bite (multiple times) or to have the ability / propensity to bite'	
Zhenya G.	перевертывать [pirivertyvat'] – 'to turn over (as a process or multiple times)', кусать [kusat'] – 'to bite (as a process or multiple times)', смотреть [smatret'] –	пить [pit'] – 'to drink' (as a process or multiple times), чистить [chistit'] – 'to clean (as a process or multiple times)', класть [klast'] – 'to put (as a process or multiple times)', кричать [krichat'] – 'to shout (as a process or multiple times)',	щипать [shshipat'] – 'to pluck (as a process or multiple times)', класть [klast'] – 'to put (as a process or multiple times)'

⁸ The indication of age reads as follows: Y.MM.DD, e.g., 1.08.22 means that the child's age is 1 year 8 months and 22 days.

	‘to look’	кусаться [kusatsa] – ‘to bite (as a process or multiple times), втыкать [ftykat’] – ‘to stick something (as a process or multiple times), плевать [plivatsa] – ‘to spit (as a process or multiple times), отворяться [atvaryatsa] – ‘to open / be opened (as a process or multiple times)’	
Maxim Ye.			мычать [mychat’] – ‘to moo (as a process or multiple times)’
Nadya S.		лечить [lichit’] – ‘to treat / cure (as a process or multiple times)’	
Natasha Zh.		ходить [hadit’] – ‘to walk around / to walk/ go somewhere several times’, учить [uchit’] – ‘to teach’, включать [fklyuchat’] – ‘to turn something on (as a process or multiple times), шуметь [shumet’] – ‘to make a noise / be noisy’, петь [pet’] – ‘to sing’, гореть [garet’] – ‘to burn (as a process or multiple times), ехать [yekhat’] – ‘to go (by transport), described as a continuous process’	
Olya M.	сверкать [sverkat’] – ‘to shine, flash’	кушать [kushit’] – ‘to eat (as a process or multiple times), давать [davat’] – ‘to give (as a process or multiple times), пить [pit’] – ‘to drink (as a process or multiple times), ползти [palsti] – ‘to crawl (as a continuous process), брякать [bryakat’] – ‘to clank (multiple times), писать [pisat’] – ‘to write (as a process or multiple times), рисовать [risavat’] – ‘to draw (as a process or multiple times), кусать [kusat’] – ‘to bite (as a process or multiple times)’	
Sasha Ye.		кушать [kushat’] – ‘to eat (as a process or multiple times), пить [pit’] – ‘to drink (as a process or multiple times)’	
Sasha S.		ехать [yekhat’] – ‘to go (by transport), described as a continuous process’, крутиться [krutitsa] – ‘to turn around’(as a process or multiple times)’	каркать [karkat’] – ‘to squawk (multiple times)’
Sonya Yu.	бить [bit’] – ‘to hit’, ложиться [lazhitsa] – ‘to lie down’	гулять [gulyat’] – ‘to go for a walk’ (as a recreational activity), приходить [prkihadit’] – ‘to come / arrive (as a process or multiple times), петь [pet’] – ‘to sing’, мыться [mytsa] – ‘to wash (oneself)	прыгать [prygat’] – ‘to jump (multiple times), кивать [kivat’] – ‘to nod (as a process or multiple times)’
Vitya O.		пить [pit’] – ‘to drink (as a process or multiple times), открываться [atkryvatsa] – to open (itself) (as a process or multiple times), стрелять [strilyat’] – ‘to shoot (multiple times)’	

Serezha A.	<p>прыгать [prygat'] – 'to jump (multiple times), гонять [ganyat'] – 'to chase (multiple times, or to chase around)', наступать [nastupat'] – 'to step on something., gradually or multiple times', ломать [lamat'] – 'break (as a process or multiple times), делать [delat'] – 'to do' (to be in the process of doing or to do multiple times', падать, [padat'] – 'to fall' (in the process or multiple times, вытирать [vytirat'] – 'to wipe' (in the process or multiple times)</p>	<p>кататься [katatsa] – 'to roll along / ride (multiple times)', гонять [ganyat'] – 'to chase around', мыть [myt'] – 'to wash (as a process or multiple times)', мыться [mytsa] – 'to wash (oneself), поливать [palivat'] – 'to water something (as a process or multiple times)', играть [igrat'] – 'to play (as a process or multiple times)', здороваться [zdarovatsa] – 'to greet (as a process or multiple times)', говорить [gavarit'] – 'to speak / talk (as a process or multiple times), отбивать [atbivat'] – 'to kick something back (as a process or multiple times)', делать [delat'] – 'to do (as a process or multiple times)', ползать [polzat'] – 'to crawl (around or multiple times), бухаться [bukhatsa] – 'to fall / slide down (as a process or multiple times)', помогать [pamagat'] – 'to help' (as a process or multiple times)', сидеть [sidet'] – 'to sit / be in a sitting position/seated, плакать [plakat'] – 'to weep (as a process or multiple times)', читать [chitat'] – 'to read (as a process or multiple times)', работать [rabotat'] – 'to work (as a process or multiple times)', называть [nazyvat'] – 'to name / call (as a process or multiple times)', запивать [zapivat'] – 'to drink something with food (as a process or multiple times)', ломать [lamat'] – 'to break (as a process or multiple times)', пускать [puskat'] – 'to let in / to allow to go (as a process or multiple times)', спать [spat'] – to sleep, включать [fklyuchat'] – 'to turn something on (as a process or multiple times)', литься [litsa] – 'to flow / run (about liquids', бывать [byvat'] – 'to be somewhere / happen from time to time, to exist', снимать [snimat'] – 'to take something off (as a process or multiple times), падать [padat'] – to fall (as a process or multiple times', заколачивать [zakalachivat'] – 'to hammer something in (as a process or multiple times), пропускать [prapuskat'] – 'to let somebody or something pass / give way (as a process or multiple times)', возить [vazit'] – 'to drive / bring by transport something or somebody (multiple times), есть [yest'] – 'to eat (as a process or multiple times)', заниматься [zanimatsa] – 'to study (as a process)',</p>	<p>капать [kapat'] – 'to spill drops of smth', стекает [stikat'] – 'to flow down'</p>
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		<p>ходить [hadit'] – ‘to walk around / to walk/ go somewhere several times’, чинить [chinit'] – ‘to fix something (as a process or multiple times)’, лаять [layit'] – ‘to bark (multiple times), петь [pet'] – ‘to sing’</p>	
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The resulting corpus is dominated by verbs with the semantics of *action* and *activity*. These words convey the idea of movement, of a change of a person’s or an object’s position in space (moving from one point to another or being positioned in a certain place in space), a change of owner (including loss of owner), a change in the person’s or the object’s state (including creation or destruction of, or other impact on the object), causing actions, sounds or speech to be produced by a person or animal, physiological actions, intellectual activity, social activity or perception. There was a very small number of words recorded with the semantics of *being, state or quality*: existence, situation in space or a characteristic of an object. The corpus does not include any words with the semantics of *attitude*.

Some of the words recorded have features that, to a certain extent, limit their use in the situation of a concrete one-off continued observed action. Linguistic norms do not allow for these words to be combined with the temporal indicator “now” (for example, it is impossible to answer the question, “What are you doing now?” using these verbs). Therefore, outside of unusual situations, such as the deliberate demonstration of an action for teaching purposes, utterances like

- *я <сейчас> теряю N [ya siychas tirayau N] ‘I am now losing N (where N is a concrete object),
- *я <сейчас> здороваюсь [ya siychhas zdarovayus'] ‘I am <now> saying hello’ (without a clarification as to whom),
- *я <сейчас> прихожу [ya siychas prihozhu] ‘I am <now> arriving’,
- *я <сейчас> кусаюсь [ya siychas kusayus'] ‘I am now biting’ are grammatically disallowed; it appears that an utterance
- *я <сейчас> бываю (где-либо) [ya <siychas> byvayu (gde-libo)] – ‘I now from time to time am (at a certain place)

is absolutely grammatically impossible. The utterance я падаю [ya padayu] ‘I am falling’ in the situation of action actualization means “I am about to fall” and represents a temporal transposition (use of present tense in the meaning of future tense). Similarly, the utterance я

сейчас называю N [*ya siychas nazuyayu N*] ‘I am now naming N’ is understood as ‘after this I will name N’.

At the same time, the actions denoted by these verbs are not continuous, which makes it impossible to use them in the meaning of a present expanded tense or a present tense of permanent action. The nature of the denoted types of action is discrete:

терять [*tiryat*] – ‘lose’,
здороваться [*zdarovatsa*] – ‘say hello’,
приходить [*prikhadit*] – ‘arrive’,
кусаться [*kusatsa*] – ‘bite (multiple times)’,
падать [*padat*] – ‘fall’,
называть [*nazyvat*] – ‘name/call’.

And, conversely, it is absolutely natural to repeat these actions from time to time, either sometimes or often. Utterances such as

я постоянно теряю N [*ya pastayanna tiryayu N*] – ‘I always lose N’

fall exactly into the category of temporal non-localization; they belong to the sphere of concrete-subject usuality.

Therefore, it can be seen that there are a number of words in the corpus whose meaning provokes use in a temporally non-localized utterance.

There are other factors that contribute to expressing the semantics of temporal non-localization. The first is recurrence and multi-directionality of the action denoted by verbs.

возить [*vazit*] – ‘drive, carry by transport, around or several times’ and not
везти [*visti*] – ‘drive, carry by transport once or in one direction’;

гонять [*ganyat*] – ‘chase / chase out multiple times’, and not
гнать [*gnat*] – ‘chase out (in one direction)’;

ходить [*khadit*] – ‘walk multiple times or in multiple directions’, and not
идти [*itti*] – ‘go, walk in one direction’, (even though the verb *идти* [*itti*] has also been observed in temporally non-localized contexts);

кататься [*katatsa*] – ‘roll along multiple times or in multiple directions’ and not
катиться [*katitsa*] – ‘roll along in one direction’;

ползать [*polzat*] – ‘crawl multiple times or in multiple directions’, and not
ползти [*palsti*] – ‘crawl in one direction’, (although the verb *ползти* [*palsti*] ‘crawl in one direction’ has also been observed in temporally non-localized contexts).

The second of these factors is suffixation with *-ва-* [*-va-*]

бывать [*byvat*] ‘to visit / be / happen from time to time / to have the ability to happen/take place’.

In addition to the morphological characteristics of verbs, other factors play a role such as the context (syntax of the sentence, the meaning of the actants and circumstants) and the type of referent.

The recurrence of an action is stressed by the use of non-singular actants (multiple subjects, objects or instruments, by the repetition of the verb, by an indicator of reiteration,

опять [aryat] 'again',
все время [fsyo vremya] 'all the time',

or by action intensifiers

понемножку [panimnoshku] 'gradually, little by little'.

The notion of temporal non-localization in the absence of a perceptual situation may not be marked by any special indicators and in such cases we used the comments written by the adults in the children's speech journals as the basis for the interpretation.

4. Connection between early utterances with the semantics of temporal non-localization and the situation “here and now”

The terminological apparatus used for the analysis of children's speech has been developed by Smirnov [1987, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2003].

Although in general the development of tense-aspect semantics in children is from the specific to the general and from the concrete to the abstract, the semantics of simple recurrence is observed in the ontogenesis at a somewhat later stage and is encountered less often than the concrete subject usability and qualitative typicality of an action or state. It would seem that, theoretically, repeated actions as part of an episode evolving in time would be more similar to the “here and now” situation than actions and characteristics of people and objects that are usual and typical (not observed during the time of speech). However, in this case, the quality of being concrete, singular and the extent of closeness between the referent and the speaker (as a family relation or as a friend) appears to be a more important factor than the perception of the situation (the speaker being able to observe a repeated action as a part of the episode, or even being involved in the action).

4.1. Usuality (habituality and typicality of an action, including the qualitative characteristic of potential ability)

Utterances with the sense of usuality can be categorized as follows:

1. Utterances with a perceptually actualized concrete participant of a situation. In this group of utterances we see the maximum degree of connection with the situation “here and now”, which is due to the fact that the subject, the object, the instrument, the means of the action, or any other participant of the situation are in the speaker's field of vision. This group also includes utterances with an actualized locus indicator (a child talks about a place he or she sees at the moment of speech and denotes it by such words as

тут [tut] 'here',
здесь [zdes'] 'here',

там [tam] 'there'.

This category consists of the following subcategories:

A. The agent referent is actualized, i.e., somebody or something carrying out the action is in the child's field of vision.

In utterances of this kind (both negative and positive), firstly, there may be an object characterized on the basis of its ability or inability to perform the action in question:

*не писет [ne pisit] 'does not write',
не исует [ne isuyit] 'does not draw' (said about pens or pencils) (Olya M., 1.09.02);
машина не едет, она сломалась, колёсики не крутятся, а у поезда крутятся колёсики
[mashina ne yedit, ona slamalas', kalyosiki ni krutyatsa, a u poyizda krutyatsa
kalyosiki] 'the car doesn't go, it's broken, the wheels don't turn, but the train's wheels turn'
(Sasha S., 1.11.06);
никак не бькает [nikak ni byakayot] 'doesn't clank' (about an alarm clock that does not
ring) (Olya M., 2.01.28);
ни кусайица, он смирный [ni kusayitsa, on smirnyi] 'doesn't bite, he is docile' (about a
sugar cutter) (Zhenya G., 2.06.09),
енот поёт, собака поёт [yivot payot, sabaka pyot] 'the raccoon sings, the dog sings'
(about "singing" toys that are at the time of speech turned off) (Seryozha A., 1.08.00);
пап, эта дверь сама атваряица [papa, eta dver' sama atvaryaitsa] 'Daddy, this door
opens by itself' (Zhenya G., 2.08.01),
тикляние, бьются [tiklyaniye, byutsa] '<they are> made of glass, they break' (about
Christmas tree decorations) (Anya S., 2.02.02),
все время надает [fse vremya padayit] 'always falls down' (in a situation where a small
bottle fell down; it does fall down often, but in this episode it happened for the first time)
(Seryozha A. 1.11.14).*

Secondly, such utterances may include a characteristic of an object by a typical action associated with it (and in such case not the potential, but the proper meaning is actualized as part of the semantic area of typical usuality⁹):

*это эвакуатор, возит машинки в ремонт [eta evakuator, vozit mashinki v rimont] 'this
is a tow truck, it takes cars away to be repaired' (said when the child saw an empty tow
truck, Seryozha A., 1.11.10).*

B. The referent of instrument/means of performing an action is actualized (but often is not explicit since it is in the field of vision of both speaker and listener):

*еть аху сунют [yet' akhu sipyut] '<this is> what they cut sugar <with>' (about a sugar
cutter) (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.02.28);
сун-та кладут [sup-ta kladut] 'they pour soup' (about a soup ladle) (Zhenya Gvozdev,
2.02.28);
это я водой играю [eta ya vadoy igrayu] 'with this I play with water' (said in a situation
where the mother ladles fruit drink with a small ladle, which the boy normally uses for
pouring water from one bowl to another) (Seryozha A., 1.11.11);
Вася запивает сухарики [Vasya zapivayit sukhariki] 'Vasya (the cat) drinks with his dry*

⁹ Regarding the distinction between typicality and habituality see Smirnov [1987].

food' (Seryozha A., 1.10.13) (said when he saw the cat's water bowl full of water, while the cat was not around, i.e. in the sense "usually"),

это се моя адезьда, Анька в нем гуляет [eto vsyo maya adez'da, An'ka v nyom gulyayet] 'these are all my clothes, An'ka goes for a walk in them' (said when opening a closet with outdoor clothes) (Anya S., 2.04.10),

Лена цисьтит ноги сеткай [Lena tsis'tit nogi syotkay] – 'Lena cleans her feet with a brush' (said when Lena was away, but Zhenya had the shoe brush in his hand) (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.06.02).

C. The patient referent is actualized, that is, in the speaker's field of vision there is an object to which the action is directed:

папа читает книги много много [papa chitayit knigi mnoga-mnoga] 'Daddy reads books many-many' (said looking at book shelves) (Seryozha A., 1.08.26),

это пикап, папа называет хэйчбэк [eta pikap, papa nazyvayit heychbek] 'this is a pickup, Daddy calls hatchback (saw a car without a boot, his grandmother calls such cars "pickups")' (Seryozha A., 1.10.05);

цветы поливает бабушка, мама не поливает [tsvity palivayit babushka, mama ni palivayit] – 'Grandma waters the plants, not Mummy' (the grandmother is away, at the family's country house, A¹⁰ is looking through the window at the plants on the balcony) (Seryozha A., 1.10.16),

мама ломает, я опять делаю, мама опять ломает [mama lamayit, ya aryat' delayu, mama aryat' lamayit] 'Mummy breaks it up, I do it again, Mummy breaks it up again' (about a jigsaw puzzle, at the time of speech the mother was not breaking up the puzzle) (Seryozha A., 1.10.27),

нам такую садике дают [nam takuyu sadiki dayut] 'they give us this kind in the kindergarten' (about buckwheat porridge) (Olya M., 2.05.21),

рази фь кисель кладут курачьки [razi f kisel' kladut kurachki] 'do they put chicken in kisel (a fruit drink)' (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.09.00),

вот эдакие красныи пёрышки фтыкают ф шляпу [vot edakii krasnyi pyoryshki ftykayut fshlyapu] 'they stick this kind of red feathers into hats' (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.08.03),

она пьёт с вареньийй [ana pyot s varenyiy] – 'she drinks (tea) with jam' (said while drinking tea, the woman mentioned was not there at the time) (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.05.19).

D. The locus is actualized, that is, the child sees the place of the action he or she describes, but at the moment of speech such action is not actually taking place:

тут я мою посуду [tut ya moyu pasudu] 'I wash the dishes here' (the washing bowl is on a bed table) (Seryozha A., 1.10.00),

я тут играю [ya tut igrayu] 'I play here' (chasing the grandmother from the armchair where she was drinking tea; before that Seryozha was playing in the room and came to the kitchen to get some biscuits; he was not going to play in the kitchen) (Seryozha A., 1.10.15),

я там сижу [ya tam sizhu] 'I sit there' (he is trying to climb up to the children's chair where he usually sits) (Seryozha A., 1.11.12),

на столе не надо играть, там мама работает с тёмеёй [na 'stoli ni nada igrat', tam mama rabotayit s tyotiy] 'we shouldn't play at the desk, Mummy works with the lady there' (meaning that his mother gives consultations to students at the desk) (this was said when

¹⁰ In a number of the examples that follow A. means an adult and C. a child.

he saw his toy dishes on the desk) (Seryozha A., 1.09.28),
где мама спит, ты чего [gde mama spit, ty chivo] ‘where Mummy sleeps, what’s wrong with you?’ (he “scolds” a piece of a puzzle that fell onto the sofa; his mother usually sleeps on this sofa; however, at the moment of speech she is sitting on a chair) (Seryozha A., 1.11.06),
отойди, тут мама сидит [ataidi, tut mama sidit] ‘move over, Mummy sits here’ (does not let the grandmother sit down on the chair where his mother usually sits; at the time of speech the chair is empty) (Seryozha A., 1.11.07),
это туда льётся вода [eta tuda l’yotsa vada] ‘water runs down there’ (points to the drain in the bath; at that time the water is not running and the bath is empty) (Seryozha A., 1.10.12),
на парковке бывает «джип», и «тайота», и «опель», и «тайота» [na parkovki byuyit jip i tayota, i opel, i tayota] in the car park sometimes there is a Jeep, a Toyota, and an Opel, and a Toyota’ (said while he sat on his mother’s lap looking out of the window from which he could not see the car park) (Seryozha A., 1.11.08),
здесь люди едят [zdes’ lyudi yidyat] ‘people eat here’ (the grandmother spilled some milk on the table and Seryozha tells her what he is usually told when he tries to put his feet on the table) (Seryozha A., 1.10.05),
здесь люди занимаются [zdes’ lyudi zanimayutsa] ‘people study here’ (about his mother’s students; he built this sentence based on what he hears often: “people eat here”) (Seryozha A., 1.10.07),
тут люди сидят [tut lyudi sidyat] ‘people sit here’ (at an empty bench he was told many times not to walk on) (Seryozha A., 1.10.21),
тут машины ходят [tut mashiny hodyat] ‘cars go along here’ (about a road that was empty at the time of speech) (Seryozha A., 1.10.21),
Ася гуляет у там далеко [Asya gulyayit u tam daliko] ‘Asya goes for walks there, far from here’ (talking about going for a long walk) (Sonya Yu., 1.10.18),
Мышка там живет, входит и выходит и покупает сёк. Там выходит, булку покупает в магазине, сёк покупает в магазине [Myshka tam zhivyot, fkhodit i vykhodit i rakupayit syok. Tam vykhodit, bul’ku rakupayit v magazini, syok rakupayit v magazine] ‘A mouse lives there, he comes in and goes out and buys juice. He goes out there, buys a loaf of bread in the shop, buys juice in the shop’ (under a stool in the kitchen there is an imaginary mouse hole, the child tells his mother about a game/story about the mouse’s life) (Yegor A., 2.02.27).

2. Utterances with a perceptually non-actualized participant of the situation. In such cases the connection with the situation “here and now” is significantly weakened.

A) If there is a visual association, based on similarity or of a metonymic nature:

как дядя Толя (сосед), у дяди Толи две собаки, они лают [kak dyadya Tolya, u dyadi Toli dve sabaki, ani layut] ‘like uncle Tolya (neighbour), uncle Tolya has two dogs, they bark’ (said when he saw an unknown man with a dog) (Seryozha A., 1.10.29);
они едят булку [ani yidyat bulku] ‘they eat bread’ (about a picture showing bullfinches perched on a branch but not pecking on anything; in the park, where S. walks people often feed ducks and pigeons with bread) (Seryozha A., 1.11.11);
плохой кот, (на) улице гуляет (бездомный), (укусил/поцарапал через) варежку [plakhoy kot, <na> ulitse gulyait, <ukusil / patsarapal cheris> varishku] ‘bad cat, walks about in the street (homeless), <he bit/scratched me> through my glove’ (Anya shows the healed scratch, the result of the actions she describes) (Anya S., 2.01.19);

другую надо (машинку), (с) багажником, (который) открывается [druguyu nada <mashinku>, <s> bagazhnikam, <katoryi> atkryvayetsa] ‘we/I need a different <toy car>, <with> a boot <that> opens’ (Vitya O., 2.05.13),

He кусит, тойко понюхает и всё. А киска у нас кусит [Ne kusit, toyka panyukhayit i fsyo. A kiska u nas kusit] He won't bite, he'll just sniff at us, that's it. But our kitty bites' (Olya M., 2.04.17),

дядя заколачивает молотком, (у) дяди такая работа [dyadya zakalachivayit malatkom, <u> dyadi takaya rabota] ‘the man hits things with a hammer, that's his job’ (about repairing cars; in this situation a tow truck was towing a car away to be repaired, C. was looking through the window at the car being towed away) (Seryozha A., 1.10.27),

А. Не надо в машинку стрелять [Ni nada v mashinku strelyat'] ‘you shouldn't shoot at the car’. С.: дядя стреляет... дядя только... [dyadya strilyayit... dyadya tol'ka...] – ‘the man shoots... only the man ...’ (C. is standing at the window with a pistol) (Vitya O., 2.05.08),

они (птицы) любят сухарики, тётя им кинет [ani <ptitsy> lyubyat sukhariki, tyotyа im kinit] ‘they <the birds> like pieces of driedbread, the lady will throw them some’ (a perfective verb in the future tense is used in the illustrative/approximate meaning),

они едят, и голуби, и вороны, и утки [ani yidyat, i golubi, i varony, i utki] ‘they eat, the pigeons, and the crows, and the ducks’ (said when looking out of the window and seeing pigeons, however, nobody feeds them, they peck on seeds that were planted in the lawn, there are no people near them) (Seryozha A., 1.11.17)

С.: тут дырки [tut dyrki] ‘there are holes here’ А.: Это вентиляция, проветривать [Eto vintilyatsiya, pravetrivat'] ‘this is ventilation, for airing. С.: мама включает окно [mama fkyuchayit akno] ‘Mummy turns on the window’ А.: Открывает, а не включает. Да, это тоже проветривание [Atkryvayit, a ne fkyuchayit. Da, eta tozhi pravetrivanie] ‘Opens, not turns on. Yes, this is also airing’ (the conversation took place while C. was studying the ventilation grid between the kitchen and bathroom) (Seryozha A., 1.11.13),

я чиню стул, а то мама все ломает [ya chinyu stul, a to mama fsyo lamayit] ‘I am fixing the chair, because Mummy breaks everything’ (C. is fixing the chair with toy pliers) (Seryozha A., 1.10.28).

B) If there are no visual stimuli.

(1) If there is a different stimulus (including a mention of a participant of the situation or in circumstances which prompt the recollection of a situation):

Зеватьку не надо глотать. А Оксанина Янка глотаем [Zivat'ku ni nada glatat'. A Aksanina Yanka glatayit] – ‘You shouldn't swallow chewing gum. But Oksana's Yanka swallows chewing gum’ (said after being promised chewing gum from the shop (Anyа S., 2.06.29),

А. Соня, когда у тебя день рождения? [Sonyа, kagda u tityа den' razhdeniya?] ‘Sonyа, when is your birthday?’ С. когда гости приходят [kagda gosti prikhodyat] ‘When guests come around’ (Sonyа Yu., 2.08.04);

Бывают такие вав Гоги ... Они кусаются, вав Гоги! ... Они собаки, собаки они. [Byvayut takiyi vav Gogi ... Ani kusayutsa, vav Gogi! ... Ani sabaki, sabaki ani.] – ‘There are / can be such woof Goghs... They bite, woof Goghs ... They are dogs, dogs is what they are’ (before that van Gogh was mentioned in the conversation, Yegor A., 2.05.15),

С. Я качаюсь [Ya kachayus'] ‘I'm teetering’. А. Ты что, пьяная? [Ty shto, p'yanaуа?] ‘What, are you drunk?’ С. Только папа пьёт пиво [Tol'ka papa p'yot piva] ‘Only Daddy drinks beer’ (C. calls any alcoholic drink ‘beer’) (Olya M., 2.05.25);

пистолет у Давида, тети Оли, она пускает пузыри, я их гоняю [pistolet u Davida, tyoti Oli, ona puskait puzyri, ya ikh ganyayu] ‘David has a water-pistol, and Auntie Olya, she makes bubbles, I chase them (said while getting ready to go to the play-park, C. is talking about his friends there) (Seryozha A., 1.10.29),
молоко бывает горячее, бывает тёплое [malako byvait garyachiye, byvait tyoplaye] ‘milk can be hot or warm’ (philosophizes while being carried by his mother to his room after a bath) (Seryozha A., 1.09.29),
я снимаю усы [ya snimayu usy] ‘I take off the moustache’ (said while “drinking” tea with a spoon and moving the spoon around his lips) A. *От чая не бывает усов [At chaya ni byvayit usov]* ‘you don’t get a moustache from tea’ C. *от творога бывают усы [at tvaraga byvayut usy]* you get a moustache from cottage cheese (Seryozha A., 1.10.12),
A. *Бабушка уехала к подруге на дачу, убирать участок, сгребать листья. [Babushka uexhala k padrugi na dachu, ubirat' uchastak, zgrebat' list'ya]* Grandma went away, to her friend’s country house, to tidy the garden, and rake the leaves’. C.: *дядя работает на тракторе, тётя не работает, тёте тяжело [dyadya rabotait na traktare, tyotyа ne rabotayit, tyoti tizhilo]* ‘a man drives a tractor; a lady doesn’t drive a tractor; it’s too hard for a lady’ (made an analogy with what he had been observing for several weeks – how people were raking leaves near his house) (Seryozha A., 1.10.16),
кашку кусаем, сяй ньём [kashku kusaim, chyay p'yom] ‘we eat porridge and drink tea’ (an answer to an adult’s question about what the kids do in the kindergarten, Sasha Ye. 2.01.28).

(2) If there are no obvious stimuli, in which case the maximum degree of distancing from the situation “here and now” is observed in the usuality area:

ни видел ты, как он плюеца [ni vidil ty, kak on plyuyotsa] ‘you haven’t seen how he spits (about Tolya) (Zhenya G, 2.07.30);
C. *пива... нету у нас пива [piva... netu u nas piva]* ‘beer... we don’t have beer’. A. *Да, нет у нас пива. [Da, net u nas piva]* No, we don’t have beer. C. *ми ни ньём пива... [mi ni p'yom piva...]* A. *Да, мы не ньём пива, Витюш... [Da, my ni p'yom piva, Vityush...]* ‘No, we don’t drink beer, Vityusha...’ (Vitya O., 2.05.13);
дядя Булат поёт и тичка вылетает [dyadya Bulat payot i ptichka vylytayit] ‘uncle Bulat sings and a little bird flies out’ (Natasha Zh., 2.00.00);
петинку паём [petinku payot] – ‘sings a song’ (talking about Winnie the Pooh) (Соня Ю., 1.11.17);
змея, он ползёт [zmeу, on palzyot] ‘the snake, it crawls’ (talking about a toy she is not playing with at the time of speech) (Olya M., 2.05.03);
де пасивая машинка? <...> беками ативайтса [de pasivaya mashinka? <...> bekami ativaitsa] (где красивая машинка? ... (с) дверками, (которые) открываются? ‘where is the cute car... <with> doors <that> open?’ (Vitya O., 2.05.13),
бабушка говорит, не надо гонять Васю (кошку), я гоняю чуть-чуть [babushka gavarit, ni nada ganyat' Vasyu, ya ganyayu chut'-chut'] ‘Grandma says we should not chase Vasya (the cat) around, I chase him around a little bit’ (the grandmother is not at home, the cat is sleeping in one of the rooms and during dinner Seryozha is discussing having a good attitude to animals in the kitchen) (Seryozha A., 1.10.02),
я «здоровую(сь)» утку, я «скажаю» (говорю) «привет» [ya «zdarovayu(s)» utku, ya «skazayu» «privet»] ‘I greet the duck, I say hi’ (talking at breakfast about the ducks at the pond, which he often sees during his walks in the park) (Seryozha A., 1.11.05),
отбивает Катя (кукла) мяч, я помогаю Саше [atbivayit Katya myach, ya pomagayu Sashi] ‘Katya (the doll) strikes back and I help Sasha (another doll)’ (in the morning, still

in bed, talking about his favourite game, football played by dolls) (Seryozha A, 1.11.10),
A.: Почему ты так не любишь голову мыть? [Pachimu ty tak nie lyubish' golavu myt'?] 'Why do you hate washing your hair so much?' C.: я плачу и <к> бабе на ручки [ya plachu i <k> babi na ruchki] 'I cry and <go> to Grandma to cuddle me' (from a dialogue after breakfast) (Seryozha A., 1.11.13),

трамвай пропускает троллейбус [tramvay prapuskayit traleybus] 'a tram lets a trolleybus pass' (no tram can be seen at the time of speech and no trolleybuses run in the street where the boy lives, but he often sees the situation described on his way to the park, maybe C. remembered an adult's comment about this kind of situation, but why he remembered it now is not clear, probably he meant the situation "in general" : a tram lets a trolleybus pass often or has to let it pass) (Seryozha A., 1.11.08),

я пойду гулять, там дети (с) горки катаются, «полезают» (= поднимаются, залезают по лесенке) и бухаются (= падают, съезжая), опять и бухаются, и по доскам ходят (подвесные досочки мостиком) [ya пойду гулят', там дети горки катаются, «palizayut» i bukhayutsa, аруят' i bukhayutsya, i pa doskam khodyat] 'I will go for a walk, outside, the children slide down the <iced-over> hill, they climb up and slide down, again and slide down, and walk on wooden planks' (talking while taking a bath) (Seryozha A., 1.11.07),

Я хожу в красную школу. Меня там учат читать зеленые книги [Ya khazhu v krasnyuyu shkolu. Minya tam uchyat chitat' zilyonyi knigi] 'I go to a red school, they teach me to read green books there' (Natasha Zh., 2.08.29);

У нас в садике Мусенька есть. Она кушает [U nas v sadiki Musin'ka yest'. Ana kushayit] 'we have Musen'ka in our kindergarten. She eats' (about a cat at the kindergarten that the kids usually feed) (Olya M., 2.05.11);

у баба зупки баят, доктай ечит [u baba zupki bayat, doktay yechit] 'Grandma has toothache, the doctor treats her' (Nadya S., 2.04.21),

как дядя тётю тилюит [kak dyadya tyotyuy tilyuit] 'like a man kisses a lady' (had seen that on TV and now kisses her grandmother that way) (Anya S., 2.04.22),

эта так ф цэркиви крищят [eta tak f tserkivi kritsyat] 'that is how they shout in the church' (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.07.18).

4.2. Simple Recurrence

This semantic area causes the greatest doubts since the data is relatively scarce and each of the recorded examples may also be interpreted as a description of a temporally-localized action. However, it can be argued with some certainty that such utterances are iterative due to the choice of an iterative/multiple-action verb, a lexical marker of multiple actions

опять [аруат'] – 'again',
все время [fso vremya] – 'all the time',

the repetition of the verb or by adding a synonym, a multiple characteristic of the implied object of action:

страницы [stranitsy] 'pages',

a non-singular subject of the action:

все детки [fse detki] – 'all the kids',
комары [komary] – 'mosquitoes',
футболисты [futbalisty] – 'footballers',

a non-singular locus indicator

в свои кровати [f svai kravatki] – ‘to their beds’,

or an indicator of the intensity of the action:

понемножку [panimnoshku] – ‘little by little’.

мяч прыгает [myach prygayit] ‘the ball is bouncing (C. several times throws the ball from the table to the floor and comments on what is happening) (Seryozha A., 1.08.23);

я их гоняю, я на них наступаю [ya ikh gonyayu, ya na nikh nastupayu] ‘I chase them, I step on them’ (about soap bubbles) (the mother makes soap bubbles, C. catches them) (Seryozha A., 1.10.27);

я опять ломаю, я опять ломаю, мама делает куличики, я ломаю [ya aruat' lamayu, ya aruat' lamayu, mama delayit kulichiki, ya lamayu] ‘I break it again, I break it again, Mummy makes <sand> cakes, I break <them>’ (in the sandbox, C.’s mother makes sand cakes, C. tramples on them once they have been made) (Seryozha A., 1.10.29);

Катя все время падает, бедная [Katya fsyo vremya padait, bednaya] ‘Katya falls all the time, the poor thing’ (sits a doll named Katya on the table, it falls down, C. seats it again, the doll falls down again – several times) (Seryozha A., 1.11.10);

Мама вытирает, я опять делаю лужу, мама опять вытирает [mama vytirait, ya aruat' delayu luzhu, mama aruat' vytirait] ‘Mummy wipes it up, I make a puddle again, Mummy wipes it again’ (C. is playing: throwing water on the table, while the mother stands next to him and wipes the water away) (Seryozha A., 1.11.13).

привёртывает, а сама ни смотрит [privyortuyayit, a sama ni smotrit] – ‘turns <pages> and doesn’t look’ (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.07.10).

я панимношку кусаю [ya panimnoshku kusayu] ‘I bite it in little bites’ (a chocolate that was used as a Christmas tree decoration) (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.07.25).

идёт мышка, покупает бульку и мышка идёт сынку домой, дать сынку бульку. И идёт домой мышонку. И даёт бульку и сок (сок) даёт. [Idyot myshka, rakupayit bul'ku i myshka idyot synku damoy, dat' synku bul'ku. I idyot damoy myshonku. I dayot bul'ku i syok dayot.] – ‘The mouse goes and buys some bread and goes home to her son, and gives the son the bread. And goes home to the baby mouse. And gives it the bread and juice. (S. is playing by himself and telling a story) (Yegor A., 2.02.27).

вот опять молния асает [vot aruat' molniya asaet] ‘the lightning is flashing again’ (Оля М., 2.05.01).

все детки лягутся в свои кровати [fse detki lyagutsa v svai kravatki] ‘all kids lie down in their beds’ (Sonya Yu., 2.05.17);

меня мары кусаюца [minyа mary kusayutsya] ‘mosquitoes bite me’ (makes this up) (Zhenya Gvozdev, 2.03.06).

бьют ногами [b'yut nagami] ‘they are kicking’ (talking about a football match S. is watching on TV (Sonya Yu., 2.01.17).

The utterances above characterize the semantics of a temporally non-localized action to a lesser extent than utterances falling under the ‘usuality’ category.

4.3. Atemporality

This type of temporal non-localization is the last (chronologically) to appear in children’s speech and the rarest to be recorded in the early stages of language acquisition. In principle, atemporality represents the greatest degree of detachment from the situation “here and now”; however, even the use of atemporality can be triggered by a situational stimulus. For example, when seeing a toy or a picture showing an animal, the child may produce an utterance whose subject represents a class of similar items and the predicate ascribes to this subject a characteristic typical for such a class. Usually, such a characteristic is manifest by the ability to produce typical sounds or to make typical movements:

му-му-му коова... так коова мычит [mu-mu-mu kaova... tak kaova mychit] ‘moo-moo-moo cow... this is how a cow moos (Maxim Ye., 1.09.28);
аненя какит [anyonya kakit] (ворона каркает) ‘the crow squawks (Sasha S., 1.09.23);
это белитька, бель-бель гавалит [eta belit’ka, bel’-bel’ gavalit] ‘this is a squirrel, it says bel-bel (squirrel is belka in Russian)’ (Anya S., 2.04.23);
давай я покажу, как лягушка прыгает [davay ya pokazhu, kak ligushka prygayit] ‘let me show you how the frog leaps’ (Соня Ю., 2.04.18).

However, at the early stage of speech ontogenesis, utterances of this group that have not been triggered by an obvious stimulus can occur:

дождь капает на землю [dozhd’ karayit na zemlyu] ‘rain falls on the ground’ (said when preparing to go for a walk, however, it is sunny outside and there has not been any rain for several days, there are not even any puddles, it does not seem to be irony) (Seryozha A., 1.10.02);
вода стекает, может в сток, может в люк [vada stikayit, mozhit f stok, mozhit v lyuk] – water flows down into something, down drain, or down the plughole’ (C. is talking about the properties of water, sitting in a high children’s chair, there is no water running anywhere near; some minutes before this monologue C. washed his hands) (Seryozha A., 1.11.03).

5. Conclusion

The transition from the semantics of temporal localization to the semantics of temporal non-localization is a gradual process – there is no overnight “leap” from the situation “here and now”. However, in some children, the time-scale for this transition may be relatively short (there are subjects who produce their first temporally non-localized utterances within a month of their first temporally localized utterances), whereas for other subjects the period of gradual separation from the situation “here and now” may take significantly longer, up to 8 months.

The learning and internalization of the meaning of temporal non-localization of an action at the early stages of speech ontogenesis is to a certain extent based on the actual meaning of the verb. It is easier to internalize a semantic area when verbs whose meaning cause their ‘gravitation’ towards usage in utterances with the meaning of temporal non-localization enter a child’s vocabulary.

Further specification of recurrent action semantics is interwoven with the development of the complexity of the sentence structure. If a child's vocabulary includes lexical indicators that can directly or indirectly mark the idea of recurrence and the child can ascribe to them the related semantic roles in the structure of the sentence, this facilitates the differentiation of the types of temporal non-localization semantics.

The acquisition of the category of personal attribution and the gradual evolution of the understanding of its deictic nature, which happens in parallel with the formation of the meaning of iterativeness, contributes to the detailization of the types of the latter.

The individual personal strategies of acquiring a language demonstrated by different children has an influence on the specific timing of the learning and internalizing of this tense-aspect category and on the level of a child's progress in acquiring new levels of semantics of a language.

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