

ANALYSIS OF FOSSILIZED ERRORS IN SPEECH PRODUCTION OF ADULT IGBO-ENGLISH BILINGUALS

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed a sample of the interlanguage (speech production) of Igbo English bilinguals to determine manifestation of fossilized errors induced by the target sounds /A, Ø, and æ/. Data were generated from a passage and a model containing the target sounds given to 10 randomly selected staff of the Federal Medical Centre, Umuahia who had their training in English language. Data were analyzed using spearman's correlation coefficient statistical method, and mean value of the correct and fossilized errors. The findings revealed high mean value of fossilized errors for the target sounds which are lacking in the participants' native language (NL) phonemic inventory /A, and Ø/ with a low mean value of fossilized errors for the target sound present in the participants' NL phonemic inventory/æ/. Spearman's correlation coefficient adopted for analysis gave us a value of -1. The study concluded that linguistic items present in the target language but absent in the learners' native language are probable mistake causers which, if not got rid of, with positive input, before the learners attain their plateaus in IL, would possibly become fossilized items. This study further appear to establish a negative correlation between amount of fossilization and learners' NLand recommended strategies to be adopted to facilitate learning before learners reach their plateau in IL because permanent defossilization may not be possible after critical period.

KEYWORDS: *Fossilization, Stabilization, Critical Period*

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