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Development of Predicates and Participle Construction in Malayalam Speaking Typically Developing Children of Different Age Groups

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Abstract

The study aims at understanding and comparing the development of participle construction and predicates in Malayalam speaking typically developing children of different age groups).

A group of 10 normal children from each age group 5 yrs,6 yrs 7yrs and 8 yrs were selected randomly. 20 pictures indicating each sentence containing predicates and participle construction were taken as stimulus to elicit response. Same stimulus is given for all age groups. For both predicate and participle construction: pictures indicating each sentence were shown in the laptop. The subjects were asked to respond for what is shown in the picture which should contain predicates and participle. For each correct response, a tick mark is given, and it is counted and checks how many correct responses were obtained without any cues. From the results it is evident that development of predicates and participle construction acquires or emerges as the age increases. The result of the present study indicates better performance was shown by 8 year old group compared to other age groups.

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The results also indicate that the predicates are acquired and developed earlier than participle constructions.

Keywords: Malayalam Speaking, Typically Developing Children, Different Age Groups, Predicates, Participle construction.

Introduction

Language is the expression of human communication through which knowledge, belief, and behavior can be experienced, explained, and shared. This sharing is based on systematic, conventionally used signs, sounds, gestures, or marks that convey understood meanings within a group or community. Recent research identifies "windows of opportunity" for acquiring language—written, spoken, or signed—that exist within the first few years of life.

Language determines one's entire way of life, including one's thinking and all other forms of mental activity. To use language is to limit oneself to the modes of perception already inherent in that language. Language effects the original split between wisdom and method.

"A language [is] a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements." (Noam Chomsky)

Malayalam is a language of the Dravidian family and is one of the four major languages of this family with a rich literary tradition, Malayalam has a rich morphology, and identifying the morphological suffixes of Malayalam verbs and nouns are quiet tough task.

The predicate is a grammatical construction that forms part of both lexical and syntactic categories of linguistics. It is explained that the predicate is the part of a sentence that offers information surrounding the subject of that sentence(Straus, Kaufman & Stern, 2014).The predicate is an important aspect of language to study as it collectively accounts for smaller linguistic elements such as action verbs, adjectives and adverbs which are quite complex as these require the speaker to know the subject as well as its attributes in a phrase(Strawson, 2017).Despite languages not being typologically similar, language-development studies illustrate that languages are universally acquired at different rates and stages. Markman (1991) illustrates how the child's lexicon is dependent on the development of semantic or meaning construction and categorization skills. These affect literacy and numeracy skills.

Several researchers of language acquisition suggest that children across all languages acquire nominal structures before all other structures such as action verbs, adjectives and even adverbs (Snow,1978; Harley,2013; Gentner,1978). Without something concrete to attach a lexical element to-one that could be possibly seen, touched or heard-a linguistic structure

becomes abstract(Bird, Franklin & Howard, 2001). Clark (2009) further shows that predicate structures would be acquired later than nominal structures. This is because verbs and adjectives do not offer concreteness or iconicity.

The predicate construction comprises several categories :action verbs explain an action that could occur, adjectives describe characteristics about an object or person and adverbs allow one to describe the manner in which a verb is enacted, or it could describe variables relating to place and time. Itis very important to revisit theories that universally govern the understanding of this category, such as how the predicate develops, in order to ascertain if there are any developments that could further enhance existing aspects of language acquisition theory. Research shows that the predicate does not always appear after nominal acquisition has taken place. It may emerge before or at the same time as nominal as a result of the way different language typologies make use of the nominal structure (Kersten & Smith, 2002).Ata conceptual level, it appears that predicate structures seem more difficult (than nominal structures)to acquire as these do not refer to concrete entities in the real world but rather link how concrete objects are described. The presence of the verb structure depends on an individual's understanding of what actions and feelings are as well as how the person perceives these actions and feelings. From a structural perspective, in typical English sentences the verb shows the relationship between the subject and the object of a sentence (Straus et al., 2014). Studies also show that one can gain a better understanding of the early conceptualization of predicate structures through semantic analysis (Saeed, 2009). The predicate falls under the 3broader linguistic category of the verb so, in this report, the terms 'verbal construction' and 'predicate' are used interchangeably unless there is a focus on a specific aspect.

The predicate must contain a verb, and the verb requires, permits, or precludes other sentence elements to complete the predicate. These elements are: objects (direct, indirect, and prepositional), predicatives, and adjuncts:

She **dances**. – Verb -only predicate
Ben **reads the book**. –Verb + direct object predicate
Ben's mother, Felicity, **gave me a present**. - verb + indirect object + direct object predicate
She **listened to the radio**. - verb + prepositional object predicate
They **elected him president**. - Verb + object + predicative noun predicate
She **met him in the park**. - Verb + object + adjunct predicate
She **is in the park**. - verb + predicative prepositional phrase predicate

A **participle** is a form of a verb that is used in a sentence to modify a noun, noun phrase, verb or verb phrase, and thus plays a role similar to that of an adjective or adverb. Participles may correspond to the active voice (active participles), where the modified noun is taken to represent the agent of the action denoted by the verb; or to the passive voice (passive participles), where the modified noun represents the patient (undergoer) of that action. Participles in particular languages are also often associated with certain verbal aspects or tenses.

The two types of participle in English are traditionally called the present participle (forms such as *writing*, *singing* and *raising*; these same forms also serve as gerunds and verbal nouns) and the past participle (forms such as *written*, *sung* and *raised*; regular participles such as the last, as well as some irregular ones, have the same form as the finite past tense).

In some languages, participles can be used in the periphrastic formation of compound verb tenses, aspects, or voices. For example, one of the uses of the English present participle is to express continuous aspect (as in *John is working*), while the past participle can be used in expressions of perfect aspect and passive voice (as in *Anne has written* and *Bill was killed*).

A verb phrase based on a participle and having the function of a participle is called a participle phrase or participial phrase (*participial* is the adjective derived from *participle*). For example, *looking hard at the sign* and *beaten by his father* are participial phrases based respectively on an English present participle and past participle. Participial phrases generally do not require an expressed grammatical subject; therefore such a verb phrase also constitutes a complete clause (one of the types of nonfinite clause). As such, it may be called a participle clause or participial clause. (Occasionally a participial clause does include a subject, as in the English nominative absolute construction *the king having died*)

Jia and Fuse(2007) studied the acquisition of English grammatical morphology by native Mandarin-speaking children and adolescents and age related differences. The results indicated that acquisition of some grammatical morphemes by school ages immigrates takes several years to complete. As second learners exhibit some error types and difficulties similar to monolingual children with specific language impairment, caution needs to be taken when interpreting and using morphological errors as indicators of speech/language learning problems in this population.

Lakshman (2000) investigated the acquisition of relative clause in 27 Tamil speaking children (2-6yrs). The findings indicated that the younger children produced a significantly greater number of pragmatically inappropriate responses than the older children. But the younger children are not inferior to the older children with respect to their grammatical competence.

RK Nicholas and Saaliha (2016) investigated the development of noun and predicate comprehension and production in isiZulu-speaking children between the ages of 25 and 36 months. It compares lexical comprehension and production in isiZulu, using an Italian developed and validated vocabulary assessment tool. The result shows an age effect throughout the entire sample. Across all the age groups, the comprehension of the noun and predicate subtests was better performed than the production of noun and predicate subtests. With regard to lexical items, the responses of children showed an influence of various factors, including the late acquisition of items, possible problems with stimuli presented to them, and the possible input received by the children from their home environment.

JR Johnson,Miller and Tallal (2001) Studied of the use of cognitive state predicates by children with specific language impairment (SLI). Study analyzed longitudinal language samples collected from 26 children with SLI and 25 children with normal language (NL) development, aged 4;4 and 2;11, respectively, at Time I. Study II analyzed samples from SLI children with more severe delays at an earlier language stage. There were 10 SLI children and 10 NL children, aged 4; 11 and 2; 8, respectively, matched by MLU. All cognitive state predicates were identified using both broad and narrow definitions. In Study 1, the SLI children used cognitive state predicates less frequently than their mental age peers, and with no greater frequency or variety than their younger, language peers. In Study II, children with SLI used more predicates referring to communication events, but there were no further group differences. These findings are discussed as they relate to two current psycholinguistic issues: the possible dissociation of grammar and the lexicon, and the role of language in the development of children's theory of mind.

Review of Literature

Language is an extremely important way of interacting with the people around us. We use language to let others know how we feel, what we need, and to ask questions. We can modify our language to each situation. For instance, we talk to our small children with different words and tone than we conduct a business meeting. To communicate effectively, we send a message with words, gestures, or actions, which somebody else receives. Communication is therefore a two-way street, with the recipient of the message playing as important a role as the sender. Therefore, both speaking and listening are important for communication to take place.

Language enables individuals to engage socially, initially within the family, and later in an ever-widening network of relationships and cultural experiences. Such experiences create a sense of belonging and enhance general well-being. Language enables individuals to give expression to their feelings, ideas, and concerns. As they mature, it is through language that they will communicate their personal needs and claim their rightful place in society. The five main

branches of linguistics are phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The scientific study of language may be referred to as linguistic analysis. Linguistic analysis can be used to describe the unconscious rules and processes that speakers of a language use to create spoken or written language, and this can be useful to those who want to learn a language or translate from one language to another.

Syntax is the study of sentence structure. Every language has its own rules for combining words to create sentences. Syntactic analysis attempts to define and describe the rules that speakers use to put words together to create meaningful phrases and sentences. It is a dominant component of language. It governs how morphemes and words are correctly combined. It refers to the branch of grammar dealing with the ways in which words, with or without appropriate inflections, are arranged to show connections of meaning within the sentence.

A participle is a form of a verb that is used in a sentence to modify a noun,noun phrase, verb phrase, and thus plays a role similar to that of an adjective or adverb. It is one of the types of non-finite verb forms. Its names come from the Latin participium, a claque of Greek and Latin participles share some of the categories of the adjective or noun (gender, number, case) and some of those of the verb (tense and voice). As adjectives, participle scan modifies nouns or pronouns. In this way, we can include a lot of information in a sentence without making it too long or complicated. In the present participial construction (ing-form), we show that both actions are taking place the same time and with the passive participle and with past participle, we can shorten a passive clause. We use the perfect participle to indicate that the action in the participle clause took place before the action in the main clause. In English, the perfect participle can express actions in both the active and the passive voice. Other English participles are created periphrastically to imitate the richer array of classical participles, but they often seem formal or even awkward.

Participle constructions in Malayalam include 3 types. They are verbal, relative, and negative relative. The scan again is made for the presence or absence of the structure. Adjectives may be derived from verbs, generally, by adding /il/ or /kal/ to the verb stem. Examples are:

Verbal participle: /kal/
1) Pakshigal parannupogunnu
2) Kuttikal variyayipogunnu

Relative participle: /lla/
1)Kiliullakood
2) Kodiyullakar

Negative relative: /tha/
1)Vellam nirayatha pathram
2)Kanak cheyatha al

The predicate can be defined as the part of a sentence or clause that contains a verb or refers to something about the subject and/or object of that sentence (Rothstein, 2012).Recent empirical evidence shows that language acquisition and the early development of verb constructions may not be as universal as once believed (Kunene Nicolas & Ahmed, 2016; Pettenati, Sekine, Congestrì, & Volterra, 2012).

Language Acquisition and Use

Language learning and use are determined by the interaction of biological, cognitive, psychosocial, and environmental factors. Language evolves within specific historical, social, and cultural contexts. **Communication difference/dialect** is a variation of a linguistic symbol system used by a group of individuals that reflects and is determined by shared regional, social, or cultural/ethnic factors (ASHA, 1993).

Language Acquisition in Malayalam

Malayalam is a Dravidian language spoken in India. Dravidian languages have a rich system of overt case marking of noun phrases. It also has a relatively free word order. The language has basic Subject-Object-Verb word order. The interesting fact about Malayalam is that, instead of adjectives, it makes elaborate use of relative clause like structures for nominal modification. In Dravidian languages, pronoun can be readily omitted in a context where its referent can be easily guessed. Relatively little research has been conducted on children's grammatical development in Malayalam context, especially in the area of Participle construction.

Vijayalakshmi (1981) tested children between ages of 1 to 5 yrs with the Test of Acquisition of Syntax in Kannada (TASK). She reported that children use case, tense, gender, plural, number, and person markers as well as positions, determiners, adverbs and adjectives.

Sudha (1981) has developed a syntax screening test in Tamil for children in the age range 2-5rs. The test was administered to 56 normal children, divided into 6 groups and 3 language disordered children (6-15yrs). The results showed an increase in the overall performance on all the 10 grammatical categories like negations, tenses, plurals, 'Wh' questions that were observed as a function of age.

Kathyayani (1984)studied the development of morphological categories in Kannada in children between 6 to 8 yrs of age. He reported that they used genders, plurals and tenses correctly.

Rukmani (1994) has developed Malayalam Language Test for children in the age range of 4-7yrs. The test has two parts-semantics and syntax. Each part has 11 subsections with5 items each for expression and reception except semantic discrimination. The test administered to 90 Malayalam speaking children in the age range of 4-7 yrs, 5-6yrs and 6-7 yrs. The results indicated that the scores increased with increasing age. Children performed better in the reception task than the expression task. Also, they performed better on syntactic tasks than semantic tasks.

Harris and Flora (1982) examined children's use of 'get' in passive like constructions and the study reveals that children use more 'get' than 'be' passives and more truncated passives than full passives.

Kernan,Sharon and Sabsay(1996) studied linguistic and cognitive ability of adults with Down's syndrome and mental retardation of unknown etiology. They assessed different types of participle construction and results showed that the adult with Down's syndrome exhibited significantly poorer linguistic ability than the adult with mental retardation.

Babby (2002) investigated the deep structure and the transformations involved in the syntactic derivation of long and short forms of adjectives and participles in Russian language. The results indicated that the active participle in modern Russian is a deeper verb transformational introduced into the constituency of an NP. Stromswold and Karin (2002) examined in both children and adults in interpreting sentences. In the first experiment, 59 children were asked to interpret sentences with one, two, three, or no passive participle cues. The second experiment used college graduates and an almost identical procedure was used. Results suggested that children interpret passive sentences correctly but were not processed like adults.

Redmond (2003) investigated Children's productions of the affix – edin past tense and past participle contexts (e.g., the boy kicked the balls. the ball was kicked) were examined in spontaneous conversations and elicited productions. The performances of 7 children with specific language impairment (SLI) were compared with those of 2 control groups of typically developing children (age matches, MLU matches). Children with SLI produced fewer obligatory contexts for both past tense and past participle forms than did the control children and were more likely to omit past tense affixes. In contrast, few omissions of the past participle were observed across all 3 groups. Implications for theories regarding the morphological deficits associated with SLI are discussed.

Savage, Lievan, Theakston and Tomasello (2003) investigated on abstractness of early syntactic constructions in children of ages 3, 4, and 6 years and the results reveals that 6 year old children showed both lexical and structural priming for both active transitive and passive constructions whereas 3 and 4 year-old children showed lexical priming only. These results revealed that children develop abstract linguistic representations in their pre-school years.

Vini (2019) compared the participle construction performance of intellectually disabled children with typically developing Malayalam speaking children enabling the speech language pathologist for a focused assessment, better intervention, and monitoring of therapy progress. The result showed a general increase in the usage of participle construction with increase in the mental age of the children. Expression of participle construction was better in typically developing children than children with Intellectual disability.

Anu (2015)investigated the acquisition of participial construction in typically developing children in both Malayalam and English on the basis of familiarity of use and from their textbooks. The result indicated better performance in English past participial construction compared to present participial construction and actives than passives. In Malayalam, there is a significant difference between active and passive participial constructions indicating that children mostly use active participles rather than passive participles. While comparing both languages (Malayalam and English), a highly significant difference was noted in the acquisition of active and passive participial constructions. Children are more familiar with active participial construction than with passives. But there is no significant difference found in present and past participial constructions.

Lyle (2020) examined the development of the earliest type of complex predicates to emerge in child Hebrew – extended predicate constructions. These constructions take the form of a modal/aspectual operator followed by an infinitival verb form (e.g., *rocelesaxek* 'want to. play'), and since they serve various discursive functions (e.g., intent, desire, request), their use marks a significant development in toddlers' cognitive, linguistic, and conversational abilities. The results showed the complex predicates develop in a piecemeal fashion, promoted by both the gradually evolving relations between children's linguistic productions and their discursive functions, and the supportive contexts provided by their adult interlocutors.

Sreelakshmi (2015) investigated on acquisition of case markers in typically developing Malayalam speaking children in the age range of 3-8 years and the results reveals that nominative, locative and acquisitive case markers are the most developed type of case markers were as instrumental, genitive and dative are least developed case markers in the earlier ages.

Nandhu (2015) investigated on acquisition of case markers in Malayalam speaking Down's syndrome children of mental age range 3-8 yrs and results showed that there is a general increase in acquisition as well as frequency of usage of some type of case markers with increase in the mental age of the children.

Bello,Onofrio and Caseli (2014) investigated the lexical comprehension and production abilities and gestural production taking into account different lexical categories, namely, nouns and predicates. Fourteen children with DS (34 months of developmental age) and a comparison group of 14 typically developing children (TD) matched for gender and developmental age were assessed through a test of lexical comprehension and production (PiNG) and the Italian MB-CDI. Children with DS showed a general weakness in lexical comprehension and production. As for the composition of the lexical repertoire, for both groups of children, nouns are understood and produced in higher percentages compared to predicates. Children with DS produced more representational gestures than TD children in the comprehension tasks and above all with predicates.

Kim (2017) Japanese exhibits two different types of morphological processes. Some morphologically complex predicates are generated within the domain of the lexicon, whereas others are generated outside the domain of the lexicon. An elicited production task involving both types of complex predicates was administered to six Japanese children with specific language impairment (JSLI) and six children with normal language development (JNLD). The JSLI children experienced significant difficulty forming the lexicon-external complex predicates but much less difficulty with the lexicon-internal complex predicates while the performance of the JNLD children exhibited no such asymmetry. These preliminary results suggest that the deficit of SLI affects the ability to construct implicit procedural rules for morphology that are generated outside the lexicon while their lexical operations for morphology that are generated within the domain of the lexicon.

Need for the Study

Language acquisition is the process and learning curve of skills by which a child acquires language. This set of skills contains the ability to perceive and comprehend language, as well as the ability to produce and use words and sentences to communicate. A substantial body of research work existed on participle construction in typically developing children in languages like Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam.Except for few research,most studies have focused on development and acquisition of predicatesin foreign languages.The present study emphasizes the development of predicates and participle construction in typically developing Malayalam

speaking children of different age groups. This information may be important to understand the exact age wise acquisition of different structures or components of language.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to compare the development of predicates and participle construction in Malayalam speaking typically developing children of different age groups.

Methodology

Subject

A group of 10 normal children from each age group 5 yrs,6 yrs 7yrs and 8 yrs were selected randomly(total 40)

Stimuli

20 simple sentences and 20 pictures indicating each sentence containing predicates and participle construction were taken as stimulus to elicit response. Same stimulus is given for all age groups.

Instruments

HP laptop

Procedures

For both predicates and participle construction: pictures indicating each sentence were shown in the laptop. The subjects were asked to respond for what is shown in the picture which should contain predicates and participle construction. For each correct response a tick mark is given, and it is counted and check how many correct responses were obtained without any cues.

Analysis

After obtaining the data, count the number of correct responses. As same stimulus is given for all age groups, check for the correct number of responses in all age groups for both the predicates and participle construction and analyze which group has performed better among four groups for both and conclude how well both the components have developed in different age groups.

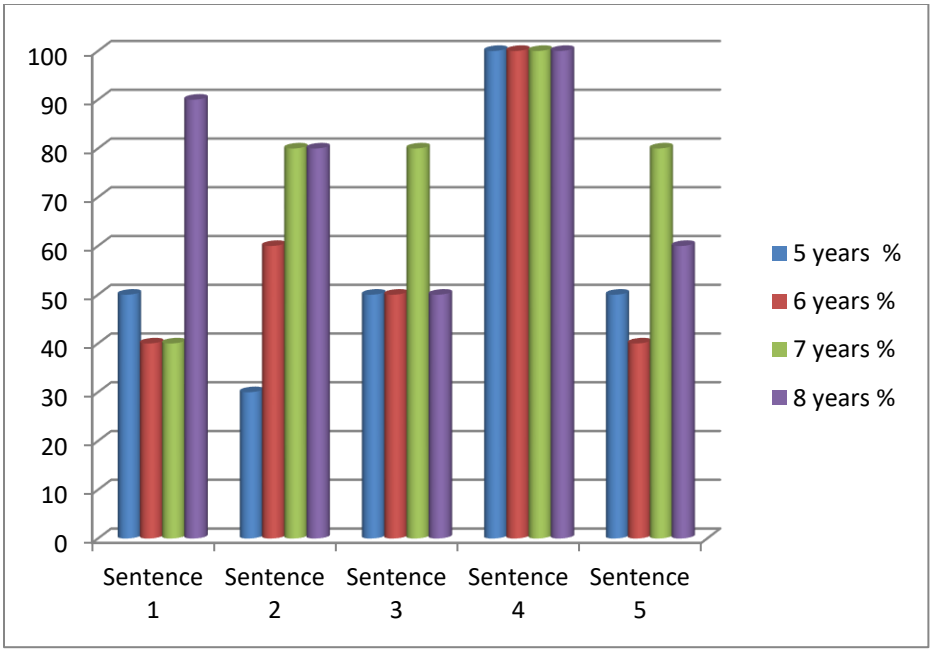
Test used is testing equality of proportions.

Results

Predicates

	5 years		6 years		7 years		8 years	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	5	50	4	40	4	40	9	90
Sentence 2	3	30	6	60	8	80	8	80
Sentence 3	5	50	5	50	8	80	5	50
Sentence 4	10	100	10	100	10	100	10	100
Sentence 5	5	50	4	40	8	80	6	60

Table 1: showing development of predicates (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in various age groups



For sentence 1, children with age group of 8 years performed better than rest of the age groups.

For sentence 2, Children with age group of 7 and 8 years performed better than rest of the age group.

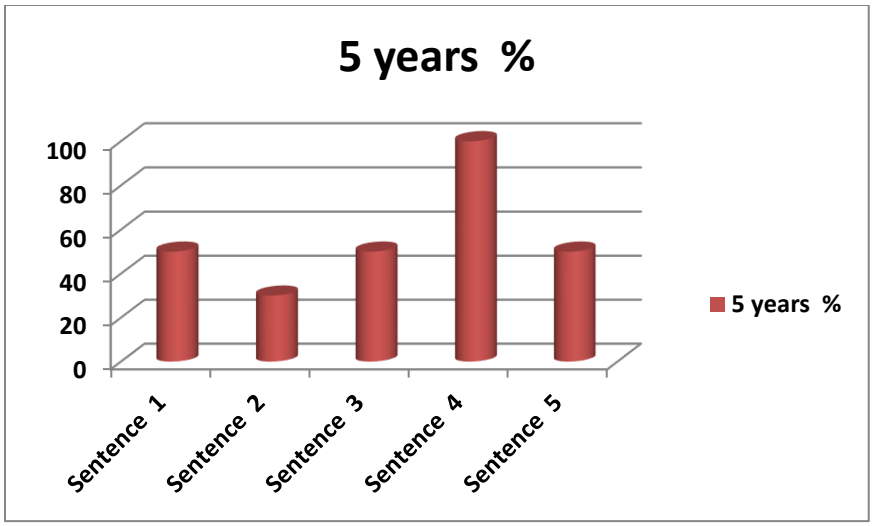
For sentence 3, Children with age group of 7 years performed better than rest of the age groups.

For sentence 4, children with all the age groups scored 100% i e, all performed well, this is because of the frequent usage of predicates given in sentence 4.

For sentence 5, Children with age group of 7 years performed better than rest of the age groups.

PREDICATES	5 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	5	50
Sentence 2	3	30
Sentence 3	5	50
Sentence 4	10	100
Sentence 5	5	50

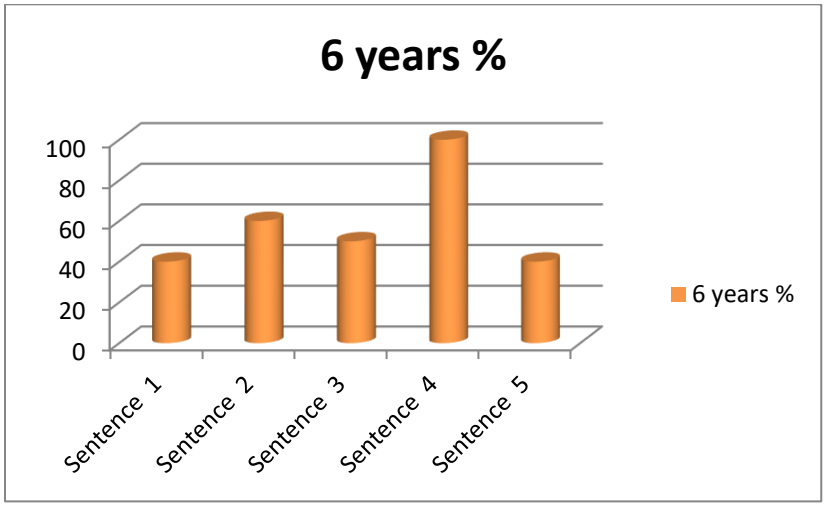
Table 2: showing development of predicates (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 5 years



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 5 years showed 50 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3, sentence 4,sentence 5 showed 30%,50 %,100% and 50% respectively.

PRE DICATES	6 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	4	40
Sentence 2	6	60
Sentence 3	5	50
Sentence 4	10	100
Sentence 5	4	40

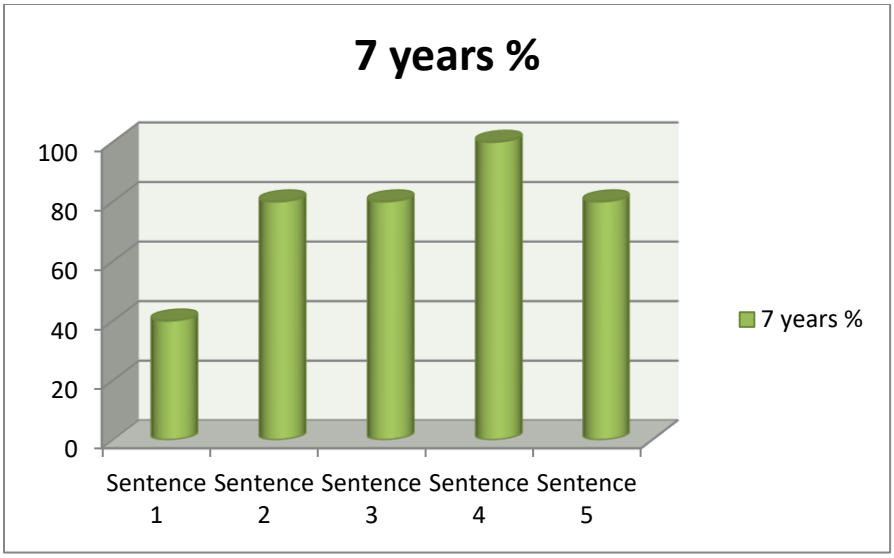
Table 3: showing development of predicates (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 6 years



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 6 years showed 40 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3,sentence 4, sentence 5 showed 60%,50 %, 100 % and 40% respectively.

PREIDCATES	7 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	4	40
Sentence 2	8	80
Sentence 3	8	80
Sentence 4	10	100
Sentence 5	8	80

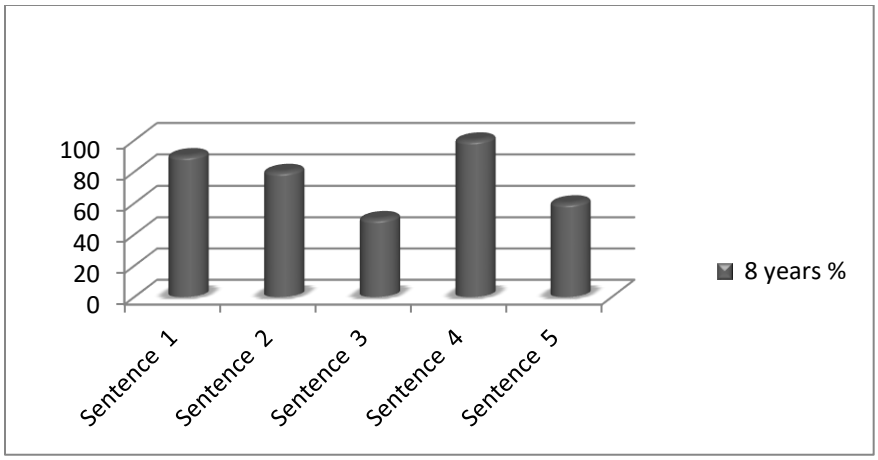
Table 4: showing development of predicates (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 7 years



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 7years showed 40 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3,sentence 4,sentence 5 showed 80%,80 %, 100 % and 80% respectively.

PREDICATES	8 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	9	90
Sentence 2	8	80
Sentence 3	5	50
Sentence 4	10	100
Sentence 5	6	60

Table 5: showing development of predicates (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 8 years



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 8 years showed 90 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3,sentence 4,sentence 5 showed 80%,50 %, 100 % and 60% respectively.

	P value					
	5 with 6yrs	5 with 7yrs	5 with 8yrs	6 with 7yrs	6 with 8yrs	7 with 8yrs
Sentence 1	0.327	0.327	0.025sig	0.500	0.010s	0.010sig
Sentence 2	0.089	0.012s	0.012s	0.165	0.165	0.500
Sentence 3	0.500	0.080	0.500	0.080	0.500	0.080
Sentence 4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sentence 5	0.327	0.080	0.327	0.034s	0.186	0.165

When the acquisition of predicates were compared across age groups, significant difference were noted in 5 with 8 years(P = .025),6 with 8 years(P = .010) and 7 with 8 years (P = .010) for sentence 1.

For sentence 2, significant difference was noted in 5 with 7 years (P = .012) and 5 with 8 year (P = .012).

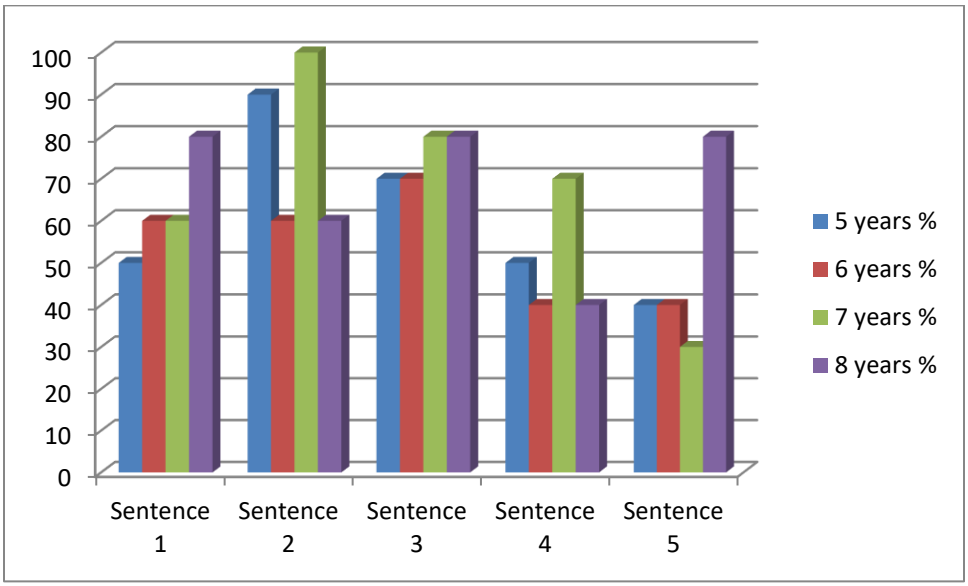
For sentence 3, No significant difference was noted in any of the age groups.

For sentence 5, significant difference was noted in 6 with 7 years(P = .34).

Participle Construction

PARTICIPLE	5 years		6 years		7 years		8 years	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	5	50	6	60	6	60	8	80
Sentence 2	9	90	6	60	10	100	6	60
Sentence 3	7	70	7	70	8	80	8	80
Sentence 4	5	50	4	40	7	70	4	40
Sentence 5	4	40	4	40	3	30	8	80

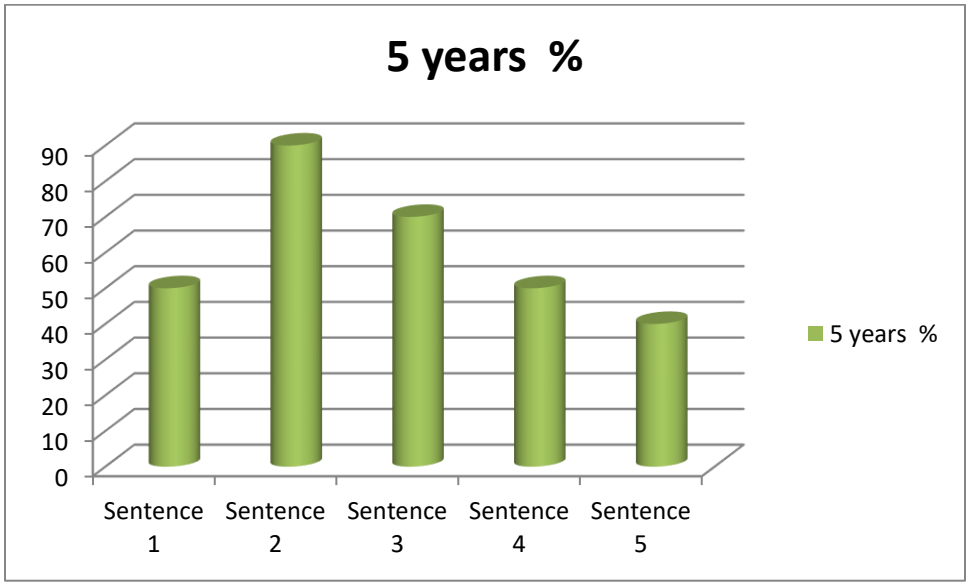
Table 7: showing development of participle construction (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in various age groups



For sentence 1, children with age group of 8 years performed better than all other age groups.
For sentence 2, children with age group of 8 years performed better than all other age groups.
For sentence 3, children with age group of 7 and 8 years performed better than all other age groups.
For sentence 4, children with age group of 8 years performed better than all other age groups.
For sentence 5, children with age group of 8 years performed better than all other age groups.

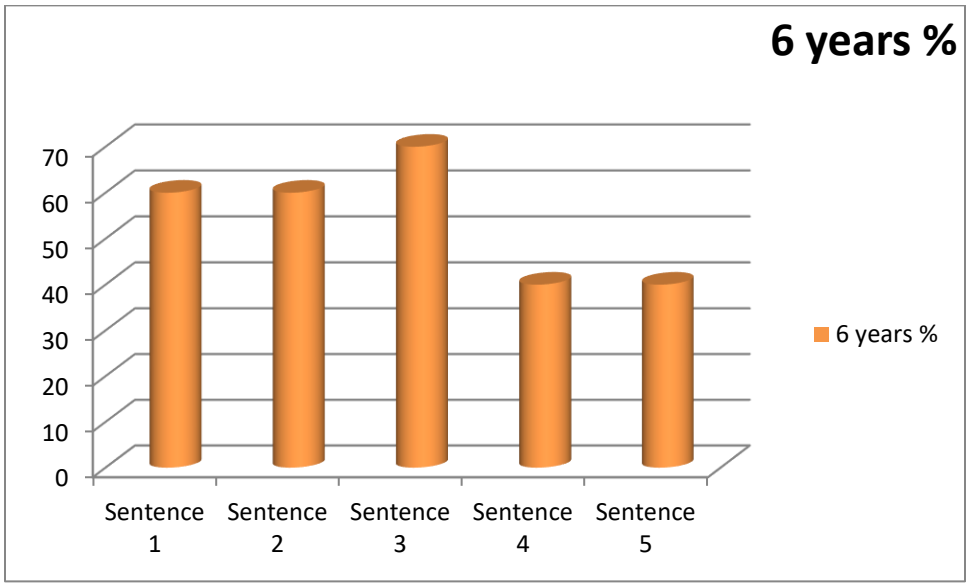
PARTICIPLE	5 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	5	50
Sentence 2	9	90
Sentence 3	7	70
Sentence 4	5	50
Sentence 5	4	40

Table 8: showing development of participle construction (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 5 years



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 5 years showed 50 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3, sentence 4, sentence 5 showed 90%,70 %, 50 % and 40% respectively.

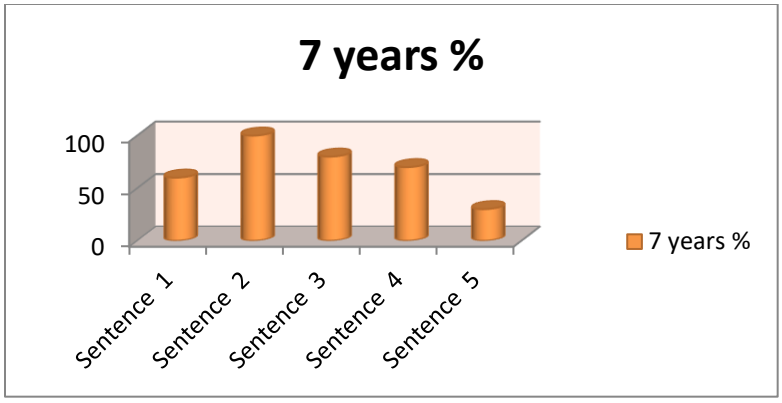
PARTICIPLE	6 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	6	60
Sentence 2	6	60
Sentence 3	7	70
Sentence 4	4	40
Sentence 5	4	40
Table 9: showing development of participle construction (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 6 years		



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 6 years showed 60 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3,sentence 4, sentence 5 showed 60%,70 %, 40 % and 40% respectively.

+ ARTICIPLE	7 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	6	60
Sentence 2	10	100
Sentence 3	8	80
Sentence 4	7	70
Sentence 5	3	30

Table 10: showing development of participle construction (frequency of occurrence and in percentage) in 7 years.



From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 7 years showed 60 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3, sentence 4, sentence 5 showed 100%,80 %, 70 % and 30% respectively.

PARTICIPLE	8 years	
	Frequency	%
Sentence 1	8	80
Sentence 2	6	60
Sentence 3	8	80
Sentence 4	4	40
Sentence 5	8	80
Table 11: showing development of participle construction (frequency of occurrence and in percentage)		

From the above table and graph, the children with age group of 8 years showed 80 % acquisition for sentence 1 whereas for sentence 2, sentence 3,sentence 4,sentence 5 showed 60%,80 %, 40 % and 80% respectively.

	P value					
	5 with 6yrs	5 with 7yrs	5 with 8yrs	6 with 7yrs	6 with 8yrs	7 with 8yrs
Sentence 1	0.327	0.327	0.080	0.500	0.165	0.165
Sentence 2	0.061	0.152	0.061	0.013s	0.500	0.013s
Sentence 3	0.500	0.303	0.303	0.303	0.303	0.500
Sentence 4	0.327	0.181	0.327	0.089	0.500	0.089
Sentence 5	0.500	0.320	0.034s	0.320	0.034s	0.012s

Table12: Showing significant value for development of participle construction across age groups

When the acquisition of participle constructions were compared across age groups, significant difference were noted in 6 with 7 years(P = .013) and 7 with 8 years(P = .010) for sentence 2.

For sentence 5, significant differences were noted in 5 with 8 years(P = .034), 6 with 8 years (P= .034) and 7 with 8 years(P = .012)

No significant difference was noted in sentence 1,3 and 4.

Discussion

From the above results it is evident that development of predicates and participle construction acquires or emerges as the age increases. The result of the present study indicates better performance was shown by 8 year old group compared to other age groups.In the development of predicates, children showed 56% in 5 years, 58% in 6 years,76% in 7 years and 82% in 8 years. In the development of participle construction, children showed 52% in 5 years, 54% in 6years,62%in 7years and 65% in 8 years. The results also indicate that the predicates are acquired and developed earlier than participle constructions. The present study is in accordance with previous studies like Vijayalakshmi (1981), Sudha (1981), and Rukmani (1994), SubbaRao (1995) which revealed that as the age increases the performance of the usage of language increases.

Summary and Conclusion

Language development in humans is a process starting early in life.Through language we can connect with other people and make sense of our experiences. The communication skills that your child learns early in life will be the foundation for his or her communication abilities for the future. Strong language skills are an asset that will promote a lifetime of effective communication. In recent years, language behaviors of normal children have become an important area of research. A description of language behavior in normal population is essential for detailed assessment and effective intervention programming for clinical population. Malayalam is an agglutinative morphologically rich language in which identifying the morphological suffixes of Malayalam verbs and nouns are tougher task.

The present study aimed at comparing the development of predicates and participle construction in Malayalam speaking typically developing children of different age groups. The result showed that there is general increase in the usage of predicates and participle construction with increase in the mental age of the children. Predicates are acquired earlier than participle construction.

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