The development of English and Japanese phonology in a bilingual child aged 1 year 3 months to 1 year 8 months

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Abstract

Language used by a child between the ages of 1;3 and 1;8 was recorded while she was being brought up in a bilingual English-Japanese home environment. The words used by the child were phonologically analysed to determine whether there was any evidence for a structural theory or a frequency theory of phonological development. Evidence was found to support and to contradict each of these types of theory. It was found that either a) the child chose to attempt only words which contained a high proportion of phonemes she knew she could utter or b) the frequency of the parents' phonemes was modified from the frequency of standard adult speech when the parent was talking to the child. Little evidence of phonological interference between the two languages was observed during the course of this study.
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Contents

Acknowledgements iii
Contents iv
List of tables vi

Part One Review of literature 1

Introduction 1
Language input 2
Phonological development 5
Bilingualism 9

Part Two Purposes and procedures of study 13

Purposes of study 13
Problems 13
Procedure and plan of study 14
Definition of terms 18
Transcription symbols 19
Part Three  Results

Vocabulary development  22
Word classes  26
Semantic groups  27
Word mortality  28
Phonemic shapes of words  29
Phonological interference  33
Development of phonemes  34
Frequency of phoneme occurrence  41

Part Four  Discussion and conclusions  45

References  50

Appendices  54

Bibliography  73
List of tables

Table 1  Vocabulary development of child 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 2  English word development in child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 3  Japanese word development in child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 4  Common word development in child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 5  Word class analysis of child's English, Japanese and common lexical items from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 6  Semantic analysis of child's English, Japanese and common lexical items from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 7  Comparison between adult word shapes and child word shapes when child was aged from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 8  Common word shapes of child 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 9  Percentage of CV and CVCV syllables in English, Japanese and common vocabulary of child 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 10 Analysis of child's English and Japanese vowel development from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 11 Place of English and Japanese vowel articulation compared in adult speech and child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 12 Analysis of child's English and Japanese consonant development from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 13 Manner of English and Japanese consonant articulation compared in adult speech and child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 14 Place of English and Japanese consonant articulation compared in adult speech and child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 15 Frequency of occurrence of English vowels in "ordinary" speech measured by D.B.Fry compared with frequency of occurrence of English vowels in adult words attempted by child from 1;3 to 1;8  
Table 16 Frequency of occurrence of English consonants in "ordinary" speech measured by D.B.Fry compared with frequency of occurrence of English consonants in adult words attempted by child from 1;3 to 1;8