

Socialisation into a school language for non-native speakers

Kateřina Šormová, Charles University

Eliška Doleřalová¹

¹Charles University

Over the past two years, the number of non-native Czech-speaking pupils has rapidly increased in the Czech Republic. The reason is the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The presented study aims to describe the process of socialisation into a school language. Two research questions were set:

1. What vocabulary forms the centre of the school language?
2. How do non-native speakers understand this vocabulary?

In addition to the acquisition of the regular language, non-native speakers must also acquire the school language. The school language is very specific; therefore, it is often considered to be a special type of foreign language (cf. Šalamounová, 2015; Higgins, 2003; Lemke, 1990). Along with the education itself, pupils also learn this specific language at school. The school language is dominated by a characteristic vocabulary. The main requirement is the linguistic economy (e.g. by using nouns instead of verbs) teachers achieve the so-called condensation of meanings (Sharpe, 2008, p. 135).

The methodological design consists of a comparative frequency analysis of data from the SCHOLA2020 corpus and an analysis of the instructions used in the textbooks. Based on the results of the analysis, a basic list of lexemes typical for the school language was defined. This list was transformed into a didactic test with various types of tasks.

In the second phase, the test was given to pupils aged 10-15 years (respondents included non-native Czech speakers and a comparative sample of native speakers).

Based on the evaluation of the test results, lexemes that are difficult for non-native speakers were identified and will be used for teaching purposes.

References

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