

**THE ROLE OF PLAYGROUND GAMES IN THE
SYNTACTIC DEVELOPMENT IN SUDANESE CHILDREN**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
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KUALA LUMPUR**

2012

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**SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND
LINGUISTICS UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA,
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LINGUISTICS**

2012

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

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The Role of Playground Games in the Syntactic Development among Sudanese Children

Field of Study: **First Language Acquisition**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the playground games performed by Sudanese preschoolers and school going age children in an effort to determine the role of these in the syntactic development among its performers. The researcher's own children as well as Sudanese students in some international schools in Kuala Lumpur form the population of participants in this study. The study adopts a qualitative research method and its data is collected by means of tape recording, transcribed and analyzed using the Minimalist Program which is latest development in Generative Grammar as a framework of analysis. This is done to determine foremost the grammaticality of sentences used in the games, secondly to discover the prevailing types of communicative syntactic units provided by the games for its performers and the developmental significance of these units.

Analysis of data shows that grammatically correct "WH" questions and negative sentences are heavily used in the language of the games. These are found to be of particular significance for the syntactic development of the age group of games performers who are expected to acquire questions and negative sentences needed especially in conversations by this age (four and above). The playground games under study are found to play a positive role in syntactic development of its performers. These games act as a platform for children to practise the type of sentences detected in their verbal component.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneroka permainan di taman permainan oleh kanak-kanak pra-sekolah dan peringkat sekolah, yang berbangsa Sudan, dalam usaha untuk menentukan peranan permainan-permainan tersebut dalam pembangunan 'syntactic' di kalangan mereka. Kajian ini dijalankan keatas anak-anak penyelidik dan pelajar-pelajar berbangsa Sudan di beberapa sekolah antarabangsa di Kuala Lumpur. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan berbentuk kualitatif. Data-data dikumpul melalui rakaman audio, ditulis dan dianalisa menggunakan kaedah-kaedah perkembangan terkini dalam tatabahasa 'generative' iaitu dalam 'The Minimalist Program'. Analisa ini dijalankan untuk meneliti tatabahasa ayat-ayat yang digunakan dalam permainan dan seterusnya kesesuaian bahasa dalam permainan tersebut sebagai sumber dalam "Primary Linguistic Data' (PLD) untuk pengguna bahasa tersebut. Tujuan kedua kajian ini adalah untuk mendapati jenis-jenis "communicative syntactic units' yang sedia ada dalam permainan dan keutamaan unit-unit dalam pembangunan 'syntactic' bagi peserta-peserta permainan tersebut.

Analisa data menunjukkan bahwa soalan-soalan yang betul, yang menggunakan kata tanya yang bermula dengan 'wh', dan ayat-ayat negatif banyak digunakan dalam bahasa semasa bermain. Ini memainkan peranan yang penting untuk pembangunan 'syntactic' bagi kanak-kanak yang berumur 4 tahun keatas, yang sememangnya banyak menggunakan soalan dan jawapan dalam perbualan mereka. Permainan di taman permainan didapati memainkan peranan yang positif di dalam pembangunan 'syntactic' bagi peringkat umur tersebut. Permainan yang dimainkan boleh dianggap sebagai pentas untuk kanak-kanak menggunakan jenis ayat-ayat yang tersebut dalam perbualan mereka.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am in debt to a number of people whose help is a genuine component in this research report. First and foremost, I am grateful to Dr. Rodney C. Jubilado for the profound and encyclopaedic information he presented on the generative school of linguistics, for the interesting discussions we had in class concerning both first language acquisition and the description of syntax and for the continuous encouragement he gave. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Mahmud Hassan Khan for his advice on research methods and design, Mrs. Zaida Basharahil for the Malay translation of the abstract and to Mr. B. Jamo for his friendship and for lending hand in software trouble shooting.

This work would not have seen the light; neither would the coursework part in my programme has been completed without the help, support, encouragement and love I received from my wife Ragyya and from our lovely kids Duaa, Mohammed, Tasneem and Awab. This work is dedicated to them and praise is to ALLAH who granted me them. However; the whole success is attributed to the kind prayers from those who have devoted their lives for bringing up quite a big number of us my mother and father, may they enjoy good health.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	
Original Literary Work Declaration.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Abstrak.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Abbreviations.....	x
List of Appendices.....	xi
1. INTRODUCTION	
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	2
1.1.1 Syntax.....	2
1.1.2 Stages of First Language Syntactic Development.....	4
1.2 The Purpose of the Study.....	5
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	6
1.5 The Research Questions.....	7
1.6 The Limitation of the Study.....	7
1.7 The Significance of the Study.....	7
1.8 Overview of the Research Report.....	8

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
2.0 Introduction.....	9
2.1 Approaches in the Study of Syntax.....	9
2.1.1 The Prescriptive Approach.....	9
2.1.2 The Descriptive Approach.....	10
2.1.3 Generative Grammar.....	12
2.1.4 Language Acquisition in Generative Linguistics.....	12
2.1.5 The Description of Syntax in Generative Linguistics.....	17
2.2 Relevant Issues in the Syntax of Arabic.....	27
2.3 Studies in Syntactic Development.....	34
2.4 Studies in Language Development and Play.....	35
3. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.0 Introduction.....	40
3.1 Type of Data.....	40
3.2 Data Collection Strategy.....	40
3.3 The Instrument.....	41
3.4 Participants.....	41
3.5 Considerations of Ethical Issues.....	41
3.6 Procedure of Games.....	42
3.6 Framework of Analysis.....	45
4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	
4.0 Introduction.....	47
4.1 Data Analysis and Procedures.....	47
4.1.1 Syntactic Analysis of the Language of Games.....	47
4.2 Answering the Research Questions.....	55
4.2.1 The First Research Question.....	55

4.2.2 The Second Research Question.....	56
4.2.3 The Third Research Question.....	56
4.2.4 The Fourth Research Question.....	57
5. CONCLUSION	
5.0 Introduction.....	58
5.1 Summary	58
5.4 Conclusion.....	60
5.3 Recommendations for Further Research.....	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	62
APPENDIX.....	66

LIST OF FIGURES

2.1 First Language Acquisition in Generative Grammar.....	15
2.2 Extended Standard Theory.....	18
2.3 The Government and Binding Model of Grammar.....	20
2.4 Relations and Configurations in X-Bar Syntax.....	21
2.5 IP and CP Analysis.....	22
2.6 The Minimalist Model of Grammar.....	25
2.7 The Computational System.....	25
2.8 The Minimalist Y-Model.....	27
2.9 Negation in Arabic.....	33

LIST OF TABLES

1.1 Stages of Syntactic Development.....	5
1.2 The Five Stages in Syntactic Development.....	5
2.1 Phases in the Development of UG.....	27
2.2 The Morphology of Tense in Standard Arabic.....	32
2.3 Order of Acquisition of English Grammatical Morphemes.....	35
4.1 Question words in Standard and Sudanese Arabic.....	47

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	First Person	LF	Logical Form
2	Second Person	m	Masculine
3	Third Person	MP	Minimalist Program
Acc	Accusative	MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
Asp	Aspectual Marker	Neg	Negative Mark
CA	Classical Arabic	Nom	Nominative
Comp	Complementizer	OA	Old Arabic
CP	Complementiser Phrase	p	Plural
CS	Computational System	P&P	Principles and Parameters
Dat	Dative	PF	Phonetic Form
DS	Deep Structure	PLD	Primary Linguistic Data
EA	Early Arabic	POS	Poverty of the Stimulus
EST	Extended Standard Theory	Prog	Progressive
f	Feminine	s	Singular
FL	Faculty of Language	SA	Sudanese Arabic
FM	Focus Marker	SS	Surface Structure
Fut	Future Marker	Subj	Subjunctive
GB	Government and Binding	TP	Tense Phrase
Gen	Genitive	UG	Universal Grammar
Ind	Indicative	Voc	Vocative Marker

LIST OF APPENDICES

Recording of Games.....	66
Informed Consent Form.....	68