

Abstract

Human speech is considered to be unique means of communication. The beginnings of human vocalization, which develops into the speech, however, have some patterns or principles which can also be found in animal communication. It has been discovered that there are similarities between humans and animals in terms of social organization, neural control, cognition and function of vocal signals. Moreover, it seems that birds, parrots specifically, have closer parallels with humans in these respects than with other primates. Vocal ontogeny was, however, at least in parrots, investigated only marginally. Therefore it has become the subject of this study. African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*) show a wide range of cognitive abilities and are thus suitable species for comparison with humans. The aim of this study was to map the early vocal development of African grey parrots until age of 11 weeks. Then it was possible to compare it theoretically with the early vocal development of children. The repertoire was mapped using video recordings of four fledglings of feral African grey parrots, which are in possession of FHS UK Prague. The recordings were analysed acoustically and visually with audio software Sound Forge Pro 11 and Sound Forge Audio Studio 10. After identifying the repertoire we used stage models of vocal development to theoretically compare the development of early vocalizations in children and parrots. We identified several types of calls in the repertoire of parrots and we also found several vocalisation contexts. Regarding the comparison of vocal development, we have discovered that there are similar trends.

Key words: vocal ontogeny, African grey parrot, *Psittacus Erithacus*, infant vocalization development