

CHILD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN RELATION TO REDUPLICATION: A CASE STUDY OF 6 (SIX) TWO-YEAR-OLD HAUSA CHILDREN

SHEHU SIDI IBRAHIM¹ & HADIZA I. IBRAHIM²

¹Department of Modern European Languages & Linguistics Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria

²Department of Early Childhood Care and Education, Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This paper represents a psycholinguistic study of aspects of reduplication in the Acquisition of lexical items by 6 Hausa children between the ages of 2 to 3. Various linguistic theories and grammatical models have been used to analyze adult language at the expense of infant speech. A fuller understanding of human linguistic system might be possible by investigating it from childhood. Not much has been done in the area of child language research in Hausa and probably none in reduplication in child language. Hausa language is very rich in reduplication which is both a phonological and morphological process in Hausa language as in most languages of the world. Reduplicative productions of the children were coded and analyzed. The aspects of reduplication identified in the data included; CV reduplication of CV syllable, reduplication by harmonizing consonants, whole word repetition and onomatopoeic sound imitation. Other patterns observed are, reduplication across word boundaries and reduplication in baby talk (BT). Reduplication in child languages serves various functions. These functions of reduplication were discussed in relation to hypotheses about the function of reduplication in child language. The common strategy employed by the children was that of maintaining a place for a consonant, where children use CV syllable structure to insert another consonant that is easier for them to produce.

KEYWORDS: Acquisition in Relation to Reduplication