

THE ACQUISITION OF KIKUYU PHONOLOGY

by

JUDITH W. NJAGE

SEPTEMBER, 1982.

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A dissertation submitted in
partial fulfilment for the
Degree of Master of Arts in
General Linguistics in the
University of Nairobi.

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to trace the acquisition of phonology by Kikuyu-speaking children. It is based on the universal claims of phonological acquisition posited by Roman Jakobson (1941).

Chapter One gives an introduction to child language in general and child phonology in particular.

Chapter Two briefly looks into the phonological system of Kikuyu adult language. This chapter is relevant to our study because it gives the structure of the language that the child is aiming at. Moreover, we posit the adult surface forms as the child's underlying forms.

The actual analysis begins in Chapter Three where we give the first stage of the acquisition process.

Chapters Four through Six give the remainder of the stages based on studies carried out on three children of varying ages.

Chapter Seven, which concludes the study, includes a summary of the findings vis a vis Roman Jakobson's (1941) claims; phonological acquisition in relation to the theory of Markedness; and general remarks and significance of the study.