

TALA NAZZAL
Department of Applied and Allied Medical Sciences
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
An-Najah National University
t.nazzal@najah.edu
t.nazzal.95@hotmail.com
+972597350554

Education

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain.

PhD in Cognitive Science and Language

- Doctoral Degree, Awarded with Highest Honors (*Sobresaliente cum laude*), January. 2024
- Supervisor (Director): Prof. Anna Gavarró

The University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom.

MSc Speech Difficulties

- Master's Degree, (*Awarded with Merit*), September 2019
- Supervisor: Prof. Sandra Whiteside.

Birzeit University, Ramallah, Palestine.

BSc in Audiology and Speech Therapy

- Bachelor of Science (*Awarded with Distinction*), June 2017
- Supervisor: Dr. Ghada Salha.

Kufor Ni'ma Secondary Girls School, Ramallah, Palestine.

High school diploma (*Awarded with High Distinction*), August 2013

Academic experience

Lecturer (Full Time)

Department of Applied Medical Sciences

An-Najah National University, September. 2024 – Present

- Teaches undergraduate courses of Linguistics, Auditory Verbal Therapy, clinical practicum of Auditory Verbal Therapy, Phonetics, Language Disorders, Articulatory and Phonological Disorders and Neurogenic Communication Disorders.
- Supervising undergraduate students' graduation projects.

Research and Teaching Assistant (Part-Time)

Departament de Filologia Catalana

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Aug. 2022 – June 2023

- Teaches undergraduate courses in Language Acquisition and Linguistics.
- Member of Acquisition and Pathology Lab.
- Research member of Centre de Lingüística Teòrica.

Lecturer (Full Time)

Department of Applied Medical Sciences

An-Najah National University, Aug. 2019 – May 2021

- Teaches undergraduate courses of Linguistics, Auditory Verbal Therapy, clinical practicum of Auditory Verbal Therapy, Phonetics, and Neurogenic Communication Disorders.

Research and Teaching assistance (full-time)

Department of Applied Medical Sciences

An-Najah National University, Aug. 2017 – Jul. 2018

- Assisted faculty members with classroom instruction, exams, record keeping, and other miscellaneous projects.
- Participated in the supervision of students' practical work and coordinated speech-language and hearing-screening visits to kindergartens and primary schools.

Clinical experience – Voluntary Work

Speech Language Therapist (Part-time)

An-Najah Speech and Language Clinic, Nablus, Palestine, Sep.2019 – May 2020

- Individual speech/language evaluations and therapy for children developed therapy plans and implemented goals for children with a variety of communication disorders, including articulation disorders, dyslexia, developmental language disorders, and stuttering.
- Counsels families on how to cope with communication disorders.

Philippa Cottam Communication Clinic, Sheffield, United Kingdom, Oct.2018 – May 2019

- Individual speech/language evaluations and therapy for adults: developed therapy plans and implemented goals for adults with aphasia and/or dysarthria.

Najah Child Institute, Nablus, Palestine, Oct.2017 – July 2018

- Individual speech/language evaluations and therapy for children developed therapy plans and implemented goals for children with a variety of communication disorders, including articulation disorders, dyslexia, developmental language disorders, stuttering, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and phonological disorders.
- Counsel families on how to cope with communication disorders.

Certifications (Online Courses)

- **Introduction to Eye-tracking-Wearable** by Tobi Pro Academy, Spain, 1 June 2022
- **Considerations in Adult CI Candidacy evaluation** by Cochlear Academy, Dubai, 19 Apr. 2021
- **Certification in Mapping and Rehabilitation Outcomes in CI** by Cochlear Academy, Dubai, 24 Mar. 2021
- **Certification in Pediatric Rehabilitation** by Cochlear Academy, Dubai, 1-3 Mar. 2021
- **Certification in Development of Three-Dimensional Conversations and Auditory Verbal Therapy**, Cochlear Academy, Dubai, 20 Jan. 2021
- **Certification in Creating Listening and Spoken Language Opportunities in Daily Activities** by Cochlear Academy, Dubai, 16 Dec. 2020

Research experience

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain, Feb 2024.

**Nazzal, T. (2024). The early acquisition of syntax: Evidence from Palestinian Arabic.
(Doctoral Thesis)**

Abstract: Despite the abundance of studies on parameter setting, there has been limited research conducted on early parameter settings before the two-word stage. This dissertation presents experimental work on the nature of infant's syntactic representations, focusing on word order and wh-interrogatives in Palestinian Arabic, preceded by a study of the early spontaneous productions of children entering the two-word stage and their interlocutors. The study of spontaneous production revealed on the part of young children no problems in verbal inflection, the presence of serial verb constructions, and various word order alternations (a total of 50 different word orders were found in the adults' speech sample, while 45 word orders were coded for children), with dominance of VO patterns and SVO when the subject and object are present. In the first experimental study a combination of the preferential-looking paradigm, the weird-word-order paradigm, and pseudo-verbs were employed to investigate the acquisition of the VO order (as opposed to OV) in 17-month-old native Palestinian Arabic infants. The findings indicate that native Palestinian Arabic infants have established VO by the age of 17 months, and ignore sequences of ungrammatical OV. This is in consonance with previous results from French, Hindi-Urdu and Mandarin, although the result was only available for 17-month-olds for Mandarin. In the second experimental study, also resorting to the preferential-looking paradigm, parsing of wh- questions was tested. The infants were presented with subject and object ?ay 'which' questions. We introduced measures of fixation on a character (not a scene) which guarantees that we targeted comprehension of the wh- question; also, unlike in previous research on wh- questions, we used pseudo-verbs. Evidence for the interpretation of subject wh-questions in an adult-like manner was found for 18-month-olds. The performance of infant in both experiments provides evidence in favour of the Very Early Parameter Setting and is predicted by the generative account, as children were not performing based on any prior lexical knowledge of the verb, implying the presence of adult-like syntactic representation in child grammar.

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain, Dec.2020 – Present.

Research Member of the Acquisition and Pathology Lab, Department of Catalan Studies.

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain, July 2021.

(Nazzal, T., 2021) “A corpus of child production and child-directed speech of Palestinian Arabic” – CHILDES Platform ‘Nazzal’s Corpus).

- **Summary:** There is, to date, no spontaneous production data for child and child-directed speech for most Arabic varieties. The purpose of this corpus is to provide a first corpus of child production, as well as child-directed speech, for Palestinian Arabic. The data were collected from February to July 2021 from 11 healthy monolingual Palestinian Arabic-speaking children aged between 2;0 and 6;5 years old and their parents in Palestine. <https://sla.talkbank.org/TBB/childes/Other/Arabic>

The University of Sheffield, Feb. – May 2018.

(Nazzal, T., 2019): “Picture naming in Arabic: a normative data sample of monolingual speakers from Palestine” - Not Published.

- **Summary:** a cross-sectional study that provides Palestinian researchers and clinicians with a database of a 56-noun-pictures set, norms of three psycholinguistic variables; imageability, VC and AoA for the set of 56 noun pictures set. Results from phase I revealed that there is some effect of the demographic variables on the naming performance of healthy participants in Arabic as well as on the three psycholinguistic variables (VC, AoA and imageability) in Arabic. In addition, it reports that there are some effects of the demographic variables on the naming performance of healthy participants in Arabic.

Birzeit University, Feb.- May 2017.

(Baddour, R.; Moghrabi, H.; Nazzal, T. & Taqtaq, R., 2017): “Phonological Errors and Sound Changes in Normally Developing Arabic Speaking children” - Not Published.

- **Summary:** a cross-sectional study that describes the phonological errors and sound changes in Arabic-speaking Palestinian children aged between 3;0, and 6;5 years old selected from nurseries, kindergartens and first grades from Ramallah, Beit Hanina, and Nablus; to determine the phonological processes and articulation errors in normally developing children and to investigate the effect of gender and age on phonological errors and sound changes, with the exclusion of the variant of consonant phonemes in educated

spoken Arabic (ESA). There was a significant association between the age and the phonological errors and sound changes that children produce. The P value was less than 0.01 and equaled 0.00. Pearson's r was negative, which indicated a negative relation between age and the phonological errors and sound changes that children produced, which means as children get older, the phonological errors and sound changes decrease. Whereas gender showed to have no significant effect on phonological errors and sound changes because the P value was more than 0.01, and it equals 0.516.

Peer Reviewed Publications

Tala Nazzal, Jingtao Zhu & Anna Gavarró (19 Feb 2025): Early knowledge of word order in Palestinian Arabic: An eye-tracking study, *Language Acquisition*, DOI: 10.1080/10489223.2025.2456564

Conference Presentations and Posters

Oral Presentations

- **Title:** Which questions did the Palestinian Arabic infant understand?
 - **Conference:** 8th Bucharest Colloquium of Language Acquisition
 - **Date:** Friday, 17 November 2023
 - **Location:** Bucharest, Romania (Online Presentation in the Main Session)
 - **Role:** Presenter
 - **Co-author:** Anna Gavarró
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- **Title:** Infant comprehension of *wh*- questions in Palestinian Arabic
 - **Conference:** Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition 16
 - **Date:** Friday, 13 September 2024
 - **Location:** Lisbon, Portugal (Hosted by the NOVA University of Lisbon)
 - **Role:** Co-author
 - **Co-author:** Anna Gavarró

Poster Presentations

- **Title:** Comprehension of *wh*- questions in infants exposed to Palestinian Arabic
- **Conference:** Workshop on Infant Language Development
- **Date:** 19-21 June 2024
- **Location:** Lisbon, Portugal

- **Role:** Co-author
- **Collaborators:** Anna Gavarró and Jingtao Zhu

Languages

- Arabic: Mother Language
- English: Advanced level, IELTS 7.0

References

Will be sent on request