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Hypotaxis and parataxis in the two- and four-year-old children in Igbo

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Titre	Hypotaxie et parataxis chez les enfants de deux et quatre ans en Igbo
Mots clés	L'enfant de 2 à 4 ans ; hypotaxie ; langue igbo ; théorie de l'acquisition du langage ; parataxis ; théorie de X-bar.
Résumé	
L'hypotaxie est l'arrangement grammatical de constructions fonctionnellement similaires mais inégales, tandis que la parataxis est le placement syntaxique de phrases, de clauses et d'expressions dans des positions adjacentes sans aucune coordonnée ni marqueur subordonné. Certains des objectifs de cet article sont : montrer que l'acquisition du langage est un processus graduel, et que l'utilisation de constructions hypotaxiques est le reflet de la maîtrise de l'usage d'un langage. La principale source de données de cet article a été obtenue en écoutant et en écrivant des propos prononcés par six enfants âgés de deux à quatre ans, qui acquièrent la langue igbo. Nous avons également utilisé les textes de la bibliothèque et Internet. Le cadre sur lequel cet article a été réalisé est la théorie de l'acquisition du langage. La raison du choix de cette théorie est qu'elle rend compte des étapes que traverse un enfant dans l'acquisition d'une langue. Certaines des conclusions de cet article sont les suivantes : que les enfants âgés de 2 à 4 ans qui apprennent la langue igbo utilisent moins de constructions hypotaxiques en raison de leur incapacité à être logiques, que les enfants âgés de 2 à 4 ans qui apprennent la langue igbo ne peuvent pas utiliser facilement les relations causales qui nécessitent des constructions complexes, que l'utilisation de constructions paratactiques par les enfants de 2-4 ans acquérant la langue igbo laisse l'auditeur interpréter la phrase par lui-même, que les constructions paratactiques révèlent une relation d'asyndéton dans les constructions syntaxiques des 2-4 ans vieil enfant en langue Igbo, et enfin que les constructions paratactiques sont utilisées pour attirer l'attention. Cet article recommande donc d'encourager l'étude de la parole des enfants de 2 à 4 ans qui acquièrent d'autres langues, afin d'améliorer l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de n'importe quelle langue dans le monde.	

Keywords	<i>The 2-4 years old child; hypotaxis; Igbo language; language acquisition theory; parataxis; X-bar theory.</i>
Abstract	
Hypotaxis is the grammatical arrangement of functionally similar but unequal constructs, while parataxis is the syntactic placement of sentences, clauses and phrases in adjacent positions without any coordinate or subordinate marker. Some of the objectives of this paper are: to show that language acquisition is a gradual process, and that the use of hypotactic constructions is a reflection of the mastery of the use a language. The primary source of data in this paper was gotten through listening and writing down some utterances made by six children between two to four years old, who are acquiring the Igbo language. Also, use were made of the library texts and the internet. The framework on which this paper was carried out is the <i>Language Acquisition Theory</i>. The reason for the choice of this theory is because it gives account of the stages that a child undergoes in the acquisition of a language. Some of the findings of this paper are that: that children between 2-4	

years acquiring the Igbo language, used less hypotactic constructions because of their inability to be logical, that 2-4 years children acquiring the Igbo language cannot use easily express causal relationships which require complex constructions, that the use of paratactic constructions by 2-4 years old children acquiring the Igbo language leave the listener to interpret the sentence for himself, that paratactic constructions reveal a relationship of asyndeton in the syntactic constructions of the 2-4 years old child in the Igbo language, and finally that paratactic constructions are used for attention grabbing. This paper thus, recommends that study be encouraged of the speech of the 2-4 years old child acquiring other languages, in order to enhance the teaching and learning of any language in the world.

1. Introduction

Language acquisition is not an easy task. For the new born, the triggering of this complex process starts with the cry of the baby in the labor room, where the lungs are dilated and activated for its biological and linguistic function in the life of a man. According to: [raising children.net-and>babies>lan...](#) “Language development is a critical period of child development. It supports a child’s ability to communicate and express and understand feelings. It also supports thinking, problem solving, developing and maintaining relationships”. This implies that language is an indispensable tool in the existence of a person from childhood to adulthood. The six stages of child language development are: newborns, infants, toddlers, preschool, school age and adolescents. cf. [riservicesinc.org>5-stages-child-...](#) Each stage in the acquisition of a language shows the age of the learner and the linguistic challenges faced by the learner. In this paper, one is going to examine the use of hypotactic and paratactic constructions in the 2-4 years old child who is acquiring the Igbo language. Other things that will be briefly considered in relation to this paper are: the 2-4 years old child, hypotaxis, Igbo language, language acquisition theory, parataxis, X-bar theory.

2. The 2-4 years old child

The two-four years old is a toddler who has barely learned how to walk and is grappling to master the language of his immediate environment. According to [www.northshore.org>pediatrics> t...](#) “As physical growth and development slow down during the ages of two to four, motor skills, cognitive development and language take huge strides. In just a few short years, your child will go from crawling and babbling as an infant, to running, jumping and excitedly telling stories as a kindergartner”. This implies that the 2–4-year-old are involved in a transitional phase of life, where much use of the body muscles and mental flexes are beginning to be used for very many exciting activities that will last through one’s life time. To be specific in the description of the characteristics of the two- and four-year-old, a brief consideration will be given to each below.

2.1 The Two-Year-Old

According to [www.care.com>stories101-funt...](#), “The two-year-old is toddler”. This means that the two-year-old is just a child who has recently learned how to walk. The term *toddler*, also covers children from one to two. Though definitions and use

of this age range may vary. This is not the concern of this paper. The interest of this paper is on the ability of the 2–4-year-old to use simple and complex syntactic structures. At age two the child's language, social skills and cognitive skills are constantly developing, though they cannot reason like adults. This therefore requires that the child needs to be properly guided with care and discipline in order to get his language, social and cognitive behaviors right early in life for a better adult behavior. cf. www.courier-journal.com>story. By age two, the linguistic behavior of a child starts by recognizing some letters by singing it a loud as a song. cf. www.understood.org>. reading issues. Studies have shown that from eighteen months to two-year-old, that children can typically understand the words for familiar people, everyday objects and body parts. They can also use a variety of single words and speak in sentences of two to four words. They may also have a vocabulary of more than two hundred words by thirty-six months, (three-year-old). cf. www.understood.org>development. ... and www.verywellfamily.com>different.... The two-year-old can exhibit behaviors such as: playing house, making maracas to shake as one dances, playing stepping stones with pillows, jumping in a leaf pile, trying to cook with an adult in the kitchen and so on. cf. www.care.com>stories 101-fun-t.... In the cognitive development of the normal two-year-old, he or she can also recognize similarities and differences in colors, shape, size and texture. Though it may take a little time more for him to be able to name the colors. cf. www.babycenter.com>development . A gifted two-year-old, hits speech milestones early in life and has a large vocabulary for her age. He or she is a quick learner, who remembers most of what she sees and hears. cf. www.whattoexpect.com>ask-heidi. The two-year-old, in mathematical performance can count up to 10. At this point in time, the two-year-old are probably repeating them mostly by memory and have yet to understand what they actually mean. This concept is known as rote counting. This because children at this age just do oral reproduction for what they have been taught without any attachment as to what they utter actually mean. cf. speechhubs.com>blog> toddler-a.... A two-year-old who has *Autism* will show the following signs:

- i. Does not keep eye contact or makes very little eye contact
- ii. Does not respond to a parent's smile or other facial expressions
- iii. Does not look at objects or events a parent is looking at
- iv. Does not point to objects or events to get a parent to look at them. cf. www.healthychildren.org>pages.

The account here is brief for a two-year-old. For the purpose of this paper, a brief description of the three-year-old is given.

2.2 The Three-Year-Old

The three-year-old is also a toddler. It is the age between the two- and four-year-old. Because of this, it will be observed that the three-year-old is very likely to exhibit behavior that overlap between the two- and four-year-olds. By age three, the linguistic development of a child has increased from what it is used to be at twenty-

four months. The three-year-old in addition to naming familiar persons and objects around him can name differentiate colors. cf. www.babycenter.com/development. Some of the characteristics of the three-year-old. Some of the social and linguistic behaviors of the three-year-old will include: playing dough with some dry spaghetti, filling a table with books and being able to read some simple stories, play doctor with dolls, play with puzzles, look at family photos, create with peels, make simple drawings on cardboard papers and stick jewels. cf. www.notimeforflashcards.com/>5-.... At age three, children may recognize about half of the letters in the alphabet and start to connect letters to their sounds. (like s makes the /s/ sound). cf. www.understood.org/. reading issues. Between the ages of two and three, most children: speak in two- and three-word phrases or sentences. They can also use at least two hundred words and as many as one thousand words. At age three, children are expected to state their first name.

2.3 The four-Year-old

The four-year-old, according to www.care.com/questions/what-a... “... is considered a preschooler, and toddlers are 1-3. No, a 4-year-old is not toddling around anymore, hence, they are no longer toddlers”. From the citation above it is clear that the four-year-old is seen to have stabilized his steps in walking and should be getting ready to go to the first class in early primary school. This means that he or she should have done with crèche and nursery classes. At age four, the child is expected to be running, hopping, throwing and kicking balls, climbing and swinging with ease. According to www.babycenter.com/child/your... “The average 4-year-old can count up to ten, although he may not get the numbers in the right order every time”. This means that the four-year-old is yet to register in his brain, permanently the right order of numbers. As part of the cognitive development of the four-year-old, he improves in simple arithmetic tasks of addition and subtraction. Such as $2+2 = 4$ or $4-3 = 3$ and so on. Some of the social skills of the four-year-old include: playing fireman, rescuing people, talking about their feelings, feeling ashamed when caught doing the wrong thing, playing with other children with shared aims within a play, wanting to please and be like friends, showing increased independence, being able to distinguish fantasy from reality, being demanding at times and so on. cf. childdevelopment.com.au/resources, and www.healthline.com/parenting/f.... Having discussed briefly the characteristics of the two-, three- and four-year-old children, the next sub section will be on the conceptual review of the conceptual review of the terms: hypotaxis and parataxis.

3. Conceptual Review

The word *Hypo* is a Greek word which means *beneath* and *taxis* means arrangement. According to Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 63), “One of the most obvious features of syntactic style in any language is the degree to which grammatical and semantic relationships are expressed by subordinate clauses. A high proportion of long sentences with subordination, as in the prose of Edward Gibbon or Henry James or the poetry of John Milton, is known as hypotactic style, whereas shorter sentences

and a higher proportion of principal clauses, as in the prose of Ernest Hemingway, is paratactic”. This means that hypotactic constructions are found in complex sentences, while paratactic constructions are found in simple sentences. *Hypotaxis* according to literarydevices.net>hypotaxis “... is the grammatical arrangement of functionally similar but unequal constructs”. This implies that hypotaxis is a linguistic term that is used to refer to syntactic constructions where there are two clauses placed in adjacent position to one another, which could be through coordination or subordination where the subordinated clause modifies the matrix. Wikipedia, refers to hypotaxis as; “... a common examples of syntactic unit expressions that involve subordination of one syntactic unit to another in a complex sentence”. This means that hypotactic constructions exhibit a relation of stratification which is polysyndeton in nature. An example of coordinate and constructions in the English language are:

- 1a. My friend Lois had great love for me, *but* she never crossed her limits.
- b. John plays drums *and* Peter plays the piano.
- c. You can buy a lorry *or* a boat.
- d. *Neither* the man *nor* his is guilty.
- cf. (Ndimele, 2007, p. 189).
- e. She bought *both* the skirt and the blouse.
- f. The train arrived late, *yet* he got there in time.

In (1a-f), the italicized words: *but*, *and*, *or*, *neither*, *nor*, *both*, and *yet*, are coordinate conjunctions. Examples of subordinate constructions are:

- 2a. She danced *while* he played.
- b. I left *when* they arrived.
- c. The book was *still* where he left it.
- d. *Since* you left, she has been sad.

cf. (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 43). In (2a-d), the italicized words: *while*, *when*, *still*, and *since* are subordinate conjunctions.

From google.com/search iq=, “Parataxis is derived from a Greek word that means, ‘to place side by side’. This implies that paratactic constructions are syntactically unconnected sentences. This internet source, also goes on to add that: “It can be defined as a rhetorical term in which phrases and clauses are placed one after another independently without coordinating or subordinating them through the use of conjunctions”. Thus, one can say that in paratactic constructions, each construction stands on its own without any linker to account for account for meaning or grammatical relationship. In other words, paratactic constructions are asyndeton in nature, because there is no indicator to clarify the type of relationship that the

clauses in adjacent position have. cf. www.masterclasses.com>articles>pa.... An example of a paratactic construction from this internet source is given below:

3. Tell me; how are you?

From the example in (3), it can be seen that there is no grammatical connector linking the construction, '*Tell me*', and '*how are you?*' Each is independent of the other in spite of their closeness in the stretch of utterance.

Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 63), also note that *Parataxis* on the other hand “may be interpreted as immature and childish...”. This shows that parataxis as simple syntactic structures, are typical of the type of sentences made by little children just trying to learn a language or an adult learner who is yet to master the language that he is learning. Baugh and Cable give examples of paratactic constructions in the example below:

4a. Then I asked him; then he replied...

b. They came to a place on the road; there stood a temple,

c. There lived in the convent a certain monk; he was called Martin: he said....

Baugh and Cable explain the examples in (4a-c), as typical of the type of constructions used in Old English, which is quite different from the syntactic types in modern English. The examples above reveal that paratactic constructions are used by learners of a language who are not fluent in the use of that language. Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 238), also refer to parataxis as “... the loose association of clauses...”. This means that in paratactic constructions, the sentences are not syntactically connected in order to show any meaning relationship. Also from the internet source of Wikipedia, “Parataxis can most simply be described as and compared to the way children speak”. This implies that the speech of toddlers are associations of unconnected strings of utterances in adjacent syntactic position. Wikipedia goes on to give the example below from the Bible:

5. And God said, let there be light, and there was light.

In (5) above, it obvious that in the utterance: *And God said*, is a chunk of utterance that is not grammatically related with the next utterance, *let there be light*, which is also logically independent of the following construction, *and there was light*.

Having briefly considered the terms hypotaxis and parataxis, the next subsection will give a brief introduction of the language on which the data for this paper is collected.

4. Igbo language

Igbo is a language spoken in Nigeria, in the Eastern states of Abia, Anambara, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and in some parts of Delta and Rivers states. It is one of the three major languages that are spoken in Nigeria. The other two major languages in Nigeria

are: Hausa and Yoruba. The Igbo language has a standard variety called *Igbo*. This standard variety is taught in schools, used in writing text books and in the media houses. The standard variety is also internationally recognized. In spite of the fact that it has a standard variety, the Igbo language has many dialects such as: Abiriba, Enuani, Mbaise, Ndoki, Ngwa, Ohofia, Onitsha, Owere, Umuahia and so on. Linguistically, the Igbo language is classified as a Niger-Congo language under Kordofanian. cf. Williamson (1989, p. 21). From the historical perspective, the Igbos are said to be descendants of the Jewish tribe who were displaced from their original homeland during the Babylonian Conquest. cf. Alaezi (2011, p. 16-22). Data for this paper will be taken from the standard variety of the Igbo language.

5. Language acquisition

According to Wikipedia, “Language acquisition is the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend language, as well as to produce and use words and sentences to communicate”. This means that the theory of language acquisition is concerned with all the activities that a person undergoes in the learning of a language. In language acquisition, for the normal child, there are four main stages involved namely: the babbling stage, the holophrastic or one word stage, the two word stage, and the telegraphic stage. cf. [enlsac2max.wordpress.com>stages-....](https://enlsac2max.wordpress.com/stages-....) According to Lyons (1981, p 254), “In the first six months of postnatal life the child normally passes successively from crying to cooing and from cooing to babbling”. This implies that crying is of great importance in the process of language acquisition, in that it mechanically dilates the lungs that are involved in the initiation of the airstream mechanisms that are used for speech. The babbling stage is the phase immediately after birth, where the child cries and makes vocalic sounds of all the possible sounds found in the human language. The babbling stage is also called the preproduction stage. The holophrastic or one word stage, is the phase where the child uses one word for things or actions. For instance, *ta* can stand for many things such as: father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, hunger, sleep, wet, and so on. The one –word stage, is also called the early production stage. In the two-word stage, the child is beginning to use two simple words together to express many objects or actions. For instance, the child can make expressions such as: Papa go, bread eat, water drink, water floor and so on. the two –word stage, is also called the speech emergence stage. The telegraphic stage is the phase where the child, mimics and repeats what he hears adult speakers in his linguistic environment say. The telegraphic stage is also called the intermediate fluency, which will eventually graduate into the advanced fluency stage which is called the loquacious stage, where child has great pleasure in being able to talk and express himself in many activities. cf. Lyons (1981, p. 254).

In language acquisition, the critical period is the first five years of a child when language readily develops, in a linguistically rich environment, after which language acquisition becomes more difficult to acquire. Ndimele, (2004, p. 8), calls the linguistic rich environment, *the triggering experience*. If language input does not

occur until after the first five years of life, the individual will never achieve a full command of language. The fact that there is an age limit for ease of the acquisition of human language, shows that language development is biologically linked to a person's age and neuroplasticity, which is a time phase when the brain is ready to accept, any information that is adequately deposited in it. When lateralization, which is the specialization of the hemispheres into their specified functions takes place, language acquisition becomes difficult if not impossible.cf. Lyons (1981, p. 248). Having briefly discussed language acquisition in human beings, the next subsection will discuss, briefly too, the X-bar theory which is the framework on which data collected will be projected.

6. X-bar theory

The framework adopted for data analysis in this paper is the x-bar theory of structural representation. The notion of x – bar theory was first introduced into grammatical analysis by Chomsky (1970) in his article entitled *Remarks on Nominalization* and was later expanded by Jackendoff (1977) in a monograph entitled *x – Syntax*. The major concerns of the x – bar theory are: to account for word order, to determine the configuration of the D – structure, to determine the direction of movement if there is any, to demonstrate constraints in the movement of structural constituents, to determine the structural relationship between the head of a construction and other members of the construction such as: determiners, complements and adjuncts, to recognize intermediate categories like: (N¹, V¹, P¹, I¹), which are larger than the terminal lexical categories; (N, V, P, A) but smaller than the phrasal categories such as: (NP, VP, PP, IP) and so on. cf. (Ndimele 2004, p. 34) and (Ugorji 2019, p. 60). The tree diagrams in this paper will reflect this as required.

7. Methodology

Data for the analysis were obtained through the interview of children of 2 years, 3 years, and four years-old. Use was also made of the library and the internet. In the sub sections that follow data showing the various types constructions made by children of the age range under consideration is presented.

8. Hypotaxis and Parataxis in the 2-4 Years–Old Igbo Child

Recall, that hypotaxis refers to long sentences with coordination or subordination, whereas shorter sentences or principal simple clauses, are called paratactic constructions. cf. Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 63). Below are data showing the construction types of the two, three and four years-old children in Igbo.

Tableau 1 : Titre

INTENDED UTTERANCE	TWO YEARS- OLD (IKESINA CHI	THREE YEARS- OLD (PRAISE MICHAEL)	FOUR YEARS-OLD (AMARACHI CHIBUEZE)	GLOSS
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	NOBLE ONUMAE GBU)			
i. A cho ^{ro} m ⁱ ri ga ^{ri}	6a. A ga ^{ri} .	b. A cho ^{ro} m ⁱ ri ga ^{ri} .	c. A cho ^{ro} m ⁱ ri ga ^{ri} .	'I want to eat garri'.
ii. Ma ^{ma} m ^{ga} ra a ^{hi} a.	7a. Ma ^{ma} a ^{hi} a.	b. Ma ^{ma} ga ^{ra} a ^{hi} a.	c. Ma ^{ma} m ^{ga} ra a ^{hi} a.	'My mother went to the market'.
iii. E ^{hi} e ^{la} m ^u r ^a .	8a. U ^r a.	b. E ^{lo} lo u ^r a.	c. E ^{hi} e ^{la} m ^u r ^a .	'I have slept'.
iv. E ^{nwe} re m ^e fe.	9a. M ^e fe.	b. Enwere m epe.	c. E ^{nwe} re m ^e fe.	'I have a dress'.
v. Mi ^{ri} na-gu ^m .	10a. Mi ^{ri} n ^u .	b. Mi ^{ri} na-gu ^m .	c. Mi ^{ri} na-gu ^m .	'I am thirsty'.
vi. Ma ^{ma} m ^{no} n'u ^{lo} .	11a. Ma ^{ma} m ^{no} u ^{lo} .	b. Ma ^{ma} m ^{no} n'u ^{lo} .	c. Ma ^{ma} m ^{no} n'u ^{lo} .	'My mother is in the house'.
vii. A ^{nyi} na ^{ra} a ^{mu} i ^{he} m ^{gbe} nwa ⁿ ne ^m bi ^a ra.	12a. Mu ^{he} .	b. A ^{nyi} ye ^e mi ⁱ he.	c. A ^{nyi} na ^{ra} a ^{mu} i ^{he} m ^{gbe} nwa ⁿ ne ^m bi ^a ra.	'We were learning when my sibling came'.
viii. Ada bu ^o nye were akwukwo m	13a. A ^{da} a ^{kwu} kwo.	b. A ^{da} a ^{kwu} kwo m.	c. A ^{da} bu ^o nye were akwukwo m.	'Ada is the person that took my book.'

ix. U _{che} si _{na} ya ga _{-e} ri	14a. U _{che} ri.	b. U _{che} ga _{-e} ri.	c. U _{che} si _{na} ya ga _{-e} ri.	'Uche said that he will eat '.
x. N _{go} zi no _{ro} e _{be} a _{ru} e m _{gbe} chi _{ji} ri.	15a. N _{go} zi i _{chi} e _{ji} e.	b. N _{go} zi i _{chi} e _{ji} e.	c. N _{go} zi no _{ro} e _{be} a _{ru} e m _{gbe} chi _{ji} ri.	'Ngozi was here, until evening'.

From the data above, in (6a), A_{ga_{ri}}, which means, 'I want to eat garri', has no verb and no pronoun in the construction. It has just the place holder, A and the object of the construction *gari*. In (6b), this shows that the two-year-old child in Igbo, at this instance could not make a complete sentence, that has a verb, but it is expected that the listener will understand from the place holder A, that there should be a verb in the construction which is understood from the context of the speech. In (6b), the construction: A_{cho_{ro} m_{ga_{ri}}}, also means 'I want to eat garri'. This construction is made by the three-year-old. It has only a verb, *cho_{ro}*, 'want', which is in the present assertive form. The construction also has the place holder A, and the pronoun *m*, 'me'. This shows that three-year-old can use pronouns in simple construction. The construction does not have the infinitive verb *i_{ri}* 'to eat'. This shows that the three-year-old is able to make simple sentences. In (6c), the construction is: A_{cho_{ro} m_{i_{ri} ga_{ri}}}, 'I want to eat garri'. This is a complex construction with all features of the construction in place. The construction has The matrix clause as: A_{cho_{ro} m} 'I want', while the embedded clause is: *i_{ri} ga_{ri}*, 'to eat garri'. This shows that the four-year-old Igbo child can make complex sentences.

In (7a), the construction: Ma_{a_{hi} a}, is an incomplete construction in the Igbo language. The subject; Ma_{ma}, 'mother' is not fully voiced out. It is only pronounced as Ma. This shows that the child has not mastered the use of multisyllabic words. Again, there is no verb in the construction, only the place noun a_{hi} a, 'market' that is in the construction. This seems to suggest that the two-year-old is focused on the subject and object of a construction. In (7 b), the construction from the three-year-old is: Ma_{ma ga_a a_{hi} a}, 'My mother went to the market'. The construction has the subject name completely called out, but the verb in the construction has no [r] sound to mark the -rV past suffix. It is only the vowel of the suffix that is articulated. There is also the absence of the

pronoun *m* 'me', in the construction, which shows that the three-year-old, is yet to stabilize in his use of pronouns in constructions, unlike what is seen in (6b). In (7 c), The Construction is: *Ma ma m ga ra a hi* 'My mother went to the market'. This is a complete simple construction. In the sentence, the subject, pronoun, verb, and place noun are all spelt out. This shows that the four-year-old is showing mastery of his language.

In (8a), the construction is a one-word expression, *U* 'sleep', which is the cognate object to the verb, *i hi* 'to sleep'. The full meaning of this construction is; 'I have slept'. The construction has no subject and no verb, but the nasalized roll [r], is properly articulated, which shows that the two-year-old, has acquired a fair portion of the phonemic inventory of the Igbo language. In (8b), the construction of the three-year-old is: *E lo lo u* 'I have slept'. Here the construction which is a simple construction has a subject represented by the pronoun *m*. The expected verb, *hi* 'sleep' and its open vowel and present perfect suffixes *-e -la* are verbalized as, *-lo* 'have slept'. In (8c), the construction is *E hi e la m u* 'I have slept'. This sentence is made by the four-year-old child. The sentence is a complete construction, with the verb, its prefix and suffixes as: *E hi e la* 'have slept', the subject *m*, 'I/me', and the cognate object of the verb *hi* 'sleep', which is *u* 'sleep'.

In (9a), the construction of the two-year-old is, *M e fe*, 'I have a dress'. The two years here, was able to use the pronoun *m* 'I', as the subject of the construction. There is however no verb in the construction, but there is an object *e fe*, 'dress'. This is unlike what is seen in (1a) and (8a). In (4b), the construction is: *E nw ere m e pe*. 'I have a dress'. The fall in this construction is that the [f] of *e fe*, 'dress', is substituted with [p], which shows that the two-year-old child, is still grappling with the difference between the two consonants. In (9c), the construction is. *E nwe re m e fe*. 'I have a dress'.

In (10a), has an object and a verb: *Mi ni n i u o*, which literally translates as 'water drink'. This for the two-year-old, means 'I want to drink water or I am thirsty'. In the word *Mi ni*, 'water', the [r] sound in the intended utterance is substituted with [n], and for the verb *na -a gu*, to desire to have', the verb *n i u o*, 'drink', is used. This indicates that the two-year-old is able to use specific verbs to express their intention, because *gu* 'desire', is generic verb that can be used to express different kinds of wants or desired intentions in the language. In (10b), the construction is, *Mi ni n na a gu u*, which translates as 'I am thirsty'. The three-year-old, here is able to use the auxiliary verb, *na* 'is' The problem with this construction made by the three-year-old is that the child could not articulate the [r] sound of the past tense *-rV* suffix in Igbo. Thus, the verb phrase is pronounced as, *na a gu u*, which means 'presently desires to'. In (10c), the construction is, *Mi ri n na a gu m*, 'I am thirsty'. This construction which is a simple one

conforms to the intended utterance in (v). The four-year-old is able to make simple sentences, with the correct sound pattern of the language.

In (11a), the intended utterance is a simple sentence: *Ma ma m na n'u ilo*. 'My mother is in the house', but the actual utterance by the two-year-old is, *Ma m u ilo*, with the meaning 'My mother is in the house'. The fall with this sentence is that the two-year-old, has not learned to use the preposition *na* 'in/by/ under and so on', and the stative verb *no* 'be', in the language. In (11b), the utterance of the three-year-old is: *Ma ma no n'u ilo*, which has the intended meaning, 'my mother is in the house'. The problem in this sentence is that the second syllable of the word, *Ma ma* 'mother', is omitted, which leaves only, *Ma*, as the designate of the subject. This shows that the child is still more comfortable with single syllable words. The child was also able to use the pronoun *m* 'my/me', but the three-year-old was able to use the preposition *na* 'in' and its object *u ilo* 'house'. In (11c), the construction of the four-year-old is: *Ma ma m na n'u ilo*, 'my mother is in the house'. This construction conforms with the intended utterance. This shows that the four-year-old, has learnt a great deal of the language of his immediate environment.

In (12a), the construction is: *Mu he*. This is a construction of the two-year-old child learning the Igbo language. This construction has just the verb *Mu* 'learn', and its object *he*, 'something'. (12a), is short of the target construction which is: *A nyi na ra a mu i he m gbe, nwa n ne m bi a ra*, 'We were learning when my sibling came'. This target construction is a complex sentence, which has a matrix clause *A nyi na ra a mu i he*, 'we were learning', and a subordinate part: *m gbe, nwa n ne m bi a ra*, 'when my sister came'. From the utterance in (12a), one can see that the two-year-old could only utter the verb and the object of the matrix clause, leaving out the entire part of the subordinate clause. This shows immaturity in the speech of the two-year-old. In (12b), the construction from the three-year-old is: *A nyi ye e mi i he*, 'We are learning something'. The construction in (12b), has a subject, *A nyi* 'we', the verb, *ye e mi* 'are learning' and an unspecified object, *i he* 'something'. The auxiliary verb in the Igbo language which is, *na* 'is', is replaced by a toddler's form *ye* 'is', while the verb, *mu* 'learn', is replaced by a toddler's form, *e mi* 'learn'.

In (12c), the construction is: *A nyi na ra a mu i he m gbe nwa n ne m bi a ra*. 'we were learning when my sibling came'. This is the construction made by the four-year-old. The construction is a complex sentence as has been explained above in (12a). It is the equivalence of the target construction. This again shows that the four-year-old can make hypotactic constructions in the Igbo language.

(13a), is the utterance of a two-year-old in the Igbo language. The construction in (13a), is *Aada a kwuokwo*, ‘Ada book’. The target construction is: *Aada buonye were a kwuokwo m*, ‘Ada is the person who took my book’. The target construction is a hypotactic construction, which has a matrix part: *Aada were a kwuokwo m*, “Ada took my book”, and a subordinated part: *buonye ...*, ‘is who...’. (13a), is made up of the subject, *Aada* and the object *a kwuokwo* ‘book’. The construction has no verb. This shows that the target of the two-year-old is to mention the subject and the object of a large construction, with option left for the hearer to find out what happened between the subject and the object of a construction. In (13b), the construction: *Aada a kwuokwo m*, ‘Ada my book’, is made up of: the subject *Aada* and the object *a kwuokwo m* ‘my book’. The difference between (13a) and (14b) is that the object noun in (8b), has a pronoun *m*, ‘my’, which shows possession. This difference shows that the three-year-old, has learned how to use possessive pronouns. (13c) which is, *Aada buonye were akwukwo m*, is a relative construction which is made by the four-year-old. This construction, is in consonance with the intended utterance. This shows that the four-year-old has in the Igbo language, has learned how to use relative constructions which is hypotactic in structure.

The intended utterance in (14), is: *Uche sinanya ga-e ri*. This construction is a hypotactic construction, which has a matrix clause: *Uche ga-e ri* ‘Uche will eat’, and an embedded part: *sinanya*, ‘that he will ...’. In (9a), however, the construction of the two-year-old has only the subject, *Uche* and the verb, *ri*. ‘eat’. The construction does not have the embedded part of the intended construction. This is immaturity and simplification of hypotactic constructions in the utterances of the two-year-old child in the Igbo language. In (14b), the construction of the three-year-old is: *Uche ga-e ri*, ‘uche will eat’. This construction leaves out the embedded part of the larger construction, which is: *sinanya*, ‘said that he’. The construction by the three-year-old, reveals that the three-year-old is yet to master the use of hypotactic construction in the expression of his thoughts, but the three year is some steps ahead of the two-year-old, in that he could use the auxiliary and its verb: *ga-e ri*, ‘will eat’. The construction in (14c), is: *Uche sinanya ga-e ri*. ‘Uche said that he will eat’. This construction is the equivalence of the intended construction. That the four-year-old is able to make hypotactic constructions shows that he acquired a great skill in the use of the Igbo language.

The intended construction in (15), is: *Ngozi tro ebe a ru mgbeghe chi jiri*, ‘Ngozi was here until evening’. This construction is a complex sentence, with the matrix clause: *Ngozi tro ebe a*, ‘Ngozi was here’, while the embedded part is: *...ru mgbeghe chi jiri*, ‘until it was evening’. In (15a), the construction of the two-year-old is: *Ngozi tro chi ejie*, ‘Ngozi

evening’. This construction summarises the larger construction by using only the subject of the matrix clause: *N̄go t̄zi t̄* and the object and verb of the embedded clause *chi ē ji ē*, ‘day darken’, (evening). This also shows lack of skill in the use of hypotactic constructions by the two-year-old Igbo child. In (10b), the construction is: *N̄go t̄zi t̄ chi ē ji ē*. ‘Ngozi evening’. This is also what is seen in (10a). This shows that the two and three year-old, Igbo children have not learned to how to use complex sentences. The construction in (15c), is: *N̄go t̄zi t̄ no t̄ro t̄ ē bē ā rū ē mā gbē chi jī rī*. ‘Ngozi was here until is it was evening’. This meets with the structure of the intended utterance which is a complex one. This shows that the four-year-old child, has learned how to use hypotactic constructions in the Igbo language. Having considered some constructions in the Igbo language of two-, three- and four-year-old children in Igbo, one can then make some conclusions as presented below. Having considered the utterances above, by the two-, three- and four-year-old children in the Igbo language, a tree diagram will be given below, using (6a-c) as (16a-c), to show their representation on an X-bar projection.

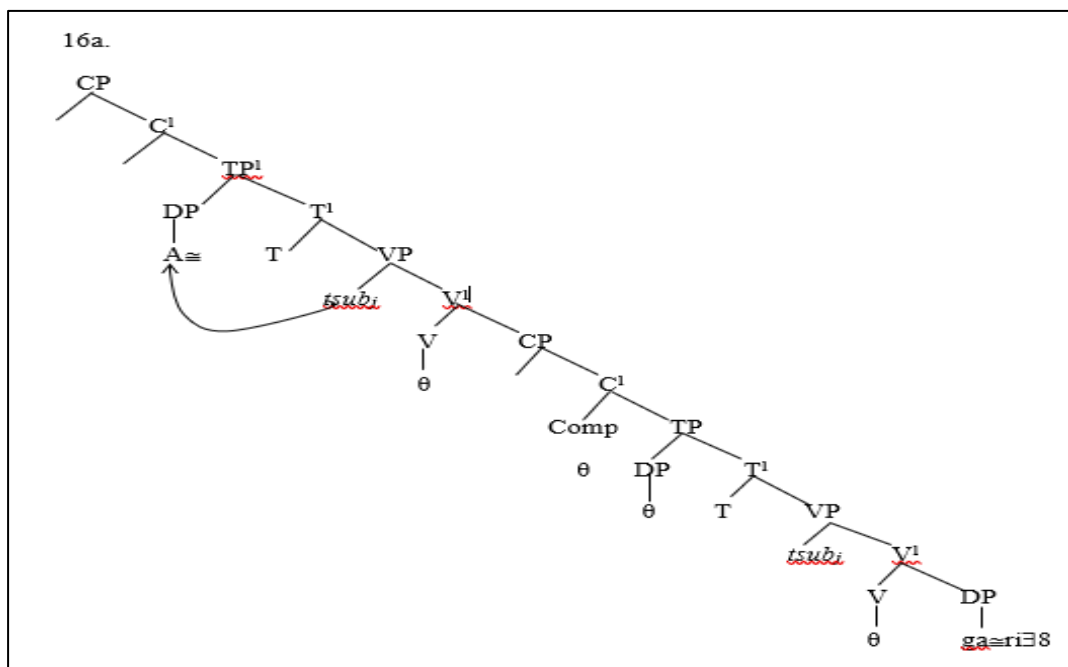


Figure 1: Titre

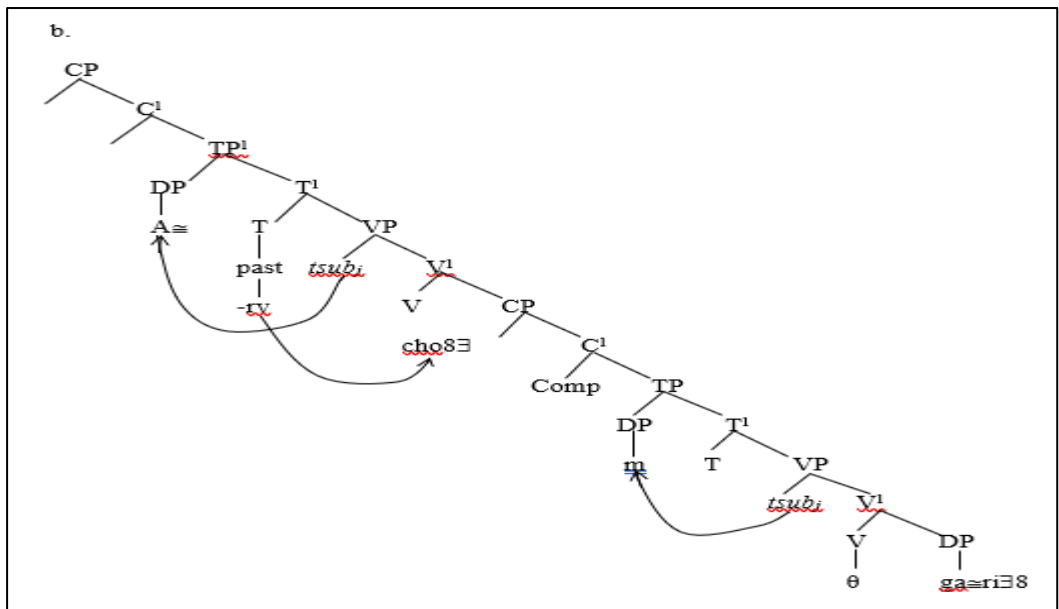


Figure 2: Titre

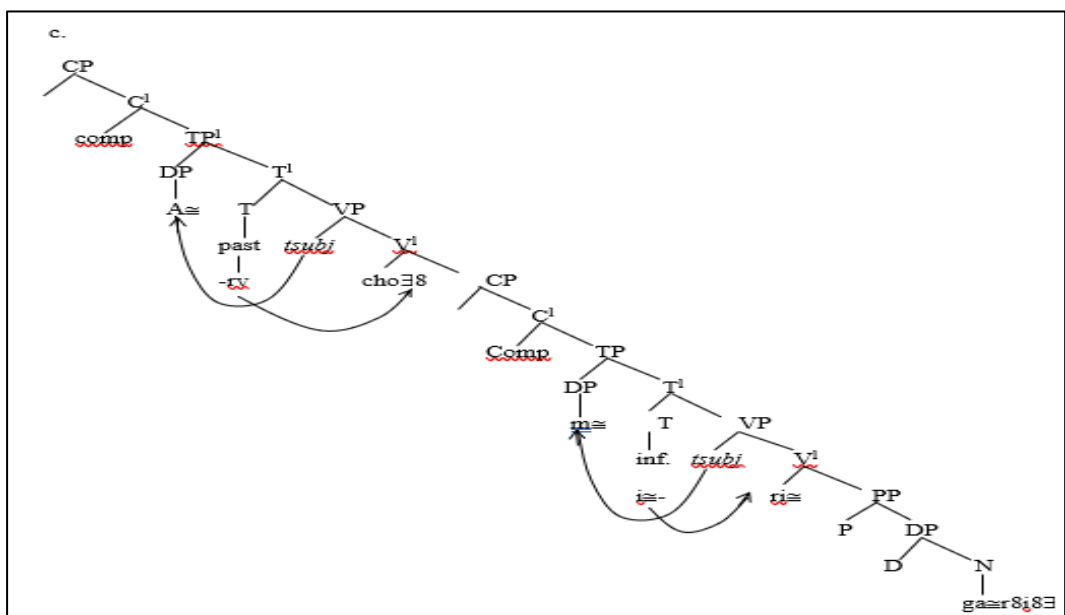


Figure 3: Titre

From the tree diagram in (16a), the only lexical items are the place-holder *a* 'I', which serves as the subject pronoun, and the *gari* 'baked cassava flakes'. The arrow from the verb phrase (VP) node to the determiner phrase (DP) node, shows that the subject is internally generated by the verb which is the role assigner in order to avoid

ungrammaticality of constructions. In (16b-c), the tree diagrams show that the three and four years-old were able to use the verb *cho* 'want', in the constructions. The arrows from the verb phrases (VP) node in (16b-c), to the determiner phrase (DP) node, also show that the subject is internally generated by the verb which is the role assigner in order to avoid ungrammaticality of constructions. The arrow from the T (Tense node) lowers the -rv suffix to the verb for the complete realization of the verb *cho* 'want' in its appropriate infinitive tense in the Igbo language.

9. Conclusion

The focus of this paper has on hypotaxis and parataxis in the two, three- and four-years children in the Igbo language. The paper explained that hypotaxis is a syntactic unit of expression that involve the subordination of one part of a sentence to another in a complex construction. On the other hand, paratactic constructions are syntactically unconnected sentences. From the data in this paper, it was discovered that children between two and three years-old, used less hypotactic constructs. This is because of their inability to be logical in their thought patter. It was also discovered that temporal relations posed a problem to the two- and three-year-old children, as in (10a-b), while the four-year-old child could express his thoughts using any kind of sentence. Also, it was found that the two- and three-year-old children cannot be persuasive in the utterance, since persuasion can best be achieved using hypotactic constructions. The paper also showed that the two- and three-year-old child cannot give adequate detailed information about a situation, which is unlike the four-year-old child in the acquisition of the Igbo language. The paper also found out that the use of paratactic constructions by the two- and three-year-old leaves the listener to interpret such constructions. The data also revealed that in paratactic constructions connectives are not used, unlike in hypotactic constructions, where coordinate or subordinate connectives can be used. The paper also showed that the brevity of paratactic constructions are used to call the attention of the listener. The paper also revealed that, each utterance in a paratactic construction is thematically used, since it contains a major information of what the speaker wants to say. Finally, the X-bar phrase markers helped in the projection of lexical items that are omitted in constructions by the two- and three-year-old children in Igbo. The work in this paper is not exhaustive on what can be done on hypotaxis and parataxis in the two-, three- and four-year-old children in the Igbo language. The paper recommends a further study in this area in the Igbo language.

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Titre	Hypotaxie et parataxis chez les enfants de deux et quatre ans en Igbo
Mots clés	L'enfant de 2 à 4 ans ; hypotaxie ; langue igbo ; théorie de l'acquisition du langage ; parataxis ; théorie de X-bar.
Résumé	
L'hypotaxie est l'arrangement grammatical de constructions fonctionnellement similaires mais inégales, tandis que la parataxis est le placement syntaxique de phrases, de clauses et d'expressions dans des positions adjacentes sans aucune coordonnée ni marqueur subordonné. Certains des objectifs de cet article sont : montrer que l'acquisition du langage est un processus graduel, et que l'utilisation de constructions hypotaxiques est le reflet de la maîtrise de l'usage d'un langage. La principale source de données de cet article a été obtenue en écoutant et en écrivant des propos prononcés par six enfants âgés de deux à quatre ans, qui acquièrent la langue igbo. Nous avons également utilisé les textes de la bibliothèque et Internet. Le cadre sur lequel cet article a été réalisé est la théorie de l'acquisition du langage. La raison du choix de cette théorie est qu'elle rend compte des étapes que traverse un enfant dans l'acquisition d'une langue. Certaines des conclusions de cet article sont les suivantes : que les enfants âgés de 2 à 4 ans qui apprennent la langue igbo utilisent moins de constructions hypotaxiques en raison de leur incapacité à être logiques, que les enfants âgés de 2 à 4 ans qui apprennent la langue igbo ne peuvent pas utiliser facilement les relations causales qui nécessitent des constructions complexes, que l'utilisation de constructions paratactiques par les enfants de 2-4 ans acquérant la langue igbo laisse l'auditeur interpréter la phrase par lui-même, que les constructions paratactiques révèlent une relation d'asyndeton dans les constructions syntaxiques des 2-4 ans vieil enfant en langue Igbo, et enfin que les constructions paratactiques sont utilisées pour attirer l'attention. Cet article recommande donc d'encourager l'étude de la parole des enfants de 2 à 4 ans qui acquièrent d'autres langues, afin d'améliorer l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de n'importe quelle langue dans le monde.	

Keywords	<i>The 2-4 years old child; hypotaxis; Igbo language; language acquisition theory; parataxis; X-bar theory.</i>
Abstract	
Hypotaxis is the grammatical arrangement of functionally similar but unequal constructs, while parataxis is the syntactic placement of sentences, clauses and phrases in adjacent positions without any coordinate or subordinate marker. Some of the objectives of this paper are: to show that language acquisition is a gradual process, and that the use of hypotactic constructions is a reflection of the mastery of the use a language. The primary source of data in this paper was gotten through listening and writing down some utterances made by six children between two to four years old, who are acquiring the Igbo language. Also, use were made of the library texts and the internet. The framework on which this paper was carried out is the <i>Language Acquisition Theory</i>. The reason for the choice of this theory is because it gives account of the stages that a	

child undergoes in the acquisition of a language. Some of the findings of this paper are that: that children between 2-4 years acquiring the Igbo language, used less hypotactic constructions because of their inability to be logical, that 2-4 years children acquiring the Igbo language cannot use easily express causal relationships which require complex constructions, that the use of paratactic constructions by 2-4 years old children acquiring the Igbo language leave the listener to interpret the sentence for himself, that paratactic constructions reveal a relationship of asyndeton in the syntactic constructions of the 2-4 years old child in the Igbo language, and finally that paratactic constructions are used for attention grabbing. This paper thus, recommends that study be encouraged of the speech of the 2-4 years old child acquiring other languages, in order to enhance the teaching and learning of any language in the world.

1. Introduction

Language acquisition is not an easy task. For the new born, the triggering of this complex process starts with the cry of the baby in the labor room, where the lungs are dilated and activated for its biological and linguistic function in the life of a man. According to: [raising children.net-and>babies>lan...](#) “Language development is a critical period of child development. It supports a child’s ability to communicate and express and understand feelings. It also supports thinking, problem solving, developing and maintaining relationships”. This implies that language is an indispensable tool in the existence of a person from childhood to adulthood. The six stages of child language development are: newborns, infants, toddlers, preschool, school age and adolescents. cf. [riservicesinc.org>5-stages-child-...](#) Each stage in the acquisition of a language shows the age of the learner and the linguistic challenges faced by the learner. In this paper, one is going to examine the use of hypotactic and paratactic constructions in the 2-4 years old child who is acquiring the Igbo language. Other things that will be briefly considered in relation to this paper are: the 2-4 years old child, hypotaxis, Igbo language, language acquisition theory, parataxis, X-bar theory.

2. The 2-4 years old child

The two-four years old is a toddler who has barely learned how to walk and is grappling to master the language of his immediate environment. According to [www.northshore.org>pediatrics> t...](#) “As physical growth and development slow down during the ages of two to four, motor skills, cognitive development and language take huge strides. In just a few short years, your child will go from crawling and babbling as an infant, to running, jumping and excitedly telling stories as a kindergartner”. This implies that the 2-4-year-old are involved in a transitional phase of life, where much use of the body muscles and mental flexes are beginning to be used for very many exciting activities that will last through one’s life time. To be specific in the description of the characteristics of the two- and four-year-old, a brief consideration will be given to each below.

2.1 The Two-Year-Old

According to [www.care.com>stories101-funt...](#), “The two-year-old is toddler”. This means that the two-year-old is just a child who has recently learned

how to walk. The term *toddler*, also covers children from one to two. Though definitions and use of this age range may vary. This is not the concern of this paper. The interest of this paper is on the ability of the 2–4-year-old to use simple and complex syntactic structures. At age two the child's language, social skills and cognitive skills are constantly developing, though they cannot reason like adults. This therefore requires that the child needs to be properly guided with care and discipline in order to get his language, social and cognitive behaviors right early in life for a better adult behavior. cf. www.courier-journal.com>story. By age two, the linguistic behavior of a child starts by recognizing some letters by singing it a loud as a song. cf. www.understood.org>. reading issues. Studies have shown that from eighteen months to two-year-old, that children can typically understand the words for familiar people, everyday objects and body parts. They can also use a variety of single words and speak in sentences of two to four words. They may also have a vocabulary of more than two hundred words by thirty-six months, (three-year-old). cf. www.understood.org>development. ... and www.verywellfamily.com>different.... The two-year-old can exhibit behaviors such as: playing house, making maracas to shake as one dances, playing stepping stones with pillows, jumping in a leaf pile, trying to cook with an adult in the kitchen and so on. cf. www.care.com>stories 101-fun-t.... In the cognitive development of the normal two-year-old, he or she can also recognize similarities and differences in colors, shape, size and texture. Though it may take a little time more for him to be able to name the colors. cf. www.babycenter.com>development . A gifted two-year-old, hits speech milestones early in life and has a large vocabulary for her age. He or she is a quick learner, who remembers most of what she sees and hears. cf. www.whattoexpect.com>ask-heidi. The two-year-old, in mathematical performance can count up to 10. At this point in time, the two-year-old are probably repeating them mostly by memory and have yet to understand what they actually mean. This concept is known as rote counting. This because children at this age just do oral reproduction for what they have been taught without any attachment as to what they utter actually mean. cf. speechhubs.com>blog> toddler-a.... A two-year-old who has *Autism* will show the following signs:

- i. Does not keep eye contact or makes very little eye contact
- ii. Does not respond to a parent's smile or other facial expressions
- iii. Does not look at objects or events a parent is looking at
- iv. Does not point to objects or events to get a parent to look at them. cf. www.healthychildren.org>pages.

The account here is brief for a two-year-old. For the purpose of this paper, a brief description of the three-year-old is given.

2.2 The Three-Year-Old

The three-year-old is also a toddler. It is the age between the two- and four-year-old. Because of this, it will be observed that the three-year-old is very likely to exhibit behavior that overlap between the two- and four-year-olds. By age three, the

linguistic development of a child has increased from what it is used to be at twenty-four months. The three-year-old in addition to naming familiar persons and objects around him can name differentiate colors. cf. www.babycenter.com>development. Some of the characteristics of the three-year-old. Some of the social and linguistic behaviors of the three-year-old will include: playing dough with some dry spaghetti, filling a table with books and being able to read some simple stories, play doctor with dolls, play with puzzles, look at family photos, create with peels, make simple drawings on cardboard papers and stick jewels. cf. www.notimeforflashcards.com>5-.... At age three, children may recognize about half of the letters in the alphabet and start to connect letters to their sounds. (like *s* makes the /s/ sound). cf. www.understood.org>. reading issues. Between the ages of two and three, most children: speak in two- and three-word phrases or sentences. They can also use at least two hundred words and as many as one thousand words. At age three, children are expected to state their first name.

2.3 The four-Year-old

The four-year-old, according to www.care.com>questions>what-a... "... is considered a preschooler, and toddlers are 1-3. No, a 4-year-old is not toddling around anymore, hence, they are no longer toddlers". From the citation above it is clear that the four-year-old is seen to have stabilized his steps in walking and should be getting ready to go to the first class in early primary school. This means that he or she should have done with crèche and nursery classes. At age four, the child is expected to be running, hopping, throwing and kicking balls, climbing and swinging with ease. According to www.babycenter.com>child>your... "The average 4-year-old can count up to ten, although he may not get the numbers in the right order every time". This means that the four-year-old is yet to register in his brain, permanently the right order of numbers. As part of the cognitive development of the four-year-old, he improves in simple arithmetic tasks of addition and subtraction. Such as $2+2 = 4$ or $4-3 = 3$ and so on. Some of the social skills of the four-year-old include: playing fireman, rescuing people, talking about their feelings, feeling ashamed when caught doing the wrong thing, playing with other children with shared aims within a play, wanting to please and be like friends, showing increased independence, being able to distinguish fantasy from reality, being demanding at times and so on. cf. childdevelopment.com.au>resources, and www.healthline.com>parenting>f.... Having discussed briefly the characteristics of the two-, three- and four-year-old children, the next sub section will be on the conceptual review of the conceptual review of the terms: hypotaxis and parataxis.

3. Conceptual Review

The word *Hypo* is a Greek word which means *beneath* and *taxis* means arrangement. According to Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 63), "One of the most obvious features of syntactic style in any language is the degree to which grammatical and semantic relationships are expressed by subordinate clauses. A high proportion of long sentences with subordination, as in the prose of Edward

Gibbon or Henry James or the poetry of John Milton, is known as hypotactic style, whereas shorter sentences and a higher proportion of principal clauses, as in the prose of Ernest Hemingway, is paratactic”. This means that hypotactic constructions are found in complex sentences, while paratactic constructions are found in simple sentences. *Hypotaxis* according to literarydevices.net>hypotaxis “... is the grammatical arrangement of functionally similar but unequal constructs”. This implies that hypotaxis is a linguistic term that is used to refer to syntactic constructions where there are two clauses placed in adjacent position to one another, which could be through coordination or subordination where the subordinated clause modifies the matrix. Wikipedia, refers to hypotaxis as; “... a common examples of syntactic unit expressions that involve subordination of one syntactic unit to another in a complex sentence”. This means that hypotactic constructions exhibit a relation of stratification which is polysyndeton in nature. An example of coordinate and constructions in the English language are:

- 1a. My friend Lois had great love for me, *but* she never crossed her limits.
- b. John plays drums *and* Peter plays the piano.
- c. You can buy a lorry *or* a boat.
- d. *Neither* the man *nor* his is guilty.
- cf. (Ndimele, 2007, p. 189).
- e. She bought *both* the skirt and the blouse.
- f. The train arrived late, *yet* he got there in time.

In (1a-f), the italicized words: *but*, *and*, *or*, *neither*, *nor*, *both*, and *yet*, are coordinate conjunctions. Examples of subordinate constructions are:

- 2a. She danced *while* he played.
- b. I left *when* they arrived.
- c. The book was *still* where he left it.
- d. *Since* you left, she has been sad.

cf. (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 43). In (2a-d), the italicized words: *while*, *when*, *still*, and *since* are subordinate conjunctions.

From google.com/search iq=, “Parataxis is derived from a Greek word that means, ‘to place side by side’. This implies that paratactic constructions are syntactically unconnected sentences. This internet source, also goes on to add that: “It can be defined as a rhetorical term in which phrases and clauses are placed one after another independently without coordinating or subordinating them through the use of conjunctions”. Thus, one can say that in paratactic constructions, each construction stands on its own without any linker to account for account for meaning or grammatical relationship. In other words, paratactic constructions are

asyndeton in nature, because there is no indicator to clarify the type of relationship that the clauses in adjacent position have. cf. www.masterclasses.com>articles>pa.... An example of a paratactic construction from this internet source is given below:

3. Tell me; how are you?

From the example in (3), it can be seen that there is no grammatical connector linking the construction, ‘*Tell me*’, and ‘*how are you?*’ Each is independent of the other in spite of their closeness in the stretch of utterance.

Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 63), also note that *Parataxis* on the other hand “may be interpreted as immature and childish...”. This shows that parataxis as simple syntactic structures, are typical of the type of sentences made by little children just trying to learn a language or an adult learner who is yet to master the language that he is learning. Baugh and Cable give examples of paratactic constructions in the example below:

4a. Then I asked him; then he replied...

b. They came to a place on the road; there stood a temple,

c. There lived in the convent a certain monk; he was called Martin: he said....

Baugh and Cable explain the examples in (4a-c), as typical of the type of constructions used in Old English, which is quite different from the syntactic types in modern English. The examples above reveal that paratactic constructions are used by learners of a language who are not fluent in the use of that language. Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 238), also refer to parataxis as “... the loose association of clauses...”. This means that in paratactic constructions, the sentences are not syntactically connected in order to show any meaning relationship. Also from the internet source of Wikipedia, “Parataxis can most simply be described as and compared to the way children speak”. This implies that the speech of toddlers are associations of unconnected strings of utterances in adjacent syntactic position. Wikipedia goes on to give the example below from the Bible:

5. And God said, let there be light, and there was light.

In (5) above, it is obvious that in the utterance: *And God said*, is a chunk of utterance that is not grammatically related with the next utterance, *let there be light*, which is also logically independent of the following construction, *and there was light*.

Having briefly considered the terms hypotaxis and parataxis, the next subsection will give a brief introduction of the language on which the data for this paper is collected.

4. Igbo language

Igbo is a language spoken in Nigeria, in the Eastern states of Abia,

Anambara, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and in some parts of Delta and Rivers states. It is one of the three major languages that are spoken in Nigeria. The other two major languages in Nigeria are: Hausa and Yoruba. The Igbo language has a standard variety called *Igbò Izùgbé*. This standard variety is taught in schools, used in writing text books and in the media houses. The standard variety is also internationally recognized. In spite of the fact that it has a standard variety, the Igbo language has many dialects such as: Abiriba, Enuani, Mbaise, Ndoki, Ngwa, Ohofia, Onitsha, Owerre, Umuahia and so on. Linguistically, the Igbo language is classified as a Niger-Congo language under Kordofanian. cf. Williamson (1989, p. 21). From the historical perspective, the Igbos are said to be descendants of the Jewish tribe who were displaced from their original homeland during the Babylonian Conquest. cf. Alaezi (2011, p. 16-22). Data for this paper will be taken from the standard variety of the Igbo language.

5. Language acquisition

According to Wikipedia, “Language acquisition is the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend language, as well as to produce and use words and sentences to communicate”. This means that the theory of language acquisition is concerned with all the activities that a person undergoes in the learning of a language. In language acquisition, for the normal child, there are four main stages involved namely: the babbling stage, the holophrastic or one word stage, the two word stage, and the telegraphic stage. cf. enlsac2max.wordpress.com>stages-.... According to Lyons (1981, p 254), “In the first six months of postnatal life the child normally passes successively from crying to cooing and from cooing to babbling”. This implies that crying is of great importance in the process of language acquisition, in that it mechanically dilates the lungs that are involved in the initiation of the airstream mechanisms that are used for speech. The babbling stage is the phase immediately after birth, where the child cries and makes vocalic sounds of all the possible sounds found in the human language. The babbling stage is also called the preproduction stage. The holophrastic or one word stage, is the phase where the child uses one word for things or actions. For instance, *ta* can stand for many things such as: father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, hunger, sleep, wet, and so on. The one –word stage, is also called the early production stage. In the two-word stage, the child is beginning to use two simple words together to express many objects or actions. For instance, the child can make expressions such as: Papa go, bread eat, water drink, water floor and so on. the two –word stage, is also called the speech emergence stage. The telegraphic stage is the phase where the child, mimics and repeats what he hears adult speakers in his linguistic environment say. The telegraphic stage is also called the intermediate fluency, which will eventually graduate into the advanced fluency stage which is called the loquacious stage, where child has great pleasure in being able to talk and express himself in many activities. cf. Lyons (1981, p. 254).

In language acquisition, the critical period is the first five years of a child

when language readily develops, in a linguistically rich environment, after which language acquisition becomes more difficult to acquire. Ndimele, (2004, p. 8), calls the linguistic rich environment, *the triggering experience*. If language input does not occur until after the first five years of life, the individual will never achieve a full command of language. The fact that there is an age limit for ease of the acquisition of human language, shows that language development is biologically linked to a person's age and neuroplasticity, which is a time phase when the brain is ready to accept, any information that is adequately deposited in it. When lateralization, which is the specialization of the hemispheres into their specified functions takes place, language acquisition becomes difficult if not impossible. cf. Lyons (1981, p. 248). Having briefly discussed language acquisition in human beings, the next subsection will discuss, briefly too, the X-bar theory which is the framework on which data collected will be projected.

6. X-bar theory

The framework adopted for data analysis in this paper is the x-bar theory of structural representation. The notion of x – bar theory was first introduced into grammatical analysis by Chomsky (1970) in his article entitled *Remarks on Nominalization* and was later expanded by Jackendoff (1977) in a monograph entitled *x – Syntax*. The major concerns of the x – bar theory are: to account for word order, to determine the configuration of the D – structure, to determine the direction of movement if there is any, to demonstrate constraints in the movement of structural constituents, to determine the structural relationship between the head of a construction and other members of the construction such as: determiners, complements and adjuncts, to recognize intermediate categories like: (N¹, V¹, P¹, I¹), which are larger than the terminal lexical categories; (N, V, P, A) but smaller than the phrasal categories such as: (NP, VP, PP, IP) and so on. cf. (Ndimele 2004, p. 34) and (Ugorji 2019, p. 60). The tree diagrams in this paper will reflect this as required.

7. Methodology

Data for the analysis were obtained through the interview of children of 2 years, 3 years, and four years-old. Use was also made of the library and the internet. In the sub sections that follow data showing the various types constructions made by children of the age range under consideration is presented.

8. Hypotaxis and Parataxis in the 2-4 Years–Old Igbo Child

Recall, that hypotaxis refers to long sentences with coordination or subordination, whereas shorter sentences or principal simple clauses, are called paratactic constructions. cf. Baugh and Cable (2013, p. 63). Below are data showing the construction types of the two, three and four years-old children in Igbo.

Tableau 1 : Titre

INTENDED UTTERANCE	TWO YEARS- OLD (IKESINA CHI NOBLE ONUMAE GBU)	THREE YEARS- OLD (PRAISE MICHAEL)	FOUR YEARS-OLD (AMARACHI CHIBUEZE)	GLOSS
i. <i>Á chòrò m írí gàrí.</i>	6a. <i>Á gàrí.</i>	b. <i>Á chòrò m gàrí.</i>	c. <i>Á chòrò m írí gàrí.</i>	'I want to eat garri'.
ii. <i>Màmà m gàrà áhjá.</i>	7a. <i>Mà áhjá.</i>	b. <i>Màmà gàà áhjá</i>	c. <i>Màmà m gàrà áhjá.</i>	'My mother went to the market'.
iii. <i>Éhíélá m úrà.</i>	8a. <i>Úrà.</i>	b. <i>Él òlò úrà.</i>	c. <i>Éhíélá m úrà.</i>	'I have slept'.
iv. <i>Énwèrè m éfè.</i>	9a. <i>Í éfè.</i>	b. <i>Énwèrè m épè.</i>	c. <i>Énwèrè m éfè.</i>	'I have a dress'.
v. <i>Mírí nà-ágù m.</i>	10a. <i>Míní n̄yù.</i>	b. <i>Míní nà-ágù.</i>	c. <i>Mírí nà-ágù m.</i>	'I am thirsty'.
vi. <i>Màmà m nò n'úlò.</i>	11a. <i>Mà m úlò.</i>	b. <i>Mà m nò n'úlò.</i>	c. <i>Màmà m nò n'úlò.</i>	'My mother is in the house'.
vii. <i>Ányì nàrà àmù íhè mgbè nwáánné m bjàrà.</i>	12a. <i>Mù hé.</i>	b. <i>Ányì yé émí íhé.</i>	c. <i>Ányì nàrà àmù íhè mgbè nwáánné m bjàrà.</i>	'We were learning when my sibling came'.
viii. <i>Àdá bù ónyé wèrè ákwùkwó m.</i>	13a. <i>Àdá ákwùkwó.</i>	b. <i>Àdá ákwùkwó.</i>	c. <i>Àdá bù ónyé wèrè ákwùkwó m.</i>	'Ada is the person that took my book.
ix. <i>Úchè sị nà yá gà-érí.</i>	14a. <i>Úchè rí.</i>	b. <i>Úchè gà-érí.</i>	c. <i>Úchè sị nà yá gà-érí.</i>	'Uche said that he will eat'.
x. <i>Ngózí nòrò ébé à rùé mgbè chí jìrì.</i>	15a. <i>Ngózí chí éjìé.</i>	b. <i>Ngózí chí éjìé.</i>	c. <i>Ngózí nòrò ébé à rùé mgbè chí jìrì.</i>	'Ngozi was here, until evening'.

From the data above, in (6a), *Á gàrí*, which means, 'I want to eat garri', has no verb and no pronoun in the construction. It has just the place holder, *A* and the

object of the construction *gàrì*. In (6b), this shows that the two-year-old child in Igbo, at this instance could not make a complete sentence, that has a verb, but it is expected that the listener will understand from the place holder *A*, that there should be a verb in the construction which is understood from the context of the speech. In (6b), the construction: *Á chòrò m gàrì*, also means ‘I want to eat garri’. This construction is made by the three-year-old. It has only a verb, *chòrò*, ‘want’, which is in the present assertive form. The construction also has the place holder *Á*, and the pronoun *m*, ‘me’. This shows that three-year-old can use pronouns in simple construction. The construction does not have the infinitive verb *írí*, ‘to eat’. This shows that the three-year-old is able to make simple sentences. In (6c), the construction is: *Á chòrò m írí gàrì* ‘I want to eat garri’. This is a complex construction with all features of the construction in place. The construction has The matrix clause as: *Á chòrò m*, ‘I want’, while the embedded clause is: *írí gàrì*, ‘to eat garri’. This shows that the four-year-old Igbo child can make complex sentences.

In (7a), the construction: *Mà áhjá*, is an incomplete construction in the Igbo language. The subject; *Màmà*, ‘mother’ is not fully voiced out. It is only pronounced as *Mà*, This shows that the child has not mastered the use of multisyllabic words. Again, there is no verb in the construction, only the place noun *áhjá*, ‘market’ that is in the construction. This seems to suggest that the two-year-old is focused on the subject and object of a construction. In (7 b), the construction from the three-year-old is: *Màmà gàà áhjá*, ‘My mother went to the market’. The construction has the subject name completely called out, but the verb in the construction has no [r] sound to mark the *-rV* past suffix. It is only the vowel of the suffix that is articulated. There is also the absence of the pronoun *m*, ‘me’, in the construction, which shows that the three-year-old, is yet to stabilize in his use of pronouns in constructions, unlike what is seen in (6b). In (7 c), The Construction is: *Màmà m gàà áhjá*, ‘My mother went to the market’. This is a complete simple construction. In the sentence, the subject, pronoun, verb, and place noun are all spelt out. This shows that the four-year-old is showing mastery of his language.

In (8a), the construction is a one-word expression, *Úrà*, ‘sleep’, which is the cognate object to the verb, *hí*, ‘to sleep’. The full meaning of this construction is; ‘I have slept’. The construction has no subject and no verb, but the nasalized roll [r], is properly articulated, which shows that the two-year-old, has acquired a fair portion of the phonemic inventory of the Igbo language. In (8b), the construction of the three-year-old is: *Élòlò úrà*, ‘I have slept’. Here the construction which is a simple construction has a subject represented by the pronoun *m*. The expected verb, *hí* ‘sleep’ and its open vowel and present perfect suffixes *-é-lá*, are verbalized as, *-lò* ‘have slept’. In (8c), the construction is *Éhiéla m úrà*, ‘I have slept’. This sentence is made by the four-year-old child. The sentence is a complete construction, with the verb, its prefix and suffixes as: *Éhiéla*, ‘have slept’, the subject *m*, ‘I/me’, and the cognate object of the verb *hí*, ‘sleep’, which is *úrà*, ‘sleep’.

In (9a), the construction of the two-year-old is, *M' éfě*, 'I have a dress'. The two years here, was able to use the pronoun *m'*, 'I', as the subject of the construction. There is however no verb in the construction, but there is an object *éfě* 'dress'. This is unlike what is seen in (1a) and (8a). In (4b), the construction is: *Énwèrè m' épè*. 'I have a dress'. The fall in this construction is that the [f] of *éfě* 'dress', is substituted with [p], which shows that the two-year-old child, is still grappling with the difference between the two consonants. In (9c), the construction is, *Énwèrè m' éfě*, 'I have a dress'.

In (10a), there is a construction that has an object and a verb: *Míní n̄yò*, which literally translates as 'water drink'. This for the two-year-old, means 'I want to drink water or I am thirsty'. In the word *Míní*, 'water', the [r] sound in the intended utterance is substituted with [n], and for the verb, *nà-àgù*, to desire /to have', the verb *n̄yò*, 'drink', is used. This indicates that the two-year-old is able to use specific verbs to express their intention, because *gù*, 'desire', is a generic verb that can be used to express different kinds of wants or desired intentions in the language. In (10b), the construction is, *Míní nà- àgù m'* which translates as 'I am thirsty'. The three-year-old, here is able to use the auxiliary verb, *nà*, 'is' The problem with this construction made by the three-year-old is that the child could not articulate the [r] sound. In (10c), the construction is, *Mírí nà-àgù m'*, 'I am thirsty'. This construction which is a simple one conforms to the intended utterance in (v). The four-year-old is able to make simple sentences, with the correct sound patterns of the language.

In (11a), the intended utterance is a simple sentence: *Màmà m' nò n'úlò* 'My mother is in the house', but the actual utterance by the two-year-old is, *Mà m' úlò* with the meaning 'My mother is in the house'. The fall with this sentence is that the two-year-old, has not learned to use the preposition *nà*, 'in/by/ under and so on', and the stative verb *nò*, 'be', in the language. In (11b), the utterance of the three-year-old is: *Mà m' nò n'úlò*, which has the intended meaning, 'my mother is in the house'. The problem in this sentence is that the second syllable of the word, *Màmà* 'mother', is omitted, which leaves only, *Mà*, as the designate of the subject. This shows that the child is still more comfortable with single syllable words. The child was also able to use the pronoun *m'*, 'my/me', but the three-year-old was able to use the preposition *nà*, 'in' and its object *úlò*, 'house'. In (11c), the construction of the four-year-old is: *Màmà m' nò n'úlò*, 'my mother is in the house'. This construction conforms with the intended utterance. This shows that the four-year-old, has learnt a great deal of the language of his immediate environment.

In (12a), the construction is: *Mù hé*, This is a construction of the two-year-old child learning the Igbo language. This construction has just the verb *Mù*, 'learn', and its object *hé*, 'something'. (12a), is short of the target construction which is: *Ányị nàrà àmụ íhè mgbè nwánné m' bjàrà*, 'We were learning when my sibling came'. This target construction is a complex sentence, which has a matrix clause *Ányị nàrà àmụ íhè*, 'we were learning', and a subordinate part: *mgbè, nwánné m'*

bjàrà, ‘when my sister came’. From the utterance in (12a), one can see that the two-year-old could only utter the verb and the object of the matrix clause, leaving out the entire part of the subordinate clause. This shows immaturity in the speech of the two-year-old. In (12b), the construction from the three-year-old is: *Ányị yé émí ihè*, ‘We are learning something’. The construction in (12b), has a subject, *Ányị*, ‘we’, the verb phrase, *yé émí*, ‘are learning’ and an unspecified object, *ihè* ‘something’. The auxiliary verb in the Igbo language which is, *nà*, ‘is’, is replaced by a toddler’s form *yé*, ‘is’, while the verb, *mụ*, ‘learn’, is replaced by a toddler’s form, *émí*, ‘learn’.

In (12c), the construction is: *Ányị nàrà àmụ ihè mgbè nwánné m bjàrà*. ‘we were learning when my sibling came’. This is the construction made by the four-year-old. The construction is a complex sentence as has been explained above in (12a). It is the equivalence of the target construction. This again shows that the four-year-old can make hypotactic constructions in the Igbo language.

(13a), is the utterance of a two-year-old in the Igbo language. The construction in (13a), is: *Àdá ákwùkwọ́*, ‘Ada book’. The target construction is: *Àdá bụ́ ónyé wèrè ákwùkwọ́ m*, ‘Ada is the person who took my book’. The target construction is a hypotactic construction, which has a matrix part: *Àdá wèrè ákwùkwọ́ m*, ‘Ada took my book’, and a subordinated part: *bụ́ ónyé...*, ‘is who...’. (13a), is made up of the subject, *Àdá* and the object *ákwùkwọ́* ‘book’. The construction has no verb. This shows that the target of the two-year-old is to mention the subject and the object of a large construction, with the option left for the hearer to find out what happened between the subject and the object of a construction. In (13b), the construction: *Àdá ákwùkwọ́ m*, ‘Ada my book’, is made up of: the subject *Àdá* and the object *Àdá ákwùkwọ́ m*, ‘my book’. The difference between (13a) and (14b) is that the object noun in (8b), has a pronoun *m* ‘my’, which shows possession. This difference shows that the three-year-old, has learned how to use possessive pronouns. (13c) which is: *Àdá bụ́ ónyé wèrè ákwùkwọ́ m*, is a relative construction which is made by the four-year-old. This construction, is in consonance with the intended utterance. This shows that the four-year-old in the Igbo language, has learned how to use relative constructions which is hypotactic in structure.

The intended utterance in (14), is: *Úchè sị ná yá gà-érí*. This construction is a hypotactic construction, which has a matrix clause: *Úchè gà-érí*, ‘Uche will eat’, and an embedded part: *sị ná yá*, ‘that he will ...’. In (9a), however, the construction of the two-year-old has only the subject, *Úchè*, and the verb, *rí*, ‘eat’. The construction does not have the embedded part of the intended construction. This is immaturity and simplification of hypotactic constructions in the utterances of the two-year-old child in the Igbo language. In (14b), the construction of the three-year-old is: *Úchè gà-érí*, ‘uche will eat’. This construction leaves out the embedded part of the larger construction, which is: *sị ná yá*, ‘said that he ...’. The construction by the three-year-old, reveals that the three-year-old is yet to master the use of

hypotactic construction in the expression of his thoughts, but the three year is some steps ahead of the two-year-old, in that he could use the auxiliary and its verb: *gà-éri*, ‘will eat’. The construction in (14c), is: *Úchè sị nà yá gà-éri*, ‘Uche said that he will eat’. This construction is the equivalence of the intended construction. That the four-year-old is able to make hypotactic constructions shows that he has acquired a great skill in the use of the Igbo language.

The intended construction in (15), is: *Ngózí nọ̀rọ̀ ébé à rùé mgbè chí jìrì*, ‘Ngozi was here until evening. This construction is a complex sentence, with the matrix clause: *Ngózí nọ̀rọ̀ ébé à*, ‘Ngozi was here’, while the embedded part is: *...rùé mgbè chí jìrì*, ‘until it was evening’. In (15a), the construction of the two-year-old is: *Ngózí chí éjé*, ‘Ngozi evening’. This construction summarises the larger construction by using only the subject of the matrix clause: *Ngózí* and the object and verb of the embedded clause *chí éjé*, ‘day darken’, (evening). This also shows lack of skill in the use of hypotactic constructions by the two-year-old Igbo child. In (15b), the construction is: *Ngózí chí éjé*. ‘Ngozi evening’. This is also what is seen in (10a). This shows that the two and three year-old, Igbo children have not learned to how to use complex sentences. The construction in (15c), is: *Ngózí nọ̀rọ̀ ébé à rùé mgbè chí jìrì*. ‘Ngozi was here until is it was evening’. This meets with the structure of the intended utterance which is a complex one. This shows that the four-year-old child, has learned how to use hypotactic constructions in the Igbo language. Having considered some constructions in the Igbo language of two-, three- and four-year-old children in Igbo, one can then make some conclusions as presented below. Tree diagrams will be given below, using (6a-c) as (16a-c), to show their representations on an X-bar projections.

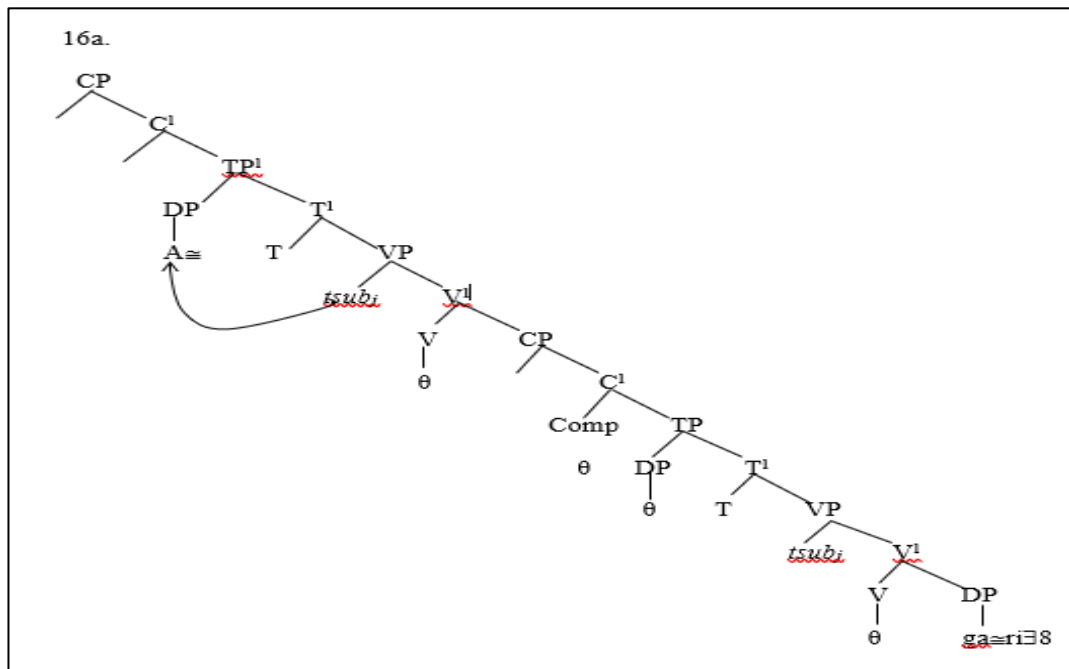


Figure 1: Titre

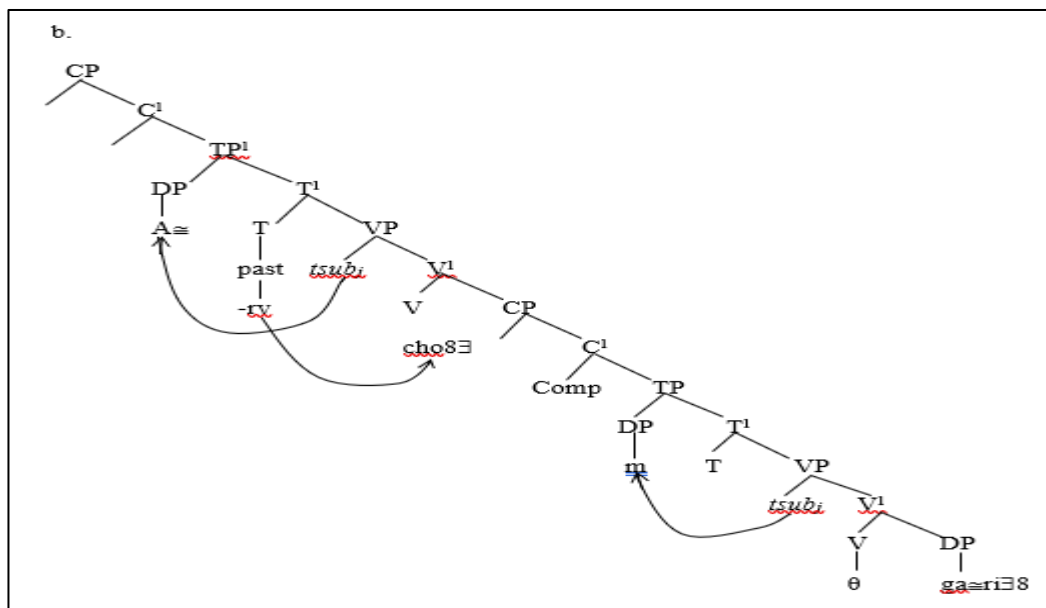


Figure 2: Titre

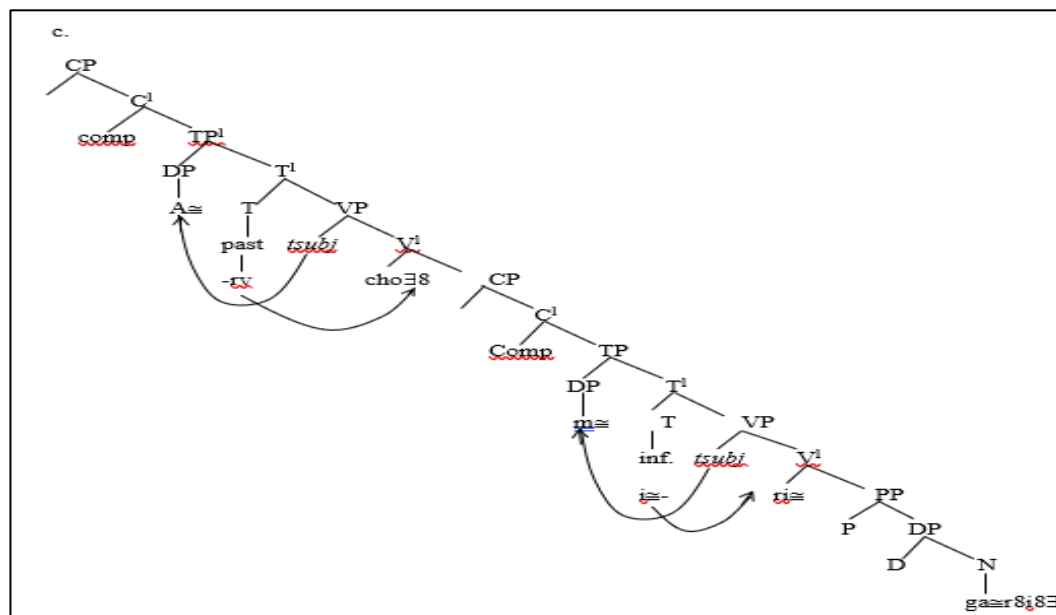


Figure 3: Titre

From the tree diagram in (16a), the only lexical items are the place-holder á ‘I’, which serves as the subject pronoun, and the *gàrì* ‘baked cassava flakes’. The arrow from the verb phrase (VP) node to the determiner phrase (DP) node, shows that the subject is internally generated by the verb which is the role assigner in order to avoid ungrammaticality of constructions. In (16b-c), the tree diagrams show that the three and four years-old were able to use the verb *chọ*, ‘want’, in the constructions. The arrows from the verb phrases (VP) node in (16b-c), to the determiner phrase (DP) node, also show that the subject is internally generated by the verb which is the role assigner in order to avoid ungrammaticality of constructions. The arrow from the T (Tense node) lowers the *-rv* suffix to the verb for the complete realization of the verb *chọrọ*, ‘want’ in its appropriate infinitive tense in the Igbo language.

9. Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been on hypotaxis and parataxis in the two, three- and four-years children in the Igbo language. The paper explained that hypotaxis is a syntactic unit of expression that involve the subordination of one part of a sentence to another in a complex construction. On the other hand, paratactic constructions are syntactically unconnected sentences. From the data in this paper, it was discovered that children between two and three years-old, used less hypotactic constructs. This is because of their inability to be logical in their thought pattern. It was also discovered that temporal relations posed a problem to the two- and three-year-old children, as in (10a-b), while the four-year-old child could express his thoughts using any kind of sentence. Also, it was found that the two- and three-year-old children cannot be persuasive in the utterance, since persuasion

can best be achieved using hypotactic constructions. The paper also showed that the two- and three-year-old child cannot give adequate or detailed information about a situation, which is unlike the four-year-old child in the acquisition of the Igbo language. The paper also found out that the use of paratactic constructions by the two- and three-year-olds, leave the listener to interpret such constructions. The data also revealed that in paratactic constructions, connectives are not used, unlike in hypotactic constructions, where coordinate or subordinate connectives can be used. The paper also showed that the brevity of paratactic constructions are used to call the attention of the listener. The paper also revealed that, each utterance in a paratactic construction is thematically used, since it contains a major information of what the speaker wants to say. Finally, the X-bar phrase markers helped in the projection of lexical items that are omitted in constructions by the two- and three-year-old children in Igbo. The work in this paper is not exhaustive on what can be done on hypotaxis and parataxis in the two-, three- and four-year-old children in the Igbo language. The paper recommends a further study in this area in the Igbo language and other languages of the world.

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