The Acquisition of Relative Pronouns: A Case Study of Moroccan Children

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Abstract

The understanding of complex sentences by children acquiring their mother tongue has attracted many psycholinguists who have attempted to understand why children find some sentences more difficult to comprehend than others. The study investigated the acquisition of relative pronouns-'which', 'that', and 'who'-by Moroccan children aged between 3 and 5. It also examined their understanding of the four different relative clauses: SS, OO, SO, and OS. The study lasted six weeks and used two methodological tasks: imitation and acting out. In the imitation experiment, participants were asked to repeat some model sentences and to retell a story. In the acting-out experiment, participants were asked to act out some model sentences using toy animals. The results revealed that Moroccan children do not follow the same order of acquisition as that of English children. On the other hand, it was noticed that, like English children, they find SS and OO sentences easier to understand than OS and SO sentences because of the same function of the head NP in the matrix clause and the relative clause in both SS and OO sentences.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are several important variables that should be taken into consideration when analysing the structure of sentences containing relative clauses in English. The first variable is the position that the relative pronoun occupies in the sentence.If the relative pronoun modifies the subject of the matrix clause, it is called 'centre embedded', while if it modifies the object, it is called 'right-branching'. The other variable pertains to the syntactic function of the head NP within the relative clause, referred to as the focus of the relative clause. There are four major types of relative clauses which have been studied mostly with reference to embeddedness (the role of complex NP) and focus- Subject-subject **(SS)** : The cat that bit the dog ate the rat, subject-object **(SO)**: The cat that the dog bit chased the rat, object-subject**(OS)**: The cat bit the dog that chased the rat, object-object **(OO)**: The cat bit the dog that the rat chased (De Villiers et al., (1979, p.500). Complex sentences, as most studies indicate, begin to appear between the ages of about 2 and 4. Limber (1973) studied children aged 2 years and 6 months. He noticed that his subjects at this particular age have not yet

identified any relative pronoun to mark relativisation; they simply juxtaposed clauses. At around the age of 3, subjects began to produce relative clauses that contain a relative pronoun. He noticed that the first relative pronoun to appear was 'that' in examples like 'see the ball that I got. 'Who' and 'which' appeared several months later after having been used as WH words in WH questions (Melissa Bowerman, p.287). The relative clauses Limber's subjects produced were attached in most cases to the objects of main clauses. Subjects avoided interrupting the main clause. This finding received further support from the test carried out by Slobin and Welsh (1967). They noticed that their subject (a child they named Echo) imitated correctly sentences where the relative clause didn't interrupt the main clause. Still, in her imitation of sentences where the main clause was interrupted by relative clause, she either left out the relative clause and reproduced only the main clause or she reproduced the original sentence as two clauses coordinated by 'and'. The operating principle that seemed to be at work in her imitation is the principle D (avoid interruptions)[1]. (**See table 1 in the appendix**).

Many researchers have attempted to determine why children find some relative clauses more difficult to comprehend than others. Two major studies that investigated this question can be attributed to Sheldon (1974) and Tavakolian (1977). Sheldon (1974) introduced the parallel function hypothesis to account for this difficulty. She noticed that the relative difficulty of some relative clauses in English should be accounted for by considering both embeddedness and focus within the structure of sentences containing relative clauses. Sheldon studied children aged between 3 years and 8 months to 5 years and 5 months using an acting–out comprehension task. She found that "SS sentences were responded to the most accurately, followed by OO, OS, and SO, in order of increasing difficulty" (p.292). She explained that the ease of SS and OO sentences in comparison with OS and SO sentences is to be accounted for by taking into account the syntactic role of the head NP in both the matrix clause and the subordinate clause. In SS and OO sentences, the head NP plays the same grammatical role in both the matrix and the relative clause; it is either subject or object. In OS and SO sentences, however, the head NP takes two different syntactic functions. Sheldon asserted that 'double grammatical function was difficult for children' (in Melissa Bowerman, p.292). Tavakolian (1977) studied a group of 24 children, aged between three and five, using an acting-out task. The children were asked to demonstrate their understanding of the sample sentences by manipulating the toy animals provided. She obtained the same results as Sheldon, SS OO SO OS, but she concluded that the parallel

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[1] Slobin and Welsh (1967).

function hypothesis does not account for this pattern as well as the hypothesis that children were using a conjoined clause analysis on relative sentences. She claimed that children tend to apply on sentences containing relative clauses a conjoined clause analysis, which consists of a set of rules: a rule for postulating that there is a zero subject in the second clause, i. e "a phonologically null subject", and a rule for finding an antecedent to the null (zero) subject. She concluded that the rule for assigning an antecedent to the missing subject is identical to the rule used to determine the referent of a missing subject in true conjoined clauses (p.22). She concluded that 'the conjoined clause analysis is a universal feature of language acquisition. The value of such a restriction in language development is that it greatly limits the number and kind of possible hypotheses a child must entertain in constructing a grammar of his language" (pp. 45-46). Similar findings were highlighted in other studies, including Diessel (2005), Gutierrez-Mangado (2011), and Guasti et al. (2018). The aim of this study, therefore, is to find out to what extent Moroccan children aged between 3 and 5 follow the same order of acquisition as the one proposed by Limber (1973) and to what extent they would have the same order of difficulty while interpreting relative clauses as the one proposed by Sheldon (1974) and Tavakolian (1977).

2. DESCRIPTION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS IN MOROCCAN ARABIC
2.1. Relative pronouns: "lli" "as", "m∂n"

In Moroccan Arabic, relativization is achieved through the use of the relative pronouns: "lli", "aš", and "m∂n". The relative pronoun "lli" is used in most cases to indicate that a preceding noun or pronoun is a prestated topic for a following subordinate clause, e.g: "ž- bert l-magana lli nsiti fe-ddar."" I found the watch that you forgot at home." The antecedent 'presented topic' can be the object of a preposition or the possessor of a noun in the subordinate clause, the prestated topic is repeated in the relative clause as a pronoun ending, e.g: "Ha stilou lli ktebt bih lbra.", "Here is the pen that I wrote the letter with." In some sentences, the repetition of the prestated topic by the addition of a pronoun to the relative clause is possible, but less common, e.g: žbert l-magana lli nsiti (less common nsitiha fe-ddar."), "I found the watch that you forgot at home". When the NP of the main clause is preceded by the indefinite article "ši", the definite article, or a demonstrative article such as "dik", the use of "lli" becomes obligatory if the relative clause functions as a restrictive adjectival modifier of the prestated topic, e.g: ʕteni dak dfta:r lli ġlafou hmar", " give me that copybook whose cover is red." Sometimes "lli" is used in the meaning of "the one who", "those", "that", "which", in this case it occurs without a prestated topic, e.g: "lli xditi naxdu.", "what you take, I take.", "lli bġiti, bġitou.", "what you want, I want." Besides its use as relative pronoun, "lli" can be used in some sentences as a simple subordinating

conjunction (this is the same as "that" in English which is both a relative pronoun and a complemehtizer) . e.g: " mzian lli maglti lih walou", " It is good that you told him nothing".

The relative pronoun" aš" is also used to mark relative clauses in Moroccan Arabic when the prestated topic is not a human being. It is always used attached to a preposition, e.g: "l-mšta b-aš mšat saʕre", "The comb that I combed my hair with.", "ha tumubil faš safru." "Here is the car that they travelled by." Unlike "aš" the relative pronoun "m∂n" is used to relativize humans only. It is noticeable that the relative pronouns "aš" and "m∂n" are always used to relativize prepositional objects, whereas "lli" can be used to relativize either subjects or objects. The examples below show this tendency:

-Stilou ʕla-aš sweltini twader.

 "The pen about which you asked me is lost."

-r-ražel l-m∂n ʕteti lflus draief.

"The man to whom you gave the money is sympathetic."

-'lweld lli ža lbareh sahbi

"The boy who came yesterday is my friend."

-"lfilm lli šeft lbareh zouin. '

The film (that) I saw yesterday is good.

 One more thing that should be said before we move to talk about the types of relative clauses   is that the relative pronouns in Moroccan Arabic , unlike English, are never deleted , they are mandatory.

2.2.Types of Relative Clauses in Moroccan Arabic
In Moroccan Arabic, as in English, there are three types of relative clauses: appositive, restrictive, and free relatives. Restrictive relative clauses (RRC) serve to restrict the range of references of the head N, e.g: "lweld lli šefti lbareh sahbi.", "The boy that you saw yesterday is my friend;" Here, the relative clause restricts the possibility of reference to the head N in the sense that we are not talking of "lweld" in general, but only of the one that was met yesterday. On the other hand, appositive relative clauses (ARC) are used not to restrict the head N, but to add information to it. The head N is considered in this case to be unique and it is identified independently of the appositive relative clause; for example: "had ražel, lli ʕad xrež , sahbi", " This man, who just left, is my friend." In addition to the semantic

difference between ARC and RRC, there is also a syntactic difference. Restrictive relative clauses can occur both with definite head NPs and indefinite head NPs, whereas appositive relative clauses occur only with definite head NPs. Another difference between RRC and ARC is that a tag or an adverb can be used only with ARC. Before moving to the other type of relative clauses, it is important here to stress one important point concerning the idea of extraposition of relative clauses in Moroccan Arabic, Generally, all relative clauses in Moroccan Arabic do not allow extraposition. The third type of relative clauses is free relatives. The free relatives are those which seem to have no antecedent to refer to. This type of relatives may be introduced either by special heads or by Wh- elements, e.g : " lli xditi, naxdu", " what you take , I take.", "lli bġiti , bġ- ittu", " what you want , I want".

To sum up, we can say that Moroccan Arabic relative pronouns function similarly as the English relative pronouns:

- The relative pronoun "lli" like "that" can be used to relativize both humans and non-humans.
- The relative pronoun "aš" like "which" is used to relativize only non-humans.
- The relative pronoun "m∂n" like "who" is always used to relativize nouns that stand for human beings.

One thing that is worth noting is that Moroccan Arabic relative pronouns "aš" and "m∂n" are always used attached to a preposition.

3. PARTICIPANTS

12 children aged between 3 and 5 were selected to participate in this study. They were boys and girls that go to schools situated in their neighborhood.

4. MATERIAL (SEE APPENDIX FOR THE MODEL SENTENCES, THE STORY AND THE PICTURES)

The first test consists of two experiments. As material, in the first experiment, we have some sentences that contain different types of relative pronouns –'lli', 'aš', 'm∂n' like: ' r-ražel lli šfti lbareh sahbi', ' the man (that) you saw yesterday is my friend. The second experiment consists of a story made up with pictures

- **A girl accompanied by her dog.**
- **A boy playing with his ball.**
- **A palace and a road that leads to it.**
- **A man.**

The second test consists of one experiment. The material used in this test consists of some model sentences that contain different types of relative clauses, namely SO,OO,OS, and the SS sentences (e.g: SO: " dub lli bastou d∂ria dreb qnia." ' the bear that the girl kissed hit the rabbit.' ; OO: " d∂ria bast l ʕaud lli ʕadu lk∂lb." ,' the girl kissed the horse that the dog bit.'; OS: ' d∂ria d∂rbat lk∂lb lli ʕad lmša.' ' the girl hit the dog that bit the cat.' ; SS: ' d∂ria lli r∂kbat fouq l ʕaud bast qnia.' " the girl that climbed on the horse kissed the rabbit'.

We have also six toys that have the shape of different animals and one toy that stands for a young girl:

- **A doll (d∂ria)**
- **A bear (dub)**
- **A rabbit (qnia)**
- **A cat(mša)**
- **A horse (lʕaud)**
- **A dog (lk∂lb)**
- **A fish(lhouta)**
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5. METHODOLOGY

The study lasted six weeks (all participants underwent a piloting test before each type of experiment). The first test consists of two experiments. In the first experiment, the researcher used elicited imitation. First, the participant was asked to listen carefully to a sentence twice or three times. When the researcher was sure the participant (the child) heard the target sentence, he asked him to repeat it once or twice. Each participant was tested on a set of sentences that contained different relative pronouns. In the second experiment, the researcher told the participant a story that contained the target relative pronouns – "lli", "aš", and "m∂n". The participant, after being sufficiently exposed to the story, was asked to tell it on his turn to an adult person that naturally was not present while the researcher was telling the story to the participant.

In the second test, the participant was shown different animals. As a first step, the researcher asked him or her to name the animals to see if he or she knew them. Then, the researcher put the needed animals in front of the participant and uttered twice or three times a sentence that contained one of the target relative clauses: SO, OO, OS, or SS relative clauses. When the researcher was sure the participant heard the target sentence, he asked

him or her to act it out using the animals in front of him or her. Each participant was tested on the four major types of relative clauses.

6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The results summarized in table 2 show that 3 and 4- year- old children succeeded in imitating correctly sentences containing the relative pronouns: 'lli", "aš", and failed to imitate sentences containing the relative pronoun "m∂n". In their imitation of sentences that contained the relative pronoun "m∂n", the participant either gave the main clause without the relative clause, or repeated the sentence using a word order different from that of the model sentence. The following data is from sentences uttered by the participants:

1. **Model sentence**: "lb∂nt l-m∂n ʕtet lmounika zouina."

    "The girl to whom I gave the doll is beautiful."

    Child's imitation: "lb∂nt zouina."

    : "The girl is beautiful."

2. **Model sentence**: "r-ražel lm∂n slefti lflus sahbi."

    :"The man to whom you lent the money is my friend."

    Child's imitation: "l-m∂n sleft lflus sahbi ….r-ražel."

    : "To whom I lent the money is my friend…the man."

5 year olds, however, could imitate without any difficulty all the sentences on which they were tested. Thus, they differed from 3 and 4 -year -olds in their ability to handle sentences containing the relative pronoun "m∂n".

Table 2: Imitation task. Comprehension of relative pronouns. Total number of responses

Target terms	3-year old		4-year old		5-year old	
LLi	correct	incorrect	correct	incorrect	correct	incorrect
	40	0	40	0	40	0
b-aš	20	0	20	0	20	0
f-aš	20	0	20	0	20	0

ʕLa-aš	20	0	20	0	20	0
l-m∂n	0	20	0	20	20	0
ʕLa-m∂n	0	20	0	20	20	0
mʕa-m∂n	0	20	0	20	20	0

Results obtained in the second experiment confirmed the results of the first experiment. 3 and 4 year olds could retell the story using only the pronouns "lli "and "aš", their failure to use the relative pronoun 'm∂n" was noticeable. 5 year olds, however, retold the story using all the relative pronouns without any exception.

Results obtained in the second test were similar for all three groups. For 3 and 4 year olds, SS and OO sentences were responded to more accurately than OS and SO sentences. As table 2 indicates, the participants got all the responses to SS and OO sentences correct and only average responses to OS sentences. They were also unable as evidenced by the results presented below to respond correctly to SO sentences. 5 year olds succeeded in responding correctly to SS and OO sentences. More than that, half of their responses to OS and SO sentences were correct. Thus, the three groups differed from each other only in their responses to SO sentences.

Table 3: Acting-out task. Comprehension of relative clauses. Total number of responses.

Target sentences	3 –year-old		4 –year-old		5-year-old	
SS sentences	Correct	incorrect	correct	incorrect	correct	incorrect
	16	0	16	0	16	0
OO sentences	16	0	16	0	16	0
OS sentences	7	9	8	8	8	8
SO sentences	0	16	0	16	8	8

7. DISCUSSION

3 and 4 year olds, as table 2 indicates, succeeded in imitating correctly all the sentences that contained the relative pronouns "aš" and "lli", and failed to imitate sentences that contained the relative pronoun "m∂n". 5 –year- olds, however, imitated correctly and without any exception all the sentences on which they were tested. One thing that is worth noting is that participants found sentences with the relative pronoun "lli" easier to imitate than sentences with the relative pronouns "aš" and "m∂n". The following data shows the way participants imitated sentences with the relative pronoun"aš".

A: say, " lkora b-aš lʕabt kbira."

　　　' the ball with which I played is big.'

B: " lkora b-aš lʕabt kbira…"

　　' the ball with which I played is big….."

A: say, "lkora b-aš lʕabt kbira."

　　　' the ball with which I played is big.'

B: " lkora b-aš lʕabt ……kbira."

　　'the ball with which I played……is big"

A: Say, " Lkora b-aš lʕabt kbira."

　　　' The ball with which I played is big.'

B: " lkora b-aš lʕabt kbira."

'the ball with which I played is big.'

5 year olds imitated sentences with the relative pronoun "m∂n" in the same way they imitated sentences with the relative pronoun "aš", i.e at first they gave target sentences without its object. When the researcher repeated the sentence another time, participants gave the target sentence but hesitated before adding the object. It is only at the end that participants gave the complete target sentences. Thus, one would be tempted to ask the following question: What is it in the nature of "aš" and "m∂n" that makes the participants face certain difficulties in the imitation of sentences containing these two terms? The answer seems to be that the pronouns "aš" and "m∂n" are rarely used as relative pronouns. They are used most of the time to mark

interrogative sentences rather than relative clauses, (participants were more at ease while imitating interrogative sentences introduced by "aš" or "m∂n"). Moreover, errors that 3 and 4 year- olds made, while imitating sentences containing the relative pronoun "m∂n", indicates that these participants were applying operating principle D "avoid interruption " because in their imitation they would repeat only the main clause and drop out the relative clause. The following table provides some examples.

Table 4 .

Model sentences	Child's imitation
-r-ražel l-m∂n seleft lflus sahbi "the man to whom I lent the money is my friend."	-r-ražl sahbi. "the man is my friend."
-lb∂nt l-m∂n ʕtet lmounika zouina. "the girl to whom I gave the doll is beautiful."	-lb∂nt zouina "the girl is beautiful."

To sum up, we can say that the order of acquisition of relative pronouns in Moroccan Arabic is to a certain extent different from the order of acquisition of relative pronouns in English. The only similarity between the two orders of acquisition is that the age of three is the age when both Moroccan and English children start using their first relative pronouns. While acquiring relative pronouns, Moroccan children go through the following stages:

1. Stage (3 year olds): at this stage, the child can be credited with knowledge of the relative pronouns "aš" and "lli".
2. Stage (4 year olds): at this stage, the child has not yet acquired the relative pronoun "m∂n".
3. Stage (5 year olds): the child seems to have acquired the relative pronoun "m∂n".

Thus, Moroccan children aged between 3 and 5-year- old do not follow exactly the order of acquisition that Limber (1973) proposed. This variation is because Moroccan Arabic pronominal system is different from the English pronominal system.

Now we come to the discussion of the results obtained in the second test. As we noticed, Moroccan children aged between 3 and 5- year- old found it easier to act out SS and OO

sentences than to act out OS and SO sentences. This finding is the same as Sheldon's (1976) and Tavakolian's (1977) findings. However, the conjoined clause analysis hypothesis that Tavakolian proposed does not account for this finding, because analysis of my participant's errors indicated that they were not applying the conjoined clause analysis. Thus, the ease of the SS and OO sentences in comparison with OS and SO sentences can be accounted for in the light of Sheldon's (1974) parallel function hypotheses. We can say that the ease of the SS and OO sentences is because the head NP has the same grammatical function in both the matrix clause and the relative clause-it acts either as a subject or as an object. In SO and OS sentences, however, the head NP has one grammatical function in the matrix clause and another one in the relative clause. We can say that 'double grammatical function' is difficult also for Moroccan children.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study used 12 participants which limits to a certain extent the generalizability of the obtained results. Much more about the nature of strategies that Moroccan children apply while parsing complex sentences (e.g. relative clauses) remains shrouded in mystery. It is, therefore, the task of future studies to further investigate and shed light on the strategies children use to parse relative clauses and other complex sentences.

9. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

As for the English class, English teachers should take into account the difficulty encountered by learners while learning English as a second or a foreign language. Language items should be graded in terms of difficulty and complex structures should be taught at later stages. As for relative clauses, SS and OO sentences should be taught before SO and OS sentences because in the former the head NP had the same grammatical function in the matrix and the relative clause. Thus, learners would find them easier to grasp because they represent less grammatical complexity.

10. CONCLUSION

The outcome of this research does not totally support Limber's predictions. A comparison between the two orders of acquisition clarifies the differences. By the age of 3 years old, Moroccan children acquire the two relative pronouns 'lli' , 'that' and 'aš' , 'which' ; English children , on the other hand, acquire only the relative pronoun 'that'. Thus, at this age, Moroccan children are more advanced than English children are. By the age of 4, Moroccan children do not make any noticeable progress in relative pronouns acquisition, i.e. they do not acquire the relative pronoun 'm∂n', ' who'; at this age English children, on the contrary, seem

to add to their lexicon both relative pronouns ' which' and ' who'. For Moroccan children, the relative pronoun 'm∂n', 'who' will not be acquired until the age of 5. The question is why the order of acquisition of relative pronouns in Moroccan Arabic is not exactly the same as that in English. No definite answer can be made to account for this question. However, the difference in the two orders of acquisition may be accounted for in terms of the input 'the motherese' the child is exposed to, i.e. children acquire certain items, certain structures before others because of the nature of the language their mothers use while addressing them. The difference may be also attributed to the differences between Moroccan Arabic pronominal system and that of English. The second experiment showed that Moroccan children aged between 3 and 5- year-old, like English children, find SS and OO sentences easier to understand than OS and SO sentences because the function of the head NP is the same in the matrix clause and the relative clause in SS and OO sentences.

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Appendix

Table 1. Echo's Imitation of Adult's Utterances. Echo's Age is: 2 Years and 4 Months.

Adult Model	Echo's Imitation
Mozart* who cried came to my party.	Mozart came to my party.
Mozart who cried came to my party.	Mozart cried and he came to my party.
The owl who eats candy runs fast.	Owl eat a candy and he run fast.
The man who I saw yesterday got wet.	I saw the man and he got wet.
The man who I saw yesterday runs fast.	I saw the man and he run fast.

- **Mozart is the name of the child's bear. Based on Slobin and Welsh (1967, p.14-15).**

I -Model sentences with relative pronouns used in the elicited imitation task.

Lli – who, that, which.

1. r-ražel lli šeft lbareh sahbi.

    The man that I saw yesterday is my friend.
2. r-ražel lli ža lbareh žab liya bškito.

    The man who came yesterday brought me some biscuits.

3.Lhmam lli mšina lih sxoun bzaf.

   The steambath that we went to is vey hot.

4.Lmunika lli žab liya baba zouina.

  The doll that my father brought me is nice.

5.deria lli bastni zouina.

 The girl who kissed me is nice.

6. Lbšklita lli šra liya baba kbira.

   The bicycle that my father bought me me is big.

b-aš **– with which**

1.Stilu b-aš ktebt zraq.

 The pen with which I wrote is blue.

2.Lkora b-aš lʕabt kbira.

   The ball with which I played is big.

3.Lʕsa b-aš drabni kasha.

The stic with which he hit me is solid.

ʕLa-aš **- on which, about which**

1.Lkursi ʕla –aš glest kbir.

   The chair on which I sat is big.

2.Lmida ʕla-aš   htit lktab mwesxa.

   The table on which I put the book is dirty.

 3.   Lktab ʕla-aš   sweltini twader.
    The book about which you asked me is lost.

f-aš **- in which**

1.Lkar f-aš saferna kbir.

  The coach on which we travelled is big.

2.Tumubil f-aš kanurakbin xsrat.

   The car in which they were driving broke down.

3.Lbi:t f-aš tġdina kbir.

 The room in which we had lunch is big.

L-m∂n - to whom, for whom

   1.   r-ražel l-m∂n sleft lflous sahbi.
      The man to whom I lent the money is my friend.

   2.Lweld l-m∂n ʕtet lktab saken hdaia.

The boy to whom I gave the book lives in the neighborhood.

3.Lbent l-m∂n ʕtet lmunika zouina

The girl to whom I gave the doll is beautiful.

ʕLa -m∂n - about whom

1.r-ražel ʕla –m∂n sweltini msafer.

The man about whom you asked is on travel.

2.Lmra ʕla-m∂n hdart li:k draiefa.

The woman about whom I talked to you is polite.

3.Deri ʕla-m∂n wsetek sahbi.

The boy whom I asked you to take care of is my friend.

Mʕa-m∂n - with whom

1.r-ražel mʕa-m∂n safert sahbi.

The man with whom I travelled is my friend.

2.dri mʕa -m∂n šeftini kayqra mʕaia.

The boy with whom you saw me is my classmate.

3.Lbent mʕa-m∂n tġdit lbareh zouina.

The girl with whom I had lunch yesterday is beautiful.

II- Model sentences used in the acting-out task.

SO sentences:

1.dub lli bastou deria dreb qnia

The bear that the girl kissed hit the rabbit.

2.lmša lli drebatha deria qmšat qnia.

The cat that the girl hit scratched the rabbit.

3.dub lli katbusu deria kaynʕes mʕa qnia.

The bear that the girl kisses sleeps with the rabbit.

4.deria lli kayʕanqha dub katgles had lmša.

The girl that the bear takes in his arms sits beside the cat.

SS sentences:

1.deria lli rekbat qnia bast lmša.

The girl that carried the rabbit kissed the cat.

2.deria lli rekbat fouq lʕaud bast qnia.

The girl that climbed on the horse kissed the rabbit.

3.deria lli katwekel lmša kadreb lkelb.

The girl that feeds the cat hits the dog.

4.lmša lli katakul lhouta katqmeš deria.

The cat that eats fish scratches the girl.

OS sentences:

1.deria katbʕe lkelb lli kayžri mora lmša.

The girl follows the dog that runs after the cat.

2.lʕaud kaynaqez men fouq deria lli katleʕb mʕa dub.

The horse jumps over the girl that plays with the bear.

3.deria drebat lkelb lli ʕad lmša.

The girl hit the dog that bit the cat.

4.lkelb ʕad dub lli ʕanq deria.

The dog bit the bear that took the girl in his arms.

OO sentences:

1.dria bast l ʕaud lli ʕadu lkelb.

The girl kissed the horse that the dog bit.

2.dub ʕanq deria lli qmšatha lmša.

The bear took in his arms the girl that the cat scratched.

3.deria katġsel l dub lli katwesxu qnia.

The girl washes the bear that the rabbit dirties.

4.lmša katbous dub lli baġa deria tdi:h mʕaha.

The cat kisses the bear that the girl wants to take with her.

III- The model story

Had deria lli žara lkelb žaia ʕand had deri lli kajlʕab lkora. Wahed šouia lkelb bda kajnbah ʕla deri lli kajlʕab lkora. Deri txleʕ m∂n lkelb uhua jhrab, uxla lkora b-a š ka:n kajlʕab. bqa kajžri wahed šouia uhua je txba fe had da:r. šti da:r f-aš txeba kbi:ra. Had r-ražl kajži ʕand deri ʕla-m∂n kajnbeh lkelb u kajgul li:h " rir xrež ma ʕandek ʕla-aš txaf".

The girl who/ that is accompanied with her dog is coming to see the boy who/that is playing with his ball. At one moment, the dog starts barking at the boy who/that is playing with the ball. The boy gets afraid of the dog and runs away, he left the ball with which he was playing .He runs and runs, at one moment he takes shelter in this house. You can see, the house in which he takes shelter is very big. This man comes and tells the boy at whom the dog is barking:' get out, there is nothing to be afraid of'.

*The word "dar" is used to refer to the palace in the picture.