ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF CHILDREN IN MOTHERLESS BABIES HOMES IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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APPROVAL

This thesis has been approved for the Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

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DEDICATION

To the Holy Trinity for Their blessings and protection

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ABSTRACT

Motherless babies homes are places where children at different stages of language acquisition/development are taken care of. This research, aims at x-raying the linguistic development of these deprived children. The study explored the linguistic development of children in motherless baby homes. Specifically, this study sought to: assess the level of language acquisition of children in the motherless baby homes, identify the environmental factors that aid language acquisition that may be lacking in motherless babies homes, determine the extent to which children in the motherless babies homes negotiate and attach meaning to utterances, find out if the attention given by the workers in the motherless babies homes and visitors are capable of aiding the childrenôs language acquisition, ascertain the extent to which inputs from organizations aid the language acquisition of the children, find out the effect of the language acquired in the motherless babies homes on the children and determine if the prevailing language environment in the motherless babies homes is capable of impairing the language acquisition of children in the motherless baby homes. In this study, the descriptive survey research method was adopted. Based on the nature of the research and target population, only purposive sampling technique was used. Three major instruments of data collection were used. These include; participant observation, interview (oral) and the questionnaire. The result of the study shows that the level of language acquisition by children in the motherless babies homes was low. Also the result of the study indicates that different organizations have been assisting these motherless babies homes, however their support were mainly in the area of helping the workers perform some domestic chores, as they were not very much interested in their language development. The result also shows that the children do not have enough materials and people to play with, and as a result of that, their language development were seriously delayed and or impaired. The study therefore concludes that the language environment of the motherless babies homes were defective in terms of providing favourable environment that aid the childrenôs language acquisition as most of the human and material resources in normal homes were not readily available in the motherless baby homes.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Language is the major means of human communication and is mainly obtained through acquisition, learning and subsequent development. A few years after birth, a normal child is capable of producing complex sentences that do not only attest to the knowledge of his language but also the level of his mental development. Language encompasses every means of communication in which thoughts and feelings are symbolized in order to convey meaning to others (Nwachukwu, 1995) through writing, speaking, signs, facial expression and gestures. This must have prompted Simpson (1994) to state that language is a system of speaking, writing or signing. Therefore, language was glossed as being a mode of speaking or writing common to a group of people. Among all human and in all known languages of the world, language is either developed through the process of acquisition or learning.

Language acquisition is the term most commonly used to describe the process whereby children become speakers of their native language or languages (Agbedo, 2003; Malmkjaer, 2001). Language acquisition according to Rice (1989) has three different components: the language to be acquired, the child and the childôs endowment. Specifically, Clark (1991) opines that the acquisition of language forms the basis of all other forms of symbolic activities by humans. According to Morrison (2001) when children in the first few years of life are given appropriate opportunities, they make remarkable, effortless acquisition of language. Thus language acquisition does not require only the natural endowment but also the right environment.

Language learning, on the other hand, focuses on the process by which second or foreign languages are learnt. The learning is guided in line with the curriculum of an educational establishment. In view of that, language learning, most of the time, requires a formal setting, conscious effort by a conscious learner and a conscious mind.

From the light of the foregoing, it can be seen that language acquisition seems to be the appropriate concept to refer to how the young humans learn their first language. On the other hand, language learning usually takes place in formal setting (school system) and by older adults who must have acquired their first language. Thus the first language becomes an effective aid for the learning of the second or foreign language.

However, there may not be any clear-cut line that exists between language acquisition and language learning. This is even more so as it relates to child language.

This stems from the fact that in contemporary society, children who are acquiring their first language also start learning/acquiring a second language even at home and in a greater degree when they enroll in school system. Age cannot thus be used as a bearer since the child even starts acquiring and learning the first and second languages respectively from the womb. According to Hopson (1998), behaviourally speaking, there is little difference between a new born baby and a 32-week-old foetus. A wave of new researches according to her, suggest that the fetus can feel, dream, and even enjoy stories from the mother. They feel happy when their mothers read sweet and familiar stories to them in different languages. She however warns that, ó a fetus prefers hearing momôs voice over a strangerôs - speaking in her native, not a foreign tongue- and being read aloud familiar tales rather than new storiesô.

From the above statement, it can be seen that though children prefer their native languages right from the womb, they do not close their ears to other languages. Thus, neither the age of the child nor the first, second or foreign language can be used to differentiate language acquisition and learning in relation to child language. The only difference that can be deduced is that while the child acquires his first language in the native speakerôs environment, he learns the second and foreign language outside the native speakerôs environment.

At this juncture, it should be stated that both the acquired and learnt languages lead to language development. Language development which manifests in learning to talk among children is one of the most visible and important achievements of early childhood. In a matter of months, according to Johnston (2006), and without explicit teaching, toddlers move from hesitant single words to fluent sentences and from a small vocabulary to one that is growing by six new words a day. This is true of normal children who have the required predisposition (innate abilities) to acquire language (Agbedo, 2003; Yule, 1997). However, we know that not all children acquire language at the same rate, as some have delayed language development (Morrison, 2001), specific language disorder (Johnston, 2006), language handicaps (Crystal, 1992), etc. Finally, there are children with language disabilities (Harris, 1990). Again, while some children are in socially enriched language environments which aid their language development (Morrison, 2001), others are in isolated settings. In whichever condition/social environment a child finds him/herself, Lucchese & Tamis-LeMonda (2007) observe,

> Early language development is rooted in the interactions children have with their parents, significant caregivers, childcare providers, and peers. These

> early social exchanges both foster developing language skills and provide a vital foundation for childrenôs social readiness and academic achievement. (p. 3)

In line with the importance of early language development among children, researches had been carried out in area of phonemic development (Sills, 1972), type of language addressed to the child by mothers and caregivers (Galloway, 1994), communication disorders in children (Agbedo, 2008), establishing the appropriate time children acquire language (Toger-Flushberg, 1994), when children start communicating with adults (Machado, 1990) and whether language (acquisition) is innate or learned (Bowen, 1998). However, not much has been done in the area of looking at the language development of children outside the normal home or family environment.

Motherless babies homes/orphanages and rehabilitation homes are such places where children at different stages of language acquisition/development are taken care of. Children in these two homes have been classified as deprived children. This classification is based on the fact that they are in peculiar environments which are not only exceptional to their language development but also in social setting.

It is a known fact, according to Morrison (2001), that children with or without disabilities benefit more when they are in natural environment and thus grow in area of personal, language, cognitive and social skills which they may not other wise learn in isolation or even in classroom. The question now is, are the motherless babies homesô environmentally rich enough to facilitate and aid childôs language development? Actually, motherless babies homes have welfare officers, organizations and workers who take care of the children. Visitors visit these children individually and sometimes in groups and thus provide them with the much needed warmth. However, the next questions are, to what extent do visitors interact with these children? Even if these visitors interact with these children to a great extent, can the level of their interaction with the children be reasonably equated with that which exists between the children and their mothers or the caregivers at home? Are the children capable of negotiating for meaning (Rhonda, 2002) to both the caregivers in the motherless babies homes and visitors to the extent that they understand what they mean and react accordingly?

The last question is based on the fact that even a childôs cry is meaningful (Harris, 1990) and the meaning attached or not attached to their utterances reveal a lot about the child. After all, mothers even affirm to the fact that associating meaning(s) to the

utterances of the children are capable of identifying children with language disorders and other disorders.

One may equally be tempted to ask, at this juncture if the caregivers, welfare officers and other visitors spend enough time playing, listening, associating meaning to childrenôs utterances and detecting children with language and other problems. These Alms (2004) likened to diagnostic test which covers three modalities; listening, speaking and reading. Morjoram (1985:87) on the other hand opines that by ñé listening to children and encouraging them to speak at length, one may note all kinds of strengths and weaknesses and growth points - speech defects obviouslyò. Parents and teachers are in a position to accomplish these tasks (Essa & Young, 1994; Crystal, 1992; Hall & Segara, 2007; Machado, 1990) as they are usually close to children. Whether these features merely facilitated the acquisition for the children, or guided the childrenôs progress in language acquisition, Agbedo, (2009) while stressing the views of Aitchison (1991), observe that they have the following influence,

(i) Direct influence : the possibility of motheress directly influencing the child through imitation

(ii) Indirect influence: the possibility of the motherôs speech indirectly guiding the child, for example, by providing a pattern of usage which the child might follow.

(iii) Facilitation: the possibility of parental speech providing clear input from which the child extracts what it considers relevant. (p.124)

The present study supports the fact that environment influences the childôs language acquisition process; however, it hinged this study on the fact that parental speech greatly facilitates the language acquisition process of the child. This is in line with Agbedoôs (2009) position, when he states that, in language acquisition process, normal children benefit substantially from both the innate linguistic capacity and cognitive abilities and that the entire process stands to be facilitated by sufficient exposure to sensitive and helpful parental speech and/or caregiver language.

Children in motherless babies homes may have teachers/caregivers around them but not their parents. As such, this puts them at risk in area of not only language development (*Bernard Van leer foundation, 2007*) but also in the area of early childhood care and development (Maduewesi, 2005). Even the Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (IECD) did not capture both the language need and other needs of these children.

According to the Nigerian Educational Resource and Development Center (NERDC) (2004), the objectives of IECD include:

(a) to provide care and support to the child in form of good nutrition and health for children, a healthy and safe environment, psycho-social stimulation, protection and security,

(b) to inculcate in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music and playing with toys etc,

(c) to effect adequate transition from the home to schoolé and

(d) to inculcate social norms--that is, culturally relevant skills and behaviours which allow them to function effectively in their current context. (p. 3)

It can be seen from the above that the programme fits those children that have homes and live with their parents. This led *Early Childhood Matters* (2007) to declare that;

> é the challenge of early childhood development (ECD) among Orphans and vulnerable children (OVD)are enormous,é it has became clear that an approach consisting of one or even two areas of intervention is not sufficient to address the varied, interdependent needs of very young children. Additionally focusing only on children, or only on children and their caregivers, do not adequately address needs of the community or facilitate essential changes in national policy. (p. 9)

This emphasizes the fact that children in orphanages and motherless babies homes are vulnerable children and as such require special attention. This attention is even needed more in the area of language acquisition and development.

These children need special attention not only because they can no longer hear their mothersô voices which hither-to they had been hearing from the womb (Klaus & Klaus, 1985) and reap fully all the advantages there-in in motherese language (Crystal, 1992) but more importantly because they have been removed from the natural human environment where language makes things work.

It can be seen that children in motherless babies homes suffer a lot of deprivation. But then, can their inability to reside in a natural or ólanguage environmentô impair or affect acquisition and their over- all language development?

This research, therefore, aimed at x-raying the linguistic development of these deprived children. This is with a view to assessing their vocabulary development and the impact of the motherless babies homes, environment on their language development. In an attempt to x-ray the language acquisition/development of children; language acquisition/development, language learning, negotiation for meaning, environments and

language development, language disorder, language, thought, and culture and the effect of education in language acquisition were examined.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Studies on child development often focus on the normal child in a natural environment. In like manner, policies and programmes of government are usually targeted at the same group of children. As such, while Nigeria *Educational Research and Development Council* (*NERDC*) (2004) states that one of its objectives for IECD is to ñeffect smooth transition from home to schoolò through the empowerment of households/caregivers to provide appropriate care for children aged 0-5 years at the household level, the *Federal Republic of Nigeria* (*FRN*) (2004) affirms that the purpose of Early Childhood/pre-primary education shall be to, ñeffect a smooth transition from home to school (and) provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (on the farm, in the markets, offices, etc)ò (p.11). Thus the programs/polices of both the FRN (2004) and NERDC (2004) focused on children that have parents and live within the normal family/community settings.

Researchers had thus focused on the personal, social and educational need of family based children without taking cognizance of the fact that there are many other children that do not live in the comfort of their parentsô homes or live in normal ôhomesô. Even more worrisome is the fact that most of these researchers did not focus childrenôs language development. Fine arguments, findings and recommendations had thus been made in the area of education of the child, improving the social and other cares given to the child, but insufficient thought has been given to the important role language plays in the childôs educational, personal social and over all development.

Even when the language of the child and the childôs language development are the focus of linguistic researchers, efforts were geared more towards looking at the language development and language impairment/disorders of children in normal home/natural environment.

As Nigerian children in motherless babies homes are regarded as endangered species due to their peculiar environment, (*Justice, Development and Peace/Caritas Commission (JDPC)* (2009), this research aimed at assessing the vocabulary cum language acquisition/development of these children. Since language development is linked to other domains and since language acquisition is enhanced and can equally

enhance other areas of childôs development, other areas of childôs development that affect the child language development were looked into.

Specifically, the research focused not only on assessing the language acquisition/development of these deprived children, but also sought to find out if this peculiar environment can affect their language acquisition process/development.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The general objective of this study is to critically investigate the language acquisition/ development of the deprived children in motherless babies homes in Enugu State of Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

(i) assess the state of language acquisition of children in the motherless babies homes.

(ii) identify the environmental factors that may aid language acquisition among children in normal homes which are lacking in motherless babies homes.

(iii) assess the extent to which children in the motherless babies homes negotiate and attach meaning to utterances.

(iv) find out if the attention given by the welfare officers, workers of motherless babies homes and visitors are capable of aiding the childrenôs language acquisition process.

(v) ascertain the extent to which inputs from organizations, aid the language acquisition of these deprived children.

(vi) find out the effect of the language acquired in the motherless babies homes on the children.

(vii) determine if the prevailing language environment in the motherless babies homes is capable of delaying the language acquisition of children in the motherless babies homes.

1.4. Research Questions

The study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

(i) What is the state of language acquisition of children in the motherless babies homes?

(ii) What are the favourable environmental factors that aid language acquisition in normal homes which are lacking in motherless babies homes?

(iii) To what extent do children in the motherless babies homes negotiate and attach meaning to utterances?

(iv).Do the children in the motherless babies homes receive enough attention that aids their language acquisition from workers and visitors?

(v) To what extent do the inputs of organizations aid the language acquisition of these children?

(vi) What are the effects of the language acquired in the motherless babies homes on the children?

(vii) Do the language environments in the motherless babies homes delay the language development of the children?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Specifically, the research is significant in that it will aid linguists, researchers in related fields, mothers/caregivers, governmental and other non-governmental organizations, and experts involved in planning programmes/polices for children to understand and appreciate not only the crucial role language plays in the over-all development of the children (in motherless babies homes) but also the peculiar environment they acquire their language.

Linguists and psychologists are still a long way from a complete theory of language acquisition (Nwachukwu, 1995). This assumption stems from the fact that most experts that propound theories of language acquisition use the language behaviour of normal children and children in normal environment (the society) to formulate theories of language acquisition. They thus neglect other children in isolated environments like motherless babies homes and rehabilitation centres. This study is an attempt towards assessing the language acquisition of these deprived children and therefore it is expected to be an eye opener to the fact those language acquisition theories especially those that

relate to stages in acquisition should be so comprehensive as to include children in both normal homes and other special settings.

Equally, researchers in related fields especially those that relate to child language, education of the environmentally challenged children, and language impairment/disorders, will find this study useful. As the childôs language, especially that of the environmentally challenged ones is the focus of this research, other researchers in these areas will find it a veritable spring-board and reference material for their own study.

Mothers and caregivers are very essential in the language acquisition of the growing child. Mothers and other individuals who visit the motherless babies homes and the caregivers in these homes will also find this study useful. This is because the study has not only exposed the language and environmental needs of these children but will also make their handlers to be better informed on the role language plays in the childôs early development. These groups of people will not only learn from the study the act of monitoring the language development of these children but also to give them the necessary attention that will aid their language acquisition process.

Organizations, be they religious, governmental or non-governmental will find this study useful in the area of understanding the linguistic needs of the research population. As these groups provide children in these homes with financial, human and material resources needed for the running of the homes, the study will also help them to understand the linguistic needs of the children and thus be able to provide them with the needed linguistic friendly environment, both within and outside the homes.

The study is also useful to experts in linguistics, education as well as policy makers. This is because the research will help them have a broader view of all the children in the country and thus be enable to formulate language polices that are so comprehensive as to include our research population.

1.6. Hypotheses

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following null hypotheses were formulated.

(i) There is no significant difference in the state of language acquisition of children in the motherless babies homes and children that live in normal homes.

(ii) There is no significant difference between the language environment of the deprived children and normal children.

(iii) There is no significant difference between the negotiation abilities of the deprived children and the normal children.

(iv) There is no significant difference between the mean response of mothers and workers in motherless babies homes on the effect of the language environment in the motherless babies homes on the language acquisition of the children.

1.7. Scope of the Study

The study covered some sampled motherless babies homes, in Enugu State of Nigeria. It specifically focused not only on the language acquisition process of children in the motherless babies homes but also on the prevailing language environment in the motherless babies homes.

Since the field of speech acquisition among children is a very large one, the researchers restricted the study to the speech/language acquisition of children (infants aged 0-5 years) in the motherless babies homes. This enabled the researchers have an in-depth study of these linguistically deprived children

1.8. Delimitation of the Study

A lot of constraints were encountered by the researchers while carrying out this research. Foremost among these constraints was the bureaucratic procedure involved in getting the approval of the motherless babies homesô management for the use of their ñhomesò for the research work. All the motherless babies homes that were used for this study were owned by different organizations and it was a herculean task getting the approval of the management of these motherless babies homes for the use of their out-fits in this research work.

The use of tape recorder of any type is essential in most research works especially when interviews and participant observation are employed. However, the use of such back-up equipment is highly prohibited in these motherless babies homes. Visitors and especially researchers were not allowed to use tape-recorders, video machines or even papers in recording anything in these motherless babies home. In view

of this, researchers may thus be left with no other option than to collect the needed information secretly.

Carrying out research with children is usually a difficult task and sometime time consuming. This is because, sometimes they run away when they see that you are interested in asking them questions and not playing with them. This was coupled with the fact that motherless babies homes have their own time-table, in view of that, whether you are through with your assignment or not, once it is time for visitors to leave, you have to leave. Carrying out research in these motherless babies homes was therefore time consuming as the researcher visited these motherless babies homes several times.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language acquisition/development is an aspect of language study that has attracted experts from different fields. As such, while some experts like Skinner (1957) posit that language is acquired via operant conditioning, implying that reinforced responses from children are usually repeated (Ugwu, 1997), others like Chomsky (1959) propounded a theory which state that humans are born with the ability to acquire language (Morrison, 2001). Some others still believe that language is acquired in the context of the society (Santrock, 2007 and Agbedo, 2009). In line with these, theories on how children acquire languages have been propounded.

The fact that all children are not born with equal potentials is not a hidden fact. Therefore while some are born with great potentials, others are born with relatively lesser abilities. Others may equally be born in a relatively deprived environment. Thus, children are born with different potentials and in different environments. As stated earlier, much has been done in the area of language development of normal children in normal environments but less attention had been paid to their counterparts in peculiar environments. This study is an attempt aimed at assessing the language acquisition/development of children in deprived environments. Based on that, the researchersô goal was to ascertain the possibility or otherwise of using the language acquisition/development process of this group of children to throw more light on the language acquisition problem of related group of children such as those in orphanages, and rehabilitation homes. Before delving into this, we reviewed related literature in our field of study. The review was taken up under the following headings:

(a) Theoretical studies
(b) Empirical studies

2.2. Theoretical Studies

Theoretical studies in relation to language acquisition are vital aspects of language studies since they do not only focus on child language but also give useful insight into the origin of language, the link between language and thought, why other creatures do not acquire language and other related topics. Also theories that relate to language acquisition and development were discussed here to broaden our outlook.

2.2.1. Interactionist Theory

Interactionist theory is a mediationist approach in relation to language acquisition. Explaining the history of interactionist theory, Agbedo (2003) and Santrock (2007) observe that decades before the idea was popular, linguists like Chomsky (1957) argued that humans are biologically pre-wired to acquire language at a certain time and in certain way. Chomsky went further to state that children are born into the world with a language acquisition device (LAD), a biological (innate) endowment that enables the child to detect the features and rules of language. On the other hand, Bruner (1996) emphasizes that socio-cultural contexts are vital in child language acquisition/development. Interactionist approach is an approach that finely blends these two opposing schools of thought.

According to Nwachukwu (1995) Interactioninst approach, ñemphasizes that higher levels of development (in language acquisition) emerge out of constructive interactions between innate and environmental factorsò. In line with this view, Tomasello & Slobin (2004) affirm that an interactionist approach emphasizes that both biology (innate abilities) and experience (socio-cultural context) contribute to language acquisition. In support of this stand, Agbedo (2009) points out that the interactionist viewpoint is that all humans can acquire language, provided there is no family history of deviant genetic inheritance, no signs of serious organic defects and there is rich experience of language communication between the child and others, that is, a home background, which indicates that the child has not been deprived emotionally, intellectually, or economically.

He went further to affirm that every human being can develop language given the conditions of normality and minimal exposure to language. Interactionist theory posits that language learning results from the interaction of the learnersô innate ability and their language environment, especially the feedback they receive from fluent speakers to monitor and improve their output. This theory emphasizes the importance of the learnersô language environments and their opportunities to produce language and receive feedback. Without the simulation of that specific language in that specific language-using community according to (Agbedo, 2009), it would appear that the child will not acquire language.

Furthermore, while supporting the view of Lightbown & Spada (1999) on interactionist theory which states that language acquisition is a product of complex interaction of the childôs linguistic environment and the childôs internal mechanism,

Owen, Tong, Jin, & Tarmini (2011) observe that modified verbal language, also called ñmothereseò, is deemed to be crucial in language acquisition. This theory is, therefore, essential in explaining how children acquire language since it sees language acquisition as emanating from both the childôs innate potential and the environment.

2.2.2. Predetermined/ Innateness Theory

The theory as the name implies states that the mechanism/device for language acquisition/ development is innate and as such had been pre-programmed even before the child came into existence. Explaining this theory, Machado (1990) states that language acquisition is considered innate (a predetermined human capacity). Each new being is believed to possess a mental ability that enables him to master any language. This is in line with Chomskyôs (1968) theory which emphasized that each person has an individual language acquisition device (LAD).

In line with this theory, Crystal (1992) argues,

> é Children must be born with an innate capacity for language development; the human brain is ready for language, in the sense that when children are exposed to speech, certain general principles for discovering or structuring language automatically begin to operate. These principles constitute a childôs language acquisition device (LAD).(p. 234)

The child uses the LAD not only to pick the utterances heard within his environment but also to construct complex sentences which he may not have heard.

In this respect, Young (1994) affirms that it is the belief of Chomsky that every person starts life with a predisposition to understand the rules of grammar and meaning. Thus, children are ñwiredò to know without being taught that communication has meaning or that it can affirm, negate, question and command. Beyond the innate deep structure, children have to learn the specific vocabulary and grammar of their language, which Chomsky calls the surface structure.

The theory is plausible since it throws light on the fact that language and the capacity to acquire it is in-born and this explains ñthe uniqueness of language as an essential aspect of human essence (Agbedo, 2003, p. 1). However, the theory is blind to the fact that not all humans come to the world with equal capacity to acquire language. Related to this is the fact that Chomsky failed to take cognizance of the fact that not all environments can trigger the acquisition of language. After-all, Genie (a girl that was kept out of peoplesô view for years) (Santrock, 2007) found it a hard task to speak, even

when she was exposed to language despite all the inherited potentials after she was rescued.

2.2.3. Theory of Learning/ Social Learning Theory (S-R theory)

Theory of learning is an important theory in child language. Though Carnie (2007) Warns that, ñ one of the most common misconceptions about language is the idea that children and adult ólearnô languageò (p. 14), the fact still remains that theory of learning is a vital theory needed to explain how children acquire their native language and simultaneously learn other languages either in the school system or elsewhere. Theory of learning has two approaches namely: the stimulus response theory and the cognitive approach. Only the stimulus response theory will be discussed. The stimulus response theory normally referred to as S-R theory was propounded and popularize by Pavlovôs (Eze, 1998). Parlovôs association theory resulted from an experiment he performed with a dog. Explaining this theory further, Eya (2003) explains how the dog learnt to salivate when a bell was rang. This habit (salivating) was learned through successive pairing of bell and food. The experience led the dog to associate bell with food and therefore to give to bell the response it would give to food.

Thus, the dog through reinforcement and association came to associate the bell with food, signaling that learning which is a change in behaviour has taken place. This is because language, according to behavourist is a type of behaviour and as such while quoting Skinner (1957), Santrock (2007) argued that language represents chains of responses acquired through reinforcement. Just as Pavlov described learning in terms of classical conditioning (Stantrock 2000). Nwachukwu (1995) went further to explain it in relation to the childôs language thus,

> é upon learning the word ñsweetò, a child cannot understand what it means. But after the word, ñsweetò has been paired with the sight of sweet and the taste of sweet, the word ñsweetò begins to acquire the meaning, ñtaste goodò. (p. 279)

Children thus, learn their language through their contact with it. However language is not contacted, learned or spoken in a vacuum. It is used in the society and this explains why this research endeavour favours the social learning theory. The children who are members of the society pick the language through their interaction with other members of the society. This is in line with social learning theory which stipulates that

children learn their language through interaction with members of their families and other groups in the society.

Explaining the social learning theory, Ngwoke (2004) asserts that,

> The social learning theory assumes that the learner is a member of a social groupé very early in family interactions (which includes language), the child identifies with parent as a model and therefore imitates the parenté As the child grows older, he meets and interacts with peers, school mates, members of their church, the immediate and larger society. (p . 49)

The child acquires language through this process because according to Harris (1990), language is, first and foremost, a social process and its utilization implies social understanding and a variety of social skills. Stressing the fact that children learn from their social environment, Essa & Young (1994) affirm that, children learn the meanings of words in the context of their experience in the society. Thus, as children acquire words and understand their meaning, they also learn the societal acceptable rules that govern both the spoken and the un-spoken language.

In conclusion, Ngwoke (2004) states that the social learning theory claims that crucial influence is exerted by key social agents such as parents, teachers, peers, group leaders, adults, and influential figures in the society. The young child thus by looking up to those adult members of the society/peers, copies both their behaviour patterns and utterances. The stand of this theory is clear, as it explicitly explains how children acquire language through reinforcement and other incentives. But this theory is deficient as children are not reinforced always in every speech event, but despite that they continue in their language acquisition task unabated.

2.2.4. Theory of Imitation

The theory of imitation (is one of the language acquisition theories that greatly) values the role of environment in language acquisition. According to Morrison (2001),

> é the content of the language (-syntax, grammar and vocabulary) is acquired from the environment, which includes parents and other people as models for language. Development depends on talk between children and adults, and between children and children. Optimal language development ultimately depends on interaction with the best possible language models. (p. 207)

While stressing on this, Crystal, (1992) explains that children do imitate a great deal, especially in learning sounds and vocabulary. According to Agbedo (2009), children acquire the detailed conventions of a particular language by first hearing and imitating

what adults say and later by inferring the process by which the basic elements are built into complete sentence. Through imitation, the child is able to copy and use the sound pattern produced by adults. In support of the fact that children acquire the language they hear around them, Nwachukwu (1995) goes further to observe that modern researches have shown that young children often learn to name things by hearing someone else name them and then repeating what they hear.

Still on this theory, Agbedo (2009) explains that children have to acquire the detailed constructions of a particular language by first hearing and imitating what adults say and later by inferring the process by which the basic elements are built into complete sentences. Thus the emphasis of this theory is the fact that children copy/repeat the utterances of those around them. In line with this, and support of the views of Berko, (2005), Santrock (2007), Snow & Young (2006) and Tomasellor (2006), opined that the support and the involvement of caregivers and teachers greatly facilitate the childôs language learning to a great extent. Even though this theory is one of the theories of language acquisition acceptable to many experts in the field, Nwachukwu (1995) warns:

> Simple imitation does not appear to explain how children acquire complex patterns of syntax or the ability to express new ideas they have not previously heard. It is these complexities that led a leading learning theory, Albert Bandura to propose that language is acquired through a kind of imitation called abstract modeling. (p. 278)

Children acquire language through abstract modeling because according to Nwachukwu, even when children imitate specific utterances, they abstract from them the general linguistic principles underlying those utterances. This thus explains how children are able to utter utterances never heard before. In actual sense, this theory explains how children through hearing the utterances of others, especially the adult members of the society develop their own language. This theory equally fails to recognize the fact that not all children have equal number of models (adult and caregivers) to learn from.

2.2.5. Behaviourist Theory

Imitation theory hinges on children copying/repeating the sound/utterances made by adults. Behaviourist theory also focuses on the role of reinforcement in child language acquisition. Behaviourism is another theory of language development which favours

environmental influences on child language development. Accepting this idea, Santrock (2000) observed that the father of behaviourism, B.F. Skinner (1957) is of the opinion that language is another behaviour, like sitting, walking or running. In line with this, Agbedo (2003) states,

> Skinner recognized two types of response behaviours - respondent and operant behaviour ï contrary to the classical behaviourist stimulus ï responseé That matches stimulus strictly with corresponding response. By respondent behaviour, Skinner means purely reflex responses to stimulus, that is aspect of behaviour that are elicited by casual agents like the act of sniffing in response to a kind of aroma. Operant behaviour, on the other hand, is behaviour for which no particular stimulation can be designated as the casual agent. (p. 35)

In both classical and operant conditioning, reinforcement is paramount, though the reinforcement may be positive or negative. Santrock (2007) agrees with Skinner on the fact that language represents chains of responses acquired through reinforcement, but he states that as a baby happens to babble ñma ï maò and mama rewards the baby with hugs and smiles, the baby says ñmamaò more and more. Bit by bit, the babyôs language is built up. This view is supported by Nwachukwu (1995) where he states that if these operants are followed by reinforcement, they are repeated and hence strengthened; if not, they tend not to be used again.

The theory has several problems, according to Santrock (2007). This is because according to him, children learn the syntax of their native language even if they are not reinforced for doing so. Worthy of note is the fact that parents and caregivers reinforce both grammatically correct and in-correct sentences. One wonders if this theory has any explanation for how the child retain the correct utterances and throw off the ill-formed sentences, hence the need for a more comprehensive theory in relation to language acquisition.

In conclusion, Agbedo (2009) states that the major problem of this theory is that it focus more on the relation between manôs environment and his behaviour. The theory, thus, concentrated strictly on observable behaviour to conjecture what supposedly goes on inside the organism. He went ahead to state that instead, everything was directly tied to specific stimulus or stimuli experience by the organism and the latterôs resultant outputs. It should be stated herein that everything cannot be directly tied to specific stimulus or stimuli experience, as human being have the power of imagining and thinking of abstract objects and things they never encountered and making their feelings known via utterances they may not have heard before.

2.2.6. Maturational / Normative Theory

Children are seen under this theory as being able to attain any developmental task only when they are ready or ripe for it. According to Machado (1990) ñchildren are seen as moving from one predictable stage to another with órediness ô the precursor of actual learningò (p . 8). Without the child being ready, it may be hard, if not impossible for the child to acquire language. This theory emphasizes that though the child is born with the innate abilities and environmental condition suitable for language acquisition, the child acquires language relatively at the appropriate time. In view of this, according to Essa and Young (2001) careful analysis of how children learn grammatical rules indicates that they are not merely imitating what the adult says, but rather asserts that they are just matured to use such utterances. This equally explains why children are unable to learn/acquire the rules of certain grammar at certain stages of their life. In a study carried out by Bever (1975), he discovered that the child was unable to recognize irregular verbs at certain age and continued to use ñgoedò instead of ñwentò. He therefore concluded that the child was not ñreadyò to use the appropriate word at that stage.

Still on this theory, Machado (1990) asserts that this position (maturation approach to language acquisition) was wildly accepted by linguists who studied children in less than desirable circumstances and discovered consistent patterns of language development among those studied.

This theory also explains how children learn/acquire languages at different levels of development and even in less desirable circumstances. However, it did not pin-point the specific problems that are associated with language development of children in such less desirable circumstances. It also did not recognize the fact that the ability to acquire language even starts before the childôs birth (Machado 1990). The thrust of the present research endeavour however, is on language development of children in less desirable circumstances.

2.2.7. Theory of Intellectual Development.

This theory focuses on the processes children use in constructing their knowledge of the world. Piaget (1954) believes that the underlisted processes are important in intellectual development: schemes, assimilation, accommodation, organization, equilibrium, and equilibration. However, Iroegbu, (2003) observes that the theory of

intellectual development was propounded by Jerome Brunner, an American psychologist and Jean Piaget. Whereas Piaget emphasizes changes in cognitive structure as children move from one stage to another, Jerome Brunner emphasized addition to cognitive structure which children acquire. According to Brunnerôs view, as children develop, they pass through three modes or ways of representing their world. These three modes include; enactive, iconic and symbolic modes.

At the stage of enactive (0 ï 1yr) the childôs representation of words depends on action and as such move round to reach and grasp objects, instead of thinking and looking for the best solution in the absence of language, the child may resort to crying. When the child reaches the iconic mode (1 ï 3yrs) he focuses on objects and forms images, and since language is slightly developed, he gradually leaves manipulation of objects to the use of communication system and can even form memories of past experiences. By 3 -5 years, the child has developed language and as such can use symbols to represent abstract phenomena. Explaining this stage further, Iroegbu (2003), states that symbolization is the process of attributing names to objects. In view of this, language is not only the most important symbolic activity at this stage but transforms the way the child is able to adapt to his environment. With language now acquired, children are able to reason in a logical way and solve complex problems.

Still under this theory, Ugwu (1997) opines that the theory of intellectual development which can also be called cognitive development was propounded by Piaget a Swiss Psychologist. According to him, Piaget is of the view that cognitive development is a continuous process which passes through four stages namely: sensori - motor stage (0 ï 2yrs), pre-operational stage (2 -7yrs), concrete operational (7 ï 11years), and formal operational stage (11- 18years).

While the child learns through his natural reflexes and manipulation of objects at the sensori-motor stage, he can think about objects (and can even value such thoughts), people, actions and other things that are present at pre-operational stage and reason logically even with language at concrete operational stage. At formal operational stage, the child is in the advanced form of cognitive operation in terms of thinking and reasoning and these affect language too.

In the light of the foregoing, it can be seen that intellectual development theory explains not only how children develop and grow in their cognitive domain and abilities but also how they develop in the area of language. This thus explains how children are able to accomplish one linguistic task at one stage but not the other. However, the theory

fits in well only for children in normal environment. As such no provision/explanation was given in relation to children in peculiar environment as well as linguistically challenged children.

2.2.8. Information Processing Theory

Information processing theory focuses on the thought processes that occur within the brain (Ashman & Conway, 1993). This approach shares a basic characteristic with the theories of cognitive development but rejects the behavioural approach which behaviourists favour.

While stressing the view of Munkata (2006), Siegler, (2006) and Siegler & Alibali (2005) which state that, information-processing approach analyzes how children manipulate information, monitor it, and create strategies for handling it, Santrock (2007) explains that, ñeffective information processing involves attention, memory, and thinkingò(p. 241) . In line with the above, Onyemerekya (2003) argues,

> This approach emphasizes the way in which humans think and learn through the acquisition, organization, storage, retrieval and evaluation of information, concepts and thinking skillsé it .can (also) be described as the on-going improvement of personôs system for processing information.(p. 138)

Through effective processing of information, children are able to handle both existential and abstract phenomenon. This is because, according to Santrock (2007), ñIn the information processing approach, childrenôs cognitive development results from their ability to over-come processing limitations by increasingly executing basic operations, expanding informationï processing capacity and acquiring new knowledge and strategiesò (p.241).

The theory is significant as it touches on vital concepts that are needed in information processing and cognitive development of children. These include, the brain, memory, thinking and how new knowledge are acquired. All these are necessary not only for the acquisition of language but also for language development. It thus gives an insight into how children learn/acquire their native languages and even construct sentences which they have never heard before. This theory indirectly affirms the fact that language acquisition/learning is not by rote-learning.

The theory equally relates to both the children in normal and deprived environments. This is because no matter the environment one finds oneself, one would

be able to process information. On the other hand it did not take linguistically challenged children into consideration as some of them may find it difficult to pay attention, think well and remember past experiences and these have serious effect on child language development.

2.2.9. Componential Theory.

Most of the theories treated so far have tried to state how the child acquire his language but did not handle the issue of meaning in childôs language, hence the need to look at a theory that hinge on meaning of utterances. This according to Caron (1992) is under psychological semantics. As it relates to this theory, Clerk (1970) argues that, if the semantic structure of a word is conceived as a set of ñfeaturesò, then the production of an association can be interpreted as an operation consisting of changing, adding, or deleting one or more of these features.

Caron (1992) explains this as simple version of features. This he illustrated with this example: ñMan,òŸ ñWomanò, were the single feature [± male] is changed or inverted. High level of contrastive association is paramount in this theory. The semantic distance between two words can thus be deduced in relation to semantic features which differentiate them. According to Miller (1996) words are perceived as being closely related if they have more semantic features in common.

In relation to child language development, Clerk (1973) observes that this explains the ñover-extensionò which is frequently noticed in young children (application of word to category of objects which are much larger than adult usage). ñCatò can thus be used to refer to any other ñfour-leggedò animal.

The theory is plausible, as it relates to child language development and to how children ascribe meaning to their utterances. However, componential theory is problematic when it comes to objects that do not have appreciable level of relatedness. On this, Caron (1992) states that it may be easy to give the semantic features that differentiate ñhorseò and a ñmareò but difficult to select the semantic features which differentiate a ñhorseô and a ñdonkeyò. In view of this the use of semantic features may pose a serious problem in the area of ascribing meaning to objects not only to children but also to adults. But in childrenôs language, this theory may explain why children generalize a lot in giving names to objects.

2.2.10. Set Theory.

Set theory is a mathematical theory which has not only been applied in many other disciplines but has also been domesticated in quite a number of them. According to Partee, Meulen and Wall (1990) set theory is derived from ñsetò which is, an abstract collection of distinct objects which are called the members of a set, for instance, the set of red objects may include; cars, bulbs, blood-cells, or they may be abstractions of some sort like numbers (e.g.: number seven). The most important thing in this theory is that one possesses some qualities that make the entity belong to the group/set. Size may not play a vital role here and as such collection of objects of varying sizes may belong to the same set. A member of one set may equally qualify to be a member of another set or have another set as a member. Commenting on this, Partee, Meulen & Wall (1990) explain

> é we may arbitrarily collect objects into a set even though they share no property other than being a member of that set. The subject matter of a set theoryé is what can be said about such sets disregarding the actual nature of their members. (p. 30)

Set theory thus is a vital theory in linguistic analysis and more importantly in child language development. This stems from the fact that it is one of the theories that can best explain how children give names to objects. In this vain, while one child sees anybody wearing a white gown as a nurse, another sees any man that is well dressed and stays in an office as a medical doctor and capable of giving injections and administering drugs.

This theory is however, not without its short-comings. Set theory is hailed for explaining how children arbitrarily give names to objects but fails to recognize that at certain stage, children use other parameters to give names to objects. It equally fails to recognize that age/maturation and other things play important roles in the utterances children make.

At this juncture it should be emphasized that even though these theories have their strengths, they also have their weaknesses. In view of this, it should be stated at this juncture that, no theory is good enough to explain language, how language is acquired, learned or developed. Fine blending of different theories is therefore seen as being better in explaining the process of child language acquisition/development.

2.3.1. Language Acquisition, Language Learning and Language development

The terms ñlearningò, ñacquisitionò and ñdevelopmentò are often used interchangeably (Harris, 1990) by experts in the study of language and child language. But on the contrary, Yule (1996) believes that there is a great difference between language learning and acquisition, while Carnie (2007) thinks that it is a misconception to hold the view that children and adults ñlearnò languages. Following levels of disagreements in relation to the meaning of these terms, it becomes very necessary to reach a level of agreement on the meaning of these terms.

Language acquisition or first-language acquisition specifically according to Agbedo (2003) and Malmkjaer (2001) is a term most commonly used to describe the process whereby children became speakers of their native language or languages. Language acquisition thus center on children that are involved in obtaining the language of their people. Though this definition seems to have some short comings since, at times, children may be born outside their native land which may pose a serious problem in relation to acquiring their native language, the fact still remains that it is an accepted fact that only the young human beings acquire their native /first language.

In a more technical definition, Harris (1990) asserts that,

> The term acquisition is more frequently associated with the child mastery of higher-order understanding which cannot easily be reduced to the additive effect of different learning experiences. Thus, a child may be said to acquire the rule of grammar, although it is difficult to see how such rules can be established as a result of numerous discrete learning experiences. (p. 68)

Acquisition of language by children cannot be pinned down in terms of explaining how and what learning experiences are involved before the child achieves any recognizable milestone in his language acquisition task.

Every language is basically made up of basic sounds and how these sounds are combined (Menn & Stoelï Gammon, 2005). These, according to Santrock (2007), include morphology (unit of meaning and word formation), syntax (phrases and sentences), semantics (meaning of utterances) and pragmatics (contextual use of language). Thus language has five basic parts namely; Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics. Furthermore, Rice (1987) attested to the fact that, language consists of four dimensions: the sound system (phonology), the system of meanings (semantics), the rule of word formation (morphology), and the rule of sentence formation (syntax). All these according to him are mastered by children with ease on their own. The effortless acquisition of language by children must have prompted

Leepper, Skipper & Witherspoon (1979) to observe that children discover rules and how language works and learn grammar gradually on their own. In language acquisition, children are capable of picking the language of the immediate environment in an informal environment with little or no help.

Language learning, on the other hand, may have both the young and the old as participants and may require a formal setting. According to Kenstowicz (2005), ña traditional explanation of language learning is that it proceeds by analogy from the most frequent or salient patterns and structureò (p. 1). The fact that what goes on in language learning follows a definite pre-planned pattern explains/supports the fact that it is done in formal setting.

Though Carnie (2007) holds the view that children do not learn language, Crystal (1992) has a contrary view and describes the situation thus:

> When children arrive in school they experience different kind of linguistic world. They meet, for the first time, children from unfamiliar regional, social and ethnic backgrounds, whose linguistic norms differ greatly from their own. They encounter a social situation in which levels of formal and informal speech are distinguished, and standards of correctness emphasized. The educational setting presents them with variety of unfamiliar, subject-related style of language. (p. 228)

From the above, it can be noticed that children not only learn language at school but also find out that formal and informal speeches are distinguished (dialect and standard varieties of a language). Thus children learn not only that other languages exist but also that a standard variety of their local languages exist and as such must be spoken the right way. In bilingual situation however, Agbedo (2009) observes that children that acquire both languages at home are referred to as simultaneous bilinguals while those that learn the second language only when they go to school are called successive bilinguals. The next group is the successive bilinguals that learn a second language without their first language losing its importance for them (additive bilingualism). The last group is the subtractive bilinguals and these are the people that have no other choice but to learn the second language since that is the dominant language in the community.

Adults learn language, especially the second language, though at a slower pace. Explaining this further, Stantrock (2007) affirms that, learning a second language is more readily accomplished by children than by adolescents or adults. This shows that both children and adults engage in language learning or what is technically referred to as second language acquisition. However, the language to be leant seems to be the only

difference. This is because as no emphasis has been laid on the fact that first/native language can be learnt, rather the second language or any other language has been stressed in language learning. Environment could thus be pinned-down as a differentiating factor when it comes to language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition takes place in the native language environment while language learning takes place in a non native language environment.

We shall at this juncture focus our attention on language development. Language development, according to Ervin-Trip (1972), refers to the childôs acquisition of his first language usually under informal and natural condition. Thus, by the end of first four years of life, children have mastered the essentials of this most distinctively human attribute. In a more comprehensive manner, Harris (1990) states that the term ódevelopmentô is amenable to a number of different interpretations with the most general being, ñchanges which occur over timeò. According to him, when development is used in literature of childrenôs language, it usually implies acknowledgement of process over and above learning and underlying continuity with respect to earlier occurring relatively simple abilities and later, more complex abilities.

The complexity of child language development stems from the fact that language development even starts from the womb. Hence, Klaus & Klaus (1985) state that infants in the womb can hear their mothersô voice. Explaining this further, *Development Milestone* (2006) discloses as follows,

> Many researchers believe the work of understanding language (development) begins while the baby is still in uterus. Just as your unborn baby gets used to the steady beat of your heart, he turns into the sound of your voice. Days after birth, heôs able to discern your voice among others. (p. 1)

Those who hold this view, therefore, think that language development does not start at child birth or when the child acquires his first word but rather that it starts earlier when the child is still in the womb.

Commenting on those who believe that language development starts at birth and there-after, Morrison (2001) observes that the idea of a sensitive periods of language development makes a great deal of sense and has a particular fascination for Montessori. The Montessori, according to him, believe that there are two sensitive periods of language development. The first begins at birth and last until about three years. During this time children unconsciously absorb language from the environment. The second

period begins at three years and lasts until about eight years. This time children are active participants in their language development and learn how to use their power of communication.

Whether the foetus starts their language journey in the womb, at birth or later remains controversial, but it is widely accepted, according to Machado (1990), that, ñnewborn and infants are no longer viewed as passive, unresponsive mini humansò (p. 4). They are thus seen as active participants in any speech/communication event.

Regardless of the theory of language development or the school of thought we belong to, Morrison (2001) admits that ñthe fact remains that children develop language in predictable sequences, and they do not wait for us to tell them what theory to follow in their language development. They are very pragmatic and develop language regardless of our beliefsò (p. 207). The sequence/stages of language development continue from childôs cry which begins at birth till the acquisition of two word sentences and pronouns which are acquired by children at twenty four months.

In a more comprehensive study, Santrock (2007) describes how language develops in children in relation to milestone thus,

> Among the milestone in infant language development are crying (birth), cooing (1 to 2months), babbling (6 months),making the transition from universal linguist to language-specific listener(6 to 12months), using gestures (8 to 12 months), comprehension of words (8 to 12months), first word spoken (13 months), vocabulary
> spurt (18 months) rapid expansion of understanding
> words (18 to 24 months), and two words utterances (18 to 24 months).
>
> - Advances in phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics continue in early childhood.
> - In middle and late childhood, children become more analytical and logicalé
> - In adolescence, language changes include more effective
> - use of wordsé ability to understand metaphor and adult
> - literary words. (p. 325)

From the fore-going discussion on language development, it can be seen that language development is all encompassing and includes all that the child goes through in trying to become speaker of his various languages. It can be stated here that though language acquisition, learning and development can not be said to mean the same thing, the fact still remains that there is just a thin line that separates them. This is because children start their language acquisition, learning and development right from the womb (Hopson, 2001 and Santrock, 2007); their language development continues at birth with

child cry and other acquisition schedule (Machado, 1990 and Yule, 1996). Language development is also enhanced by the imitation of adult language which is a form of learning (Crystal, 1992).

It can be seen, therefore, that a childôs language development is facilitated by the acquisition and learning of utterances. Without acquisition and conscious or unconscious learning of language by children, their linguistic ability will never develop. Language acquisition and learning are thus necessary tools needed for childôs language development.

2.3.2. Environment and Language Development.

Babies babble a lot at 3 to 6 months due to biological readiness and not by reinforcement (Agbedo 2003 and Locke, 1993) and about 10 to 13 months, they are able to utter their first words (names of family members, familiar animals, toys etc). These are normally first words babies utter. These are followed by two word statement at 18 to 24 months and by this time according to Schafer (1999); they quickly grasp the importance of expressing concepts and the role of language in communicating with others.

These developments can be achieved because according to Schaffer (1977) the environment in which children find themselves is an intensely social one and as such they become immersed in a network of social interaction. In view of this, according to Harris (1990), while Piaget emphasized the importance of the childôs action upon the world, other researchers have focused on the childôs reactions to other people and the interactions which occur when adult and infant act and react towards each other over a period of time.

The interactions among members of the society support the fact that society is an indispensable element in child language development. Santrock (2007) warns that ñlanguage is not learned in a social vacuumò (p. 318). He states that most children are bathed in language from a very early age due to their association with members of their society, especially their family members. As verbal language is the most public aspect of representation- using culturally agreed sounds and symbols (Brunce, 1991), children acquire it, according to Ugwu (1997), through modeling and imitation of adult who expand and recast children utterances to improve their linguistic ability. Through the

above strategies, children are able to informally develop linguistic ability from their immediate environment. In particular, Agbedo (2009) declares,

> The motherese or caregiver speech facilitates the childôs language acquisition process by providing very explicit linguistic inputs from which the child draws insighitful inspiration regarding the appropriate use of the evolving verbal repertoireé . Parents who engage in and talk about joint enterprise with their children appear to speed their acquisition process more than those that do not.(p. 126)

Supporting the above stand, Leepper, Skipper and Witherspoon (1979) declare as follows:

> Before they go to school, children have much practice with spoken language. Estimate of the number of the words spoken per day by the child range from 7,500 at three years to 10,500 at five. The child has thus developed much of the skill in speaking before he or she receives any formal instruction. Noel states that by the time the child arrives at school age, he or she has already learned to speak with whatever sound system, grammar and vocabulary heard most often at home or in the neighbourhood. (p. 227)

It can, therefore, be deduced that, a child develops his language with the aid of linguistically rich environment. Even though Chomsky (1975), Lock (1999) and Maratsos (1999) believe that there is no convincing way to explain how children quickly learn and develop language other than biological factors, they at least believe that language environment is needed to trigger off language development in all normal children. While relating the view of Pan & Snow (1999) and Snow (1998), Santrock (2001) emphasized that though children are biologically prepared to acquire language, they also benefit enormously from being bathed in a competent language environment from an early age.

But then, the question is what human and non-human elements are needed in this all important bath that is essential in child language development? Parents basically are the most important elements in childrenôs early language development (Santrock, 2007). This must have led Lucchese, & Tamis-Lemonda (2007) to observe that children language development is rooted in the interaction they have with their parents. In line with this, studies had been carried out to find out how family backgrounds affect language development.

In one of such studies, the socio-economic statuses of the parents were examined. In the study, the manner in which socio-economic status is linked with how often parents talk to their children to help in their vocabulary development were specially

chosen for study. As language environments of children whose parents are professionals and those whose parents are on welfares were the main focus of the study which Hart & Risley (1995) carried out. They found out that children whose parents are professionals talk to them more than those whose parents are on welfare. Thus, professional parents provide a richer language environment than their welfare counter-parts.

Still on parentsô influence on child language development, Lucchese & Tamis ï Lemonda (2007) state:

> Countless studies indicate that social risk factors, such as chronic poverty and low parental education, pose serious obstacle to childrenôs early language developmenté researchers, policy makers and educators have been dedicated to identifying and ameliorating the risk factors that interfere with childrenôs language development. Most of these works focused on three major area of risk: poverty, low parental education, and minority status. (p. 1)

From the above, it can be seen that poverty and parentsô educational background pose a lot of problem. While supporting the above discussion, Mcloyd (1990), Guo & Harris (2000) and Hoff (2003) added another risk factor in relation to the issue at stake. According to them parental mental health and thought play a vital role in childrenôs language development.

Mothers basically play a vital role more than any other member of the family. This is not primarily due to the fact that the mother start communicating with the child as a fetus (Klaus & Klaus, 1985 and Hopson, 2001) or respond to contextual cues (e.g. time of last feeding) but due to the painstaking strategy they adopt while talking to their children. Thus, while Morrison (2001) observes that mothers adopt different conversation patterns from the way they discuss with adults, while talking to their children, Crystal (1992) asserts that parents (especially mothers),

> seem to adapt their language to give the child maximum opportunity to interact and learn. [They é do not talk to their children in the same way as they talk to other adult, but the early period for example, there is a great deal of simplification of sentence structure, a high use of question forms, words and sentences are frequently repeated, speech is slower and livelier, and several special words and sounds are used. (p. 33)

All these highly structured characteristics of maternal language are seen in mother and child interactions and are therefore taken seriously whenever childôs early conversation is under study. This is why, according to him, there is now no doubt that the nature and frequency of linguistic features in maternal input is an important factor in any theory of language acquisition.

However, mothers/parents are not alone in this business of helping the child acquire/develop language. This is because while Morrison (2001) reports that ñcaregivers talk to infants and toddlers differently than adults talk to each otherôsò (p. 209), Lucchese & Tami-Lemonda (2007) aver that caregivers, childcare providers and peers play important role in children language development. All these people are essential in child language development because they provide the stimulation necessary for a childôs language acquisition. According to Agbedo (2003) ñwithout the stimulation of that specific language in that specific language-using community, it would appear that the child will not evolve languageò (p. 70). In other, words a child gets attached to its caregivers not only because of the attention it gets from them (Nwachukwu, 1995) but also because of the rich language environment they provide.

Explaining caretaker speech, Yule (1996) states,

> Built into a lot of caretaker speech is a type of conversation structure which seem to assign an interactive role to the young child even before he or she becomes a speaking participanté it has generally been observed that the speech of those regularly interacting with children changes and becomes more elaborate as the child begins using more and more language. (p. 178)

Through this means, those that interact with the child do not only convey their thoughts with symbols (Umano, 1999) to the child but directly or indirectly enrich the childôs language development.

At this juncture, it can be seen that, mothers/parents, caretakers, peers and other neighbours play significant roles in making the childôs language environment rich. However, it should be observed here that the richness or otherwise of the childôs language environment plays a significant role in the language development of the child. Equally, the degrees with which children acquire/ develop language vary, depending on the environment and or human elements in the environment. According to Santrock (2007), children whose parents cum caretakers provide rich verbal environment show that, in the way they communicate with others via the use of acquired vocabulary and other language related behaviours.

This is actually in line with the social interactionist theorists, according to Essa & Young (1994), that ñlanguage is intimately tied to social process ... (which) emerge within the social environment provided by the parentsò (p. 45).

In our contemporary world, most children find themselves not only in communities where more than one language are spoken but equally start school at an early age. This may not pose a problem to the childrenôs language development since in the word of

Harris (1990), naturally, teachers and parents are keen to ensure that the children they care for have every opportunity to develop normal language abilities. The need for the children to learn other languages early stems from the view expressed by Leepper, Skipper & Witherspoon (1979) which states that nations of the world are increasingly aware of the importance of languages in communication between nations of the world. The recognition of this fact has resulted in the heightened interest in teaching foreign languages to young children.

The teaching of different languages in the school makes the childôs linguistic environment richer and complex. It is even more complex to the teacher not only because the children come from different homes/linguistic backgrounds but also according to Rice (1989:154), ñthe teachability of language depends upon the extent to which certain language skills are learnable, the characteristics of individual learner, and the match between learner and teaching strategyò. Though the situation seem to be problematic, Essa & Young (1994) opine that though,

> A single child or a few children from another linguistic and cultural background are often enriched in an early childhood programme, leaving teachers who are not familiar with the childôs language to use their ingenuity in helping such youngsters learn,é more often than not, a less systematic approach is followed, taking cues from the childôs reaction and apparent needs. (p. 325)

Just as teachers are able to handle teaching/learning situations in the classroom, parents and other caregivers should not worry themselves about the heavy load to which their young ones are being subjected to. This is because language tasks are more readily accomplished by children than by adolescents and adults (Santrock, 2007).

From the fore-going, it can be said that a childôs language development is tied to the environment in which the child lives. If the child lives in a linguistically rich environment, then the child will be better off linguistically; else, the child may have problem with his/her language development. To give the child a favourable environment is not only necessary for language development but also for the childôs over-all development. Machado (1990) while supporting the views of Hakuta (1986) and Werner & Smith (1982) states that parenting techniques and home environment of children described as, ñresilient and capableò by researchers may provide clues to optimum language-promoting factors. The home factors or environment that provide fertile

ground for child language and other development in the view of Machado (1990) include;

- Lots of attention by socially responsive caretakers
- Little or no disruption of (bonding) attachment between the infant and his or her primary caregiver during the infantôs first year.
- Availability of space and objects to explore.
- Good nutrition.
- Active and interactive exchanges and play time.
- Parent knowledge of developmental milestones and the childôs emerging skills.
- Parent confidence in infant handling.
- Maintenance of the childôs physical robustness.
- Positive attention and touching in play exchange. (p. 95)

The availability of these home factors makes an environment favourable for language and other development necessary for a child to actualize his or her potentials. But then we know that not all children are privileged to stay, grow and develop in this ideal environment. As noted by Bernard Van Leer foundation (2007), the inability of every child to stay in an ideal environment can be due largely to ñConflict, natural disaster, HIV/AIDS, rising poverty and death are among the issues leading to a growing number of orphans and vulnerable children with little adult care and supervisionôô (p.2). Lamenting on the situation in which these vulnerable children find themselves, *JDPC* (2009) states,

> It is worrisome to experience the almost hopeless situation in which [these] children must live and growé Indeed something has gone wrong with the Nigerian child.[These children] have become endangered species. It seems that both the born and unborn child are exposed to the contemporary culture.... (p. 2)

This type of environment can affect child language development. According to Bymer (1992) a case in point is Genie whose parents never communicated to in words but rather barked and beat instead. Even though Genie stayed with the parents, she did not develop language and even when she was rescued and given extensive rehabilitation programmes, including speech and physical therapy (Curtiss, 1977), she only had stunted language development (Santrock, 2000). It can then be said that the language

development of Genie was impaired due to the unfavourable language environment she found herself. But then, can this be likened to the language environment in the motherless babies homes?

2.3.3. Negotiation for Meaning and Child Language Development

Negotiation is a normal procedure which exists when individuals in the course of their normal interaction want to reach a pedestal or a comfortable ground which is relatively appropriate for the two parties. Negotiating for meaning in relation to language occurs when the speaker pair sentences with the context in which they would be appropriate (Levinson, 1983). An utterance becomes comprehensible only when the hearer deduces the meaning there-in in any speech situation. According to Ndimele (1999):

> Meaning is not a stable phenomenon. An expression can be subject to a number of interpretations depending on the speaker, hearer, or context. So, a phenomenon which is as elusive as meaning cannot be easily investigated with some degree of objectivity.(p. 1)

In view of this, Rhonda (2002) in an attempt to summarize the views of Grass & Varonis, (1985), Long, (1983), and Pica & Doughtyôs (1985) contributions, affirms that a number of studies have been undertaken about the specific form of the modified interaction most commonly referred to as negotiation for meaning. Most of the researchers point to the fact that negotiation for meaning is facilitative of second language acquisition/learning (L2). According to the Rhonda (2002), it is facilitative because it provides language learners with three basic elements crucial for L2 acquisition success. These include comprehensible input, comprehensible output, and feedback.

Some other experts, however, believe that the process of negotiation for meaning exists in child language and also facilitates the acquisition of language by children. In furtherance of this stand, Long, (1996: 451) states that ónegotiation worké triggers interaction adjustments by the NS (native speaker- of which children are inclusive) or more competent interlocutor, facilities acquisition because it connects input , internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention and output in productive waysô. Negotiation for meaning as such is an indispensable aspect of child language and a

veritable tool that aid interaction between children and their peers, on the one hand, and adults, on the other hand.

In the words of Harris (1990),

> Since very often the childôs utterances seem to be prompted by an effort to communicate specific meanings, it has been argued that it makes more sense to describe childrenôs language in terms of the ideas they seem to be expressing, rather than in terms of the inadequate structural devices which they employ.(p. 31)

These inadequate structural devises which they employ are the efforts they put-in in a bid to convey the meaning of their utterances to the hearer (negotiation for meaning).

But then what does negotiating for meaning entail? How does it exist in child language and what role does it play in the development of language by young children. According to Rhonda (2002), negotiation for meaning is tangential to the main focus of the conversation and it has been described as the ñside sequenceò of conversation. It is the side sequence of conversation aimed at driving home the meaning of the utterance to the hearer. It can be likened to the vehicle necessary for the conveyance of the meaning therein in an utterance.

According to Varonis & Grass (1985) negotiating for meaning is a vertical ñpush-downò from the horizontal flow of the conversation and how interlocutors ñpopò back to the conversation when the communication problem has been resolved. The model according to them consists of four parts, namely; the triggers, indicator, responses, and reactions to the responses. Supporting these views, Rhonda (2002) declares that in terms of communication, the process of negotiating for meaning functions as both a means to prevent conversational trouble and a repair mechanism to overcome communication breakdown.

Still on the subject matter, Long (1983) states that negotiation may also include explicit attempts to prevent communication breakdown. Grass & Varonis (1985) are of the opinion that negotiation for meaning include those exchanges within a conversation where there is some overt indication that mutual understanding has not been achieved. Thus, for mutual understanding to be achieved, interlocutors must engage in some overt indication/negotiation for meaning. At this juncture, childôs utterance and how they drive their point home via negotiation for meaning will be focused at.

Negotiation for meaning among children may not resemble that of adults and as such Machado (1990) opines that people who interact with the child should adopt

observable behaviours when speaking or listening to the child as this may be the only clue that may lead them to understand their utterances.

According to Plough & Grass (1993), in an interactive process, negotiation for meaning appears to be affected by the age of the participants and their inherent differences. Negotiation for meaning can take place in an interactive process between children of the same age, and other adults. Specifically, Harris (1990) confirms that children utterances are attempt to give verbal expression to ideas or concept which are already understood in some way. The idea goes with lots of negotiation in the form of gestures to bring the meaning of the utterance to the fore.

At birth, crying may be the only source of communication the child can use to communicate with the outside world. This is because crying, which is also called ñcalling outò, is the only way infants have which enable them to express their need or discomfort (Buchwald, 1984). Cries can be weak or hardy, and according to Machado (1990), each cry style provides a veritable clue not only to what the child needs or does not need at that material moment but also gives insight to the infantôs general health.

Santrock (2007) opines that at 4 to 6 months, the child enjoys, ñtalkingò with you, smiles at you, coos and squeals for attention and has a special cry when hungry. All these have implications and mean a lot in terms of telling the adults whether the child is happy, or need attention of any sort. Commenting on childôs early form of negotiation, *Developmental Milestone* (2006) states,

> Crying is your babyôs first form of communication and one cry doesnôt fit all. A piercing scream may mean heôs hungry, while a whimpering, staccato cry may signal that he needs a diaper change. As he gets older, heôll develop a delightful repertoire or gurgles, signs and coos.(p. 3)

Through gurgles, sign and cooing, the child is able to make the meaning inherent in her utterances known. Though this may not be meaningful in relation to adult language, Harris (1990) states that by taking into account the physical and social context within which the utterance occurred, the meaning can be deduced.

As the child grows, the ability to understand and use words and sentences increases. In the same manner, his ability for negotiating for meaning increases. Young (1994) thus, declares that though the two-year-old children are often referred to as, ñthe terrible twosò they have acquired relatively verbal skills and with gesture and sometimes cries they are able to make their idea known to whoever is with them.

While giving extensive interpretation to the one-word-utterance of the child, Harris (1990) states that the first message might be glossed as, ñmummy [is doing something with the] sockò and the second one as, ñ[this is] Mummy [ós] sockò. (Note that the square brackets indicate aspects of meaning which are not expressed in the surface structure). He went further to state that it is the availability of contextual cues which enable the adult (the childós mother as well as the researcher) to fill in the structural elements which are missing and thus provide an interpretation of the childós intended meaning. Because this kind of description requires the researcher or clinician to infer what the child might be trying to say, it is often referred to as a *rich interpretation*.

Changes in pragmatics also characterize young childrenós language development (Bryant, 2005). While talking about the characteristics of toddlerós language, Machado (1990) describe the speech of young children as being in telegraphic and prosodic. It is telegraphic because many words are omitted because of the childós limited ability to express and remember large segments of information, the most important part of the sentence are usually present. ñProsodicò refers to the childós use of voice modulation and word stress to give special emphasis and meaning. These types of utterances according to Donoghue (1985) ó é are devoid of functional words and resemble messages that adult would send by wire, for instance, óJimmy truckô could represent óthat truck belongs to Jimmyô or óGive me my truckô. Meaning will often depend upon context and intonation of the utteranceôô(p. 37)

Context and intonation serve as tools which the child uses to negotiate for meaning. According to Lee (1979) the child strings two words together in what he describes as real grammar thus, ñreal grammar is concerned with what people do when they talk, and not what they should do, and it consists of the principle of structure and sequence which apply when any given language is usedò(p. 29). Compared with structural approaches to description, Harris (1990) observes as follows:

> The emphasis in semantic description has shifted from reading meaning from the surface structure of the words, and phrases spoken, to using contextual information to infer the childós intentions when speaking. Instead of development being seen as an attempt to master a language system by acquiring rule-based knowledge, growing structural sophistication is seen as a consequence of the childós struggle to make other people understand what she wants to say.(p. 32)

In whichever way negotiation is looked at, Rhonda, (2002) opines that the characteristics of the children influence the pattern of negotiation and interaction (be it

in L1 or L2 acquisition). And as the child negotiates and learns/acquires the L1 and L2, he acquires more words which in turn help in his language development.

From the discussion so far, it can be seen that negotiation for meaning is an integral aspect of the language development of the child. Since language rules involve pragmatics (Santrock, 2007) and since pragmatics rules can be complex and differ from culture to culture (Bryant, 2005), the need for the child to use his language in the society cannot be over-emphasized. This is because it will not only help in his language development but will also make him/her to be on the know of how to use the language at the appropriate situation.

The questions now are, do the children in the motherless babies homes negotiate for meaning just like children in the normal homes? Are their negotiation abilities at different speech and language development milestones at the same level with their counterpart elsewhere? And can their negotiation for meaning lead to ascertaining their language and other problems at the appropriate time?

2.3.4. Education and Child Language Development

Education is actually the act of the utilization of knowledge. In view of the non-quantifiable advantages derivable from the education of the young child, many countries of the world have included it as one of the rights of the young human. Explaining the rational for early education of the child, *NERDC* (2004) states that Nigeriaôs intervention in the early years of childôs learning and development is firmly rooted in the national policy on education which is premised on the effective development of the child into a sound and effective citizen and the need for equality of educational opportunities to all children.

The need for early education of the child prompted the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) to include pre-primary education and the guideline for its operation in the *National Policy on Education*. This thus made the young children who may not have acquired the first word to be enrolled into the formal school system. The question now is, even if it is right to enroll the child so early in school, has it any significant role to play in the language development of the child?

Literacy at nursery or even sometimes at the early primary level is mostly a linguistic process as most of what is done in the school depends on the childôs knowledge of his language. But then since the language ability does not surface before

the child reaches two to four years (Radford, 1990) the implication of this according to Iroegbu, et al (2003) is that children of this age should be taught with very simple words.

The emphasis on how the child should be taught in school is very crucial. This is because as the education of the child starts from the home, children bring a wide variety of intellectual, perceptual, social and motor competencies to language learning (Rice, 1989). In like manner, Johnstan (2006) argues that children equally come into the task of language learning with perceptual mechanisms that function in a certain way. This is because language learning and cognitive development is a unitary process (Kean & Personke, 1976). As such since the child is still acquiring/learning his language, the need to focus on language development becomes prominent in the school and at home.

In line with the above view, Rice (1989) states that the teachability of children depends upon a synergistic balance of interacting skills and knowledge bases. Even though teaching ability should be the main focus of the teacher as a means of enriching the childôs vocabulary, Bowen (1998) warns,

> Children learns at different rates, some are fast language learners and some are slow, so it is best not to compare one childôs language development with anotherôs. The important thing to watch is that language development proceeds steadily not whether it is fast or slow. (p. 1)

Teachers should not however teach the child alone, rather, the teaching should be a collective effort. According to *Bernard Van Leer foundation* (2007),

> What we tend to do is start by talking to parents about how play and sports are part of the development process of the child. We get them to think about how their children first start to perceive sounds, and then to explore and manipulate space and we relate this to learning strategies. We found out that when you take parents through whole process of conceptualizing how their children learn (they realize their importance). (p. 23)

While playing at school, the child has the opportunity of not only having the first group association with people from different places (Gilley & Gilley, 1980) but also have the opportunity of playing with different objects which may not readily be available at home. This is because according to Johnston (2006), materials and social world provide the early bases for interpreting the language the children hear. Thus, children are exposed to other groups and materials in school and these help the child in his language development process.

With such exposure and increase in acquisition of vocabulary, Clark (1993) observes that at pre-school, sentence patterns become increasingly complex and

vocabulary diversified. The child thus becomes ready for the primary school level. This is because, according to Berninger, (2006), Gleason (2004), and Rubin, (2006), children who enter elementary school with small vocabulary are at risk of developing reading problems. This points to the fact that acquisition of relatively high vocabulary is necessary for reading readiness in primary school. In support of this, McGregor, Friedman, Reilly, & Newman (2002) state that this is because world knowledge which is obtained via exposure to different materials affect language skills.

While stressing the inter-relatedness that exists between the acquisition of vocabulary, awareness of structures and reading, Senechal (2006) agrees that accumulated evidence suggest three things;

(i) Children with stronger awareness of the structure to learn, read more easily than children who have weaker or no awareness of this structure. Most importantly, phonemic awareness can be taught prior to grade one.

(ii) Children with stronger vocabulary skill tend to have better reading comprehension skills in grade three. Most importantly, vocabulary can be enhanced at home, in child-care centers and in kindergarten.

(iii) Children with weaker reading skills tend to have less developed self-concepts and tend to read less. This highlights the importance of early interventions to ensure that children start grade one with the necessary skills and knowledge to learn and read. (p. 1)

What the child has learnt at the pre-primary level not only helps him read but also enables him have that necessary change in behaviour which suggests that learning is taking place (Ngwoke, 2004). Santrock (2007) states that the whole-language-approach stresses that reading instruction should parallel childrenôs natural language learning. He goes further to state that reading should be connected with listening and writing skills. When the child acquires the vocabularies/structures, speaks, listens and writes, the fact is that he has achieved a lot in his language development.

However, it must be stated here that the childôs education does not only focus on one language (L1 alone) but includes the learning of two or more languages. This is because just as Machado (1990) explains that exposing the child to two or more languages enhances his language development, Santrock (2007: 313) while quoting Petilto, Kovelman & Harasymowycz (2003) asserts: ñé researches have found that early

exposure to two languages is best ï not only for learning a second language but also foré the learning of other languages as it relates to multi-lingualò.

As we have seen, education brings the child out to the school system where he encounters other materials different from those he is used to at home, meet other people and interact with them, read, listen and write. Little wonder then it may not be wrong to say that education does not only help in language development but also helps the child in the acquisition of other language skills.

2.3.5. Language Impairment and Language Development

Language acquisition usually has different stages or what is technically referred to as milestones and each normal child attains different milestones at relatively the same time. If, however, a child fails to progress at the same level in language development with his peers, what Agbedo, (2008) calls communication disorders may be suspected. According to him,

> communication disorders comprises a wide variety of problems, voice disorders, fluency problems (such as stuttering), aphasia (difficulty in using words sometimes as a result of a brain injury, viral infections, cardio-vascular accident, mental retardation), delays in speech and/or language. (p. 1)

What Nwachukwu (1995) calls delayed speech may also be suspected and as he puts it,

> this expression is used when a childôs vocabulary is smaller than that of his age and his pronunciation is on a more infantile level; such a child is said to have a ñquantitative speech lagò, that means that he speaks correctly or nearly correctly but on a level below that of the norm for his age. (p. 294)

Explaining this further, Harris (1998) states that ña child with language which is less advanced than the language of other children of that age would be regarded as having delayed languageò (p. 99). This group of children could also be referred to as ñlate talkers.ò According to Bowen (1998) ña child is considered to be ña late talkerò if he or she has a spoken vocabulary of fewer than 50 words at 24 months. This does not mean that the 50 words will be pronounced perfectly.

Specifically, NICHY (2009) states, ña childôs communication is considered delayed when the child is noticeably behind his or her peers in the acquisition of speech or language skillsò(p. 1). Thus, the importance of linguistic competence and linguistic

awareness according to Magnusson & Naucler (2008) should be considered among children especially in relation to their peers. *Speech Development and Milestone-Index* (2009) advises that if children show any of the warning signs which indicate that delayed language is suspected, then speech ï language pathologists, who according to Matthews (1972) are concern with diagnosis, treatment and prevention of speech and language disorder, should be contacted.

From the above, it can thus be deduced that delayed acquisition if not properly handled can lead to speech and language disorders/impairments. The areas of language that are most significantly affected by language impairment according to Conti-Ramsden & Botting (1999) vary across individual children and also within the same child over time. Equally, classification cum definition of language disorder and language impairment vary among authors and as such while some state that language impairment and disorder mean the same thing, others have a contrary opinion. In line with the above stand, while explaining language disorder, Agbedo (2003) observes that language *disorders* emanating from malfunctioning of the physiological aspects of man are usually associated with linguistic ability. The observed *impairments* according to him are in the use of those features of language describable in terms of the representational linguistic level of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics.

For Nolen-Hoeksema (2004) , communication disorders,

> é involve deficits in the ability to communicate verbally, because of a severely limited vocabulary, severe stuttering, or an inability to articulate words correctly. Children with expressive language disorders have a limited vocabulary, difficulty in learning new words, difficulty in retrieving words or the right word, and poor grammar. They may use a limited variety of sentence types (only question or declarations), omit critical part of sentences, or use words in usual order. (p. 460)

Communication disorder can thus affect not only the physical quality of utterances in children but also the acquisition and retrieval of words. In the words of Thordardottir (2007), problems that are connected with language acquisition/development should be referred to as specific language impairment. He affirms that Specific Language Impairment (SL1) is diagnosed in children who have evidence of significant developmental difficulty which manifest primarily in the area of language. SLI, according to him, is used to refer to difficulty in aspects such as vocabulary and grammar. Though he states that ñspeechò disorder is different from language disorder, NICHY (2009) technically and in a more comprehensive manner observes that speech

and language disorders refer to problems in communication and related areas such as oral-motor function ï swallowing, drinking, and eating. These delays and disorders range from simple sound substitutions to inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding.

The area of language/speech disorders are complex, based on the above definition/explanation. However, Crystal (1992) chose to call this language handicap. He went further to state that language handicap refers to any systematic deficiency in the way people speak, listen, read, write, or sign that interferes with their ability to communicate with their peers. At one extreme, the handicap may be quite mild, such as minor impediment of pronunciation; at the other, there may be an almost total breakdown of all modes of communication. In every case, we see language to some degree ceasing to function in a natural, spontaneous, and unselfconscious and drawing attention to itself, thus becoming a barrier rather than a means of communication.

Furthermore, Agbedo (2003) classified these disorders as developmental (before birth) and acquired (after birth). Nolen-Hoeksema (2004) states that language disorder is of three types. These include; expressive language disorder, receptive language disorder and mixed receptive-expressive language disorder. On the other hand, Crystal (1992) states that language disorder can be traditionally classified as organic or functional. He went further to state that language disorder can better be classified into production, reception and expressive defects.

No matter the way linguists and other experts classify language or speech disorder/impairment, Harris (1990) observes that a child whose language stands out because it is deficient when compared with the way in which he performs social and intellectual tasks may be regarded as having language deficit and according to Anagbogu, Mba and Eme (2001) such language problems which include inability to speak or to understand speech conditions are usually caused by brain damage. This stand was equally supported by Nwachukwu (1995). He, however, went further to state that speech disorder can also be caused by language retardation. This is because severe mental retardation affects not only behaviour and intellectual abilities but also language abilities.

It can be seen that language impairment is a condition that affect not only language production but also the reception and expression of language. These conditions, thus, lead to speech retardation (Nwachukwu, 1995), language disorder (Agbedo, 2003) and communication disorder (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2004). All these language conditions affect

language acquisition/development negatively. This is because language disorders/impairments are conditions that retard and impede the acquisition and learning of language by the child.

Language disorder in the child is an absorbing subject which touches on many clinical disciplines, yet it has been curiously neglected medically (Martin, 1980) educationally and even by experts in different fields of linguistics. Even when researches are carried out, they mainly focused, according to Tannock (2006), on impairment in structural aspects of receptive and expressive language skills and accord little attention to the outcomes of impairments in pragramatic aspects (the appropriate use of language within social, situational and communicative contexts). However, Agbedo (2007) states thus,

> Psycholinguistic researchesé currently aimed at investigating into varying degrees of language deficits technically referred to as aphasia, which arise either from pathological failure to acquire language or the complete/partial loss of previously acquired language abilities due to a number of factors.(p. 52)

Ervin-Tripp (1972) opines that these are defects of symbolic formulation. The defects in his view may be both expressive and receptive types. Although defects of symbolic formulation are often categorized as either expressive aphasia or receptive aphasia, in actual sense most patients who have difficulty with symbolic formulation have some difficulties in both the expressive and the receptive realms. Stressing the complexities associated with language disorders further, Tannock (2006) observes as follows:

> Nonetheless, it is important to understand that speech and language impairment may also occur as secondary difficulties to a primary condition such as autism, hearing impairment, neurological impairment, general development difficulties, behavioural or emotional difficulties, psychological adversity (e.g. adverse rearing conditions associated with growing up in poverty or orphanages, refugee camps or war zones). (p. 1)

The above excerpt not only attests to the fact that language impairments/disorders can either be primary or secondary but also emphasize the fact that it can be due to psychological adversities and environmental factors. Thus, as language impairment/disorder is of great interest to the present researcher, language impairment will be treated at the two fronts - the primary and secondary conditions.

Most often, aphasia is usually the language disorder that is mostly discussed whenever language disorder or impairment is studied. According to Agbedo (2003) even

though aphasia can be defined in various ways by various authors, it is a disorder of symbolic formulation and expression as a result of brain damage. In his view, this broad definition embraces any difficulty a patient has with symbolic function including the inability to use symbols (asymbolia) as well as cognitive and general personality problems. Santrock (2007) simply states that aphasia is ña loss or impairment of language after brain injuryò (p. 316). Aphasia can result from injuries at either the Brocaôs area or the Wernickeôs area of the brain. Both are at the left hemisphere and since according to Gaillard, et al, (2004), Gazzaniga, Ivry & Mangun (2002), Nagano & Blumatin (2004) and Santrock (2007) evidence suggest that language processing primarily occur in the left hemisphere, brain damage which affects the area result in aphasia.

According to Ugwu (1997), this condition is a receptive or expressive language disorder in which a child fails to comprehend the spoken or written words or to express himself in the language of his environment. The retarded language development of such a child cannot be attributed to partial hearing or poorly functioning speech organs but language learning disability.

Explaining the two types of disorders, Matthews (1972) observes that individuals with receptive aphasia may be able to hear a speaker say the word ñchairò but will not be able to translate the sounds in this word into the concept of a piece of furniture on which a person may sit. They may be able to see and recognize each of the five letters used in writing the word ñchairò but be unable to translate the written letters into the concept of a chair. The individual with an expressive type of aphasia may know what a chair is and be able to pronounce all of the sounds in the word ñchairò but be unable to put this sound together so that they become a recognizable symbol of the concept ñchair.ò

Despite the fact that authors define aphasia as total or partial loss of language abilities, Agbedo (2003) warns that in the strict sense, aphasia is used to denote ñtotal lossò as against dysphasia which is ñpartial lossò of language abilities. Aphasia according to him is of two types namely - developmental/childhood or infantile aphasia (referring to the impaired development of language in childhood) and acquired aphasia (the loss of previously attained normal adult language).

Aphasia is not only associated with speaking as we also have dyslexias which are disorders in reading and writing. According to Steinberg & Sciarini (2006) there are many sorts of dyslexia, one category is due to damage to the brain, after reading and writing have been acquired. With children, however dyslexias may be observed while

they are in the process of acquiring reading and writing skills. These groups of children may only be able to write backwards (deer as reed) or upside down, or in reading, they may confuse letters (b with d, p with q, u with n, m with w) and engage in other anomalies. Specifically according to him, dyslexia is of two types, alexia (disorder in reading) and agraphia (disorder in writing).

Next is dysphasia which according to Agbedo (2003) is a partial loss of language ability. This condition can be acquired or can result due to retardation. Arguing this out, Ingram (1974) points out as follows:

> Acquired dysphasia implies the loss of acquired language functions and therefore a birth- injured child cannot be described as having lost language functions, but more accurately as showing retardation of speech and language development. If a child suffer serious brain insult at the age of two to three years, there is likely to be both impairment of language and thereafter slowing of speech development. (p. 66)

Fundudis, Kolvin & Garsidewent (1980) went further to identify four developmental speech disorder syndromes (dysphasia) under the heading, Specific Development Speech Disorder (SDSD) as follows:

(I) Mild (dyslalia)

(II) Moderate (developmental expressive dysphasia)

(III) Severe (developmental receptive dysphasia, word deafness)

(IV) Very severe (auditory imperceptions, central deafness)

These groups of children (those that suffer from SDSD) are misnomers and in some cases their speech development are not only retarded but deviant.

Stuttering or stammering is another speech disorder and according to Ugwu (1997) ñthis is a disturbance in the rhythm, or fluency of speech, characterized by pauses or hesitance, repeated or prolonged sounds, and extraneous soundsò(p.105) In line with this, Alms & Risberg (2006) state that stuttering is a frequent speech disorder, which, if persistent often has far reaching psychological and social effects on the affected persons.

According to Alms (2004), Craig, Hancook, Tran & Craig (2003), Ezrati-Vinacour & Levin (2004), Guitar (2003) and Oyler (1994), stuttering can be due to psychological or physiological factors. Continuing, Alms & Risberg (2006) while stating that it is possibly due to psychological factors (anxiety) and a ñsensitiveò temperament, Guyton & Hall (1996) observe that a psychological factor/agent known to affect the level of neuromuscular reactivity is calcium: the excitability of the nervous system is directly related to the level of calcium in the blood, as such, low calcium can lead to low

tetany. Low level of calcium leads to reduction of the plasma concentration (of calcium) which invariably makes the nervous system more excitable. This was why Costa, Antoniae, Berghianu & Marinescu (1986) had to report that there is low calcium in a group of stuttering persons, especially for the level of free, ionized calcium.

Equally, magnesium is required for the function of more than 300 enzymes (Burties & Ashwood, 1999) and as such reduction of the plasma magnesium concentration results in decreased threshold for signal in the nervous system, with increase nerve condition velocity and neuromuscular excitability (Alms & Risberg, 2006). This condition thus makes the patience emotionally reactive and sensitive temperament resulting in disordered speech.

Dysarthria is another speech disorder which results from the inability of the patient to control the muscles that help in speech production. In this respect, Harris (1990) reports as follows:

> Dysarthria arises from the difficulties with the control of speech musculature. They give rise to drooling, slow and uncoordinated oral movements and abnormal tongue protrusion during early infancy, and subsequently, slow speech and more general language delay. Misarticulations occur most frequently in consonant clusters and slightly less often in single consonants and diphthongs. (p. 229)

Majority of errors noticed among sufferers are distortion or omission rather than substitutions and individual children tend to produce consistent errors. Explaining this condition further, Agbedo (2003) states that dysarthria is a term given to series of motor speech disorder arising as a result of damage to the nervous system, and manifested by neuromuscular disability. He classified this condition into ataxic and spastic dysarthria. Ataxic dysarthria is derived from ataxia which is a general disorder characterized by tremors and general lack of muscular coordination which results from damage to the cerebella system. Crystal (1980) states that spastic dysarthria is a condition in which a limited and frantic muscular movement produces words with imprecise articulations, slurred sequencing, erratic pauses, flat prosody and often accompanying facial grimaces. Though these symptoms may not be noticed at early childhood, they can be observed more easily as the child grows and uses language. However with closer observation, facial grimaces and other abnormal gesture can be noticed even at the early childhood.

Significantly differing from the above definition is another disorder referred to as Apraxia. According to Harris (1990) apraxia is a condition in which the child has normal movement for chewing, sucking and swallowing, but abnormal movement during speech

production. Articulation errors occur erratically among patients and these may include sound reversals, additions, inappropriate repetition, as well as distortions and substitutions. The problems are basically associated with expressive language skills and most often comprehension is not usually affected.

Agnosia is a disorder which is not directly a language disorder but directly affects language negatively. According to Agbedo (2003:151) Agnosia is a generic term used whenever the brain apparently lacks the ability to recognize familiar objects. In this regard any of the senses can be affected-visual agnosia (i.e. Inability to identify visual stimuli) tactile agnosia (or astereongnosis) referring to inability to identify object by touch, and auditory agnosia denoting inability to recognize and differentiate sounds, words etc. All these conditions negatively affect language since the ability to recognize objects via all the senses not only aid language acquisition but also the retention of what is acquired.

One other disorder which affects language and other aspect of child development is Autism. Nolen Hocksema (2006) states that it is a pervasive developmental disorder which produces disorders in several areas of development. The lasting impairments are in area of social interaction, communication with others, everyday behaviours, interests and activities. Many who suffer from this disorder also show some level of mental retardation. Autistic children may not smile and coo in response to their caregivers or initiate play with their caregivers, the way most young infants do. According to Gillberg (1991) approximately 50 percent of autistic children do not develop useful speech.

Schizophrenia is another speech disorder which indirectly affects speech direction. Barlow & Durand (1999) disclose that schizophrenia is one of the disorders that involve psychotic behaviour. Carpenter (1994) on the other hand observes that the negative symptoms affect speech and motivation. Also penciled down as symptom of this disorder are rambling speech, and erratic behaviour. Thus, the disorder affects negatively the patientsô behaviour and speech and as such discussion with such persons may be frustrating (Barlow & Durand 1999).

An impairment which remotely relates to language but can affect language acquisition and development is hearing impairment or what is generally regarded as deafness. According to Crystal (1992) there is no single phenomenon of deafness, but wide range of kinds and degree of hearing impairments. Sometimes, hearing impairment does not entail that an individual must be totally deaf as Lenden & Flipsn (2007) report that some individuals with some hearing impairment tend to produce each words

separately as opposed to the continuous, overlapping flow found in normal hearing speakers. In support of this, Crystal (1992) concludes that most deaf people have some degree of ñresidualò hearing. However, he states that about 1 in 1,000 children have a hearing loss that is present at birth, or acquired soon after. In view of this, Ugwu (1997) advices that;

> Teachers should realize that the first thing to do when they notice or suspect that a child has a language problem is to subject him to a hearing test as a minimal hearing loss can retard a childôs ability to acquire spoken language.(p.106)

Hearing test in his view can be carried out through behavioural audiometry like the use of rattlers, watch tick, coin click and thumb.

Even though this study focuses on children in motherless babies homes, the need to find out if there are children in these homes with language impairment at the early stage is necessary. Discovering children with these language impairments and other problems is necessary, because early detection is necessary if any meaningful help can be rendered to these children to ensure that the problem is either corrected or at least relieved. Stressing this further, NICHCY (2009) observes,

> Because all communication disorders carry the potential to isolate individuals from their social and educational surroundings, it is essential to find appropriate timely intervention. Though many speech and language patterns can be called, ñbaby talkò and are part of a young childôs normal development, they can become problems if they are not outgrown as expected. In this way an initial language delay in speech and language or an initial speech pattern can become a disorder which can cause difficulties in learning. Because of the way the brain develops, it is easier to learn language and communication skills before the age of 5. When children have muscular disorders, hearing problems or development delays, their acquisition of speech, language and related skill is often affected.(p. 3)

The above explanation, thus, affirms that language impairment does not only point to the fact that a child may have other problems but also indicates the presence of some negative indices in the childôs overall development. This is because language has a strong link with cognition and overall development of the child. Rice (1998), thus, argues,

> If children cannot master the fundamentals of language during their preschool years, they are greatly at risk for educational achievement, particularly for reading skills. Furthermore, their limited verbal skills affect

> their social skills. It is difficult for a youngster to win an argument over a desired toy if he or she cannot negotiate verbally. (p.154)

This argument does not only support early language development/intervention (where there are problems) on the child but also remotely stresses the fact that non acquisition of the appropriate language at the appropriate age has great implication on the child. It also points to the fact that language has great link with cognition and the society that uses it. We shall now focus attention on language, thought/mind and the society/culture.

2.3.6. Language, Thought and Culture.

The relationship that exists between language, thought and culture has always been a controversial topic among psycholinguists, psychologists, philosophers, experts in education and people in other fields. According to Steinberg and Sciarini (2006),

> People throughout the ages have wondered whether speech or language is necessary for thought. Can we think without language? Does language influence culture? Does language affect our perception of nature? Does language affect our view of society and the world? (p.177)

These three concepts (language, thought and culture) are very necessary when discussing child and adult languages. While reacting to the extent of relatedness that exists among the three concepts, Obuasi (2006) observes that ñman thinks, reasons, communicate in language, which shapes his world view. Man is therefore shaped by language as an aspect of his cultureò(p. 170). This is in line with Whorf (1956) who argues that language actually determines the way we think. Santrock (2000) goes further to state that ñWhorfôs linguistic relativity hypothesis state that language determines the structure of thinking and shapes our basic ideasò (p. 277). In the light of above discussion, it can be seen that language not only shapes the thought but also determines what we think and do as a society. Akpuru-Aja (2008) caps it up by stating thus,

> Language is the keynote of culture. Without it, culture does not exist. It is the medium of language that conveys the societal thoughts, political thoughts, military thoughts, strategic thoughts, economic thoughts and religious thoughts from (a) individual - to individual, and (b) from generation to generation.In line with the above, it can be said that language and culture are not only essential for human essence but also shapes oneôs views of reality. Therefore the three are interrelated.(p.2)

Nwachukwu (1995) while writing on language and thought, states that different theories of language acquisition propose different views of the relationship that exist between. According to him, while Piaget states that development in thought is precondition for language development, Chomsky insists that, language and thought are independent of each other. Lev Vygosky, on the other hand, opines that language and thought arise independently but fuse in early childhood to create specifically human modes of thinking and communication.

This brings us to the fact that there are three schools of thought, those that think that language development hinges on the extent of development of thought/mind, the other group that thinks that language and thought are independent of each other and those who believe that both develop independently and fuse in such a way that their development becomes inseparable. In early childhood, for example while the mind/thought and language develop separately from birth, at a certain stage in the childôs development what accrues to both thought and language acquired need to be stored for effective development and at this time there is no way one can develop independent of the other according to the third school of thought.

In a broader way, Steinberg and Sciarin (2006) explain that there are four principle formulations (some overlapping) concerning the relationships of language, thought and culture which have been expressed over the centuries. These include,

> **Theory 1: Speech is essential for thought.** We must learn how to speak aloud, otherwise we cannot develop thinking.
>
> **Theory 2: Language is essential for thought.** We must learn language, how to produce or understand speech, otherwise we cannot develop thinking.
>
> **Theory 3: Language determines or shapes our perception of nature.** The learning of language will determine or influence the way we perceive the physical world, visually, auditory, etc.
>
> **Theory 4: language determines or shapes our world view.** The learning of language will determine or influence the way we understand our culture and the world. (p.179)

The above stand on four principle formulations must have prompted Umeano (1999) to note that, ñlanguage makes the translation of thought into a shared symbolic system possibleò (p. 55). Caron (1992) reasoned that language has a purely mental reality. And the mental reality exists only by virtue of the activity of speech by which it is generated. Nonetheless, language is neither a simple external object nor a purely

mental activity but rather a connection of the two. Language therefore cannot proceed independently without thought and vice vasa.

From the light of the fore-going Santrock (2000) inquires, ñDoes language influence the way you think? Does thinking influence the nature of your language?ò(p. 277). Reacting to these questions, Steinberg and Sciarin (2006) state that the theory which states that speech is essential for thought is a view that thought is a kind of behaviour that originates from speech production. Thought can thus be defined as sub-vocal speech or behaviour.

The above view is typical of what behaviourists believe in. Little wonder then Skinner (1957) declares,

> the simplest and the most satisfactory view is that thought is simply behaviour - verbal or nonverbal, covert or overt. It is not some mysterious process responsible for behaviour but the very behaviour itself in all the complexity of its controlling relations, with respect to both man, and the environment in which he lives.(p. 449)

In a relatively simple illustration, Bloom (1961) explains thus,

> The fully literate person has succeeded in reducing this speech movement to the point where they are not even visible. That is he has developed a system of internal substitute movement which serves him for private purpose, such as thinking and silent reading in place of service audible speech sound.
> (p.31)

According to Steinberg & Sciarin (2006) some experts have some objections to the above stated relationship that exists between language and thought and state:

(1). that children having no speech production can comprehend speech and think,

(2). that speech comprehension, which implies thought develops before speech production in normal children,

(3). simultaneously, speaking aloud while thinking about something different occurs in everyday life,

(4). Telling a lie,

(5). Meaning and thought occur without behaviour. (p.180)

From above, it can be reasoned that if language is a type of behaviour which can be verbal or non-verbal, and if there exist, written and sign language and if speech production and speech comprehension are all essential in language acquisition and use,

then these objections may just be pointing to the complexity of human thought and language.

As it relates to children Agbedo (2007) states :

> In the case of the relationship between language and thought, Vygotsky believes the two stages are separate and distinct at least until about the age of 2, when they coalesce into one system that serves to initiate a new form of behaviour. The separate and distinct origins of language and thought processes derive from the fact that in child development, there is a stage of vocalization and verbalization that does not involve thought at all. The two processes emerge and develop independently until they meet at a particular point in the child maturational development when they combine forces and begin to act mutually on each other.(p. 22)

Language and thought thus, develop separately at the beginning but at a later age in the childôs development, such individual development becomes extinct.

Some other experts do not actually hold the view that language and thought relate as explained above. According to Saeed (2007) ñwe can identify two main types of argument used to support this view. The first is that there is evidence of thinking without language; and the second is that linguistic analysis has shown us that language under specifies meaningò (meaning is richer than language) (p.43). In support of the first argument, Pinker (1994) states that thought and language are two different things which must not work together always. According to him, thought processes, such as remembering and reasoning, which have been identified in psychological studies of human babies and of primates, both provide evidence of creatures without language. Such evidence for mental processes not involving language, according to Saeed (2007), is often used to argue that cognition processes do not employ a spoken language like English or Arabic but rather make use of a separate computational system in the mind: a language of thought. Stillings, Weisler, Feinstein, Garfield & Risland (1995) must have thought in like manner when they aptly state that memory and processes such as reasoning seem to make use of a kind of propositional representation that does not have the surface syntax of a spoken language like English.

Explaining this especially, as it relates to both adult and children, Steinberg & Sciarini (2007) assert that the notion of ñthinking in languageò is a fallacy. They then state as follow,

> It is often observed that sound forms of words come from oneôs awareness while one is thinking. It is a mistake, however, to conclude from this that the sound forms themselves are thought. Such word forms are merely reflection of some underlying ideas. It is thought that determines the selection of word

> forms. As children, we learn to encode thoughts into language and then into acoustic speech. Because we discover that in order to interact effectively with people, we must be instantly ready to express our thought into speech, we consequently develop a habit of converting thought into speech at a mental level. It is this mental sound form that we sometimes become aware of when we think. The connection from particular thought to mental language and then physical speech are mainly automatic and it is only with conscious effort that we do not say everything that we think. (p.197)

Though there is a contradiction in the above statement because just as they seem not to accept the fact that people think in language, they later concluded that thought which is in form of mental language get converted to physical speech which we communicate. However, our main point here is not on the supremacy of thought over language or vice versa but on the fact that they are strongly tied together.

Language and thought are usually tied to peoplesô way of life (culture). Sapir (1949) states as follows:

> Language is a guide to ñsocial realityòé Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the word of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their societyé the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built up on language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different society live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attachedé We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habit of our community predispose certain choices of interpretationé from this stand point we may think of language as the symbolic guide to culture. (p.162)

The above quote supports the fact that not only are language, thought and culture related but also that language which is an aspect of the peopleôs culture shapes the peopleôs worldview. This view is consistent with Worfôs (1956) hypothesis, which states that, ñlanguage determines the structure of thinking and shapes our basic ideasò. In line with this hypothesis, Santrock (2007) observes that our cultural experiences affect the way we think. However, a critic of Whorfôs theory says that, words merely reflect (our thought), rather than cause, the way we think. Santrock (2007) thus observes that, there is evidence of linkage between language and cognition.

Even if we cannot agree that language shapes thought, we can at least accept that language which is an aspect of the peopleôs culture has great influence on whatever we do as humans. Since language classifies humans into communities (speech communities)

and equally helps to push our culture from generation, to generation, it can be said that language influences virtually all we do as humans. Akpuru-Aja (2008) states that;

> Language is a strategic asset because, plans, whether blue prints, rolling plans, developmental plans, grand plans or national vision are both oral and written. Without language, events have no value or meaning. Events do not have history and lessons. He opines that, with language,
>
> - we can apply reasons to the world reality
> - we can think and reason logically from premises to conclusion
> - we can categorize
> - we can strategize power game
> - we can order our experiences , contemplate the past and the future
> - we can abstract and hypothesize and can formulate ideas or policies that are entirely new
> - we can control, command, and exercise leadership. (p. 3)

If through language, all these are possible, then it can be said that language, as part of the peopleôs culture, shapes oneôs view/worldview. Or do we say that culture (which language is an indispensable aspect of it) shapes the peopleôs view and thus determines how they think?

As children are part and parcel of the society, they equally want to belong. Right from birth, they want to communicate their feelings via crying and gestures. To help the child have all round development, Essa & Young (1994) support the fact that language is essential for the childôs mental development and integration into the society. To facilitate this, they advised that almost every aspect of the childhood environment and programme should facilitate language acquisition/development.

This is true because, according to bucket theory, ñour mind is a bucket, which is originally empty, or more or less, and into this bucket, materials enter through the sensesé ò (Popper, 1972, p.61). At birth therefore, the child could be said to have no language, no thought and no culture. Through language and other environmental influences, children become rich in knowledge (thought) and as such think, behave and see the world in line with their people.

However, for the deprived children in the motherless babies homes, the questions we need to ask now are; (i) do they have the right environmental factors that will help them develop the language of their speech communities? (ii) Is the extent of their language acquisition adequate for them not only to develop as other normal children in homes (in terms of knowledge and experience) but also to compete in school and other childhood related experiences? (iii) Even if they acquire the ñrightò language just like other normal children and have the same knowledge, can the level of their language

acquisition and knowledge be enough to help classify them as belonging to a particular speech community and behaving in line with the dictates of the cultural pattern of the community?

2.4. Empirical Studies

As noted by Ervinï Tripp (1972), a childôs knowledge of his language is basic to his intellectual and social development. Ervinï Tripp also observes that studies of child language development are in three phases,

> é studies in the nineteenth century consisted primarily of parental diaries. Authors trained in linguisticsé have continued to use case studies. More than any other form of behaviour, language reveals obvious internal patterning, and linguists have been loath to lose sight of these patterns by pooling quantitative measures of output. In the second phase of research carried out by psychologists, standardized measuring methods of large samples were emphasizedé For the most part these studies have been atheoretical. A landmark in modern research was Veltenôs (1943) application of Jacobsonôs (1941) theory of phonemic development .The theory proposed that changes in each child language system followed an orderly sequence of increasing differentiation of significant featuresé (p. 75)

Subsequent researches, particularly on phonology and grammar, according to the Ervinï Tripp, are products of the meeting of psychology and linguistics.

In recent time, a number of linguists, psychologists, educationists and even experts in medical fields and a number of others that have interest in studying the young childôs language development have carried out studies in child language acquisition/development and the results of these studies will form the basis of the discussion in the review that follows. Studies that relate to language acquisition/development start before birth. While corroborating the views of other researchers, Hopson (2001) states that the unborn child can hear, learn and respond to sounds (especially language). He then reports as follows;

> A very premature baby entering the world at 24 to 25 weeks respond to the sound around it, é so itôs auditory apparatus must already have been functioning in the womb. Many pregnant women report a fatal jerk or sudden kick just after a door scams or a car back fires. (p.79)

Explaining how this study was conducted, Benzaquen, et al (1990) state that a microphone was inserted into the uterus of a pregnant woman to see if speech sounds

could reach the ear of the foetus despite the background sounds of the womanôs heartbeat and blood flow. It was found that not only could sound outside the womanôs body be heard by the foetus but that it could detect the motherôs speech sound from both the background sound and other external sounds. In view of this, Fifer (2001)declares that the feotal heart rate slows down when the mother is speaking, suggesting that the fetus not only hears and recognizes the sound, but that it is calmed by it.

According to Hopson (2001), in the 1980ôs, psychology Professor Anthony James Decasper, and colleagues at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, deviced a feeding contraption(a piece of equipment) that allows a baby to suck faster to hear one set of sounds through headphones and to suck slower to hear a different set. With this technique, Decasper discovered that within hours of birth, a baby already prefers its motherôs voice to a strangerôs, suggesting it must have learned and remembered the voice consciously from its last month in the womb. Hopson went on to state that more recently it was found out that not only do newborn babies prefer a story read to them repeatedly in the womb to a new story introduced soon after birth but also that they prefer to hear *mum* speaking in her native language than hear her or another person speaking in a foreign tongue.

Still on the newborn, another experiment was conducted by Lecanuet, Granier-Deferre and Busnel. In the study, Lecanuet, et al (1989) positioned a loudspeaker next to a pregnant woman. Two experimental groups were used by them and were presented with sound sequences in different orders. One group was exposed to /babi/ + /biba/ while the other group was presented with /biba/ + /babi/ (i.e. in a reverse order). According to Steinberg & Sciarini (2006), after a number of presentations to the two experimental groups, the two sound sequences were played in varying orders to both groups of women and measurements were taken.

It was found that the measurement of the fetusesô heart rate showed a differential effect for the two groups during the testing period. According to Steinberg & Sciarini (2006), the heart rate of the fetus was higher when the sequence they were trained on was played. The effect of the motherôs voice on the fetusôs intrauterine listening may explain post-birth listening preference of the newborn to the motherôs voice and for the language the mother spoke when she was pregnant.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that not only do newborn babies hear and recognize speech sounds/languages right in the womb but that they also recognize the voice of at least the mother and remember the stories that were told/read to them in the

womb. This suggests that not only do development of thought and language start in the womb but that a foetus can filter noises heard in the womb and pick what was read to them.

The studies did not however go further to state what happens to children who develop language problems (developmental aphasia) before birth. As a child recognizes his/her motherôs voice in the womb, the studies did not go ahead to study the effect the non-availability of the mother after birth could have on a childôs language development. Thus, the deprived children and children that have language and other related problems were not studied either in the womb or thereafter, thus the need for this research.

Different studies that point to landmark achievement or language acquisition milestones have also been identified by different experts. At birth, the child continues with the language acquisition/development task. As such many experts in psycholinguistics, psychology, education and even pediatricians have shown interest in studying the childôs language development. Two pediatricians Capute & Accardolo (1978) having studied children language development came up with a table that does not only specify the language acquisition stages, but also state the number of words that can be acquired by the child based on his age (milestones). This they caption; language development in infants and toddlers. Here then is the table:

Months of Age	**Language**
Birth	Crying
1½	Social Smile
3	Cooing (Long pure vowel sound)
5	ñAh-gooò (the transition between cooing and early babbling)
5	Razzing (child places tongue between lips and produces a ñraspberryò)
6½	Babbling (repetition of consonant sounds)
8	ñDada/Mamaò (inappropriate)
10	ñDada/Mamaò (appropriate)
11	One word
12	Two words
14	Three words
15	Four ï six words
15	Immature jargoning (sounds like gibberish: does

not include any true word)

18 Seven ï twenty words

18 Mature jargoning

21 Two word combinations

24 Fifty words

24 Two words sentences

24 Pronoun (I, me, you; used in appropriately) (p. 848)

The above study is significant not only because it recognized the fact that ócryingô is the first step in language acquisition but also because it recognized gesture/social smile as being important in language development of the child. The study also recognized the different milestones among children between 0 to 24 months (2 years). According to Capute & Accardolo, normal children acquire language at the same rate.

While supporting the above studies, Morrison (2007) notes;

> Regardless of the theory of language development we choose to adopt as our own, the fact remains that children develop language in predictable sequences, and they donôt wait for us to tell them what theory to follow in their language development. They are very pragmatic and develop language regardless of our belief.(p. 207)

Capute & Acredolo (1979) efforts focused on the study on language acquisition by children. However, they fail to acknowledge the fact that not all children develop at the same rate since there are some that have ódelayed languageô development. They also fail to capture children who are in linguistically disadvantaged environment and those that are linguistically challenged. These are actually the domain of the present research work.

In the study referred to above, we saw that social smile starts developing in children even at 1½ months. Many researchers have thus focused on studying gesture as it relates to the young child. In one of such studies Acredolo & Goodwyn (1986) report that researches have aided us to understand that gestures and signs (signal) occur in tandem with early vocalizing.

Furthermore, Machado (1990) studied children whose parents were interested in communicating with non-verbal as well as verbal labels. The parents, according to Machado, informally concocted signs on the spot for new events without any reference to a formal sign-language system. The figure below describes the signs and gives the age the signs appeared in the childrenôs communicative behaviours and the age the children said the word represented by the signs. The lists of signs shown below are the signs the

child learned with or without the parentsô direct teaching. The details of their findings were summarized in this table:

Table (i)

SIGNS	DESCRIPTION	AGE OF SIGN ACQUISITION MONTHS	AGE OF SIGN ACQUISITION MONTH
Flower	Sniff, sniff	12.5	20.0
Big	Arms raised	13.0	17.25
Elephant	Finger to nose, lifted	13.5	19.75
Anteater	Tongue in and out	14.0	24.0
Bunny	Tongue up and down	14.0	19.75
Cookie monster	Palm to mouth plus smack	14.0	20.75
Monkey	Hands in armpits, up-down	14.25	19.75
Skunk	Wrinkled nose plus sniff	14.5	24.00
Fish	Blow through mouth	14.5	20.00
Slide	Hand waved downward	14.5	17.50
Swing	Torso back and forth	14.5	18.25
Ball	Both hands waved	14.5	15.75
Alligator	Palms together, open-shut	14.75	24.00
Bee	Finger plus thumb waved	14.75	20.00
Butterfly	Hands crossed, finger waved	4.75	24.00
I dunno	Shrugs shoulders, hands up	15.0	17.25
Hot	Waves hand at midline	15.0	19.00
Hippo	Head back, mouth wide	15.0	24.00
Spider	Index finger rubbed	15.0	20.00
Bird	Arms out, hands flapping	15.0	18.50
Turtle	Hand around wrist, fist-out	15.0	20.00

Fire	Waving of hands	15.0	23.00
Night-night	Head down on shoulder	15.0	20.00
X-mass tree	Fist open-closed	16.0	26.00
Mistletoe	Kisses	6.0	27.00
Scissors	Two fingers open-closed	16.0	20.00
Berry ó	Raspberryô motion	16.5	20.00
Kiss	Kiss (at a distance)	16.5	21.00
Caterpillar	Index finger wiggled	17.5	23.00

From the study, Acredolo & Goodwyn (1985) were able to arrive at the following:

(I) that gestures are integral companion of a toddlerôs vocalization

(ii) that children use and understand gestures before speech production

(iii) that toddlers can read signals from their mothers and

(iv) that they are capable of inventing their own signs and using such *consistently*.

The study is significant since it emphasizes the fact that children acquire their language via verbal and non-verbal means and that the later reinforces the former. It should, however, be observed that the study was carried out on children who have parents and more importantly on some whose parents were interested in making them acquire gestures alongside speech sounds/utterances. Nothing was said of children who live without their parents and parents who are not interested in teaching their children signs/gestures with utterances.

Just as Machado (1990) reports that Acredolo & Goodwyn observed that gestures precede vocalization, Tincoff & Jusczyk (1999) carried out another research to prove that babies can recognize words as early as 6 months of age. While explaining the procedure with which Tincoff & Jusczyk carried out the study, Steinberg & Sciarin (2006) observe as follows,

> é they had 6-month-old babies watch two TV-monitors, one with a picture of the babyôs mother and the other with a picture of the babyôs father while being held, and facing one of the images on the TV, a synthesized voice said, ómommyô or ódaddyô. After a number of presentations of voice and picture, the baby then heard the voice say one of the words. More often than

by chance, the babies would turn to look at the picture being named‘ .(p. 24)

When the voice said, ‘mommy’ the child would look at the video image of the mother and the child automatically looked at the video image of the father if the name was mentioned. This in the view of Tincoff & Jusczyk (1999) proves other researchers who had earlier-on indicated that comprehension starts with children who are up to 8 or 10 months of age wrong . This is also the time they start attaching linguistic labels to objects.

The study is significant in a number of ways as it proves/confirms the fact that children recognize, comprehend, identify and associate words with objects as early as 6 months. It again considered children who have parents and not those who do not have. For studies of this nature to be comprehensive, they have to consider both the advantaged and the disadvantaged children.

In their own study, Rubin & Fisher (1982) studied the extent of growth and usage of language by three groups of pre-schoolers, 3 year-old, 4 year-old and 5 year-old preschoolers. At the end of their study, they reported that at three, four and five years of age, the children had acquired on average vocabulary of 900, 1500 and 2,200 words respectively. While they had mastered the use of regular verbs, the reverse was the case for the irregular verbs. Also the typical sentence length for three years is 3 to 4 words, four years is 5 to 6 words while five years is 6 words and above. Furthermore, they noted that while disfluency was common among the age groups, three year old children mispronounced speech sound a lot (49%). At four years the percentage reduces to 20% and at five years, the speech sounds mispronounced reduces to 10%. This result from the study is displayed in the table below.

Table (ii)

Typical Characteristics of Language Learning in Preschools

	3 years old	**4 years old**	**5years old**
Average vocabulary	900 words	1500words	2200 words
Typical sentence length	3-4 words	5-6 words	6 + words
Regular plurals	Mastered	Mastered	Mastered
Irregular plurals	errors common	errors common	errors common

Conjunctions	uses and uses who & what	add but, because add when, why	add more questions conjunction
Pronounciation	mispronounces 40%speech sounds	mispronounces 20%speech sound	mispronounces 10% speech sounds
Disfluency	common	common	common

From the study , Rubin and Fisher not only specified the number of words acquired by children at the various stipulated ages but also pointed out their sentence patterns, errors, mispronunciations and others. The study is also based on children that stay in normal homes and not children that stay in motherless babies homes and other deprived children.

In a related study, Bowen (1998) sought to find out areas where children mispronounce and or have errors in speech production. His study captioned ñphonological processesò focused on two areas: context sensitive voicing and weak syllable deletion. Children, according to the study, can out-grow these as can be seen in the result of the finding (Bowen, 1998) shown below.

> The pronunciation process called context sensitive voicing e.g. cup = gup has usually disappeared from a childôs speech sound system by three years of age (3.0). Similarly, the phonological process called word final devoicing e.g. bed = bet has normally gone by 3.0. A few months latter by 3.3 (thatôs three years 3 months) final consonant deletion, e.g. boat = bow generally vanishes. The phonological process of velar fronting e.g. car = tar persist until about 3.6 in many children. Consonant harmony e.g. kitty cat = tittytat, continues until close to 3.9, by which age it has normally vanished. Weak syllable deletion e.g. elephant = effant is common up to the age of 4.0, as in cluster reduction e.g., spoon = boon. Gliding of liquids e.g., leg = weg normally disappear by 5.0. stopping of ófô e.g. fish=tish, and stopping of ósô e.g., say=tay go by 3.0. stopping of ózô e.g., peas=pead often pesist until 3.6. stopping of óshô (shop=dop), stopping of ójô (jack=dark) and stopping of óchô (chin=tin) are eliminated by 4.6. stopping of óthô (this=dis, that=dat)can go on until 5.0. (p. 3)

Bowen (1998) concludes, from the study that childrenôs speech does not sound like adult speech because they make typical child-like replacements. These problems, however, vanish at different stages as the child progresses in his language acquisition task. The observation from Bowenôs study vividly shows the phonological processes/errors in childrenôs language. But just like previous studies failed to take into consideration the phonological process and age of children in language disadvantage backgrounds.

Most of the studies reviewed above were usually conducted with the aid of the mothers and others that were close to the child. In view of this, attention will henceforth

focus on such studies that relate to the child mother relationship in terms of language acquisition effort. One of such studies was conducted by Huttenlocker, Levine & Vevea (1998). In their study, they recorded the extensive conversation that went on between 22 toddlers and their mothers during the childrenôs typical daily activities. While explaining the procedure for the research, Santrock (2007) states,

> Taping were carried out from two to four months when the children were 16 to 26 months of age, the researchers found a remarkable link between the size of a childôs vocabulary and the talkativeness of his or her mother. The mothers varied as much as tenfold in how much they talked. The toddler of most talkative mother had a vocabulary more than four times the size of the vocabulary of the child with the quietest mother. (p.318)

From the above, Huttenlocker and his group were able to show that mothers who talked to their children more acquired more vocabulary than those whose mothers talked less to. Also, according to Santrock (2007), the children were clearly picking up what their mothers were saying, because the words each child used most often mirrored those favoured and spoken by his/her mother.

This study, apart from affirming the fact that mothers who talked to their children more provide them with greater opportunity of acquiring more vocabulary than those whose mothers talked less to, again focused on normal children that have mothers. Since mothers are crucial to the childrenôs language development, mothersô assessment of their children in relation to their over-all development was the focus of another study which was carried out by Ereky-Stevens, Fuch & Lahnsteiner (2008). The study titled, ñCoding maternal internal state focus: Mother speech sampleò was aimed at capturing the extent of mothersô internal focus in relation to how they assess their children and those characteristics they look out for in their wards (e.g.: Evaluating vocabulary or syntactic development).

Fifty four (54) mothers from fifty four homes were used for the study and home visits from which the data were collected lasted for 54 months. After the taping of their utterances/assessment, the audio-taped mother speech samples were transcribed and coded. The coding system was based on Meins, Femyhough, Russell & Clark-Caarter (1998) and Meins & Femyhough (1999). According to Ereky Stevens, Fuch & Lahnsteiner (2008) this coding system was developed with the aim to assess mothersô proclivity to describe their childrenôs mental abilities and other characteristics.

The study covered not only the physical and behavioural characteristics of the children but also the cognitive and other mental activities of the children. However,

apart from the description which states that the children, ñsometimes say - you mummy do this and this and I do this and this,ò the study did not give any other description of the childrenôs utterances from the mothers. As such it can be seen that the mothers did not see the language development of the children as being an important aspect of the childrenôs development. In this research however, the language development of the children is the main objective.

From all the studies reviewed so far, one can deduce that the mother is indispensable in child language development. In his own study, Ginsberg (1986) sought to determine the relationship that exists between maternal speech and the childrenôs development of syntax. Ginsberg (1986) designed the study to test the hypothesis that maternal utterances which benefit syntax development do so by providing syntactically rich data or by eliciting conversation from the children.

The data used for the study were collected from 22 mothers who were interacting with their 2½-year-old children. The utterances were later assessed and the pattern of result suggested that maternal speech supports the child development of syntax by engaging the child in linguistic interaction and by providing illustrations of the structures the child acquires (Ginsberg, 1986). The study has thus demonstrated the importance of the mothersô utterance/interaction in the childôs development of syntax. The development of vocabulary by motherless children which is the main objective of the present study was not studied by the researcher as this was not one of the objectives of the study.

In a related study, Huttenlocker & Cymerman (1999) examined the link between home language environment and the childôs syntax development. Santrock (2007) summarized the method and the result of the study thus;

> The speech of 34 parents and their 4-year-old children was taped to determine the proportion of complex, multi-clause sentences (such as ñI am going to go to the store because we need to get some foodò) versus that of simple single-clause ones (such as ñGo to your roomò). A significant relation was found between the proportion of complex sentences spoken by the parents and the proportion of such sentences spoken by the children (both at home and at school). (p. 319)

The research demonstrates the important roles speech input have on the childrenôs syntax or syntactic development as those children that were spoken to with complex and multi clause sentences produced more complex sentences than their counterparts that only heard simpler sentences.

From the studies reviewed so far, none has directly focused attention on ascribing meaning to childrenôs utterances, unlike the present study which looked on the attachment of meaning to childrenôs utterances. One study which throws some light on the way in which children first come to terms with conventional means of expressing concepts was undertaken by Nelson (1978). While explaining what and how the study was carried out by Nelson, Harris (1990) states,

> She studied the first 50 words acquired by a group of 18 children between the age of 15 and 24months. The identification of words categories was based upon the way in which the words were used. Thus, the word ñdoorò was counted as an ñactionò word if the child said ñdoorò when he or she wanted to go outside, but ñdoorò was counted as a ñnaming wordò (nominal) if the child merely pointed to a door or touched a door when saying the word. (p. 33)

The table below summarizes the categories and the percentage of their occurrence in Nelsonôs study.

Table (iii) Conventional Means and Expression of Concepts

		Examples
Specific nominal	**14**	People, mummy
		Animals: Dizzy (name of pet)
		Object: car
General nominal	**51**	Objects: ball, car
		Substances: milk, snow
		Animals and people: doggie, girls
		Letters and numbers: E, two
		Abstractions: God, birthday.
		Pronouns: he, that.
Action words	**13**	Descriptive: go, bye-bye
		Demand: up, out
		Notice: look, hi
Modifiers	**9**	Attributes: big, red, pretty
		States: hot, dirty, all gone
		Locatives: there, outside
		Possessive: mine
Personal Social	**8**	Assertion: no, yes, want, know
		Social expressive: please,where

Function word	**4**	Question words: what, where Miscellaneous functions: is, to, for

In the table above, while first and last column represent the category and examples of words spoken by the children, the second column is the percentage of single words spoken by the children in each major category. In this study, the general nominals (objects: ball, car etc), specific nominals (people, mummy) and action words (go, bye-bye, out) got 51% 14% and 13% respectively. Modifiers (big, red), personal social (no, yes, want) and function words received 9%, 8% and 4%.

From the study, Harris (1990) concludes that;

> When a child utters the word ñdogò this is a semantic realization of an underlying conceptual category which can be defined by what a dog is (hairy, domesticated animal with four legs and tail, barks), how one relates to dogs (pats them, takes them for walks, lets them sit on the settee) and specific exemplars of dogs (spaniels, retrievers, boxers, etc.).(p. 33)

The study actually shows how children ascribe meaning to the utterances and at what percentage each category surfaces especially with children that have acquired up to 50 words. The study did not, however, specify if the result of the study can apply to both normal and linguistically disadvantaged children.

Still on meaning and childrenôs language, Trager-Flushberg (1994) studied semantics and semantic relations in childrenôs language development. Trager-Flushberg states that when children begin to combine words to form simple sentences, though the sentences may be limited to two, three or four words, they are usually composed with nouns, verbs and adjectives. Trager-Flushberg (1994) states that the set of prevalent semantic relations expressed in two word stage include, Agent + Action (mommy come), action object (push car), Agent + Object (mommy sock), Action + Location (sit floor) and Entity + Location (cup table). Others include, Possessor + Possession (mommy shirt), Entity + attribute (box shiny) and demonstrative + Entity (Dis paper). The findings of the study are summarized in the table shown below.

Table (iv)

Set of prevalent semantic relations expressed in two-word stage.

Semantic relation			**Examples**
Agent	+	Action	Mommy come. Daddy sit

Action	+	Object	Push car. Eat cookie
Agent	+	Object	Mommy sock. Dog book
Action	+	Location	Go out. Sit floor
Entity	+	Location	Cup table. Truck box
Possessor	+	Possession	My bottle. Mommy shirt
Entity	+	attribute	Big book. Box shiny
Demonstrative	+	Entity	Dat milk. Dis paper (p. 1920)

From the table above, Trager-Flushberg concludes that children talk a lot about objects by naming them, and by discussing their locations and attributes, who owns them, and who is doing things with them. According to him, they also talk about people, their actions, their locations, their actions on objects, and so forth. In that respect, objects, people, actions and their interrelationships preoccupy the childôs mind.

Apart from showing the semantic relations that manifests in childrenôs utterances, the study gives a vivid description of the utterances of children at the two-word stage. Although the Trager-Flushberg states that this apply to all children (universal application), the age at which the normal and other children in linguistically deprived environment acquire and use such examples were not stated.

Furthermore, there are a number of developmental changes which occur in childrenôs ability to express semantic relations. As their command of structural forms improve, and so less reliance placed on contextual cues, the meaning of any utterance is usually based upon the mutual understanding of a shared context.

According to Miller (1981), childrenôs utterances must be based on the context. In his study, he found out that when children aged between 2 and 4 say, ñmy paperé pencilò, they meant ñmy paper and pencilò (coordination). When they say ñNo eaté playò, they meant ñI donôt want to eat <u>but</u> I want to playò. Also, ñI canôt do it. I no big enoughò stood for ñI canôt do it because Iô am not big enoughò (casualty/logical). The findings were presented in the table below by Miller (1981).

Table (v) Children Utterances and Contexual Usage

Co-ordination	My paperé Pencil	
	(My Paper and Pencil)	

Sequence	Bye-bye, Daddy, Karen, Ginger
Antithesis	No eaté Play
	(I donôt wan to eat <u>but</u> I want to play)
Causality (Logical)	I canôt do it. I not big enough
	(I canôt do it <u>because</u> Iôam not big enough)
Reasons (Psychological	Youôre like that, <u>because</u> you
reality)	didnôt know me
Temporal relations	Now I go eaté then I play again
	When he goes to sleep he reads.
Conditionality	I wear this <u>while</u> walking
	Can I make him a tree, <u>after</u> I finish this?
	You better move your legs <u>before</u> I run over legs
Temporal Sequence	Can I make him a tree, <u>after</u> I finish this?
	You better move your leg <u>before</u> I run over them

According to Harris (1990) what the child attempts to say is shaped by the language forms available. This is because, as the child becomes use to the structure of a language, the meanings expressed are extended. Also the grammar of the language creates the possibility for the childôs expression of more elaborate meaning by conjoining. The semantic development which is typical of the utterances of children between ages 2 and 4 years, according to Miller, is a clear manifestation of how children use words to mean more than one thing at a time.

The study according to Miller (1981), clearly demonstrates that as the child grow so does he grows in the area of linguistic development not only in the acquisition of vocabulary and syntax but also in semantic development. But the question this study failed to answer is, whether the normal and the linguistically challenged children develop at the same rate and age (i.e. age 2 to 4).

Language development in children will continue un-interrupted and though utterances from mothers and other people that attend to children aid their language development, direct teaching does not produce the desired result as children do not improve in their language acquisition task through teaching. According to Carnie (2007);

> The evidence from the experimental language acquisition literature is very clear: parents, despite their best intention, do not, for the most part, correct ungrammatical utterances by their children. More generally they correct the content rather than the form of their childôs utteranceé .when a parent does try to correct a childôs sentence structure, it is more often than not ignored by the child.(p. 20)

The inability of children to learn from the corrections of adults is clear in this conversation between a child and adult reported by Martin Poraine in Pinker (1995, p. 281). In the study, when the child said, ñwant other one spoon, Daddyò, the father corrected, ñYou mean, you want the other spoonò. The child agreed and said, ñYes I want other one spoon, please Daddyò. The father then queried, ñCan you say, ñthe other spoon?ò. The answer to this question was, ñotheré oneé spoonò. When the child was instructed to repeat the words (i.e., other and the spoon), after the father had said them, she made no mistake. However when the father wanted the child to repeat, ñ otheré spooné ò, the child in annoyance said, ñNow give me other, one spoon otheré spoonò.

From the above discussion, we not only see the child failing to learn the correct word order as instructed by the father but was already tired of the discussion as can be seen in the last statement by the child. In the last sentence, he did not only fail to learn/imitate the adult utterance but also showed his/her annoyance by commanding the father to hand him over the spoon. In conclusion, Carnie (2007) explains that the example above is typical of parental attempts to ñinstructò their children in their language. Although parents usually fail in such language lessons, children still acquire their language without formal instruction.

The best-known demonstration of childrenôs apparent failure to progress in their language acquisition task, according to Crystal(1992), is the dialogue reported by the American psycholinguist, David McNeill in 1933 , where a child proved unable to use patterns, even though the parent presented the correct adult model several times. In this study also, the child got annoyed with the lesson as can be seen in the exclamation mark contained in the last statement. Crystal thus stated that, at this point, the child in its

learning of grammar was clearly not ready to use the ñsingle negativeò pattern found in this dialect of English. This example suggests that language acquisition is a matter of maturation than of imitation.

From the studies above (i.e. Pinker 1995 & McNeill, 1933), three things can be deduced:

(a) despite their mothersô attempt, non of the children was ready to learn/imitate the adult language

(b) all the experiments/discussions recorded were done with children who had mothers.

(c) no reference was made in relation to finding out if the result of the study applies to children who have no mothers.

Based on these last remarks, it can be seen that the study does not have universal application as it excluded those children who do not live with their parents.

In another research carried out by an American psychologist, Roger Brown, in the 1960ôs, he notes not only the utterances of the children and their attitude but also the effect the researcherôs presence had on the mothers. According to Crystal (1992), Brown sampled three children for at least two hours a month and sometimes for half an hour a week. In his finding, he reported that not only did the children fail to see any need for them to co-operate with researchers, but that they also fail to say the right thing. Citing an example with Adams utterances, Brown & Bellugi-Klima(1964) report that Adam pluralized nouns at will, and sometimes answered questions that were not asked or ignored the researchers questions.

On the part of the mother, Crystal (1992) states that the presence of the researcher during recording even affected the mothers more than the children. One of the first findings about maternal language as specified in the findings was that mothers always aim at grammatical expansions when talking to their children. Due to this, mothers will often provide gloss for their childrenôs utterances which added elements that were not present in the childrenôs utterance as shown below:

CHILD: Go car.

MOTHER: Yes, daddyôs going in his car

In support of Brown (1964), Crystal (1992) states,

> It was found that expansions nearly appeared in a third of motherôs interactions, in the early stages of learning. Their function seems to be as a teaching aid for the child, in that the mothers were providing their children with a target that was slightly ahead of their performance. (p.231)

What is significant in above statement is that it points out that: **(a)** the presence of the researcher can affect both the child and the mother, **(b)** the child continues at his own pace in the language development task and the corrections of adult are seen only as teaching aids **(c)** though the corrections are there in the mothersô utterances, they should be seen as incentives for the children to continue in their language task.

However, teaching children language at the early stage of their language development should not be seen as a fruitless venture as can be seen in the report by *Texas Education Agency* (1999). According to Morrison (2001), the agency observed that scaffolding childrenôs learning is important in teaching language to a child in the school. *Texas Education Agency* also presented a table that contains a dialogue that ensued between a teacher and a child. The child was presented with a picture which will aid the child in telling a story about the birthday of the grandmother. The child had difficulty in starting the story and that made the teacher to ask the child what was happening in the picture. There was still no answer. The child was then told to name those that can be seen in the picture. The names of the people in the picture and where (location) they took the picture were also recounted by the child. Through the aid of the teacher, the child was able to recount that it was their grandmaôs birthday and that they made a big cake with rose flower. With the favourable atmosphere and much support (aiding the child to remember) from the teacher (and team of researchers) the child was able to tell them how she made the cake with her mother. The child ended the narration thus,

> Ummmé wellé , was making gradient and spoté spotôs my dog, he came by and scared me and I jumpedé andé and the flour fell down and got all over the floor.. and it got on spotôs nose and my mum laughed.

From the discussion that went on between the child and the teacher (in association with a team of researchers) it can be seen that scaffolding is an important technique used in eliciting information from children. This also aids their language development. The study did not however state the age of the child that was used by the researchers. Also, it used only the normal child that has progressed to a great extent while living with the

parents and the extended family members. The research did not consider other children outside the normal home/linguistic setting.

Researches also abound in relation to children with language and other related disorders. In one of the studies, Fundudis, Kolvin, & Garside (1980) carried out a study captioned, ñA follow up of a speech retarded children.ò Speech retardation according to them is the failure to use three or more words strung together to make some sort of sense by the age of thirty-six months. The population of the study was 3,300 children while the aim of the study was to obtain a comprehensive picture of the intellectual, behavioural and physical functioning of children at school age with an earlier history of speech retardation. The group was dimmed fit for the study because according to them, seven years is a convenient age for assessment of speech and language defects since by then most of the developmental mispronunciations have disappeared spontaneously, and those that remain are either intrinsically serious or have serious implications.

The main criterion used for the study was the identification of symptoms of speech retarded patients. According to Fundudis, Kolvin & Garside (1980),

> é children with speech delay was compared with that of matched control group. The latter consisted of children who did not suffer from speech delay and who were matched individually with our index cases on three criteria- sexes, age, and family neighborhood. (p.98)

At the end of the exercise, it was found that out of the 3,300 children used for the study 133 were identified as having speech retardedness. This, according to the study, constitutes 4 percent of the population.

Subsequent study of this group (the 133 which were identified as having speech retardedness) revealed that two groups stand out clearly. The first group consisted of those who were intellectually, psychologically or physically functioning was so abnormal that the researchers described them as being pathological deviants. The second group on the other hand consisted of children, who, after clinical examination at the age of seven years, showed no evidence of serious handicap. These they classified as residual speech retarded group. Among the disorders penciled down by them included: Dysarthria (disorder of speech sound production) secondary speech disorder (disorder of speech sound production associated with other diseases and environmental factors), mental defect, hearing defect true dysphasia (acquired) and psychiatric disorders. Fundudis et al (1980) concludes that their findings suggest that speech delay is a better predictor of impaired verbal intelligence since the,

> é result emphasizes the predictive value of a simple speech screen at the age of 3years. About 1 in 5 of the 4 percent of all children aged 3years who were speech retarded were later found to have serious language, intellectual or physical handicaps. This underlines the value of an early screening exercise in identifying children with handicaps who may need more intensive assessment or help with appropriate placement. (p. 110)

From the study, it can be seen that not only do some percentage of children have delayed speech but that some of the children with such symptoms may just be a sign of other disorders. The researchers through this study helped in detecting children with language and other impairments. However the research included only the children that came from a normal home.

As already stated, early screening exercise to identify children with handicaps that need special interventions is necessary, Landen & Flipsen (2007) studied children that were helped early enough as soon as their ailments were diagnosed. The descriptive longitudinal study, according to them, involved the analysis of the prosody and voice characteristics of conversational speech produced by six young children with severe to profound hearing impairments, who had been fitted with cochlear implants. A total of 40 samples were used. Children used for the study were selected based on the following criteria:

> (a) prelingually deaf (defined as onset of hearing loss before age 3years)
>
> (b) fitted with a multichemical cochlear implant by age 3years
>
> (c) use of the cochlear implant for at least 18 months, at the onset of testing
>
> (d) use of spoken language only as their primary communication mode.
>
> (e) Receptive vocabulary performance as measured by Peabody-picture vocabulary test ï third edition (PPVT-III-Dunn & Dunn, 1997, p.33).

Six children (5 girls and 1 boy) satisfied the selection criteria and as such participated in the study.

At the end of the research, Linchen & Flipsen (2007) conclude that,

> é unlike similar children with severe to profound hearing impairments who had not been fitted with cochlear implants, phrasing and pitch were not a significant problem for any of these six children. In addition, rate, loudness and laryngeal quality were only a problem on a small subset of the samples. However, similar to children with hearing impairments without cochlear implant, resonance quality and use of stress were clearly an issue for these children.(p. 20)

The above finding, according to the researchers, is consistent with previous studies of the speech of the hearing-impaired by Boone, (1966), Fletcher et al (1999) and Nickerson (1975). As all those that participated in the study attested, the speech of these children (experimental group) did not sound the same as the classic descriptions of the speech of the hearing-impaired. The study therefore, emphasized the benefits derivable from early identification and early implantation of cochlear for children with severe to profound hearing impairments.

This study does not only emphasize the need for implantation of cochlear (i.e. cochlear implantation) but more importantly emphasized the need for early screening, identification and implant. This is because most of the disorders noticed in human beings are best prevented/treated at the early stage when the symptoms manifest. This study looked actually at children with handicaps but did not specify whether the children were selected from both the children that live in normal and deprived environments.

Another study which is relevant to this study is that which was conducted by Konstantareas, Zadjdeman, Homatidis & McCabe in (1988). The study captioned, ñMaternal speech to verbal and Higher Functioning Versus Nonverbal and Lower Functioning Autistic Childrenò was carried out by the group in 1988. In the study, the relationship between autistic childrenôs level of functioning and maternal speech to children were examined. Twenty (20) mothers and their autistic children were used and among them were ten (10) higher functioning verbal and ten (10) lower functioning non-verbal children were videotaped in a 15-minutes interaction with their children. The result according to Konstantareas et al (2008),

> é revealed that mothers of higher functioning verbal children asked more questions, use more language modeling, gave more reinforcement for language, and answered more children-initiated questions than did mothers of the lower functioning non-verbal children. Mother of the non-verbal children employed more directives, used shorter mean lengths of utterances, and reinforced their childrenôs motoric rather than spoken behaviour. (p. 10)

Despite the above differences in their interaction with their children, the researchers stated that far from being poor models for linguistic behaviour, mothers of autistic children appear to be quite responsive to their childrenôs relative capabilities.

From the study, it can be seen that mothers of autistic children whether they are in the category of higher functioning verbal or not, speak to their children and this enhance their language development. The study thus stresses the fact that mothers should talk to their children more, whether they are normal or have any form of handicap as this helps

in their linguistic and over-all development. It can be seen also that this study just like most other studies reviewed in this study focused on children that had mothers and not on their motherless counterparts which are the target population of our study.

A slightly different study which focused on óCommunication Disorders in Children: A case study of Mimo and Sele Yengiô was conducted by Agbedo (2009). The study focused on the observed linguistic impairment of two children. Mimo Usman (female) and Sele Yengi (male) were four year and eleven month-old and five years and two months old respectively when the research was carried out. Both of them live with their parents. Mimo whose parents are relatively well off and disposed to providing the basic needs of the family enjoy a filial relationship with the siblings.

From the observation of the researchers, Mimoôs overall cognitive disposition satisfies close to 90% of the criteria listed for the diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in the Diagnostic (ADHD) and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder. It was discovered that Mimo pays little attention to details, makes careless mistakes, has short attention span, does not listen when spoken to directly or follow instructions. She fails to finish tasks, has difficulty in organizing tasks, avoids tasks that require sustained mental effort, loses things with careless abandon, gets easily distracted, and is consistently forgetful in routine activities. She fidgets, squirms in seat and leaves her seat when others are seated. Based on these and other observed behaviours, the researchers were predispose to classify Mimo as having ADHD.

Sele also lives with the parents and since the parents were not always available because of their busy schedule, he stays more with the house-help and the younger sister despite the pathetic scenario playing out in the family life. Seleôs helplessness in the hands of the house-help and the siblings posed little or no problem to the parents who were rarely at home. Due to their absence, it was the house-help and the sibling that stood in as their parents throughout the study. In a bid to ascertain Seleôs adaptive functioning at home, interviews were used systematically to elicit information about Seleôs functioning in the environments from people who know him well. The finding of the study reveals that certain skills required of him to live independently or at the minimal acceptable level for his age were below the average. Also, it was found that he presented a clear case of delay in the maturation of central neurological processes required for normal overall cognitive development. The study thus concludes that;

> whereas Mimoôs overall cognitive disposition is generally characterized by inattentiveness, impulsiveness, hyperactivity, which are symptoms of a

> psychosomatic condition known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Sele manifests symptoms of neurological disorders and mental retardationé the linguistic manifestations of these é two children tend to show that the speech of Mimo is characterized by sound substitutions, inappropriate grammatical patterns (agrammatism) deriving, perhaps from her impulsiveness and inattentivenessé The linguistic behavior of Seleôs pathological condition is generally characterized by developmental language delay, manifesting a number of speech disordersé .(Agbedo, 2008)

This study is significant as it evaluated the language development of these two children who fell short of meeting the standard expectations for normal children at various stages of their language development. However, the children investigated were only those children that live in normal homes

In conclusion, it can be seen that researches that directly and remotely relate to childrenôs language development have been carried out and these have actually thrown more light into childrenôs overall language development. It should, however, be stressed that most of these studies focused on normal children. That is, children that have mothers/parents and live in normal homes. However, few researches have focused on language development of children that live outside the normal family setting such as motherless babies homes. To the best of the knowledge of the researcher, little effort has been channeled towards finding out in time, those children who are in these ñhomesò but who have symptoms of language/other disorders. In view of this, the present study focused on this group of deprived children. This is with a view to looking at their language development and linguistic environment so as to find out the extent to which environmental factors could influence their language acquisition/development, either positively or otherwise.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

In this study, the descriptive survey research method was adopted. The descriptive survey approach was deemed appropriate for the present research endeavor since it not only helped in the collection of factual information that describes existing phenomena but also allowed the use of different methods for the collection data in any research endeavour.

Based on the nature of the research and target population, only one sampling technique was used. Purposive sampling which is a sampling technique that allows the researcher to use his initiative to select organizations/respondents was used to select motherless babies homes in Enugu State. This sampling technique was also used to select children whose utterances and other language related behaviours were collated and assessed. Purposive sampling was used since it gave the researchers ample opportunity to select the respondents that were deemed adequate at any stage of the study.

Four major instruments of data collection were used, and these include; documentary/library research, participant observation, interview (oral) and the use of questionnaire. The use of these instruments allowed the researchers to have a firsthand knowledge of the linguistic environment of the motherless babies homes and in getting the required responses from the children, their caregivers and others who visited the homes.

3.2. Population of Study

The universe of study for this research work included motherless babies homes in Enugu state. The population of the study, on the other hand, included children in the motherless babies homes, their caregivers/welfare officers, owners of the homes, mothers that visit the motherless homes and other visitors/organizations that visit the homes.

3.3. Sampling Procedure and Size

As mentioned earlier, purposive sampling technique was the only sampling technique that was used in this study. The sampling technique was used at the first stage

of the study, to sample four motherless babies homes that were used in the study. The motherless babies homes include:

- Holy Child Motherless Babies Home, Enugu,
- Guardian Angel Motherless Babies Home, Emene Enugu,
- Motherless Babies Home, Nsukka, and
- DDL Motherless Babies Home, Eha-Alumona

At the second stage, the same sampling technique was used in sampling children in the motherless babies homes where their linguistic behaviours were observed and recorded.

As it was not easy for the researchers to collect information directly from the children without the help of the caregivers/workers in homes, purposive sampling was equally used to select two research assistants each from the four motherless babies homes used in the study. The research assistants who were trained and informed of their task aided the researchers in collecting information from both the children and other people that visited the homes.

The same sampling technique was used by both the researchers and the research assistants to select mothers (mothers that visited the motherless babies homes), groups and other visitors that responded to the items contained in the instrument of data collection. While ten (10) care-givers/welfare officers were selected from each home, twenty (20) mothers and fifty (50) individuals (visitors that visit the home) were included as respondents in each home.

3.4. Instrument of Data Collection

In this research, four major means of data collection were employed. These include: documentary/library research, direct observation, interview/dialogue (oral), and questionnaire.

The above methods were used due to the nature of the study which required not only the utterances of the children in the motherless babies homes and the stages of their language development but also their counterparts who live in normal homes. Thus while documentary/library research was used to identify utterances and stages of language acquisition of children in normal homes (as recorded by past researchers), direct observation and interview/dialogue were employed to collect information from the children in the motherless babies homes. Direct observation was also employed to assess

the linguistic and social environment of motherless babies in the motherless babies homes.

Lastly, the questionnaire was used to collect information on the childrenôs (i.e. children in motherless babies homes) language development from the caregivers, welfare officers, mothers and other groups/individuals that associate with the children in the motherless babies homes. The structured questionnaire which had a 4-point Linket scale response format of; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used in the study. The questionnaire was made up of open and close ended questions and was used to elicit information from the three groups namely:

- Caregivers/Welfare Officers
- Mothers (those that visited the homes)
- Groups/individuals (visitors to the homes).

Information collected via the questionnaire from these groups helped the researchers in assessing the environment of the motherless babies homes and more importantly in assessing these childrenôs language and other related behaviours.

3.5. Validation of Instruments

The instruments used in this study were validated by four experts in Linguistics and Language Education, all from the Faculty of Arts and Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The experts critically assessment both the interview questions and the questionnaire that was used in this research endevour. Their inputs and suggestions were of immense benefit in the production of the final instruments that were eventually administered to both the children in the motherless babies homes and other respondents.

3.6. Method of Data Collection

For the first stage of our data collection, observation and interview/dialogue were used to collect information from two children in each of the motherless babies homes that were sampled. Therefore a total of eight (8) children at the various stages of their language acquisition/development were sampled.

The collection of utterances from the children was followed by the administration of the questionnaire to the three groups earlier mentioned. The structured questionnaire

which had a Linket four scale response format of; Strongly Agree(SA- 4), Agree (A -3), Disagree (D -2), and Strongly Disagree (SD -1) was used in the study. At the second stage of data collection, 10 questionnaire were administered to the caregivers, 20 to mothers and 50 to visitors, thus, a total of 80 copies of questionnaire were given out in each of the motherless babies homes. As four motherless babies homes were selected as stated earlier, we administered a total of three hundred and twenty (320) questionnaire.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis.

Two types of data were collected in this study and these include recorded utterances/linguistic behaviours from children, and data collected via the questionnaire (Appendix 1 and 3). Based on this, descriptive and statistical analyses were employed.

A descriptive approach was employed in the analysis of data collected in this research work. The data collected through the questionnaire were coded and presented in tables that contained numbers, frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. A mean of 2.50 was deemed acceptable (A). Any item that scored below this score was rejected (R).

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study made use of four instruments for data collection. These include; documentary/library research, oral interview, participant observation and questionnaire. The data presentation and analysis were structured and presented under the following headings: presentation and analysis of data from oral interview and participant observation, presentation and analysis of data from the questionnaire, and result. These were immediately followed by discussion of findings.

4.2. Presentation and Analysis of Data from Oral Interview and Participant Observation.

The data presented herein were collected from children that were at their various levels of language acquisition. In this study, deprived children below two years were excluded from the oral interview since most of them could not even answer or respond to their names. The collection of data was embarked upon after the researcher had visited each of the motherless babies homes five times. This was to enable him become familiar with the children and the workers that work in these motherless babies homes. The data collected from the four motherless babies homes were presented under the following subheadings:

(I) Institution A

(II) Institution B

(III) Institution C

(IV) Institution D

(I) Institution A

In this institution, two boys above two years were interviewed and the dialogue that ensued between the researcher and the children (Child) are presented as follows:

1st Child (Okechukwu - 2 years six months)

Child - (Runs to the interviewer)

Researcher - What is your name?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is this? (Points at a chair)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is that? (Points at the table)

Child - (No response, but left)

Researcher - Okechukwu!

Child - (Looked back but did not say anything, he was later persuaded to come back by the researcher)

Researcher - Okechuku, what is this? (Points at a book)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is this? (Points at a caregiver)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is this? (Points at another child sitting on his cot)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is his name?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Okechuku, what is your name?

Child - (No response)

From the data shown above, it could be seen that the child could neither say his name nor say the names of items requested by the interviewer. However, he responded to his name by looking at the person that called whenever he was called. All the questions asked were asked in the English language and the Igbo language. Even when the researcher mentioned his name before asking him to state same, Okechukwu could not mention his name.

The researcher also observed that, throughout his stay on the day of this interview and in subsequent visits, Okechukwu neither called other child by name nor mention the names of objects they played with. He payed little or no attention when people talked even though he enjoyed being carried by visitors.

2nd Child (Nduka – 2 years and 4 months)

Researcher - What is your name?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Nduka, how are you?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Nduka, what is your name?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Nduka, where are you going? (Jumps down)

Child - (No response, but rather ran and snatched the only toy they have at the motherless baby home from another baby).

Researcher - Nduka, what is that thing?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Nduka !

Child - (Looks back but did not come back)

Researcher - (The researcher went to him, gave him his phone and carried him once again)

Researcher - What is this? (His head)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Where is your cot?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is this? (A caregiver)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - what are holding in your hand? (phone)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - This is a table. What is this?

Child - (No response, but continued playing with the phone)

Researcher - What is your name, Nduka?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is that? (Television-TV)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is this? (Points at another child)

Child - (No response)

In the data above, Nduka could not respond to any of the questions asked by the interviewer, despite the fact that the questions were asked in the English Language and the Igbo language. Nduka, could however respond to his name as he looked back at last when he was called. While the discussion lasted, Nduka never talked to me (the

researcher) or any other person. Nduka could not identify objects found in the homes nor mention the name of a caregiver or any other child in the motherless babies home.

In this motherless babies home, only three or four caregivers could be seen working in the place at a time as they work on shift bases. However individuals and groups (mainly Christian organizations) visited the home on weekends even though there was no standing order banning people from coming to the motherless babies home at other times. The workers do not normally come to stay or talk to the children except when the children cried due to hunger or when they were pressed. Though they have a large compound, they were not allowed to go out.

(II) Institution B

In this motherless babies home, two children (a boy and a girl) aged four years and above were interviewed. The dialogues that ensued are shown below.

3rd Child (Ifeanyi – 4 years and 3 months)

Researcher - Fine boy, what is your name?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - What is your name?
Child - Ma name is Ifeanyi (My name is Ifeanyi)
Researcher - Good, what is this? (Phone)
Child - Eme fome mu. (Give me my phone)
Researcher - Okey, have it. Who is that person? (Points to a caregiver)
Child - (No response)
Researcher - What are these? (Points to a door)
Child - (No response)
Researcher - Look at that window!
Child - (Looked at the window)
Researcher - What is that?
Child - Ido (window)
Researcher - Good, window. What is the name of your friend?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - What is the name of your teacher?
Child - Ati (Aunty)

Researcher - Fine boy, what is this? (cot)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is the name of that boy?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is the name of your father?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is the name of your Daddy?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is that? (A mango tree in the compound)

Child - (No response)

The data above show that Ifeanyi could say his name. He could make other simple sentences as can be seen when he demanded that I give him my phone (Eme fome mu ï give me my phone). He could however not mention the name of the caregiver and some other things seen within and outside the motherless babies home.

Ifeanyi could not mention the name of his father, who according to the caregivers visits the motherless babies home at least once every two weeks. The researcher learnt from both the father and the caregivers that they had always tried to remind him of the fatherôs name (John Agbo). He could not also remember the name of any of his friends but could remember the name of his teacher. In this motherless babies home also, the children were not allowed to go outside the house where they reside to play except on Sundays when they are taken to the reception room where visitors chat with them and give them gifts. When the researcher wanted to know why they were not allowed to go outside, the caregivers simply stated that it was based on the instruction that was given to them by the management of the motherless babies home.

4th Child (Ebere – 4 years and 6 months)

Researcher - How are you?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What is your name?

Child - Ebele (Ebere)

Researcher - What is that? (A book)

Child - ABCD

Interviewer	-	Good, ABCD, Ebere, it is a book, what is this?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What do you do with it?
Child	-	E ji eme ABCD (it is used for writing ABCD)
Researcher	-	Who is that person? (A caregiver)
Child	-	(No response but looked at her)
Researcher	-	What is this? (table)
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is this? (chair)
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	Who is this? (A child sleeping on a cot close to us)
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is your fatherôs name?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is this? (toy- teddy)
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	Do you have friends?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is the name of your teacher?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	Fine girl, now stand up!
Child	-	(Jumped down and ran away)

In the data above, it could be seen that Ebere could mention her name, call a book ABCD and state the function of a book (E ji eme ABCD ï it is used for writing ABCD). Ebere could however not mention the name of one of the caregivers or any other item seen in the motherless babies home. Ebere just like Ifeanyi could construct simple sentences as seen in the utterance, œE ji eme ABCD (it is used for writing ABCD)ô However, she uses one word utterance more often even though she was up to four years.

III Institution C

Two children aged between 3 and 4 years were handled under this heading. The two children, Onyinye and Ndidi were already in nursery 1 and 2 respectively as they attend a nursery school that is within the premises.

5th Child (Onyinye – 3 years nine months)

Researcher - Baby, how are you?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - Fine girl, how are you?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - What is your name?
Child - Oyiye
Researcher - Onyinye
Child - Ee
Researcher - What is the name of yours school?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - Do you go to school?
Child - Ees (yes)
Researcher - Do you have friends?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - What are these? (points at different items in the room)
Child - (No response ï did not even pay attention to the questions)
Researcher - what is your name, baby girl?
Child - Oyiye.
Researcher - Onyinye, do you go to school?
Child - Ees (yes)
Researcher - What is the name of your teacher?
Child - (No response)
Researcher - Onyinye, what is the name of your aunty?
Child - Anti (Aunty)
Researcher - Who is that? (A caregiver)
Child - (No response)
Researcher - What is that? (A toy-teddy)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Look through the window!

Child - (Looked through the window)

Researcher - What is that? (Tree)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is that? (A reverend sister)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Good girl, thank you and go back to you bed (i.e. a cot)

Child - (No response)

From the interview shown above, it can be observed that the child can sate and answer her name. She also agrees that she goes to school but could not say the name of the school. Onyinye could not say the names of any of the objects seen in the seating room. Onyinye, admitted that she goes to school, and even mentioned the name of the teacher (what they usually call her).

6th child (Ndidi – 4 years two months)

Researcher - Big girl, how are you?

Child - Fai (fine)

Researcher - What is your name?

Child - Ndidi

Researcher - Ndidi, what is your fatherôs name?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Do you go to school?

Child - Ees (yes)

Researcher - What is the name of your school?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is that person?

Child - Sita (sister ï a reverend sister)

Researcher - What is this?

Child - Table

Researcher - Show me your bed!

Child - (ran and touched her bed- a cot)

Researcher	-	What is the name of your teacher?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	Ndidi, what is the name of your teacher?
Child	-	Echa (Teacher)
Researcher	-	Look through the window!
Child	-	(Looked through the window)
Researcher	-	What is that? (Points at a car parked outside)
Child	-	Car
Researcher	-	Show me your toes!
Child	-	(Points at his legs)
Researcher	-	No, I mean your toes
Child	-	(Points at his legs)
Researcher	-	Okay, show me your legs
Child	-	(Points at his legs again)
Researcher	-	Where is your bed (cot)?
Child	-	(Points at the cot)

The data above indicate that Ndidi could respond to most of the questions posed by the researcher. Ndidi however, was only able to give one-word answers to the questions asked. She does not know the name of her father who visits regularly and could not differentiate between her legs and toes.

(IV) Institution D

In this subheading, the interview sessions that went on between the researcher/interviewer and the children are presented. Chiemelie was 4 years and six months while Ogonna was 4 years and five months old.

7th Child (Chiemelie – 4 years and six months)

Researcher	-	My boy, how are you?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	How are you?
Child	-	Fai (fine)
Researcher	-	Good boy! What is your name?

Child - Chieme (Stretches out his hand to receive my handset).

Researcher - Good, Chiemelie sit down!

Child - (Collects the phone before sitting down).

Researcher - Do you go to school?

Child - Ees (yes)

Researcher - What is the name of your school?

Child - Ma school é Ma schoolé (repeated these several times but could not go further).

Researcher - What is this? (TV)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - What are these? (Points to some of the items in the motherless babies homes)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Chiemelie, who is this?

Child - Uche

Researcher - What is this?

Child - Edi (bed)

Researcher - Yes, but you can also call it cot.

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Cot, say it!

Child - Cot

Researcher - Good, what is the name of that thing?

Child - Edi (bed)

Researcher - What is that? (Point at a car parked outside)

Child - Car

Researcher - Good boy, what of the other one?

Child - (No response)

Researcher - It is a tree. Tree, say tree.

Child - Tree

Researcher - What is that? (Point at a house outside)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Who is that? (A caregiver)

Child - (No response)

Researcher - Rose, say it.

Child	-	Lose (Rose)
Researcher	-	Chiemelie, it is now story time, story, story!
Child	-	tory (story)
Researcher	-	Chiemelie, just tell a story.
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	One story.
Child	-	(No response)

The data presented above indicate that most of the questions asked by the researcher were answered by the interviewee. He could also understand some simple command like, ósit downô, stand up etc. He could neither state the name of his school nor mention the names of some objects found in the visitorsôroom and outside the motherless babies home.

Chiemelie could however mention the name of one of the caregivers who always rush in to come to their aid nor recount any story learnt at school. Based on the observation, Rose is one of the workers in the motherless babies home, and most often, she was usually called to the hearing of the children to perform one task or the other by other workers.

8th Child -(Ogonna - 4 years and five months)

Researcher	-	Fine girl, how are you?
Child	-	Fine
Researcher	-	What is your name?
Child	-	Ogoo
Researcher	-	What are you holding?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is that?
Child	-	Ball
Researcher	-	What is this?
Child	-	Ed (bed)
Researcher	-	Good, Ogoo do you go to school?
Child	-	(Nods her head)
Researcher	-	What is the name of your school?

Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is the name of your teacher?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What are these? (points to table, flask and cup etc.).
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	What is that (Points to a tree outside)
Child	-	(No response).
Researcher	-	What is that?
Child	-	Eble (table)
Researcher	-	Good, table. Table, say it !
Child	-	Eble
Researcher	-	What is this?
Child	-	edo (window)
Researcher	-	Ogoo, show me your hand?
Child	-	(Raises the hand up)
Researcher	-	Show me your head
Child	-	(Points at her head)
Researcher	-	My name is Ogoo. Say it.
Child	-	Ogoo
Researcher	-	My name is Ogoo
Child	-	Ogoo
Researcher	-	Can you tell me story you learnt from your teacher?
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	Okey, tell me any story
Child	-	(No response)
Researcher	-	Can you just tell me one story?
Child	-	(No response)

In the above interview, it can be seen that the child responded to some of the questions asked. She could also mention the names of some items in the motherless babies home. She even used a non-verbal cue to answer questions. But, Ogoo could not mention the names of some other items inside the room or outside the house. Even when the researcher tried to teach her to make a simple sentence using her name, the exercise

failed as the child could only say, Ogoo. The child could not even remember any story learnt in the school.

In the motherless babies home also, children are not allowed to move outside, though they have a large compound. At different time when the researcher suggested that the children should be allowed to play outside, the reply was either that they may get wounded in the process or that the workers were busy and cannot do that. The researcherôs requests to take some of the children down stairs with one caregiver for the same purpose were politely turned down in different occasions without cogent reasons.

4.3. Presentation and Analysis of Data from the Questionnaire.

This subheading presents the analysis of data collected via the questionnaire, thus:

A. Stages of language acquisition

B. Favourable environmental factors that aid language development.

C. Negotiation and attachment of meaning to utterances.

D. Cares given to children at the homes.

E. The effect of the language acquired in the motherless babies homes on the children.

F. Inputs of organizations on the childrenôs language development.

G. Language environments in the motherless babies homes that impair the language development of the children.

H. Mean response of the mothers and workers of motherless babies homes on the effect of the language environment in the motherless babies homes on the children.

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Table 1

A Stages of Language Acquisition

(I) Age of the children in the homes

S/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× F X	x̄	St.D	DECISION
1	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 0-6 months old.	40 13%	61 19%	118 37%	101 32%	320	2.13	1.00	REJECTED
2	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 7 ï 17 months old.	68 21%	89 28%	105 33%	58 18%	320	2.52	1.01	ACCEPTED
3	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 18 ï 24 months old.	72 23%	101 32%	88 28%	59 18%	320	2.58	1.03	ACCEPTED
4	Children in the homeless baby homes are within 25 ï 36 months old.	160 50%	88 28%	52 16%	20 6%	320	3.21	0.93	ACCEPTED
5.	Children in the motherless baby homes are above 30 mothers old.	172 54	63 20%	75 23%	10 3%	320	3.24	0.92	ACCEPTED
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	32%	25%	27%	15%	320	**2.74**	**0.98**	ACCEPTED

The data displayed above which is a sort of preliminary study indicate that most of the items received mean scores that are above 2.50. Items 2, 3, 4 and 5 received mean score 2.52, 2.58, 3.21 and 3.24 respectively. Only the first item received x̄ - 2.13. In view of this, the average mean is 2.74 indicating that most of the items received mean scores that are above 2.50. Also, it could be seen that while 58% agree that children at various age groups reside in the motherless babies homes, 42% had a contrary opinion. The scores of standard deviation (St.D) received by the different items show a high level of relationship as none deviated from the AVG. score (0.98) with up to 0.05. These show a

high level of relatedness in their response as the data indicate that most of the children in the motherless babies homes were above seven months old.

Table 2

(II) Extent of Language Acquisition

S/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× F X		St.D	DECISION
6	Children at prelinguistic stage (0-6 months) can engage in cooing and babbling.	201 62%	56 18%	60 19%	3 1%	320	3.42	0.82	ACCEPTED
7	Children at 1 year 6 months utter recognizable words.	88 28%	108 32%	112 35%	18 6%	320	2.81	0.94	ACCEPTED
8	Children at the one-word stage can communicate with one word.	45 14%	66 21%	94 29%	114 36%	319	2.13	1.06	REJECTED
9	Children that are between 18 months ï 2 years can communicate well with two words.	10 3%	21 7%	191 58%	98 31%	320	1.82	0.68	REJECTED
10	Children that are between 24 ï 30 months can communicate with three words.	47 13%	71 22%	111 35%	91 28%	320	2.23	0.98	REJECTED
11	Children that are within 31-50 months can construct simple sentences.	43 13%	72 23%	89 28%	116 36%	320	2.13	1.05	REJECTED

12	Children that are within 6-12 months can respond to or answer their names.	47 15	82 26%	74 23%	116 36%	320	2.19	1.09	REJECTED
13	Children that are in the motherless baby homes who are within 7-12 months can mention up to five words	31 10%	49 15%	105 33%	134 42%	320	1.29	0.97	REJECTED
14	Children in these ómesô that are within 7-16 months can call mama, dada, or the names of their caregivers.	68 21%	91 29%	123 39%	37 12%	320	2.59	0.94	ACCEPTED
15	Children that are within 19 ï 24 months can mention can mention ten items in the ómesô	61 19%	72 23%	95 30%	91 29%	320	2.32	1.08	REJECTED
16	Children that are within 25-34 months can mention or at least name eight parts of their body.	23 7%	63 20%	97 30%	136 43%	320	1.92	0.95	**REJECTED**
	AVG.	**19%**	**21%**	**31%**	**28%**	**320**	**2.26**	**0.96**	**REJECTED**

In the data presented in this table (Table 2), the proposition in items 6, 7 and 14 received mean scores that are above the criterion mean 2.50 and were thus óAcceptedô. All other items (9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16) received negative report as they scored below ï 2.50. This shows that the children did not possess the qualities described in these items. Therefore as majority of the respondents (57%) attest to the fact that the children did not possess the qualities mentioned in above table, 40% of them believe that the children possess those qualities.

Furthermore, there is a high level of relationship in the scores under St. D as none deviated from each other with up to 0.05. Even the average mean stood at ï 2.26, also showing that these children did not possess the qualities. The data presented here, clearly show that the items attracted similar responses. The data thus show that most of the human related activities that aid language acquisition in normal homes were lacking in the motherless babies homes.

Table 3

B. Favorable Environmental Factors that aid Language Acquisition

s/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× FX	x̄	St.D	DECISION
17	There are visitors/caregivers who carry and talk to the children always.	21 7%	75 23%	141 44%	83 26%	320	2.10	0.86	REJECTED
18	Children come around always to chart with the children.	41 13%	52 16%	153 43%	74 23%	320	2.19	0.93	REJECTED
19	Adults are always available to discuss and chart with the children.	63 20%	75 23%	107 33%	75 23%	320	2.39	1.05	REJECTED
20	Children play and run around with their peer in the motherless baby homes.	35 11%	96 30%	173 54%	16 5%	320	2.47	0.75	REJECTED
21	Children play inside the house and chart with each other.	104 33%	91 28%	30 9%	95 30%	320	2.63	1.21	ACCEPTED
22	Children play outside and engage in out-door games.	131 41%	65 20%	43 13%	81 25%	320	2.77	1.23	ACCEPTED
23	Children have enough toys to play with.	181 57%	74 23%	21 72%	44 14%	320	3.22	1.06	ACCEPTED
24	Children listen to radio always	38 12%	41 13%	109 34%	132 41%	320	1.95	1.01	REJECTED
25	Children watch	21	45	171	83	320	2.01	0.82	REJECTED

	television always.	7%	14%	53%	26%				
26	Children watch different cartoons in the motherless baby home.	15 5%	53 17%	141 44%	111 35%	320	1.91	0.83	REJECTED
27	Children watch channels dedicated to the kids always.	58 18%	47 15%	95 30%	120 38%	320	2.13	1.11	REJECTED
28	Children listen to music released by fellow kids.	68 21%	57 18%	93 29%	102 32%	320	2.28	1.12	REJECTED
	AVG.	**20%**	**20%**	**34%**	**27%**	**320**	**2.34**	**0.93**	REJECTED

In Table 3, items 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 received negative responses as they all scored below ï 2.50. However, items 21, 22 and 23 got a positive response as they scored above the criterion ï 2.50. Item 23 even received a very high response with a mean of 3.22. Generally, the items received an average mean of 2.34 indicating that most of the favourable environmental factors that aid language acquisition in normal homes were lacking in the motherless babies homes. Thus, while only 40% of the respondents hold the view that there are favourable environmental factors in the motherless babies homes just like the normal homes, 61% disagree with this stand.

Majority of the respondents therefore agree that favourable environmental factors that aid language acquisition in normal homes are lacking in the motherless babies homes. The data contained in the table above thus show that the children in the motherless babies homes do not have enough children and adult with whom they chat and play always. Although they have enough toys, they do not have access to audio-visual materials which aid them in their language acquisition task.

Table 4

C. Negotiation and Attachment of Meaning to Utterances

S/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× FX	𝑥̄	St.D	DECISION
29	The children are able to negotiate/call the attention of the caregivers right from birth.	77 24%	109 34%	58 18%	76 23%	320	2.58	1.10	ACCEPTED
30	At 6 months, the children are able to communicate to adults that they are hungry by crying.	113 35%	102 32%	39 12%	66 21%	320	2.82	1.13	ACCEPTED
31	At fifteen months, the children are able to show that they are hungry by bringing plates, spoons or feeding bottle.	59 18%	150 47%	68 21%	43 13%	320	2.70	0.92	ACCEPTED
32	At 18 months, the children show that they are hungry by uttering specific utterances.	60 19	31 10%	81 25%	148 46%	320	2.01	1.14	REJECTED
33	At 8 months, the children show that they want to be carried by adult by raising their hands.	157 49	83 26%	50 16%	30 9%	320	3.15	1.00	ACCEPTED
34	Within 13 to 18 months, children are	16	62	88	154	320	1.81	0.92	REJECTED

	able to show through different means that they want to watch TV.	5%	19%	27%	48%					
35	Indifference or inability of the child to indicate that he/she needs these services can reveal to the caregivers that the child has language problem.	93 29%	137 43%	64 20%	26 8%	320	2.92	0.90	ACCEPTED	
36	At 13-18 months, the children are able to identify the movies they want via utterances	35 11%	64 20%	84 26%	137 43%	320	1.99	1.04	REJECTED	
37	At 12 months, children are able to let someone know that they are pressed or want to ease themselves.	41 13%	54 17%	88 28%	137 43%	320	2.00	1.05	REJECTED	
38	At 18 months, children are able to communicate to the adults their needs via language and other related behaviors.	26 8%	40 13%	99 31%	155 48%	320	1.80	0.95	REJECTED	
39	At this stage up-wards (19 months and above) they are able to show/state	38 12%	76 24%	88 28%	118 37%	320	2.11	1.04	REJECTED	

	that they need this object and not the other one via language.									
40	Inability of children at 18 months and above to show that they are pressed and communicate their need are indication of language disorder.	102 32%	79 25%	56 18%	83 26%	320	2.63	1.81	ACCEPTED	
41	Caregivers can identify children in the home with language disorder through their inability to negotiate and state their need.	89 28%	19 6%	159 50%	53 17%	320	2.45		REJECTED	
	Average	**22%**	**24%**	**25%**	**30%**	**320**	**2.38**	**1.08**	REJECTED	

The propositions contained in items 29, 30, 31, 33, 35 and 40 received óAcceptedô as they got mean scores that are above 2.50. In items 32, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 41, the propositions therein were negative as they received óRejectedò. This is sequel to the fact that as 55% of the respondents representing the majority of the respondents agree that the children are incapable of negotiating and using appropriate utterances to communicate to people, 46% hold a different view.

On the other hand the scores recorded in the St.D show a high level of deviation from each other. While the standard deviation of these items 30, 32 and 40 deviated from the AVG. St.D score (1.08) by more than 0.05, the scores obtained by items 33, 34, 35 and 38 are below the AVG. St.D indicating that there is high degree of divergence in their responses. The data in this table show that the children in the motherless babies homes

are able to communicate their needs early in life to the caregivers through non verbal cues, but could not communicate same verbally even at 18 and 19 months. The data also indicate that inability of children to state their need via language at these months is indication of the fact that the children have language problems.

Table 5

D. Cares given to Children at the Homes.

	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× X		St.D	DECISION
42	These children have people who come to their aid any time they cry right from birth.	31 10%	42 13%	66 21%	181 57%	320	1.76	1.01	REJECTED
43	Those who come to their aid stay until they stop crying.	115 36%	88 28%	64 20%	53 17%	320	2.83	1.09	ACCEPTED
44	They stay with them until their needs are satisfied.	103 32%	88 28%	61 19%	68 21%	320	2.71	1.13	ACCEPTED
45	They talk to them while they feed them.	38 12%	45 14%	102 32%	135 42%	320	1.95	1.01	REJECTED
46.	They force the children to stop crying by beating or by frightening them.	97 30%	13 4%	67 21%	143 45%	320	2.20	1.29	REJECTED
47	They start talking to the children only when they are up to 8 months.	44 14%	79 25%	41 13%	156 49%	320	2.03	1.13	REJECTED
48	They talk to the children when they are a year and above.	117 37%	63 20%	52 16%	88 28%	320	2.68	1.10	REJECTED
49	The ways they talk to them encourage them to babble or coo.	57 18%	84 26%	72 23%	107 34%	320	2.28	1.11	REJECTED
50	The ways they talk to them encourage them to talk as from one-word stage.	52 16%	73 23%	61 19%	134 42%	320	2.13	1.13	REJECTED
51	The ways they talk to them encourage them to talk as from two-words stage.	61 19%	70 22%	83 26%	106 33%	320	2.27	1.12	REJECTED
52	Sometimes they prompt the children to utter utterances by talking to them even when the children are not crying or talking.	27 8%	53 17%	41 13%	199 62%	320	1.71	1.02	REJECTED

53	They talk to these children with child-like utterances.	41 13%	23 7%	84 26%	172 53%	320	1.79	1.04	REJECTED
54	They talk to these children with adult language.	101 32%	92 29%	48 15%	79 25%	320	2.67	1.16	REJECTED
55	They help the children learn the names of objects inside the óhouseô	44 14%	59 18%	33 10%	184 58%	320	1.88	1.40	REJECTED
56	They help the children learn the names of objects that are within the compound (i.e. outside the house they live in).	22 7%	36 11%	49 15%	213 67%	320	1.58	0.94	REJECTED
57	They help children learn names of objects outside the home through direct instruction.	43 13%	41 13%	69 22%	167 52%	320	1.88	1.08	REJECTED
58	They help them learn names of objects when they go out on excursion.	11 3%	22 7%	21 7%	266 83%	320	1.31	0.75	REJECTED
59	They help them learn names of objects when they go out for church services, market or other places.	34 11%	23 7%	44 14%	219 68%	320	1.60	1.01	REJECTED
60	The learn names of objects from the television and radio.	21 7%	33 10%	56 18	210 66%	320	1.57	0.92	REJECTED
61	They learn names of objects from the television (TV).	40 13%	75 23%	66 21%	139 43%	320	2.05	1.08	REJECTED
62	The way they are talked to by caregivers can aid them develop language just like children in normal	31 10%	21 7%	49 15%	219 68%	320	1.58	0.98	REJECTED

	homes.								
	AVERAGE SCORE	**17%**	**17%**	**18%**	**48%**	**320**	**1.62**	**0.85**	REJECTED

The propositions contained in items, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, and 62 got negative ratings as they all got mean scores that are below the criterion ï 2.50. On the other hand, items 43, 44, and 54 scored above ï 2.50 and as such, the propositions contained in them were accepted. This table got a very low average mean of - 1.62. Specifically, 66% of the respondents state that the care and attention given to these children are not enough, while 34% believe that they are given enough care and attention just like children in normal homes. There is equally no significant relationship in the scores obtained from the standard deviation, since most of the scores deviated from the average St.D by more than 0.05. Specifically, the data contained in this table show that the children do not have enough people who attend to them in terms of satisfying their need or even talking to them when they are being fed. Even when they are talked to, the way they talk to them do not encourage them to learn names of objects either in the motherless babies homes or elsewhere. The caregivers however stay with them until their other needs which usually excluded linguistic needs are met.

Table 6

E. The Effect of the Language Acquired in the Motherless Babies Homes on the Children.

s/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× FX	x̄	ST.D	DECISION
63	The quality of language developed in the ôhomesô help them develop critical thinking just like children in normal homes.	34 11%	55 17%	21 7%	210 66%	320	1.73	1.09	REJECTED
64	The quality of the language developed in the motherless baby homes help them love their mother tongue.	15 5%	60 19%	78 24%	167 52%	320	1.77	0.92	REJECTED
65	The language developed in the motherless baby homes help them love the official language (English language).	82 26%	181 57%	31 10%	26 8%	320	3.08	0.82	ACCEPTEI
66	The language developed in the motherless baby homes prepare them adequately for formal education.	67 21%	81 25%	31 12%	135 42%	320	2.25	1.21	REJECTED
67	The language developed in the motherless baby home help them to interact with people outside the home.	30 9%	42 13%	61 19%	187 58%	320	1.73	1.12	REJECTED
68	The language developed there help them to interact	45 14%	32 10%	52 16%	192 60%	320	1.78	1.10	REJECTED

	with their peers outside the motherless baby homes.								
69	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes help them to acquire the culture of the motherless baby home in which they live in.	122 38%	68 21%	37 12%	93 29%	320	2.68	0.88	ACCEPTEI
70	The language they developed in the motherless baby homes help them to acquire the ócultureô of the community in which the motherless baby home is situated.	13 4%	47 15%	38 12%	222 69%	320	1.53	0.88	REJECTED
71	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes make them to have negative idea about the outside world.	107	85	40	80	320	2.67	1.20	REJECTED
72	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes prepare them effectively for communication outside the homes (outside the motherless baby homes).	23 7%	45 14%	64 20%	188 59%	320	1.70	0.96	REJECTED
	AVG.	**17%**	**22%**	**15%**	**47%**	**320**	**2.09**	**1.02**	**REJECTEI**

In the data presented above, item 65, 69 and 71 recorded, ⍰ - 3.68 and ⍰ - 2.67 respectively and were thus accepted. The remaining items under Table 6 receive means

scores that are lower than ⍰-2.50 and were rejected. The average mean for this table is 2.09 while the average St.D is 1.02. These show that majority of the respondents (62%) do not hold the view therein in the propositions contained in the table.

In this table, apart from the fact that the data contained therein state that the language they developed in the motherless babies homes help them develop love for the English language and acquire the culture of the motherless babies homes where they live, it neither helps them to develop critical thinking nor prepares them for formal education. It does not also allow them to interact with other people or peers outside the motherless homes. The language equally does not allow them acquire the culture of the community where the motherless babies homes are situated and as such, they develop negative idea about the outside world.

Table 7

F. Inputs of Individuals and Organizations on the Children's Language Development

S/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	× FX	𝑥̄	St.D	DECISION
73	Children from different organizations visit the motherless baby homes.	81 25%	74 23%	67 21%	98 31%	320	2.43	1.74	REJECTED
74	The children that visit the motherless baby homes are mostly within 0-2 years old.	6 2%	31 10%	45 14%	238 74%	320	1.39	0.74	REJECTED
75	Most of the children that visit the motherless baby homes are within 2-6 years old.	13 4%	41 13%	10 3%	256 80%	320	1.40	0.86	REJECTED
76	Most of the children that visit The motherless baby homes are above 6 years of age.	200 63%	67 21%	30 9%	23 7%	320	3.39	0.93	ACCEPTED
77	The older children carry the children in the motherless baby homes and talk to them.	95 30%	102 32%	31 10%	92 29%	320	2.63	1.19	ACCEPTED
78	The younger children play with them inside the house/rooms.	22 7%	21 7%	43 13%	234 73%	320	1.47	0.89	REJECTED
79	They usually go outside with the children and play with them.	18 6%	17 5%	43 13%	242 76%	320	1.40	0.82	REJECTED
80	Adults from different organizations visit the motherless baby homes.	131 41%	142 44%	34 11%	13 4%	320	3.22	0.79	ACCEPTED
81	These adults play and chat with the children.	43 13%	81 25%	53 17%	143 45%	320	2.08	1.11	REJECTED
82	They carry the young ones	33	61	50	176	320	1.85	1.06	REJECTED

	and chat with them.	10%	19%	16%	55%				
83	They play with the children inside the house/rooms.	87 27%	130 41%	31 10%	72 23%	320	2.73	1.09	ACCEPTED
84	They also play with them Within the compound.	10 3%	14 4%	81 25%	215 67%	320	1.48	0.72	REJECTED
85	Adults that visit the motherless baby homes are usually more concern with helping the workers wash the childrenôs cloths.	155 48%	81 25%	40 13%	44 14%	320	3.08	1.08	ACCEPTED
86	They also busy themselves with other domestic chores.	141 44%	78 24%	49 15%	52 16%	320	2.96	1.12	ACCEPTED
87	Visitors usually stay for up to one hour in the motherless babies homes before living.	35 11%	40 13%	55 17%	190 59%	320	1.75	1.05	REJECTED
88	They stay for more than two hours before leaving.	20 6%	33 10%	47 15%	220 69%	320	1.54	0.91	REJECTED
89	The organizations that visit are more interested in providing services to the motherless baby homes.	21 7%	42 13%	35 11%	222 69%	320	1.57	0.95	REJECTED
90	These individuals/ organizations are more interested in donating money/materials to the motherless baby homes.	130 32%	144 45%	21 7%	52 16%	320	2.93	1.02	ACCEPTED
91	The individuals /organizations are more interested in making the children socialize with outside world.	31 10%	23 7%	40 13%	226 71%	320	1.56	0.99	REJECTED
92	They are interested in the language development of children.	5 2%	17 5%	60 19%	238 74%	320	1.34	0.66	REJECTED

	AVG.	**20%**	**19%**	**14%**	**48%**	**320**	**1.74**	**0.87**	REJECTED

In the table above, majority of the items received mean scores that are below ï- 2.50 and are, óRejected. These items include items: 73, 74, 75, 78, 79, 81, 82, 84, 87, 88, 89, 91, and 92. Items, 76, 77, 83, 85, 86 and 90 were, óAcceptedô since their scores are above ïï 2.50. The average mean score and standard deviation are ï ï 1.74 and St.D - 0.87 respectively. The data shown here indicate that the children that visit the homes come relatively from the same organization. Most of these children are above six years and are able to carry the children in the motherless babies homes. The visitors do not play with these children in the compound and usually stay for less than one hour. They are neither interested in making the children socialize with the outside world or acquire language, but are more interested in donating money/materials and in performing some domestic chores. In conclusion, most of the respondents (62%) do not agree with the proposition contained in this table.

Table 8

G. Language Environment in the Motherless Baby Homes that may Affect the Development of Language.

S/no	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SA (1)	× FX	𝑥̄	St.D	DECISION
93	The children do not have enough toys to play with.	25 8%	70 22%	41 13%	184 66%	320	1.80	1.03	REJECTED
94	The children do not have enough time to come out of the cot to play and chat with others.	152 48%	91 28%	33 10%	44 14%	320	3.10	1.05	ACCEPTED
95	The children do not have time to listen to the radio.	160 50%	101 32%	35 11	24 8%	320	3.24	0.92	ACCEPTED
96	The children do not have enough audio-visual materials (e.g. T.V) to view in the motherless baby homes.	140 44%	61 25%	44 14	54 17%	320	2.96	1.12	ACCEPTED
97	The children do not go outside the house to play in the compound.	191 60%	90 28%	23 7%	16 5%	320	3.43	0.83	ACCEPTED
98	The children do not have enough peer groups in the motherless baby home with whom they can play and discuss with.	172 53%	102 31%	21 7%	25 8%	320	3.32	0.94	ACCEPTED
99	The children do not have enough adults to attend to them and talk to them	201 63%	53 17%	23 7%	43 13%	320	3.29	1.08	ACCEPTED

	when they are within 0-1 year old.								
100	They do not have enough adults who chat and play with them when they were 1 year old and above.	141 44%	74 23%	37 12%	68 21%	320	2.90	1.18	ACCEPTED
101	They do not come out of the homes to chat and socialize with other children.	160 50%	84 26%	31 10%	45 12%	320	3.12	1.07	ACCEPTED
102	The workers in the homes do not have enough time to attend to the children because of other things they do in the homes.	171 53%	80 25%	31 10%	38 12%	320	3.20	1.03	ACCEPTED
103	The language environments in the homes are capable of delaying their language development.	160 50	84 26%	32 10%	44 14%	320	3.12	1.07	ACCEPTED
	AVG.	**47%**	**28%**	**10%**	**17%**	**320**	**3.13**	**1.05**	**ACCEPTED**

From the data presented in Table 8, apart from item 93, the propositions contain in all the other items were accepted as they all received mean scores that are above -2.50. The average mean score and standard deviation are ï 3.13 and St.D ï 1.05 respectively. In view of this, it could be seen that majority of the respondents (75%) hold the opinion that the environment in the motherless babies homes is capable of impairing the language development of the children. The data shown above indicate that though the children have enough toys, they do not have enough time to play, listen to radio, view television programmes, or even to go outside to play. Also, they do not have enough people to interact or play as most of the time, their caregivers were busy

performing domestic chores. Lastly under this table, the data indicate that the language environment is capable of delaying their language development.

Table 9

H. Means Response of the Mothers and Workers of Motherless Babies Homes on the Effect of the Language Environment in the Motherless Babies Homes on the Children.

		Mother						Caregiver/workers						
S/no	**Items**	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	x̄	**St.D**	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	x̄	**St.D**	**DECISION**
63	The quality of language developed in the motherless baby homes help them develop critical thinking just like the normal children.	12 15%	10 13%	15 19%	43 54%	1.89	1.13	14 35%	10 25%	7 18%	9 23%	2.68	1.17	REJECTED
64	The quality and quantity of language development in motherless baby homes help them love their mother tongue.	14 18%	17 21%	25 31%	24 30%	2.26	1.08	2 5%	3 8%	8 20%	27 68%	1.50	0.85	ACCEPTED
65	The quality and quantity of language developed in the motherless baby homes help them love the second language (English language).	16 20%	40 50%	11 14%	13 16%	2.74	.96	16 40%	13 33%	7 18%	4 10%	3.02	1.00	ACCEPTED
66	The quality and quantity of language developed in the motherless baby homes prepare them adequately for formal education	14 18%	17 21%	21 26%	28 35%	2.29	1.11	14 35%	8 20%	7 28%	11 18%	2.63	1.11	REJECTED

67	Language developed in the motherless baby homes help them interact with people outside the homes.	10 13%	14 18%	18 23%	38 48%	1.95	1.08	9 23%	8 20%	4 23%	19 35%	2.18	1.18	ACCEPTED
68	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes help them to interact with their peers outside the home.	15 19%	12 15%	23 29%	30 38%	2.15	1.13	6 15%	4 10%	8 20%	22 55%	1.60	2.10	ACCEPTED
69	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes help them to acquire the culture of the home they live in.	32 40%	16 20%	22 28%	10 13%	2.88	1.08	13 33%	10 25%	8 20%	9 23%	2.68	1.16	ACCEPTED
70	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes help them acquire the ócultureô of the community in which the homes are situated.	14 18%	16 20%	21 26%	29 36%	2.29	1.11	4 10%	5 13%	11 70%	20 8%	1.83	0.74	ACCEPTED
71	The language they acquire in the motherless baby homes help them have negative idea about the outside word.	18 23%	35 44%	10 13%	17 21%	2.68	1.05	16 40%	10 25%	8 20%	6 15%	2.90	1.16	ACCEPTED

72	The language acquired in the motherless baby homes prepare them effectively for communication outside the ñhomesô	17 21%	12 15%	18 23%	33 41%	2.16	1.01	10 25%	5 13%	10 25%	15 38%	2.25	1.11	ACCEPTED
	AVG.	**21%**	**24%**	**23%**	**32%**	**2.31**	**1.07**	**26%**	**19%**	**26%**	**29%**	**2.35**	**1.04**	ACCEPTED

From the data presented in the table above (Table 9), it could be seen that the average Mean from the mothersô side is 2.31 while that of the workers is ? - 2.45. These show that the scores fall below the bench mark mean of 2.50. It should however be stated that while the mothers reject the proposition in item 63 and 66, the workers accepted the proposition. The data shown here indicate that both the mothers and the caregivers believe that the language environment in the motherless babies homes is deficient as it lacks most of the essential ingredients needed for language development. They also observe that the language environment in the motherless babies homes do not help them to interact with people outside the motherless babies homes.

4.4. Discussion of Findings

The study was guided by research questions and hypotheses. The discussion is structured under the following sub-headings:

4.4.1. Result - Research Questions.

4.4.2. Result - Research Hypotheses.

4.4.1. Result - Research Questions

The **first research question** sought to find out the state of language development of children in the motherless babies homes. Based on the data collected from the different motherless babies homes (Institutions; A, B, C and D), it is evident that deprived children at various stages of language acquisition live there. This was also supported by the data shown in Table 1. In the table, it can be seen that though few children within 0-6 month were found in the motherless babies homes as attested to by score received by the item (-2.13), all other items in this table show that children from 7 months and above were more in the motherless babies homes. This is a healthy development as children have other children to interact with since according to Morris (2005), child-to-child interaction and play are essential for language acquisition and subsequent language development.

However, the data in Table 2 show that children that should ordinarily be at the holophrastic stage could not communicate with one word (65%) (Appendix 2). This is also true of children that were supposed to be at two-word (grammatical development) and telegraphic stages. Also, children that were between 31 to 50 months could not construct simple sentences. This is contrary to Steinberg (1998:7) finding when he observes thus, ñat only a year and a half, children use language to request, warn, refuse, brag, question, answer and informò.

It can also be noticed from the same table that, the deprived children who are between age range of 6-12 months, 7-16 months, 19-14 months and 25-34 months, could not respond to their names or mention five words, say dada, mama or the names of the caregivers. They could neither mention the names of ten items in the homes nor name at least eight parts of their body. 59% of the respondents therefore agree that the children are lacking in their language acquisition task.

This is consistent with the result obtained in **Institution A**, where Okechukwu and Nduka who were above two years could not respond to any of the questions asked by the

researcher. They could neither say their names nor mention any of the items seen in the homes. In **Institution B**, Ifeanyi (4years 3 months) and Ebere (4 years 6 months) could say their names, but could not say the names of most of the objects in the motherless babies homes. In **Institution C** and **D,** the children interviewed could respond to simple questions but could not name some of the objects in the motherless babies homes or engage in more elaborate discussion with the interviewer. They could not recount any short story or event that took place in the school or in the motherless babies homes even when the interviewer tried to use scaffolding method to aid them in telling the stories, or discussing what happened. It could thus be said that these children are below their age mates in normal homes in terms of climbing the language acquisition ladder. It suffices to state here that Knudtzon (2012) observes that at 18 months, language development is quick as children are increasing their vocabulary at a phenomenal rate of a new word every two hours. But these children could neither respond to questions nor answer any at 18 months. The much they could do was to play with visitors through other means but not language. In clear terms, only 40% of the respondents agree that the children in the motherless babies homes possessed the qualities contained in Table 2. It thus shows that the children are lagging behind in attaining the different milestone that corresponds to the years.

Explaining what may have caused these children not to use language at two years, Dealy, Pacchiano & Shumpi (2012) observe,

> Even before a child learns to speak, the amount and quality of the language she hears has an important impact on her developing communicative skills. Sadly, for many children, particularly those facing multiple risk factors é their homes and primary care environments are not structured to maximize language and literacy development. Far too often, the early language and literacy needs of babies and toddlers are overlooked.(p. 1)

They therefore conclude that, unfortunately, many children who are eventually labeled ñunpreparedò spend their early years in unresponsive care settings, missing out on the behaviours and language embedded in responsiveness that form the basis for social, emotional and language development.

In conclusion, it could be stated that though the children in the motherless babies homes are at different age/levels of language acquisition, their language development could not be matched with their age as they are deficient in their language acquisition task and also below the different language milestones that correspond to the different ages.

The **second research question** aimed at finding out if there are favorable environmental factors that aid language acquisition in normal homes which are lacking in motherless babies homes. This is based on the fact that multitude of environmental factors cum variables influence children acquisition and communication process (*Center for Early Care and Education* [*CECE*], (2006).

The home and or the social environment are perhaps the most important factors in childrenôs language development (Essay, 2011). According to Essay, during the first year of the childôs development, the home is the environment in which language encouragement takes place. The language input is directed towards the child, in a manner that both the adultôs behaviour and speech are constructed to fit the childôs need. Thus, the language activities in the home environment seem to take various forms and specific activities are patterned to suit the childôs language development. Table 3 specifically focused on both the material and human resources or what CECE (2011) refers to as socio-linguistic environment (SLE).

The first three items in Table 3 sought to ascertain the extent to which different visitors at different age groups visit the motherless babies homes and interact with the deprived children in the motherless babies homes. The data contained in the table show that visitors and caregivers were not always around to talk, discuss and or chat with the children. 59% of the respondents hold this view. The children from the normal homes were not always there to discuss with the children. This is really not a welcome development, as far as the childrenôs language acquisition of either the mother tongue or any other language is concerned. As constant exposure to adult and other people facilitate childrenôs language acquisition, the non-availability or minimal exposure to these groups must have contributed a lot to the childrenôs inability to reach the different milestones as children that were suppose to communicate with specified number of words at different ages were un-able to. Most of the children used in this study who were more than three years old, used mostly one ï word utterances even when they should ordinarily be communicating with more complex structures.

Language is an aspect of the human endeavors with multiple facts and aspects (Nwaozuzu, 2007) and according to Agbedo, (2009), in the language acquisition process, the normal child benefits substantially from both his colleagues linguistic capacity which must in turn be facilitated by exposure to sensitive and helpful parental (adult)speech and /or caregiver language. In line with this, Dealy, Pacchiano and Shimpi

(2012) observe that early language development is dependent on the quality of interactions a child has with the important adults (parents, caregivers, relations and other visitors) in his life.

Play is also important in childrenôs language acquisition process as they meet different circumstances that demand the use of different statements. In this study, it was observed that children in the motherless babies homes were not allowed to play and run around freely with their peers outside the house they lived in. Although the respondents accept that children in the motherless babies homes played outside and engageed in out-door games (61%), the researcher never saw the children playing outside through-out his visits. The children were always seen playing in their rooms/houses. Even their caregivers observed that the children rarely move outside to play because they had few workers in the homes to direct them while they played outside as attended to other domestic chores. They were, however, allowed to play and chat with one another inside the house (but did not engage in out-door games).

Children are exposed to different vocabulary items based on exposure to different environments, be they physical or social environments. This is because young children use all their senses, vision, touch, smell, hearing etc. while interacting with and learning in a physical environment (Iltus, 2012). When children are limited to a particular room or house as is the case with children in motherless babies homes, there is the likelihood that contact with physical and social environments are limited. These limited exposures to physical and social environment have negative effects on the childrenôs language acquisition process. During the various visits, the researcher observed that the children were either in their cots or playing in their room(s) and never seen outside the house.

The use of toys while playing also encourages children to learn even about objects that are not seen in the motherless babies homes. Through the use of toys, children talk to each other and engage in other language related behavior which may include role playing. Audio-visual equipment equally helps in exposing the children to objects and scenes that are beyond their immediate environment. In these motherless babies homes based on the data on Table 3 number 23, the children in the motherless babies homes have enough toys (80%). Thus the children can play, see and name objects that they may not have seen in real life, either the motherless babies homes or in the schools. This is good for the childrenôs language development. However it should be stated that from personal observation (by the researcher), very few toys were seen in the motherless babies homes. The children have radios and televisions but the children did not enjoy the

full benefits derivable from these facilities. Thus they rarely listen to radio, watch television or watch cartoons or channels dedicated to kids. In accordance with this, 75% of the respondents strongly believe that the children do not listen to radio, while 79% of the respondents affirm that the children rarely watch programmes shown on television stations. Equally, while majority of the respondents (79%) attest to the fact the children do not watch cartoons in the motherless babies homes, only 33% of the respondents accepted that the children in the motherless babies homes watch television channels dedicated to kids. They also did not have the opportunity of listening to music released by fellow kids. Children serve as peer models to each other, providing relevant examples (Wilcox, Murphy Bacon & Thomas, 2001) and whether the children are seen in movies or in real life, they serve the same purpose.

Commenting on the need for childrenôs interaction with people and other materials available, Essay (2011) states that the language influence is not only restricted to the childôs interaction with adults and other siblings. He went ahead to state that with the increase in modern technology, children are exposed to immeasurable materials that may serve as additional input to their language development. Such equipment as television, radio programmes, and computer programmes are used to aid children in their language acquisition task. It is not then surprising to observe that majority (61%) of the respondents posit that the proposition contained in Table 3 are not obtainable in the motherless babies homes.

Conclusively, it could be stated that children in the motherless babies homes do not have enough adults and children to interact with. Not only this, they are restricted from going outside to play but rather stay in the rooms where they rarely listen or watch televisions. It can thus be said that they lack enough human and material resources in the environment to aid them in their language acquisition task.

Furthermore, the **third research question** states inta alia, ñto what extent can negotiation and attachment of meaning to utterances of these children aid in identifying children with language disorderò.

In reaction to this, the data shown in Table 4 indicate that children in the motherless babies homes are able to negotiate and call the attention of the caregivers right from birth (58%). At 0-6 months, they can indicate that they are hungry by crying. By 15 months, they are able to bring plates, spoons or feeding bottles to show that they are hungry. However, at 18 months, most of these children are unable to state that they

are hungry through the use of specific utterances. This shows that while the children are developing normally in the use of other means of communication, that of language is lacking. According to Dealy, Pacchiano & Shimpi (2012), basic communication and language development skills are a crucial part of the foundation of children early development. As negotiation for meaning functions as both a means to prevent conversational trouble and a repair mechanism to overcome communication breakdown (Rhoda, 2002), the inability of most of the children to indicate through language that they needed certain important necessities of life portend danger. At 18 months, children should be able to show that they are hungry through various means which must include the use of language no matter how basic.

Furthermore, at 8 months, the deprived children in the motherless babies homes are able to show that they want to be carried by raising their hands. Raising of hand most often among children show special attachment to the person the child wants to be carried by. The researcher however observed that the children raised their hands more to visitors than to their caregivers. This is indicative of the fact that most often, it is the visitors that carry them and play with them as their caregivers were always busy performing some domestic chores. This is contrary to what happens in normal homes where most children prefer to be carried by family members and other people they constantly stay with. As visitors are many, the implication is that the children are not developing attachment to any special person (s) but rather need somebody to carry them at that material time. This is in line with the observation of the researchers as the children held out their hands to be carried by visitors but rarely did same when their caregivers passed. The researchers thus guessed that the children have learnt from past experience that the caregivers were not always disposed to carry them around.

At 13-18 months, the children were neither able to show that they needed to watch television or identify the movie they wanted to watch. Inability of the children to show that they wanted to be carried or that they needed to watch television show that such children have language problem. Furthermore, most of the children in the motherless babies homes (12 months and 18 months and above) are unable to indicate or communicate to adults that they are pressed or that they needed something via language and other related behaviour. Though inability of children at 18 months and above to show that they are pressed and communicate their needs are indications of language disorder, caregivers in the motherless babies homes are not able to identify children with language disorders through their inability to negotiate and identify their needs.

These developments put these children at risk as any intervention may never reach them early. These language problems may thus persist till adulthood (Johson et al, 1999; Beitchman, et al 2008), with its attendant problems (Agbedo, 2008). The problems according to Beitchman & Brownlie (2010) include continued disadvantage in speech and language competence, intellectual functioning, educational adjustment and achievement, psychosocial difficulties, and increased probability of psychiatric disorder.

In a nut-shell, the data collected in relation of this research question state that while the children in the motherless babies homes are able to negotiate and attract the attention of their caregivers at the early stage in life, this feat is not continued as they could not support this with appropriate utterances at 18 months and above. They could not equally show what they needed via verbal behaviour. Also, the caregivers are unable to identify children with language disorders through their inability to utter the needed utterances at the appropriate time even though it was found that some of the children had delayed language. Majority of the respondents (55%) thus agree that the children do not possess the abilities listed in Table 4.

The **fourth research question** sought to ascertain if the children in the motherless babies homes receive enough attention/care that aid their language acquisition from workers and visitors.

Data collected in respect of this research question (Table 5), show that children in the motherless babies homes do not have enough people that come to their aid anytime they cry, right from birth. Despite the fact that those who come to their aid do not stay with them until they stop crying, they at least stay with them until their needs are met. Also, they do not force the children to stop crying by beating or frightening them, but most often, they do not talk to the children while they feed them. They only start talking to these children when they are at least one year or more. As children start communicating to adults their needs right from birth, adults should likewise start talking to them as this will greatly improve their language skill and acquisition.

The data contained in Table 5 also show that, even when the caregivers/workers talk to them, the way they talk to the children in the motherless babies homes neither encourages them to coo and label nor encourage them to talk when they are at one-word and two-word stages. They neither prompt the children to utter utterances nor talk to them in childlike utterances, they rather talk to them in adult languages. This is not consistent with Agbedo (2009) observation, which states that, there are certain

modifications in adults languages that are directed to children. According to him, the utterances tend to be high pitched, slower, more in content words, interrogative, imperative and sometimes verbless. These prompt the children a lot and significantly facilitate their acquisition of language.

The caregivers do not also help the children to learn the names of objects inside the house (ï 1.58 < ï 2.50), learn names of objects within the compound (ï 1.58 > ï 2.50), and names of objects outside the home (ï 1.58 < ï 2.50). The story is the same even when they go for excursion, church services, market and other places. The motherless babies homesô environment rather than being a place for the language development of the children tend to retard it. According to Iltus (2012), home environments have been shown to be a major factor that influences the overall development of children. This is because, during meal and play time according to Stechuk, Burns, & Yandian (2006), caregivers sit with children and help them learn names of foods, and encourage them to talk. During active physical play also, caregivers talk to children about activities like explaining safety rules and their likes.

The use of audio-visual equipment in the motherless babies homes has also not helped the children to acquire language. The children therefore rarely learn names of objects from radio and television. To cap it all, it was found that the way the children are talked to by caregivers can not aid them in developing language like children in normal homes.

In conclusion, the care given to children at motherless babies homes received a negative report. The table (Table 5) received an average mean of 1.62 (ï 1.62 < ï 2.50). This mean ( ) is far below the criterion mean (C) of 2.50. The care and attention given to them therefore can not effectively help them develop language like other children in normal homes.

The next **research question (Research Question 5)** focused on the extent to which inputs of individuals/organizations aid the language acquisition of the children in the motherless babies homes.

The data collected in respect of this research question show that majority of children who visit the motherless babies homes relatively come from the similar organization (Christian organizations) (Table 6). These children are mostly above six years of age. This is contrary to what is obtainable in normal homes. In normal homes,

children of different age group abound and while interacting with each other, the children talk about objects/events beyond the physical environment. This can be aided by adults who can ñfacilitate dialogue among several children, possibly indirectly assigning pretended roles for children joining ongoing play (Wilcox, Murphy, Bacon & Thomas, 2001). Even if there are a good number of infants in the motherless babies homes, there is the need for a good number of children to visit them as it will give them ample opportunity of interacting with children that are from normal homes (society). Furthermore, the older children carry the children in the motherless babies homes and talk to them and this is actually a healthy development as it relates to the language development of the children. However, the younger children are not allowed to play with the children outside the house/room.

The findings reveal that adults from different organizations visit the motherless baby home (as -3.22 > ï 2.50). However, these adults neither chat with the children nor play with them. Even when they play with them, they do so inside the house alone (-2.73 > -2.50) and not within the compound (-1.48). The inability of these adults having enough time to play and chat with these children may be due largely to the fact that they are usually more concerned with helping the workers in washing the childrenôs cloths and in doing other domestic chores. The adults do not even have enough time to stay with the children as most of the adults stay for less than one (76%) or two (84%) hours. Even the organizations that visit the motherless babies homes are not different as they are more interested in donating money and materials to the motherless babies homes. These organizations are more interested in providing services to these children but are not interested in making the children socialize with the outside world. They are not equally interested in the language development of the children. In a nut shell, the overall input of individuals and organizations is negative as the average mean stood at ï 1.74. This is far below the C - 2.50, indicating that the input of the afore-mentioned is not much.

This is consistent with Batchman & Brownlie (2010) who states that speech and language competency does not progress normally for a sizeable number of children especially those in isolated or non stimulating language environment. This may be due largely to the fact that language is a shared code used to accomplish communication. Stechuk, Burns, & Yandian (2006) opined that language development includes

communication, speaking and listening, as well as mental process and external factors associated with their environments.

The social environment is an important aspect that facilitates childrenôs language, it is therefore disheartening that the adults and children that come to the motherless babies homes do not have enough time to engage in meaningful play with the children. They thus do not adequately facilitate their language development. For Wilcox, Murphy, Bacon & Thomas (2001) the main role of adults in relation to facilitating childrenôs language development is facilitating peer interaction. During meal and play time, children do many things with their peers. They practice developing language skills during peer interactions and they are socially reinforced for their efforts inwardly and by resourceful adults. Essay (2011) therefore observes that the social environment is perhaps the most important factor in childrenôs language development. The inability of individuals and organization that visit the motherless babies homes to pay attention to the language acquisition of the children could be said to be a big blow to their language acquisition process. This is because they are the ones that should ordinarily facilitate their language development and their link to the outside world.

Research question six sought to find out the effect of the language acquired in the motherless babies homes on the children.

The effect of the language acquired in the motherless babies homes could be said to be positive in certain aspect as contained in Table 7. The language developed by the children help them to love and acquire the English language and the culture of the motherless babies homes in which they live. This in no small measure, helps them in the school as most of the subjects taught in the school system in Nigeria are taught in the English language which incidentally is the official language of the country. Acquiring the culture of the motherless baby home at the expense of the culture of the community in which they live may be beneficial to them since it will make them live in harmony with each other. On the other hand, however, it is inimical to the childrenôs linguistic and social development as they will not belong to any culture group and as such not belong to any identifiable culture group in the society. In view of this they donôt only develop negative idea about the outside world but also dislike their mother tongue.

The latest stand is however contrary to the information contained in **Institution B**. The two children interviewed here showed interest in both the English language and the Igbo language. Ifeanyi spoke both in the English language (Ma name is Ifeanyi - My

name is Ifeanyi) and in the Igbo language (Emu fome mu - give me my phone). Ebele on the other hand responded in Igbo even though she was asked the question in English language (E ji eme ABCE- it is used to write ABCD). The children could be said to have acquired the Igbo language which is part and parcel of the culture of the people.

On another note, however, the data shown in Table 6 indicate that the language developed (in most cases, children in the motherless babies home are below their milestones linguistically) in the home do not help the children develop critical thinking like their counterparts in the normal homes. Even more worrisome is the fact that the language acquired in the motherless babies homes neither prepare the children effectively for formal education nor prepare them for meaningful interaction/ integration into the society as they are only able to interact meaningfully with their peers in the motherless babies homes. It is not then surprising that the data shown in Table 6 (Item 72) support the fact that the language acquired in the motherless babies homes does not effectively prepare the children for effective communication outside the motherless baby home in which they live.

Generally, the data shown in Table 6 received a negative response as it got an AVG -2.09. This shows that the effect of the language acquired in the motherless baby home are not in the best interest of the childrenôs language development. This development according to Agbedo (2008) puts them in clear risk of academic difficulties and therefore requires immediate intervention programmes.

Research question seven focuses on finding out if the language environments in the motherless babies homes are capable of affecting negatively the language development of the children.

The data contained in Table 8, indicate that the children do not have enough facilities in the motherless babies homes. Worst still they do not even have enough time to make appropriate use of the ones they have. They do not have enough time to come out of the cot to play and chat with each other. The reason for this is not far-fetched as most of the motherless babies homes do not have more than five caregivers attending to these children at a time.

Availability of stimulating objects like; books, toys, and other play materials within the homes are critical indicators for overall quality of the home environment (Iltus, 2012) which positively enhance the language acquisition of the children. But the non-availability and or limited supply of these play material especially toys negatively

affect their language development. This stems from the fact that according to, Iltus (2012: 14),

> Availability of toys, especially home-made toys created by adults and older siblings is é a good indicator of parental concern and sensitivity towards play. They help create a stimulating environment within the home that encourages exploration and problem solving

Non availability of this essential material therefore inhibits exploration and problem solving and by extension affects negatively language development since appropriate language and negotiation would have been applied in the manipulation of these objects and in other accompanying activities. The children do not equally have enough time to listen to radio and view programmes on the television stations that broadcast programmes for children. However, the motherless babies homes have a good numbers of CD plates in stock. As none of the motherless babies homes have a standby generator for electricity supply, they rely heavily on the public power supply for their electricity. But the services of the public power supply is grossly inadequate in Nigeria, and this contribute in no small measure to the children not having enough power to enjoy the audio- visual facilities in the motherless babies homes.

In terms of child ï to ï child interaction which according to Morris (2005) is very essential as it provides feedback on the childôs language and other developments, the children in the motherless babies homes unlike their counterparts in normal home rarely go outside to play and chat with their mates or others. Still on availability of human beings that attend to the children, the research shows that the children do not have enough adults to attend to them right from birth. They do not equally come out of the homes to socialize with other children and by extension the outside world. This is coupled with the fact that the caregivers do not have enough time to attend to the children because of their other engagements in the home which as earlier stated in Table 7 included washing cloths and doing other domestic chores. It is thus, not surprising that the majority of the respondents agree that the language environment in the motherless babies homes is capable of delaying language development.

Language delays, according to Agbedo (2008), may present a variety of characteristics including the inability to follow direction, incomprehensible speech and pronunciation difficulties in syntax and articulation. Commenting on the effect of language disorder, Clearve (2005) and Thiemann & Warren (2004) observe that children with language delay usually have social, emotional and behavioral problems. In view of

this, Dale & Patterson (2009) observe that, because language is central to so many aspects of human life - valid identification, prevention, and treatment of language disorders is a high priority for therapeutic professions. Delay and or difficulty in beginning to use language is one of the most common causes of parental concern for young children brought to pediatricians and other professionals.

In this type of situation, Agbedo (2008) and Thieman & Warren (2010) advocate early intervention programmes which will positively correct or minimize this disorder and as such impact on the childrenôs late communicative performance and social relationship.

4.4.2. Result - Research Hypotheses

There is no significant difference in the state of language acquisition between the children in the motherless babies homes and children that live in normal homes. This is **the first research hypothesis (HO_1))** and Tables 1 and 2 will guide us in the acceptance or rejection of this null hypothesis.

Table 1 handles the age of the children in the motherless babies homes. As the characteristic of children in the normal homes is the existence of children/infants of all ages, the same could also be said to exist in the motherless babies homes based on the data shown in Table1. Only item one has a mean score which is less than the criterion mean of 2.50. The children in the motherless babies homes who are between 0-6 months old scored - 2.13. As ï 2.13 is less than the criterion mean (C) - 2.50, this proposition stands rejected and as such the number of children within this age range could be said to be few. The rest of the items scored, - 2.52, - 2.58, - 3.21, and - 3.24 respectively. These scores are greater than the C-2.50, hence these items stand accepted. The average mean (AVG.) for this table is 2.74 and as this is greater than the criterion mean, the propositions contained in this table stand accepted (as, AVG. - 2.74 > C - 2.50).

Then on the state of their language acquisition, children at the prelinguistic stage (0-6 months), children that are between 1 year 6 months and those that are between 7 to 16 months received a positive report since they scored, - 3.42, - 2.51 and - 2.59 respectively. These scores are higher than the criterion mean 2.50. These show that

children at the prelinguistic stage can coo and babble while those that are 1 year 6 months can utter recognizable words. At 7 to 16 months also, children in those motherless babies homes can say dada and mama but could not say the names of their caregivers.

On the other hand, children that are at the one-word , two words and three-words stages could not measure up to their counterpart in the normal homes as they could not communicate with the required utterances that adequately match their various stages of language acquisition. They scored, ï 2.13, -1.82 and ï 2.20 respectively and since these are less than the criterion mean, the proposition contained in the various items from where they were extracted stand rejected. Also, children that are between 31 -50 months could not construct simple sentences (since - 2.13 < - 2.50).

Furthermore, children that are between, 6 - 12, 7 - 17, 19 - 24 and 25 - 34 months respectively could not respond to or mention their names (- 2.19), mention up to five words (-1.29), mention ten items in the motherless babies homes (-2.32) or mention at least eight different parts of their body (- 1.92). These children therefore perform below their counterpart in the normal homes.

Based on the discussion above it could be said that majority of the items under this table (Table 2) scored below the criterion mean. It can therefore be stated that since the; AVG. ï 2.26 < Cï 2.50, the null hypothesis stand rejected. Even the AVG. ST.D is 0.96 and since none of the scores in this table deviated from the AVG. ST.D with more than 0.05, it shows that there is strong relationship in their responses. This stand states the obvious and that is the fact that there is a significant difference between the state of language acquisition of children in the motherless babies homes and their counterparts in the normal homes. Since AVG. - 2.26 < C. ï 2.50, it means that the state/level of language acquisition among the deprived children in the motherless babies homes is less that the level of acquisition of children in the normal homes. Both their level of language acquisition and performance are lower than children in the normal homes.

The **second research hypothesis (Research hypothesis 2 (HO_2))** states, õThere is no significant difference between the language environment of the deprived children and the normal childrenô

Environmental factors that aid language acquisition are contained in Table 3, and the responses in this table will guide us in the acceptance or rejection of this hypothesis. The proposition in items 21 and 23 were accepted signifying that the deprived children play/chat with each other inside the house (- 2.63) and have enough toys to play with (- 3.22).

All other items in this table got mean scores that are lower than the criterion means. In the motherless babies homes, the children do not always have visitors/caregivers who carry and talk to do them (- 2.10), do not have children who come around always to chat with them (- 2.19), do not always have adults who discuss and chat with them (- 2.39) or have peers who play and run around with them in the motherless babies homes (-2.47). These items scored lower than the criterion mean and hence their propositions are rejected.

In the same vein, these deprived children do not play outside (engage in out-door games- - 1.94) or listen to radio always (ï 1.95). The children do not also watch television (- 2.01), watch different cartons (- 1.91) or watch channels dedicated to kids (-2.13). Even listening and viewing music released by fellow kids (-2.28) are a rare opportunity. All these scored below the criterion mean and hence their adequate availability in the motherless babies homes was rejected. In a nut shell majority of the environmental factors contained in the table were not available in the motherless babies homes hence, AVG. - 2.34 < C. -2.50. Since the AVG. - 2.34 < C -2.50, the null hypothesis is rejected. It therefore means that environmental factors that aid language acquisition in the motherless babies homes are limited in comparison to what is available to their counterparts in normal homes.

There is no significant difference between the negotiation abilities of the deprived children and the normal children is the next research hypothesis **(Research hypothesis 3 (HO_3)).** (The data shown in Table 4 were used to determine the acceptability or the non-acceptability of this research hypothesis).

The propositions contained in items 29, 30, 31 and 33 were accepted. This shows that the children in the motherless babies homes can call the attention of the caregivers right from births, communicate to the caregivers that they are hungry by crying, bring plates, spoons, and feeding bottles to show that they are hungry and by 8 months, they can show that they need to be carried by adults by raising their hands. All these items

received mean scores that are above the criterion mean and hence were accepted. The propositions in item 36 and 40 were also accepted as they agreed that the inability of the children to show that they needed certain services (ï 2.92) or that they are pressed (ï 2.63) at certain ages are indications that they have language problems/disorders.

On the contrary, the propositions in item 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39 and 41 were rejected as children at 18 months could not utter specific utterances to show that they are hungry, or show through different means that they want to watch TV. The children can not even identify movies they want to watch via utterances. At 12, 18 and 19 months, just as they are unable to show that they want to ease themselves, they cannot also communicate their needs via language and related behaviours or show through words that they needed an object and not the other. The caregivers could not even identify children in the homes with language disorder through their inability to negotiate and state their needs.

The above stated hypotheses (HO_3) stand rejected since,

AVG.ï 2.38 < C.ï 2.50.

It therefore shows that there is significant difference between the negotiation abilities of the deprived children and the normal children as the children in the motherless babies homes could not negotiate and use language appropriately just like their counterparts in normal homes.

Lastly, **research hypothesis four (HO_4)** states, ôThere is no significant difference between the mean response of mothers and workers in the motherless babies homes on the effect of the language environment in the motherless babies homes on the language development of the children.

To test the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean response of the mothers and workers in the motherless babies homes on the effect of the language environment in the motherless babies homes on the language development of the children, the data contained in Table 9 were used. The opinion of the mothers and workers of the motherless babies homes differ only in items 63 and 66. While the workers in the motherless babies homes believe that the quality of language developed in the motherless babies homes can help the children develop critical thinking just like normal children (ï 2.72), the mothers believe that the contrary is the case (ï 1.89). Their responses in the remaining items are relatively similar. They do not agree with the proposition in items 64, 67, 68, 70 and 71. On the other hand, they believe that

the proposition contained in items 65, 69 and 71 are true. In summary the mean response of mothers and workers in the motherless babies homes can be summed up in the table below.

Table 10
Test of Hypothesis 4 (HO_4)

VARIABLES	$\sum$	$\sum \overline{X}$	$_1 - _2$	**DECISION**
Workers of the motherless baby homes	40	2.35	0.04	Accepted
Mothers	80	2.31		

The result of the means score above show that in comparison, the mean score obtained by workers of the motherless baby home is higher than the mothers by 0.04. This score is not up to 0.05 and as such not significant. There is therefore no significant difference between the mean response of workers of the motherless babies homes and mothers. Also, since the two group got a mean scores that are below the criterion mean of 2.50, it then means that both the mothers and workers of the motherless babies homes agree that the children in the motherless babies homes do not possess majority of the qualities contained in the propositions in Table 6.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

This study focused on the language acquisition of deprived children. Specifically, a comprehensive overview of the research endeavour was given in our background of study. In it the childôs language acquisition process which starts right from the wombs were looked into. It was then reasoned that since most of the researchers in language acquisition had focused on children in normal homes and based on that, conclusions were reached on how children acquire language, it then becomes pertinent that the language acquisition of children in deprived environment should be looked into, hence the need for this research work. Based on this, research objectives, questions and hypotheses were formulated.

In review of literature, theories that relate to language acquisition were looked into before delving into other pertinent topics. Such topics as, the relatedness or otherwise of language acquisition, language learning and language development were looked into. Language development was seen as a óbuild upô from language acquisition and learning. In child language development based on the view of Agbedo (2008), all children are expected to reach developmental milestones on their own schedules as some children may develop language a little ahead or behind. The capacity to develop language hinges on both innate endowment and environmental facilitation. The home is the predominant environment in which children thrive, solely interacting with their caretaker, family members and siblings (Essay, 2011). Through interaction, children develop language. Based on the above foregoing, other topics which include, environment and language development, negotiation for meaning, education and child language development, language impairment and the relationship between language, thought and culture were also discussed before the review of empirical reports were handled.

The study focused on the deprived children who acquire language in the motherless babies homes. Specifically the summaries of major findings of the study include;

1. That despite the fact that motherless babies homes have infants at different age groups (0-36 months and above), the children in these homes could not measure up and use language like their counterpart in normal homes. The deprived children that are above 12 months could not respond to their names while older children could not communicate appropriately with the required number words or utterances that

match their different milestones. The deprived children therefore performed poorly in their language acquisition task.

2. Equally, the result of the findings reveals that the prevailing environmental factors in the motherless babies homes do not adequately favour language development (AVG ï 2.34). This is because while very few visitors visit the motherless babies homes (30%), children and adults were not always available to chat, play and discuss with these children.
3. The findings also reveals that the ability to negotiate and attach meaning to utterances could be said to be encouraging between 0-16 months but thereafter this ability diminishes as most of the children could not communicate to the adults their needs via appropriate negotiation. The study thus affirms that there is significant difference between the negotiation ability of deprived children and children in the normal homes.
4. The care given to the children in motherless babies homes in comparison with that given to children in normal homes is inadequate since the children do not have enough people that come to their aid right from birth either to play or chat with them. The children were therefore deficient in oral communication as they could not state their needs verbally.
5. The study also attests to the fact that the language developed in these homes does not help the children develop critical thinking, or interact with people outside the ôhomesô. It does not prepare the inmates adequately for formal education or develop love for their mother tongue but rather aid them in developing love for the English language.
6. The study indicates that though different organizations visit the motherless babies homes, most of the time, they render services and donate material gifts to the children. They do not stay for a long time, or concern themselves with activities that will aid the language development of the children. Their input in this context therefore is minimal.
7. Lastly, the study reveals that the language environment in the motherless babies homes is deficient and could impair the language development of these children. These negative environmental factors lead to the delay of language acquisition by the children.

In the light of the foregoing, the study reached some conclusions and made a few recommendations.

5.2. CONCLUSION

Language acquisition is a feat which every normal child achieves provided the child is adequately exposed to language. Language acquisition continues without impediments in normal homes where parents and adults provide the children with the required input that aid them in the process of language acquisition. These facilitation efforts greatly enhance the language development of children in normal homes. This research endeavour highlighted the dilemmas faced by deprived children in the of motherless babies homes and thus states that though natural endowment is essential, adequate exposures to rich language environment is necessary in language acquisition.

Adequate exposures to rich environmental factors which imply the availability of human and material resources are essential ingredients that positively enhance language acquisition. The existence of these resources alone may not achieve any recognizable impact on the language development of the children if the human elements in the environment do not spend quality time interacting with the children and even sometimes engaging them in direct teaching.

Children in the motherless babies homes have human and material resources, but these resources are not adequately provided and made use of, for the language development of these children. In fact, the children could have facilities but could not name them. They can have people around them but since these people do not stay long enough with them, interacting, chatting and playing with them right from birth, their language development is delayed.

The workers of these motherless babies homes are not even able to identify children that have language problems or believe that language delay noticed among some of the children are cases that needed urgent attention. This has its own negative implication as early intervention may never come the way of such children. The need for quality childcare which should appropriately take care of the childrenôs personal, social and language needs is therefore advocated. Researches should therefore be carried out to ascertain the various appropriate intervention programmes that should be applied to aid the language acquisition process of children in the motherless babies homes and other similar environments. Studies should also be carried out on, the effect of language acquisition of deprived children in motherless babies homes on their language development later in life.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

This research work which focused on the language acquisition of children in the motherless babies homes came up with some findings. It is based on these findings that the following recommendations are made.

Firstly, there should be a special training for the caregivers and welfare officers of motherless babies homes on the special need of these children. They should be trained not only on the personal-social needs of the children but also on how to effectively aid the children in their language acquisition task.

Toys and other play materials should be adequately provided for the children in the motherless babies homes. These materials should not only be used inside the rooms/halls in the motherless babies homes but outside the houses and in the compound. The caregivers should direct the use of these materials in order to create a language stimulating environment.

Visitors and organizations that visit the motherless babies homes should be adequately informed of what they should do to help the children in their language acquisition task. These include engaging in motherese language, baby talk, and prompting (helping) them to utter recognizable sounds. At times, direct teaching can be used to enable the children learn names of objects and human beings within the environment. What is required of them can be written down and made available to all visitors.

Also, special programmes that will enable the children leave the motherless babies homes on excursion are advocated. The programmes should not only include visits to special centres, but also visits to different families, churches, markets and different traditional ceremonies. These will enable the children interact with their counterparts outside the motherless babies homes and to see the society the way it is.

Adequate care should be taken to ensure that radio, television and other audio-visual materials are provided for the children. The provision of these materials should be followed by adequate allocation of time to enable the children make maximum use of such materials. The situation where these materials are not made use of because they are damaged or because there is no light from the public power supply should be minimized. Generators should therefore be provided for these motherless babies homes to ensure that they make good use of these facilities.

Government and non-governmental organizations should ensure that experts in language, especially the child language (psycholinguists/psychologists) are attached to motherless babies homes. These experts should ensure that the language needs of the children are taken care of. They should also train the caregivers/workers in the act of monitoring and facilitating the childrenôs acquisition of languages as well as training them to be able to identify early enough children with language problems.

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APPENDIX 1 (THE QUESTIONNAIRE)

Department of linguistics, Igbo and
Other Nigerian Languages,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The researcher is a Post-graduate student of the above department and is currently conducting a research on the, ôLanguage acquisition process of deprived child in motherless babies homesô.

Your sincere response to the items in the questionnaire is needed for the successful execution of this research work. The exercise is purely an academic one, and all information supplied will only be used for this study.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

Abonyi, Daniel Odinaka.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

INSTRUCTION: TICK [√] AT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION THAT REFLECT YOUR OPINION

Keys:	Strongly Agree	**SA**
	Agree	**A**
	Disagree	**D**
	Strongly Disagree	**SD**

	Items	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**
1.	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 0 ï 6 months old.				
2.	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 12 ï 18 months old.				
3.	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 18 ï 24 months old				
4.	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 24 ï 30 months old.				
5.	Children in the motherless baby homes are above 30 months old.				
6.	Children at prelinguistic stage (under the age 0-6 years) can engage in cooing and babbling.				
7.	Children at one-word stage utter recognizable words.				

8.	Children at the one-word stage can communicate with one word.				
9.	Children at two-word stage can communicate well with the combination of two words.				
10.	Children that are within 24 ï 30 months can communicate with three words.				
11.	Children between 31 ï 50 months can construct simple sentences.				
12.	Children that are within 6 ï 12 months can respond to or answer their names.				
13.	Children in the homes that are within 6 ï 12 months can mention up to five words.				
14.	Children in the homes that are within 6 ï 16 months can call *mama*, *dada* or the names of their caregivers.				
15.	Children in the ôhomesô that are within 19 ï 24 months can mention ten items in the ôhomesô.				
16.	Children that are within 25 ï 34 months can mention or at least names eight parts of their body.				
17.	There are parents/care givers who carry and talk to the children always.				
18.	Children come around always to chart with the children.				
19.	Adults are always available to discuss and chat with the children.				
20.	Children play and run around with their peers in the homes.				
21.	Children play inside the house and chart with each other.				
22.	Children play outside and engage in out-door games.				
23.	Children have enough toys to play with.				
24.	Children listen to radio always.				
25.	Children watch television always.				
26.	Children watch different cartoons in the homes.				
27.	Children watch channels dedicated to the kids always.				
28.	The children listen to and view music released by fellow kids.				
29.	The children are able to negotiate/call the attention of the caregivers right from birth.				
30.	At 6 months, children are able to communicate to adult that they are hungry through crying.				
31.	At 15, children are able to show that they are hungry by bring plate, spoon or feeding bottle.				

32.	At 18 months children show that they are hungry by uttering specific utterances.				
33.	At 8 months a child shows that he wants to be carried by adult by raising his two hands to the adult.				
34	Within 13 to 18 months, children are able to show through different means that they want to watch TV.				
35.	Indifference or inability of the child to indicate that he needs these services may reveal to the caregivers that the child have language problem.				
36.	At 13-18 months children are able to identify the movies they want via utterances.				
37.	A 12 months, children are able to let someone know that they are pressed (want to ease themselves).				
38.	At 18 months children are able to communicate to the adults their needs via language and other related behaviours.				
39.	At this stage up-wards (19 months and above) they are able to show/state that they need this object and not the other one.				
40.	Inability of children at 18 and above to show that they are pressed, and communicate their need are indication of language disorder.				
41.	Caregivers can identify children in the home with language disorder through their inability to negotiate and state their need.				
42.	These children have people who come to their aids any time they cry right from birth.				
43.	Those who come to their aids stay until they stop crying.				
44.	They stay with them until their needs are satisfied.				
45.	They talk to the children while they feed them.				
46.	They force the children to stop crying by beating them or by frightening them.				
47.	They start talking to the children only when they are up to 8 months.				
48.	They talk to the children when they are a year and above.				
49.	The ways they talk to them encourage them to babble or coo.				
50.	The ways they talk to them encourage them to talk as from one-word stage.				
51.	The ways they talk to them encourage them to talk as from two-word stage.				
52.	Sometimes they prompt the child to utter utterances by talking to them even when the child is not crying or talking.				

53.	They talk to these children with child-like utterances.				
54.	They talk to these children with adult languages.				
55.	They help the children learn the names of objects inside the homes.				
56.	They help the children learn the names of object that are within the compound (i.e. outside the house they live in).				
57.	They help the children learn names of objects outside the homes through teaching.				
58.	They help them learn names of objects when they go out on excursion.				
59.	They help them learn names of object when they go out for church services, the market or other places.				
60.	They learn names of objects from radio.				
61.	They learn names of object from the TV.				
62.	The way they are talked to by caregivers can aid them develop language just like children in normal home.				
63.	The quality of language developed in the homes help them develop critical thinking just like the normal children				
64.	The quality and quantity of language development in homes help them love their mother tongue.				
65.	The quality and quantity of language developed in the homes help them love the second language (English language).				
66.	The quality and quantity of language developed in the homes prepare them adequately for formal education.				
67.	Language developed in the home help them interact with people outside the homes.				
68.	The language they acquire in the home help them to interact with their peers outside the home.				
69.	The language they acquire in the homes help them to acquire the culture of the home they live in.				
70.	The language they acquire in the homes help them acquire the ócultureôof the community in which the homes are situated.				
71.	The language they acquire in the homes help them have negative idea about the outside world.				
72.	The language they acquire/develop in the home prepare them effectively for effective communication outside the homes.				
73.	Children from different organization visit the homes.				
74.	The children that visit the homes are mostly within 0 to 2 years of age.				

75.	Most of the children that visit the homes are within 2 to 6 years.				
76.	Most of the children that visit the homes are above 6 years.				
77.	The older children carry the children in the homes and talk to them.				
78.	The younger children play with them inside the house/rooms.				
79.	They usually go outside with the children and play with them.				
80.	Adults from different organization visit the homes.				
81.	These adults play and chat with the children.				
82.	They carry the young ones and chat with them.				
83.	They play with the children inside the house/rooms.				
84.	They also play with them within the compound.				
85.	Adults that visit the ôhomesô are usually more concern with helping the workers wash the children cloths				
86.	They also busy themselves with other domestic chores.				
87.	Visitors usually stay for up to one hour in the homes before living.				
88.	They stay for more than two hours.				
89.	The organizations that visit are more interested in providing services to the homes.				
90.	These organizations are more interested in donating money/materials and other things to the homes.				
91.	The organizations are more interested in making the children socialize with the outside world.				
92.	They are interested in their language development.				
93.	The children do not have enough toys to play with.				
94.	The children do not have enough time to come out of the cot to play and chat with others.				
95.	The children do not have enough time to listen to the radio.				
96.	The children do not have audio-visual materials (TV) to view in the homes.				
97.	The children do not go outside the house to play in the compound.				
98.	The children do not have peer groups in the home with whom the play and discuss with.				
	The children do not have enough adult to attend to them				

99.	and talk to them when they are within 0-1 years.				
100.	They do not have enough adults who chat and play with then when they were 1 year and above.				
101.	They do not come out of the homes to chat and socialize with other children.				
102.	The workers in the home do not have enough time to attend to the children because of other things they do in the homes.				
103.	The environment in the motherless baby homes is capable of delaying the language development of the children.				

APPENDIX 2 (SUMMARY OF SCORES)

Table 1
A Stages of language acquisition
(I) Age of the children

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	7	St.D	DECISION
1.	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 0-6 months old.	101 32%	219 69%	320	2.13	1.00	REJECTED
2	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 7 ï 17 months old.	157 49%	163	320	2.52	1.01	ACCEPTED
3	Children in the motherless baby homes are within 18 ï 24 months old.	173 55%	147 46%	320	2.58	1.03	ACCEPTED
4	Children in the homeless baby homes are within 25 ï 36 months old.	248 78%	70 22%	320	3.21	0.93	ACCEPTED
5	Children in the motherless baby homes are above 30 mothers old	235 74%	85 26%	320	3.24	0.92	ACCEPTED
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	57%	42%	320	**2.74**	**0.98**	ACCEPTED

Table 2

(II) Extent of Language Acquisition

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	2	St.D	DECISION
6	Children at prelinguistics stage (0-6 months) can engage in cooing and babbling.	257 80%	63 20%	320	3.42	0.82	ACCEPTED
7	Children at 1 year 6 months utter recognizable words.	196 60%	124 39%	320	2.81	0.94	ACCEPTED
8	Children at the one-word stage can communicate with one word.	112 35%	208 65%	319	2.13	1.06	REJECTED
9	Children that are within 18 months ï 2 years can communicate well with two words.	31 10%	289 89%	320	1.82	0.68	REJECTED
10	Children that are within 24 ï 30 months can communicate with three words.	118 35%	202 63%	320	2.30	0.98	REJECTED
11	Children that are within 31-50 months can construct simple sentences.	115 36%	205 64%	320	2.13	1.05	REJECTED
12	Children that are within 6-12 months can respond to or answer their names.	129 41%	191 59%	320	2.19	1.09	REJECTED
13	Children that are in the motherless baby homes who are within 7-12 months can mention up to five words	80 25%	240 75%	320	1.29	0.97	REJECTED
14	Children in these óhomesô	159	161	320	2.59	0.94	ACCEPTED

	that are within 7-16 months can call mama, dada, or the names of their caregivers.	50%	51%				
15	Children that are within 19 ï 24 months can mention can mention ten items in the ôhomesô.	133 42%	187 58%	320	2.32	1.08	REJECTED
16	Children that are within 25-34 months can mention or at least name eight parts of their body.	87 28%	233 73%	320	1.92	0.95	**REJECTED**
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	40%	59%	**320**	**2.26**	**0.96**	**REJECTED**

Table 3

B. Favorable environmental factors that aid language acquisition

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	x̄	St.D	DECISION
17	There are visitors/caregivers who carry and talk to the children always.	96 30%	224 70%	320	2.10	0.86	REJECTED
18	Children come around always to chart with the children.	93 29%	227 71%	320	2.19	0.93	REJECTED
19	Adults are always available to discuss and chart with the children.	138 43%	182 59%	320	2.39	1.05	REJECTED
20	Children play and run around with their peer in the motherless baby homes.	131 41%	189 59%	320	2.47	0.75	REJECTED
21	Children play inside the house and chart with each other.	195 61%	125 39%	320	2.63	1.21	ACCEPTED
22	Children play outside and engage in out-door games.	196 61%	124 38%	320	2.77	1.23	ACCEPTED
23	Children have enough toys to play with.	255 80%	65 21%	320	3.22	1.06	ACCEPTED
24	Children listen to radio always	79 25%	241 75%	320	1.95	1.01	REJECTED
25	Children watch television always.	66 21%	254 79%	320	2.01	0.82	REJECTED
26	Children watch different cartoons in the motherless baby home.	68 22%	252 79%	320	1.91	0.83	REJECTED
27	Children watch channels dedicated to the kids always.	75 33%	215 68%	320	2.13	1.11	REJECTED

28	Children listen to music released by fellow kids.	125 39%	195 51%	320	2.28	1.12	REJECTED
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	40%	61%	**320**	**2.34**	**0.93**	REJECTED

Table 4

C. Negotiation and Attachment of meaning to utterances

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	x̄	St.D	DECISION
29	The children are able to negotiate/call the attention of the caregivers right from birth.	186 58%	134 42%	320	2.58	1.10	ACCEPTED
30	At 6 months, the children are able to communicate to adults that they are hungry by crying.	215 67%	105 33%	320	2.82	1.13	ACCEPTED
31	At fifteen months, the children are able to show that they are hungry by bringing plates, spoons or feeding bottle.	209 65%	111 34%	320	2.70	0.92	ACCEPTED
32	At 18 months, the children show that they are hungry by uttering specific utterances.	91 29%	229 71%	320	2.01	1.14	REJECTED
33	At 8 months, the children show that they want to be carried by adult by raising their hands.	240 75%	80 25%	320	3.15	1.00	ACCEPTED
34	Within 13 to 18 months, children are able to show through different means that they want to watch TV.	78 24%	242 75%	320	1.81	0.92	REJECTED
35	Indifference or inability of the child to indicate that he/she needs these	230 72%	90 28%	320	2.92	0.90	ACCEPTED

	services can reveal to the caregivers that the child has language problem.						
36	At 13-18 months, the children are able to identify the movies they want via utterances	99 31%	221 69%	320	1.99	1.04	REJECTED
37	At 12 months, children are able to let someone know that they are pressed or want to ease themselves.	95 30%	225 71%	320	2.00	1.05	REJECTED
38	At 18 months, children are able to communicate to the adults their needs via language and other related behaviors.	66 21%	254 79%	320	1.80	0.95	REJECTED
39	At this stage up-wards (19 months and above) they are able to show/state that they need this object and not the other one via language.	114 36%	206 65%	320	2.11	1.04	REJECTED
40	Inability of children at 18 months and above to show that they are pressed and communicate their need are indication of language disorder.	181 57%	139 44%	320	2.63	1.81	ACCEPTED
41	Caregivers can identify children in the home with language disorder through their inability to negotiate	108 34%	212 67%	320	2.45		REJECTED

	and state their need.						
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	**46%**	**55%**	**320**	**2.38**	**1.08**	REJECTED

Table 5

D. Cares given to children at the homes.

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	𝑥̄	St.D	DECISION
42	These children have people who come to their aid any time they cry right from birth.	73 23%	247 78%	320	1.76	1.01	REJECTED
43	Those who come to their aid stay until they stop crying.	203 64%	117 37%	320	2.83	1.09	ACCEPTED
44	They stay with them until their need are satisfied.	191 60%	129 40%	320	2.71	1.13	ACCEPTED
45	They talk to them while they feed them.	83 26%	237 74%	320	1.95	1.01	REJECTED
46	They force the children to stop crying by beating or by frightening them.	110 34%	210 66%	320	2.20	1.29	REJECTED
47	They start talking to the children only when they are up to 8 months.	123 39%	197 62%	320	2.03	1.13	REJECTED
48	They talk to the children when they are a year and above.	180 57%	140 44%	320	2.68	1.10	REJECTED
49	The ways they talk to them encourage them to babble or coo.	141 44%	179 57%	320	2.28	1.11	REJECTED
50	The ways they talk to them encourage them to talk as from one-word stage.	125 39%	195 61%	320	2.13	1.13	REJECTED
51	The ways they talk to	131	189	320	2.27	1.12	REJECTED

	them encourage them to talk as from two-words stage.	41%	59%				
52	Sometimes they prompt the children to utter utterances by talking to them even when the children are not crying or talking.	80 20%	240 79%	320	1.71	1.02	REJECTED
53	They talk to these children with child-like utterances.	64 20%	256 79%	320	1.79	1.04	REJECTED
54	They talk to these children with adult language.	193 61%	127 40%	320	2.67	1.16	REJECTED
55	They help the children learn the names of objects inside the ôhouseô	103 32%	217 68%	320	1.88	1.40	REJECTED
56	They help the children learn the names of objects that are within the compound (i.e. outside the house they live in).	58 18%	262 82%	320	1.58	0.94	REJECTED
57	They help children learn names of objects outside the home through direct instruction.	84 26%	236 74%	320	1.88	1.08	REJECTED
58	They help them learn names of objects when they go out on excursion.	33 10%	287 90%	320	1.31	0.75	REJECTED
59	They help them learn	57	263	320	1.60	1.01	REJECTED

	names of objects when they go out for church services, market or other places.	18%	82%				
60	The learn names of objects from the television and radio.	54 17%	266 84%	320	1.57	0.92	REJECTED
61	They learn names of objects from the television (TV).	115 36%	205 64%	320	2.05	1.08	REJECTED
62	The way they are talked to by caregivers can aid them develop language just like children in normal homes.	52 17%	268 83%	320	1.58	0.98	REJECTED
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	34%	66%	**320**	**1.62**	**0.85**	REJECTED

Table 7

F. Inputs of individuals and organizations on the children's language development

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	𝑓	St.D	DECISION
73	Children from different organizations visit the motherless baby homes.	155 48%	165 52%	320	2.43	1.74	REJECTED
74	The children that visit the motherless baby homes are mostly within 0-2 years old.	37 12%	283 88%	320	1.39	0.74	REJECTED
75	Most of the children that visit the motherless baby homes are within 2-6 years old.	54 17%	266 83%	320	1.40	0.86	REJECTED
76	Most of the children that visit The motherless baby homes are above 6 years of age.	267 84%	53 16%	320	3.39	0.93	ACCEPTED
77	The older children carry the children in the motherless baby homes and talk to them.	197 62%	123 39%	320	2.63	1.19	ACCEPTED
78	The younger children play with them inside the house/rooms.	43 14%	277 86%	320	1.47	0.89	REJECTED
79	They usually go outside with the children and play with them.	35 11%	285 89%	320	1.40	0.82	REJECTED
80	Adults from different organizations visit the motherless baby homes.	273 85%	47 15%	320	3.22	0.79	ACCEPTED
81	These adults play and chat	124	196	320	2.08	1.11	REJECTED

	with the children.	38%	62%				
82	They carry the young ones and chat with them.	94 29%	226 71%	320	1.85	1.06	REJECTED
83	They play with the children inside the house/rooms.	217 68%	103 33%	320	2.73	1.09	ACCEPTED
84	They also play with them within the compound.	24 7%	296 92%	320	1.48	0.72	REJECTED
85	Adults that visit the motherless baby homes are usually more concern with helping the workers wash the childrenôs cloths.	236 73%	84 27%	320	3.08	1.08	ACCEPTED
86	They also busy themselves with other domestic chores.	219 68%	101 31%	320	2.96	1.12	ACCEPTED
87	Visitors usually stay for up to one hour in the motherless baby homes before living.	75 24%	245 76%	320	1.75	1.05	REJECTED
88	They stay for more than two hours before leaving.	53 16%	267 84%	320	1.54	0.91	REJECTED
89	The organizations that visit are more interested in providing services to the motherless baby homes.	63 20%	257 80%	320	1.57	0.95	REJECTED
90	These individuals/ organizations are more interested in donating money/materials to the motherless baby homes.	274 77%	73 23%	320	2.93	1.02	ACCEPTED
91	The individuals / organizations are more interested in making the	54 17%	266 84%	320	1.56	0.99	REJECTED

	children socialize with the outside world.						
92	They are interested in the language development of the children.	22 7%	298 93%	320	1.34	0.66	REJECTED
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	39%	62%	**320**	**1.74**	**0.87**	**REJECTED**

Table 8

G. Language environment in the motherless baby homes may affect nagatively the development of language.

S/NO	Items	Agreeing (SA + A)	Disagreeing (D + SD)	× FX	𝑓̄	St.D	DECISION
93	The children do not have enough toys to play with.	95 30%	225 69%	320	1.80	1.03	REJECTED
94	The children do not have enough time to come out of the cot to play and chat with others.	243 76%	77 24%	320	3.10	1.05	ACCEPTED
95	The children do not have time to listen to the radio.	261 82%	59 19%	320	3.24	0.92	ACCEPTED
96	The children do not have enough audio-visual materials (e.g. T.V) to view in the motherless baby homes.	201 68%	59 31%	320	2.96	1.12	ACCEPTED
97	The children do not go outside the house to play in the compound.	281 88%	99 31%	320	3.43	0.83	ACCEPTED
98	The children do not have enough peer groups in the motherless baby home with whom they can play and discuss with.	274 84%	39 12%	320	3.32	0.94	ACCEPTED
99	The children do not have enough adults to attend to them and talk to them when they are within 0-1 year old.	254 80%	66 20%	320	3.29	1.08	ACCEPTED
100	They do not have enough adults who chat and play	215 67%	105 33%	320	2.90	1.18	ACCEPTED

	with them when they are 1 year old and above.						
101	They do not come out of the homes to chat and socialize with other children.			320	3.12	1.07	ACCEPTED
102	The workers in the homes do not have enough time to attend to the children because of other things they do in the homes.	244 76%	76 22%	320	3.20	1.03	ACCEPTED
103	The language environments in the homes are capable of delaying their language development.	244 76%	76 24%	320	3.12	1.07	ACCEPTED
	AVERAGE (AVG.)	75%	27%	**320**	**3.13**	**1.05**	**ACCEPTED**

APPENDIX 3

Interview Questions – the interview questions focused on the following:

1. The names of the children.
2. Their fatherôs names (especially those that the caregivers attest to the fact that their fathers visited regularly as some of them have fathers).
3. The names of their schools and teachers (for those that have started going school).
4. The names of their caregivers?
5. Mentioning/identifying parts of their bodies.
6. Mentioning objects seen in the homes, outside the motherless babies homes and in their schools.
7. Recounting stories learnt in the school.