

A Prevalence of Phonological Disorder in Children with Specific Language Impairment

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Abstract : Phonological disorder is a serious and disturbing issue to many parents and teachers. Efforts towards resolving the problem have been undermined by other specific disabilities which were hidden to many regular and special education teachers. It is against this background that this study was motivated to provide data on the prevalence of phonological disorders in children with specific language impairment (CWSLI) as the first step towards critical intervention. The study was a survey of 15 CWSLI from St. Louise Inclusive schools, Ikot Ekpene in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. Phonological Processes Diagnostic Scale (PPDS) with 17 short sentences, which cut across the five phonological processes that were examined, were validated by experts in test measurement, phonology and special education. The respondents were made to read the sentences with emphasis on the targeted sounds. Their utterances were recorded and analyzed in the language laboratory using Praat Software. Data were also collected through friendly interactions at different times from the clients. The theory of generative phonology was adopted for the descriptive analysis of the phonological processes. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and composite bar chart for better understanding of the result. The study found out that CWSLI exhibited the five phonological processes under investigation. It was revealed that 66.7%, 80%, 73.3%, 80%, and 86.7% of the respondents have severe deficit in fricative stopping, velar fronting, liquid gliding, final consonant deletion and cluster reduction, respectively. It was therefore recommended that a nationwide survey should be carried out to have national statistics of CWSLI with phonological deficits and develop intervention strategies for effective therapy to remediate the disorder.

Keywords : language disorders, phonology, phonological processes, specific language impairment

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