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Title of Thesis: A Pragmatic Study of Saudi Female Children's Ability to Answer Oral Questions as EFL Learners within the Scope of Relevance Theory

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Abstract

Through this study, the researcher attempted to identify the difficulties Saudi children face when trying to communicate in the English language as EFL learners. The study specifically seeks to find out if there exists a developmental trend in both young Saudi children's ability to answer oral context-related questions and in the strategies they use when finding it difficult to do so. This will be attempted by focusing on the comprehension processes proposed by the linguists Sperber and Wilson (1995). They refer to their theory as the *Communicative Principle of Relevance*, which they believe, is essential in explaining human communication and understanding, as they show how it is enough on its own to account for the interaction of linguistic meaning and contextual factors in utterance interpretation. The validity of the theory, as a reliable linguistic tool of study, was also one of the main points of focus in the study. The study adopted a cross-sectional method, where a group of sixty female students, of seven to nine year old, were studied at a specific point of time in order to compare their language and cognitive developments. The participating children were chosen from a similar socio-economic background, attending the same private school. The main instrument utilized in the study was a story from a series of children's reading books designed for EFL learners.

Keywords: EFL learners. oral questions, pragmatic, Saudi Female Children's