

PSYCHOLOGY

XXXI. A BOY'S VOCABULARY AT EIGHTEEN MONTHS

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In any study of natural phenomena it is important to have instances of the limits of variation. In the matter of speech development careful studies should be made of children who are slow in beginning to speak and also of some who are markedly precocious, besides of the more normal cases. It is for the purpose of augmenting our knowledge as to the possibilities with a young child in the way of large vocabularies that we are offering the present record.

Duncan Miller is the oldest son of two college teachers, his father being a psychologist and his mother a specialist in languages. As to physical development, he is large for his age, having weighed 8½ pounds at birth, 25 pounds at one year and 27 pounds at 18 months. Except for severe colic during the first two months of his life, he has enjoyed excellent health. He walked at the early age of 11 months.

On his second birthday he was given the Binet test by his father and scored an I.Q. of 166. He passed all the three year tests but that of knowing his sex; he repeated the digits and passed the comprehension test of four years, while for the fifth year he gave the definitions.

A chronological list of the words used by Duncan was kept by his mother through his thirteenth month, but the dates of new acquisitions were not always recorded. At this time both parents began to keep track of the rapidly increasing vocabulary in a very systematic manner, i. e., each new word was written on a card with the date, all the cards being filed alphabetically.

The first word "tick-tick" was spoken at the age of eight and a half months. The first sentence "Man scold" was used at 15 months and the first complex sentence at 20 months—"Broke the cup that had the flowers on it." The order of appearance of the parts of speech was as follows: nouns, 8 months; interjections, 12; verbs and adjectives, 13; adverbs, 14; pronouns, 16; prepositions, 17 and conjunctions 20 or 21 months.

The vocabulary follows, the words being arranged chronologically under each part of speech. The pronunciation is not indicated after the 13th month. N. W. means new words; T. W. means total words.

*The vocabulary was collected by the first two authors and the material prepared for publication by the third.

Eight months—T. W. 1. Noun: Tick-tick.

Nine, ten and eleven months—N. W., 8; T. W., 9.

Nouns: Kee (kitty), moo (cow), bye-bye (outdoor clothes), kee-la (kiddy-kar), bow-wow, ma-a (cat), cock-a doodle, gobble.

Twelve and thirteen months—N. W., 22; T. W. 31.

Nouns: da-da (dolly), kacker (cracker and then all food), ee-ee (sound of his toy bunny), ma-a-a (sheep), a-choo (for sneezing and coughing, associated with romping), da-da (daddy), ball, book, bat (bath), 'at (hat), bok (box), buuh (brush), egg, app (apple), b'ock (block), cake.

Verb: B'oke (broke).

Adjective: 'Ot (hot, also cold).

Interjections: Oh-oh, ah-ah (meaning he must be careful), ma-ma-ma (protest), ee (three, exclamation for one, two, three).

Fourteen months—N. W., 39; T. W., 70.

Nouns: Cook, baby, bottle, butter, eye, tea, ice, tub, flower, bowl, pot, ear, bad-boy, dish, cut-cut-ca-dah-cut, park, scissors, knife, c'ock, car, cheese, bucket, spectacles, thermometer, stocking, shoe, broom, orange, house, key, walk.

Verbs: tickle, caught.

Adjectives: tight, black.

Adverbs: Ek (meaning "there" in answer to questions, "Where is Mother?, etc.).

Interjections: hello, ouch, how-do-you-do.

Fifteen months—N. W., 70; T. W., 141.

Nouns: duck, Joe, fly, Katy, stick, bubble, garter, grandma, man, school, spool, cup, diaper, basket, coal, cat, junket, Duncan, teenth, chicken, kodak, pocket, barrel, fubhy, sky, cow, mamma, pump, piggie, hammer, peaches, picce, toast, kitchen, mud, drink, picture, bag, porch, potato, spider, Clyde, drawer, door, bib, bed, tool, light, bonc, g'ove, mop.

Verbs: take-me, shut, kiss, scratch, cry, hump, wind-it, rock scold, ride.

Adjectives: two, cold, more, dry.

Adverbs: up, down, yes, please, now.

Sixteen months—N. W., 82; T. W., 222.

Nouns: wagon, patch, pin, moon, ice-pick, paper, pliers, candle, bird, night, money, lid, coffee, girl, knee, garden, beads, buggy, radish, coat, head, fish, plate, dining room, ice-cream, George, Margaret, razor, nut, mother, handkerchief, grease, nose, Patty Faro, juice, nrisance, tail, B, brick, parsley, bean, bicycle, body, comb, fire, horre, minute, porridge, pool, berry, stove, room, plow, dress, A

Verbs: cut, pull, bite, taste, bounce-it, catch, forgot, hurt, blow, cat, go, hide, rain.

Pronoun: me.

Adjectives: sick, big, dark, pretty, open.

Adverbs: no, all, back.

Interjections: thank you, Pete, peek-boo, no sir, phew.

Seventeen months—N. W., 161; T. W., 378.

Nouns: custard, daisy, hand, mulberry, dinner, trousers, sugar, ba'loon, bacon, Clarence, prune, Junior, day, pen, pencil, toe, morning, chair, town, turtle, cream, string, shirt, feet, tongue, bug, home, Minnie, Gerould, stack, duster, stone, bunny, ceiling, suit, screen, calf, fruit, spinach, umbrella, cucumber, thing, cone, sister, arm, glass, water, sink, turkey, Bessie, feather, pillow, top, cushion, blanket, cicada, typewriter, elephant, barbed wire, sleep, thimble, bath-room, cinnamon bun, Toberman, sand, telephone, corn, soup, automobile, bathing suit, Miller, hop-toad, bossie, clothes, cork, fork, hair, Indian, Listerine, leg, noise, papoose, pan, pound, watch, piano, rug, soap, table, toilet, joke, hook, swing, button, vacuum cleaner, step.

Verbs: going, grin, shake, doing, excuse-me, help, run, tear, play, spin, bring, swat, shave, drop, don't, peeling, have-it, giggle, sit, point, stand, sharpen, weigh, swim, gone, scare, see, shoo, trip-it, turn, dust, cough

Adjectives: little, ready, nice, high, sour, long, heavy, short, sweet, thirsty, hungry, dead, six, ten, careful, sleepy, green, clean, dirty, good, one, that, cross.

Adverbs: off, again, out, how many.

Prepositions: on, under.

Interjections: oh dear, bingo, bang.

Eighteen months—N. W., 144; T. W., 523.

Nouns: catalog, pocket-book, C, Cable, horn, salt, carriage, geese, Bo-peep, Auntie Marion, coal oil, gasoline, lemon, rubber, Teddy, sun, bulletin, curtain, Mrs. Forbes, Martha Ellen, music, scone, O, medicine dropper, chin, ink, hoop, cookie, soda, sonny, straw-stack, breakfast, pop-corn, slipper, fan, Jack, clippers, loaf, wheel-barrow, abacus, flag, towel, hog, closet, mouth, pussy cat, neck, ant, thumb, weeds, ribbon, soda-pop, safety pin, tomato, tiger, grocer, grape juice, office, pen (pig), Mr. Frick, barn, sherbert, shade, collar, breeze, needle, well, root beer, pitcher, screw driver, S, coffee mill, colt, fence, kiddie koop, saucer, finger, star, hill, pipe, frog, sewing machine, watermelon, strainer, brother, clothes line, bottom, ear ring, face, gelatine, milk, rope, tummy, toaster, way, Francis, house critter, cot, ring, can, whistle.

Verbs: pick up, hang, write, carry, sew, listen, flop, wake up, salute, wink, look, get, creep, slip, touch, pinch, punch, wait, dive, find, fix it, hold, put, show, wade, wind.

Pronouns: I, it.

Adjectives: shiny, new, baked, tiny, funny, afraid, other.

Adverb: away.

Prepositions: with, at, behind, in.

Interjections: whoa, my goodness, gee, good morning.

The table gives a summary of the numbers of words of each months vocabulary.

Number of Words Learned at the Different Ages.

	8-13	14	15	16	17	18	Total	Per Cent
Nouns -----	25	31	51	55	95	101	360	68.6
Verbs -----	1	2	10	13	32	26	84	16.0
Pronouns -----	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	0.6
Adjectives -----	1	2	4	5	23	7	42	8.0
Adverbs -----	0	1	5	3	4	1	13	2.5
Prepositions -----	0	0	0	0	2	4	6	1.2
Interjections -----	4	3	0	5	3	4	16	3.1
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Total New Words....	31	39	70	82	160	144	523	100
Total Vocabulary ----	31	70	140	222	378*	523		

*Three interjections and one adverb were dropped at about this time.

This child has the largest vocabulary that have yet been published for the following ages: 14, 15, 17 and 18 months. At 13 months Mrs. Hall's son used 7 more words than Duncan did, and at 16 months Mrs. Langenbeck's daughter is credited with 7 more. The vocabularies next in size to those of Duncan's are as follows: at 14 and 15 months Mrs. Hall's son attained 58 and 105 words respectively; at 17 months Miss Shinn's niece had mastered 348 words and at 18 months Mrs. Martindell's daughter (cited by Gales) had a vocabulary of 233 words. This is less than half the size of Duncan's vocabulary at this age, although it is the largest of 39 vocabularies that had previously been collected (Oatman-Blachiy). The largest published vocabularies for 19 and 20 months are those of Bohn's daughter and contains 294 and 383 words respectively. At 21 months there first appear vocabularies that surpass in size Duncan's at 18 months, viz., Mrs. Martindell's daughter with 579 words and Miss Shinn's niece with 758.

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