

Articulatory Acquisition in Kannada—A Study of Normal Children—3 to 6.6 Years*

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One hundred and eighty school children in the age range of 3 to 6.6 years selected randomly from four different schools of Mysore City, formed the subjects. They were administered the Diagnostic Kannada Articulation Test (Babu, R. N., Rathna, N., Bettagiri, R., 1972). The children were divided into seven age groups of 6 months interval in each. The test was administered individually and it was scored on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of phonemes. The maximum score that could be obtained was 299.

The data for each age group was analyzed and statistical treatment was done to see whether there was a significant difference between the articulation scores of different groups and also between girls and boys in the same age group.

The results indicated that there was a significant difference in the articulation scores for different age groups, except between the groups V (5.1 to 5.6 years) and VI (5.7 to 6.0 years) and also between VI (5.7 to 6.0 years) and VII (6.1 to 6.6 years)

A definite pattern in the acquisition of articulation was found. There is a gradual but definite change from age to age. The fricative [h] was not acquired even at 6.6

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years. This contradicts, Jakobson's hypothesis but the pattern agrees generally with Jakobson's hypothesis. The children in the present study seemed to acquire most of the sounds earlier than the English speaking children.

Girls and boys in the same group were compared for articulation scores in all the age groups and no difference was found between them in any group.

Socio-economic status level was thought to be a variable affecting acquisition of phonology but the results showed that the difference between different SESL's was not much. Statistical analysis could not be done for this, as the number of children in some SESL's was too small.

Recommendations for Further Research

- (1) Similar studies can be done in all the other Indian languages.
- (2) The children younger than 3 years and older than 6.6 years can be studied.
- (3) The effect of bilingualism and multilingualism on the acquisition of phonology can be studied.
- (4) The articulation test, used in this study, can be modified so that it can be used with young children and also aspirated sounds can be included.