The Acquisition of Basic Word Order by Children with Autism Spectrum Syndrome

Засвоєння базового порядку слів дітьми з синдромом аутистичного спектра

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ABSTRACT

Purpose. This paper reports on an investigation of Arabic word order acquisition by twelve Jordanian children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and the reasons for this order of acquisition. This study researched the following questions: (1). Which word order do Jordanian Arabic speaking children with ASD prefer? (2). Why do children with ASD prefer this word order?

Methods and Procedure. The study sample consisted of 12 autistic children (mean age of nine, two females, ten males) attending Tawasul Center for Autism, Amman, Jordan. Such a ratio is logical since there are more male than female autistic children, as concluded in multiple studies. In the present study, the participants’ native language is JA, which facilitated communication between the children and researchers since the latter are also JA native speakers. The sample’s ASD severity level was moderate with a nonverbal IQ of around 45. These 12 children were selected because their L1 proficiency was approximately the same and their mental age was around 6, based on an annual test conducted by the center. In addition, none of these children had any specific language impairments, suggesting that the sample was homogenous and heterogeneous regarding language skills. Concerning ethical approval, consent was obtained from the center and the children’s parents to conduct the tests on the children in the center. Participants from the Tawasul Center for Autism in Amman, Jordan, were asked to describe what they saw in ten different pictures and their responses were recorded. These responses can be divided into two types: SV word order and VS word order.

Results. The results indicate that SV word order structures were used more often than VS structures. The results of the t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the two in favor of subject-verb-object (SVO) order. We argue that the SVO word order is used more frequently by children with ASD due to the noun bias principle.

Conclusions. Based on the analysis, SVO sentences were used more than VSO sentences for many reasons; namely, the basic word order of the linguistic input in the surrounding community, the noun bias principle, and the type of message being conveyed, i.e., entity-oriented messages. After administering a t-test, statistically significant differences were found between the results of the two word orders in favor of SVO word order.

Key words: Language Acquisition, autism spectrum disorder, word order, Jordanian Arabic.
Introduction

According to the National Institute of Mental Health Information Resource Center (2018), autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can be defined as a developmental disorder that influences both communication and behavior. Although autism can be diagnosed at any age, it should be regarded as a developmental disorder since its symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life. The term ‘autism’ was introduced by Rutter (1977) as a disorder that can be signaled before 30 months of age, when a child fails to establish normal social relationships and their language development is delayed and deviant. According to a definition provided by the US National Academy (2013: 11), autism affects major human behaviors such as social interaction ability, communication ability, imagination, and relationships with others. The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) (2004) refers to autism as a complex, lifelong disorder which influences mental and social development. It is a heterogeneous developmental disability that weakens a child’s ability to understand language, interact and communicate with people, and show social skills and play.

Autistics show social and communicative deficits. In addition, they display structural and social abnormalities, pragmatic impairments and language abnormalities (Leyfer et al., 2008). Hill (2004) introduced additional characteristics for autistic individuals, such as social and communication disabilities, learning difficulties, and intelligence quotients (IQs) below 70. Rao and Gagie (2006) added that autistic children face difficulties in using language and their imagination, and in being creative and understanding abstract concepts. An additional feature of the autism spectrum disorder is its diversity that some autistic may are silent, unsociable and unaware of the world around whereas others may be highly verbal, keen to make friends and interested in abstruse academic topics (Bishop, 2003).

The problems autistic children encounter affect their understanding and use of language to communicate (Greenspan, 2006). The ability of autistic children to acquire language phenomena in various languages has been investigated, for example for metaphor (Rundblad & Annaz, 2010), questions (Hurtig, Ensrud & Tomblin, 1982), word order (Swensen et al., 2007), and various morphological and syntactic
structures (Park et al., 2012), *inter alia*. However, studies focusing on the acquisition of linguistic structures such as word order by ASD Arabic-speaking children are scarce (see, for example, Altakhaineh & Alkhatib, 2019; Altakhaineh et al., 2020a; Altakhaineh et al., 2020b).

Autism is a social communication deficit leading to repetitive sensory motor behaviors (Lord et al., 2018); that is, autistic children have difficulties communicating with the surrounding world and perform repeated behaviors. The language of autistic children is a linguistic phenomenon featuring, for example, a delay in both early language acquisition and effective communication with non-ASD children. Moreover, an autistic child’s understanding of phrases and gestures is reportedly very low, in that they show delay in communication and language development (Mitchell et al., 2006). Autistic children suffer from severe receptive and expressive language difficulties (Loucas et al., 2008).

Word order is the syntactic arrangement of words within a sentence, clause or phrase and concerns how a certain language arranges the constituent parts of its sentences (Al-Khresheh, 2010). Su and Naigles (2019) referred to word order as an essential property that includes the basic syntactic construction of a human language. Thus, acquisition is rather important in the typical development of children and autistic children. Word order can also refer to how the major constituents of a clause, the subject and verb, are grouped in a particular order (Comrie, 1989). Languages differ from each other in terms of the order of the constituents in a sentence, also known as word order patterns. This order is associated with the order of the subject, object, and verb with respect to each other (Dryer, 2007). More specifically, languages vary in relation to the order of constituents within the sentence, and can be classed into four types (Dryer, 2007):

1. Verb-final languages, in which the verb follows the subject and object, producing SOV word order.
2. Verb-initial languages, in which the verb precedes both the subject and object, yielding two patterns, VSO and VOS. Such a pattern is less common than the SOV word order.
3. SVO languages, which are neither verb-final nor verb-initial. In these languages, the subject precedes the verb and the object follows it. This type is more widespread than verb-initial order, but less common than verb-final order.
(4). Object-initial languages, which include the two and other rare remaining orders such as OVS and OSV.

In this study, the focus is on Jordanian Arabic (JA), a Colloquial variety used among Jordanians that is a collective term for a spoken Arabic variety that is completely different from the written. Additionally, JA includes a group of national and regional varieties that form the daily spoken language (Al-Saidat & Al-Momani, 2010). Supported by Greenberg’s word order universals, Anggraeni and Jufrizal (2013) suggested that in JA the most frequently used word order is SVO. Aljenaie and Farghal (2009) also proposed that JA uses SVO as its basic word order, despite modern standard Arabic (MSA) having VSO word order. In this study, the aim is to investigate which word order is preferred by the sampled ASD children.

**Previous Studies**

Working in the area of Dutch word order acquisition, particularly verb and preposition positions, Jansen, Lalleman and Muysken (1981) recorded the abilities of 16 Turkish and Moroccan foreign workers residing in Amsterdam. As its theoretical framework, the paper employed the alternation hypothesis. This states that once the target language offers an alternation between two patterns, which are the verb final and verb second, the learner of the second language tends to over-generalize the patterns of their first language. Accordingly, the study’s Turkish participants over-generalized the verb final, but the Moroccans over-generalized the verb second. Such alternating orders happen frequently in the early stages of language acquisition but disappear later.

Tager-Flusberg (1981) investigated autistic children’s ability to comprehend sentences by conducting two experiments. The understanding of eighteen autistic children was compared with thirty normal children aged 3–4. In the first experiment, the children were asked about four types of sentences, passive, active, biased, and reversible, and the overall understanding of the autistic group was found to be lower than that of the comparison group. Moreover, the autistic children used the strategy of word order, but not the probable event strategy to understand the sentences. In the second experiment, the same procedures were applied
but with three-word anomalous items. Such results were interpreted in relation to semantic-cognitive deficit, and it is worth noting that this deficit explains the comprehension difficulties faced by autistic children.

El-Yasin (1985) responded to Greenberg’s 1963 claim that VSO languages are globally in the minority. Based on this claim, El-Yasin suggested that word order is expected to change in the direction of the more common order of SVO. Although Classical Arabic has VSO word order, Colloquial JA has SVO order due to factors related to subject-verb agreement and the numbers of topics allowed to precede the verb in the sentence. In fact, both these authors’ claims are in alignment, as illustrated by the way in which the Arabic language has changed from VSO order in Classical Arabic to SVO order in Colloquial JA.

Salameh, Håkansson and Nettelbladt (1996) showed that children who acquired Swedish as a second language (L2) and Swedish children with specific language impairment (SLI) display interesting similarities during their linguistic development. In their study, 18 normally developing Arab children aged five and six years old were tested in relation to the development of word order patterns. The results showed that both the L2 and SLI children reflected similarities in the patterns of word order they were able to produce. These results align with Pienemann’s processability theory, which is a powerful tool for predicting the acquisition of morphological and syntactical structures and analyzing the grammar of SLI children’s speech.

Mohammad (2000) investigated two issues related to word order. A detailed comparison of word order patterns in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Palestinian Arabic (PA) surprisingly found that the two varieties allow almost the same word order options. The study also observed whether there is a VP in Arabic and found that the category does indeed exist in Arabic. The availability of [Spec, TP] in VSO sentences, which is occupied by an expletive pronoun, was also addressed in the study. According to the expletive hypothesis, the expletive pronoun reflects some of the verb features of VSO sentences, and declares a relationship between the pronominal co-reference and the sentence word order. For instance, if the subject is the antecedent of a pronominal clitic, the word order is free, but if the pronominal is cliticized onto the subject, the antecedent precedes the pronominal.

Swensen, Kelley, Fein and Naigles (2007) observed two language acquisition processes regarding the comprehension preceding production
of word order and the noun bias. Such processes were examined in ten autistic children of two and three years old and thirteen typically developing 21-month-olds. The intermodal preferential looking paradigm was used to measure the children’s ability to comprehend subject-verb-object word order and explain their tendencies to map novel words onto objects, rather than actions. After collecting samples of spontaneous speech, the data were analyzed to demonstrate that the comprehension of word order precedes its production in both groups. Moreover, children in both groups show bias toward nouns. Both the typically developing and language-impaired children therefore showed that their understanding of word order preceded their production and that they were biased towards nouns.

Aljenaie and Farghal (2009) designed a study based on 68 Kuwaiti children aged 4–8; the children were asked to respond to verbal stimuli of three-word orders in Kuwaiti Arabic, in the form of SVO, VSO and topic-comment (T-C). The study investigated both how the Kuwaiti children comprehended the various three-word orders and checked their order of acquisition. One finding was that the Kuwaiti children manifested better comprehension of the unmarked word order SVO, followed by the marked VSO, and the most marked T-C sentences, respectively. With the two marked word orders, the children ignored the word order and relied on other semantic, pragmatic, and prosodic cues, such as agreement. The results also indicated that the younger children preferred the SVO order while the older children preferred both SVO and VSO. Moreover, the acquisition of SVO and VSO happened before that of T-C, and the older children depended on gender agreement to understand reversible sentences.

Khamis-Dakwar (2011) investigated the acquisition of word order structures in Palestinian Colloquial Arabic by 50 children aged 19–36 months. The study explored the acquisition of SVO and VSO word orders using a repetition task, and found that the VSO order was mastered first by this young age group. This finding is interesting since usually the order which is acquired late by children is the one more frequently used by adults. Such findings can be explained using the head and phrase movement acquisition framework, which suggests that verb movement is acquired by children before noun phrase movement. For this reason, they achieve better in VSO sentences which involve only verb movement than in SVO which involves both verb and NP
movement. After growing up and mastering the two types of movement, children start to adopt the more grammatically complex SVO order.

Friedmann and Costa (2011) noted that SV and VS orders are both possible in languages like Hebrew, European Portuguese, Palestinian Arabic, and Spanish. However, during the first stages of sentence construction in early language acquisition, children do not use all the word order patterns available in their language. Interestingly, children’s preferred word orders differ according to the language. For instance, in Hebrew and European Portuguese, SV and VS orders are used with unaccusative verbs, but only SV is used with unergative and transitive verbs. However, in Spanish and Palestinian Arabic, the VS order is preferred with unaccusative, unergative and transitive verbs in early language acquisition. The study conducted 11 experiments on 257 different children to elicit word order patterns in the four languages and analyzed five spontaneous speeches of 80 more children. The study proposed an explanation for such cross-linguistic differences and similarities, according to which it was found that children at this stage can move the verb to I in the inflectional phrase (IP) but are as yet unable to move the subject out of the VP, i.e., the subjects stay within the VP. However, moving the verbs to I depends on the ability to violate the linear order of SV within the VP. In Spanish and Palestinian Arabic, in which children assume IP as the Spell-out domain, the verb is allowed to appear before the subject, whereas in Hebrew and European Portuguese, the Spell-out domain is initially taken to be VP, which does not allow the verb to move to I at the early stage of language acquisition.

Kissine, Luffin, Aiad, Bourourou, Deliens and Gaddour (2019) documented the reasons behind the presence of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) instances in the speech of five autistic Tunisian boys since such phenomenon is unusual in case of autistic children unlike in case of typically developing children. The colloquial Tunisian Arabic is considered be to be a diglossia, unlike MSA which is virtually never used in everyday conversation. As a result, it was found that television programs integrate the most important source of MSA for preschool children across the Arabic-speaking world. Moreover, it was found that typically developing children expose active social interaction in order to develop their language, however, some autistic children use television and cartoons as a source of noninteractive input to acquire language.
This review of the previous literature has shown that several studies have been conducted on the acquisition of word order in different languages by typically developing children, autistic children, and children with SLI. However, and to the best of our knowledge, there is a scarcity of research on language skills of Arabic speaking children with ASD and this paper reports novel data on children with ASD speaking Jordanian Arabic sheds light on syntactic and pragmatic skills of children with ASD speaking Arabic. Accordingly, this study researched the following questions:

(1). Which word order do Jordanian Arabic speaking children with ASD prefer?

(2). Why do children with ASD prefer this word order?

**Methodology**

**Participants**

The study sample consisted of 12 autistic children (mean age of nine, two females, ten males) attending Tawasul Center for Autism, Amman, Jordan. Such a ratio is logical since there are more male than female autistic children, as concluded in multiple studies. For example, Loomes, Hull and Mandy (2017) found that the male-to-female ratio of autistic children is 3:1. In the present study, the participants’ native language is JA, which facilitated communication between the children and researchers since the latter are also JA native speakers. The sample’s ASD severity level was moderate with a nonverbal IQ of around 45. These 12 children were selected because their L1 proficiency was approximately the same and their mental age was around 6, based on an annual test conducted by the center. In addition, none of these children had any specific language impairments, suggesting that the sample was homogenous and heterogeneous regarding language skills. Concerning ethical approval, consent was obtained from the center and the children’s parents to conduct the tests on the children in the center.

**Procedure**

Ten illustrative pictures were used to test the sequence in which these autistic children had acquired sentence structure (See Appendix 1).
The target pictures were chosen after consultation with the children’s teachers at the center to ensure that the children were familiar with the pictures and their colors were not disturbing to them. Pictures were used to collect data since their use is reportedly an effective tool in testing children diagnosed with ASD (see, Charlop-Christy et al., 2002; Ganz & Simpson, 2004; Altakhaineh & Alkhatib, 2019). One of the researchers used illustrative examples to explain to the children how the target activity would be performed, using a different word order in each case, i.e., SV and VS (see, Altakhaineh et al., 2020a, 2020b). Next, each child was shown the ten pictures one by one and asked to talk about them in terms of the activities they could see being performed; their responses were recorded for analysis. Figure 1 shows an example of a picture the students were asked to describe.

Figure 1

Picture example

Prior to the oral elicitation, the items and questions were checked by a linguist and a specialist in the field of autism to ascertain their objectivity and suitability for the study sample.

**Statistical analysis**

A $t$-test was administered to check if there were statistically significant differences between the participants’ answers regarding the word order used. Based on the results of the statistical analysis, the SV word order was the most commonly used by the participants compared to the VS word order. The results and discussion are provided in the following section.
Results and Discussion

For the first research question – to determine the word order autistic children use the most – the results showed that the participants used SV or VS order. The instances of each order were calculated as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Number of answers using SVO and VSO word orders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Number of answers using SVO word order</th>
<th>Number of answers using VSO word order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 indicates that the participants used SVO order more than VSO. However, to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the results of the two orders, a t-test was conducted and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Results of the t-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Order</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SVO</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.2723</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.4084</td>
<td>0.0248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.2723</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows that the mean score for SVO answers was 7.17 and that of VSO was 2.83, suggesting that SVO word order was used more frequently by the participants compared to VSO. In addition, the difference between the two means is statistically significant in favor of SVO ($p=0.0248>0.05$). They use SVO more than VSO because they are exposed to the spoken vernacular in everyday conversations, yet some of them used the VSO because they are exposed to the standard variety through books and media and the teachers in the center are well-educated and they use the SA to communicate with the children. Moreover, the presence of spontaneous and productive use of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in the speech of some of the study sample can be traced back to the use of television and cartoons as a non-interactional language-learning strategy by the children in the center (Kissine et al., 2019).

In relation to the second question on why autistic children use SVO word order, several explanations can be proposed. First, Akhtar (1999) argued that children detect the basic word order of their community through exposure to linguistic input. Accordingly, it seems that the children may have been exposed to SVO word order, which is more common in JA than VSO. Note that the acquisition of basic word order by typically developing children in any given language can be achieved quickly with relatively little data, and likewise SVO word order can be acquired based on relatively little input (Su & Naigles, 2019). Children do not have a truly general understanding of word order, and only use the orders they have heard in their community (Tomasello, 1992).

Secondly, this result may be explained by the fact that children show bias toward acquiring nouns, in what is referred to as the noun bias (Swensen et al., 2007). That is, when a child hears a new lexical item, they prefer to map that item onto an unnamed object (which is named later) rather than the texture, color, or an associated action of that object within the social/cognitive context. This suggests that typically developing children produce more nouns compared to other word classes and prefer to map new words onto new objects in the context, as opposed to new properties or actions (see, Waxman et al., 2013). Although this observation was noted for typically developing children, the findings from the current study indicate that the noun bias principle may also apply to children with ASD. This principle may explain why SVO word order is acquired before VSO word order, as children begin their sentences with a subject which is a noun rather than
a verb. Other studies align with this result as they have also proposed that autistic children show bias toward nouns (Tager-Flusberg et al., 1990; Charman et al., 2003; Swensen et al., 2007).

Additionally, the finding that SVO order is used by autistic children more than VSO order is reflective of the fact that the messages autistic children send are entity- rather than event-oriented. This is because, as Holes (2004: 250) suggested, “event-oriented” messages are normally realized as VSO sentences, while “entity-oriented” messages are normally realized as SVO sentences. Greenberg (1966) believed that cross-linguistically SVO and VSO word orders are the dominant word order patterns in declarative sentences containing nominal subjects and objects, because in both the subject precedes the object. Greenberg (1966) also argued that SVO is the most frequent word order, with VSO being in the definite minority. As mentioned, the most frequently used word order among JA speakers is SVO, since it is the basic word order in JA. Accordingly, the more common use among autistic children of SVO than VSO is normal since it is the basic order of the language to which they are exposed. It should also be noted that, like most Jordanian children, our autistic children are exposed to JA both at home and in the center.

Conclusions

This study has investigated the Arabic word order structures that Jordanian children with ASD use more frequently, and the reasons for this use. The researchers used illustrative pictures to collect data since these can help children with ASD focus on the task by establishing a connection between the target, the sentence (in our case), and the referent in the picture. Based on the analysis, SVO sentences were used more than VSO sentences for many reasons; namely, the basic word order of the linguistic input in the surrounding community, the noun bias principle, and the type of message being conveyed, i.e., entity-oriented messages. After administering a $t$-test, statistically significant differences were found between the results of the two word orders in favor of SVO word order. In line with Altakhaineh and Alkhatib (2019), it is recommended that teachers need to use special activities to draw children’s attention to the in-class activities, paying special attention to
the types of picture used in terms of familiarity and the suitability of colors. Furthermore, it is recommended that more studies are needed to investigate other linguistic phenomena among Arabic-speaking children with ASD, and the challenges facing them.

**Acknowledgments**

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**Adherence To Ethical Standards**

**Institutional Review Board Statement.** The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by Research and Ethical Committee of Al Ain University.

**Conflicts of Interest.** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Informed Consent Statement.** Informed consent was obtained from the administration of Tawasul Center for Autism, Amman, Jordan.

**Data Availability Statement.** The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy.

**Author Contributions.** Abdel Rahman Altakhaineh and Razan Alkhatib contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection and analysis were performed by Abdel Rahman Altakhaineh, Razan Alkhatib and Hiba Alhendi. The first draft of the manuscript was written by Abdel Rahman Altakhaineh and Hiba Alhendi. All authors commented on previous versions of the manuscript and all authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**References**


Appendix 1

The following are the pictures used to elicit answers from the children in the center.
АНОТАЦІЯ
Мета. У статті висвітлено результати дослідження арабського порядку слів дванадцятьма йорданськими дітьми з розладом аутичного спектру (РАС), а також розкрито причини такого порядку засвоєння. Це дослідження було спрямоване на вирішення таких питань: (1). Якому порядку слів йордансько-арabicькою мовою надають перевагу діти з РАС? (2). Чому діти з РАС віддають перевагу саме такому порядку слів?

Методи та процедура. Вибірка складалася з 12 дітей-аутистів (середній вік дев’ять років, дві дівчинки, десять хлопчиків), які відвідували Центр аутизму Тавасул, Амман, Йорданія. Таке співвідношення є логічним, оскільки, як показали численні дослідження, дітей-аутистів хлопчиків більше, ніж дівчаток. У цьому дослідженні рідною мовою учасників є йордансько-арабська, що полегшило спілкування між дітьми та дослідниками, оскільки останні також є носіями йордансько-арабської мови. Рівень тяжкості РАС у вибірці був помірним з невербальним IQ близько 45. Ці 12 дітей були відібрані, оскільки їхні навички L1 були приблизно однаковими, а їхній розумовий вік був близько 6 років, на основі щорічного тесту, проведеного центром. Крім того, жодна з досліджувана дитина не мала спеціфічних мовленнєвих порушень, що свідчить про те, що вибірка була однорідною та неоднорідною щодо мовленнєвих навичок. Щодо етичного схвалення, то було отримано згоду Центру та батьків дітей на проведення тестів з дітьми, які перебувають у відповідному Центрі. Учасників із Центру аутизму Тавасул в Аммані, Йорданія, попросили описати те, що вони бачили на десяти різних фотографіях. Їхні відповіді були записані. Ці відповіді було поділено на два типи: порядок слів SV і порядок слів VS.

Результати. Результати засвідчили, що структури порядку слів SV використовувалися частіше, ніж структури VS. Результати t-тесту виявили статистично значущу різницю між ними на користь порядку “суб’єкт – дієслово – об’єкт” (SVO). Ми стверджуємо, що порядок слів SVO частіше використовується дітьми з РАС через принцип упередження іменників.

Висновки. Аналіз результатів дослідження засвідчив, що речення SVO використовувалися більше, ніж речення VSO з багатьох причин, а саме: основний порядок слів для мовленнєвого введення у навколишнє спіттєвівороство, принцип упередження іменника та тип повідомлення, що передається, тобто повідомлення, орієнтоване на суть. Після проведення t-тесту були виявлені статистично значущі відмінності між результатами двох порядків слів на користь порядку слів SVO.

Ключові слова: оволодіння мовою, розлад аутистичного спектру, порядок слів, йордансько-арабська мова.