

# Syntactic and Semantic Acquisition

## Formulaic Nature of Early Syntactic Acquisitions

Syntax is usually picked up in terms of patterns in which something is inserted.

Taxi – Jim Ignatowski:

burned out acid head

I'm insert name  
here, but you can  
call me nickname.



Paramount Television (1978) "Taxi" Christopher Lloyd, Judd Hirsch C. 1978". Retrieved from [http://www.imdb.com/media/rm1346803712/ch0035982?ref\\_=chmd\\_md\\_pv#](http://www.imdb.com/media/rm1346803712/ch0035982?ref_=chmd_md_pv#).

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### Syntax (Galen)

Sentences	Period	Context
Hellooo X!	c17 mo.	Hellooo Papa! Hellooo cat! Hellooo pitzzy truck! said to everybody and everything, with devout conviction that an answer would come back.
More X!	c17 mo.	More books! More banana! More sticks! ...
Want some juice now, for Galen.	19 mo.	
Go! Go! Go!	c18 mo.	said while running full tilt in no specific direction
Let's go!	c18 mo.	said just before running full tilt in no specific direction
Run! Run! Run!	c18 mo.	see "Go! Go! Go!"
I'll take it!	c19 mo.	of anything that took his fancy
Must take it!	c20 mo.	this one often had a noun in place of the pronoun, as in "must take tractor!"
Go this way!	18 – 22 mo.	Let's go this way! said, usually in the car but sometimes when being carried, while pointing in any direction you're not going
Maybe X!	19 mo.	Maybe sit down! Maybe read a book! Maybe sit down right here!

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### Syntax (Oriana)

Sentences	Period	Context
I want some pineapple	13 mo.	a telephone conversation-game, after "tell them what you want"
Papa! It banged it!	14 mo.	after her head collided with the table
That is supper! That there!	15 mo.	she wanted toast; I was providing soup

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Galen's first passive constituent-question (27 mo.)

Galen: What are they doing there? (He had seen some potato chips in a store)

IR: Waiting to be bought and eaten, I guess.

Galen: What are they going to be eaten for ... with ...  
What are they going to be eaten for ... by ...  
Who are they going to be eaten by?

child treats both as agents

The **car** hits the truck.  
(agent) (patient)

The **car** was hit by the truck.  
(patient) (agent)



Child: ienm/iStock/Getty Images; Car, Truck: Kolopach/iStock/Getty Images

## Interpreting Semantic Intent

You've got a freckle.

What's a freckle called?

No.  
What are freckles called?

No, don't jump at me. I'm a bit sore today.

I don't want you to be sore. I want you to be clean. I want you to be clean in your diaphragm.

Oriana, Galen: Randy Harris