

PROFILE OF MALAY SYNTACTIC DEVELOPMENT AMONGST MALAY CHILDREN IN MALAYSIA ACROSS AGES 1;0-2;2

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This pioneer study aims to describe the syntactic development of Malay children in Klang Valley aged between 1;0- 2;0. This study also aims to profile the syntactic development of these children into LARSP chart. A total of 50 children, consisting of 25 boys and girls each were selected to participate in this study. Language samplings were carried out in two different context, which is interaction between the child and adult and in story telling. The language samples were then transcribed into orthographic Malay according to *Conversational Analysis (CA)* format. Mean length utterances (MLU) and score of Meaningfulness and Correctness of Utterance Structure (MCUS) were also calculated. The verb phrase and simple sentences produced by these children were studied. From the analysis of the data, it was found that there are 2 patterns of verb phrases produced by the subjects, which is i) [Auxiliary Verb + Verb Phrase] and ii) [Verb Phrase + Adverbial]. These children used more phrases of [Auxiliary Verb + Verb Phrase] structure. The production of both verb phrases was found to have increased as age increased. There are 6 combinations of simple sentence structures produced by research subjects which were categorized into 2-element and 3-element sentences. The 2 – element sentences are i) [Subject + Verb Phrase], ii) [Verb Phrase + Object] iii) [Negation + x] while the 3-element sentences consists of i) [Subject + Verb Phrase + Object] , ii) [Verb Phrase + Verb Phrase + Object], and iii) [Negation + XY]. It was found that as age increases, there is more production of different types of sentence combinations found in the samples. Two-element sentences and phrases were also found in the narrative language samples. The relationship between MLU with age, MCUS with age, and MLU with MCUS were found to be strongly correlated. The study's finding was an initial step in obtaining normative data on the syntax development in Malaysian children. It also provides an idea of Malaysian children's syntax development which could be of reference to the speech-language therapist on diagnosis making decision or designing an intervention plan.

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