

EXPLORING TRANSFORMATIONAL GENERATIVE GRAMMAR IN ARABIC TEXTBOOKS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL: A QUALITATIVE LIBRARY RESEARCH

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Abstract

This study addresses students' difficulties in learning Arabic due to the limited relevance of existing textbooks. Using Chomsky's Transformative-Generative Grammar Theory (TGT) as an analytical framework, the research explores the application of singular transformation rules in the ninth-grade Arabic textbook published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Chomsky's theory, which emphasizes grammatical structure and transformation processes, is applied to improve students' grammatical and communicative competence. Employing a qualitative descriptive design with a library-based approach, the study identifies six transformation rules: elimination, expansion, addition, change of order, replacement, and abbreviation. The findings indicate that integrating TGT into Arabic instruction through methods such as the Direct Method can enhance students' grammatical understanding and vocabulary mastery. The study suggests that future research examine other linguistic aspects of similar textbooks to further strengthen the pedagogical application of linguistic theory in Arabic learning.

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Keywords:

Transformational Generative; Chomsky; Textbook.

المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى معالجة الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلاب في تعلم اللغة العربية بسبب محدودية ملائمة الكتب المدرسية الحالية لاحتياجاتهم التعليمية. ويعتمد البحث على نظرية تشومسكي التحويلية التوليدية إطارًا تحليليًا لدراسة تطبيق قواعد التحويل المفردة في كتاب اللغة العربية للصف التاسع الصادر عن وزارة الشؤون الدينية الإندونيسية. تؤكد نظرية تشومسكي على البنية النحوية وعمليات التحويل في تكوين الجمل الصحيحة، ويُعتقد أن تطبيقها يساهم في تنمية الكفاءة النحوية والتواصلية لدى الطلاب. استخدم البحث المنهج الوصفي النوعي بأسلوب الدراسة المكتبية، واعتمد على مصادر مكتوبة قابلة للتحليل اللغوي. كشفت النتائج عن ستة أنواع من قواعد التحويل، وهي: الحذف، والإضافة، والتوسيع، وتغيير الترتيب، والاستبدال، والاختصار. وتُظهر النتائج إمكانية دمج هذه النظرية في تعليم العربية من خلال طرائق مناسبة كطريقة المباشرة لتعزيز الفهم النحوي وتوسيع الثروة اللغوية للمتعلمين. ويوصي البحث بدراسات مستقبلية تتناول الجوانب اللغوية الأخرى في الكتب المدرسية المشابهة.

كلمات أساسية: المدرسة التوليدية؛ تشومسكي؛ الكتاب المدرسي.

Introduction

The teaching of Arabic in Indonesian educational institutions holds a strategic role in developing students' communicative competence. Arabic, taught from kindergarten to higher education, functions as a second language in Indonesia and serves primarily to support the understanding of Islamic teachings.¹ The main goal of Arabic language teaching is to develop communicative competence namely, the ability to use the language effectively in both spoken and written forms, encompassing linguistic, phonological, and syntactic aspects.² However, in practice, many students still face difficulties in learning Arabic since it is not their mother tongue and is rarely used in daily communication.³ This condition creates various problems in the learning process, one of which is the use of textbooks that are not adequately aligned with the students' needs and abilities. Such factors hinder the optimal achievement of Arabic learning objectives.⁴ Therefore, it is necessary to use textbooks that are relevant to the learners' characteristics language development to effectively support the improvement of Arabic language skills.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenag RI), as the institution responsible for Islamic education, has a strategic role in the development and authorization of Arabic textbooks used in formal educational institutions.⁵ However, the process of compiling these textbooks remains experimental in its search for an ideal formula that aligns with contemporary demands and learning needs. Consequently, the existing textbooks are not yet fully effective in supporting the optimal attainment of Arabic learning objectives.⁶ In fact, textbooks have a central function in the learning process; they serve to clarify and simplify the presentation of material and act as a medium for transferring

¹ Ahmad Jaunanto et al., "Development Of Arabic Gramatica Book With The Concept Map Of Tony Buzan Model," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 5, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v5i1.14149>.

² M. Fauzan Aziz et al., "Istikhdam Kitāb al Nushūs Li Ta'lim al-Qawā'id Wa Atsaruhu Fi Qudrati al-Thulāb 'Alā Qirāati al-Nushūs al-'Arabiyyah," *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 5, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v5i2.12715>.

³ Husnul Khotimah and Nisfi Nurlaila, "Investigating Challenges in Arabic Vocabulary Mastery Among Students at MTs Nahdlatul Ulama Maesan Bondowoso," *IJIE International Journal of Islamic Education* 3, no. 2 (2024): 105–14, <https://doi.org/10.35719/ijie.v3i2.2165>.

⁴ Sahkholid Nasution and Akmal Walad, "The Effectiveness of Constructivism-Based Arabic Textbook in Higher Education," *Arabiyyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 6, no. 1 (2022): 63, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v6i1.3572>.

⁵ Muhamad Jaeni et al., "Nationalism Values In Arabic Textbooks: An Analysis Of Indonesian Ministry Of Religious Affairs-Endorsed Arabic Textbooks," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 8, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v8i1.28993>.

⁶ Husni Mubarak and Khairuddin Khairuddin, "Analysis of the Material in 'Al-'Arabiyyah Al-Muyassarah' by Dr. (HC) H. Mustafa Nuri, L.A.S., & Hj. Hafsa Intan, LC.," *Diwan : Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 9, no. 2 (2023): 242–58, <https://doi.org/10.24252/diwan.v9i2.36772>.

knowledge, skills, and affective values to learners.⁷ Moreover, textbooks are a key component of language teaching programs because they serve as the main source of linguistic input and language practice that learners receive in the classroom.⁸ Therefore, an analytical study of Arabic textbooks produced by Kemenag is required to assess their conformity with ideal pedagogical and linguistic principles.

From a systematic perspective, textbooks can be structured based on two main approaches: the logical and the psychological approach. The logical approach organizes the content based on the sequence of material substance, whereas the psychological system arranges the presentation according to the learners' needs and characteristics.⁹ To assess the effectiveness of these approaches, a theoretical foundation is needed to explain how language is learned and acquired by students. In this regard, the field of psycholinguistics serves as a bridge between the linguistic and psychological aspects of language learning.¹⁰ The historical development of psycholinguistics records two major schools of thought that have influenced language studies: structuralism, pioneered by Ferdinand de Saussure, and transformational generative grammar theory, introduced by Noam Chomsky. Chomsky's theory emerged as a critique of structuralism, which was deemed too focused on the empirical forms of language without considering the human cognitive capacity as a language user.¹¹ This critique brought a renewal in linguistic studies that positioned the mental aspect as the core of language acquisition.¹² In this context, Chomsky emphasized that the fundamental factor in improving language proficiency lies in the learners' cognitive potential as the primary agents of language acquisition.¹³

⁷ Toni Pransiska et al., "Al-Kutub Al-Madrasiyah Al-'Arabiyah Fī Indūnisiyā Min Mazūri Waṭanīyin Wa 'Ālamīyin," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 24, no. 2 (2024): 488, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i2.14964>.

⁸ Percia T. Adil et al., "A Communicative Analysis of Language Functions in the Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) Textbooks: The Case of Happy Chinese," *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 8, no. 8 (2020): 3725–33, <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.080853>.

⁹ Muhammad Zaenuri and R. Umi Baroroh, "Developing An Integrated Nahwu Textbook For Kitab Kuning Reading Skills," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 8, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v8i2.31175>.

¹⁰ Shi Beibei, "Psychological Impact of Languages on the Human Mind: Research on the Contribution of Psycholinguistics Approach to Teaching and Learning English," *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research* 52, no. 6 (2023): 2027–45, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-023-09977-w>.

¹¹ Honglin Zhou and Xiaoyang Luo, "Embodied-Cognitive Linguistics: Integrating Marxist Perspectives on Contemporary Cognitive Linguistics Theory," *Frontiers in Psychology* 15 (November 2024): 1475196, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1475196>.

¹² Husnaini Jamil et al., "Exploring the Acquisition of Spoken Arabic Varieties: Insights From Noam Chomsky's Genetic-Cognitive Theory," *Alsinatuna* 8, no. 2 (2023): 156–71, <https://doi.org/10.28918/alsinatuna.v8i2.1743>.

¹³ Ridha Darmawaty et al., "Developing Materials For Special Academic Purposes For Islamic Education Using Google Apps For Education," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 4, no. 3 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v4i3.12203>.

Noam Chomsky's theory, known as Transformational Generative Theory (TGT), revolutionized linguistic paradigms by asserting that humans possess an innate linguistic capacity called Universal Grammar. This capacity enables individuals to generate an unlimited number of grammatically correct sentences based on a limited set of rules.¹⁴ In the context of Arabic language teaching, this theory focuses on mastering grammatical and syntactic structures, paying particular attention to the processes of sentence transformation and formation.¹⁵ The application of TGT is believed to help learners develop grammatical and performative competence more effectively, as language acquisition, according to Chomsky, results from the operation of the human cognitive system that allows learners to creatively construct Arabic sentences accurately in accordance with the grammatical rules they have learned.¹⁶ Thus, this theory can serve as a conceptual foundation for analyzing the quality and suitability of Arabic textbooks used in the teaching and learning process.

The Transformational Generative Theory (TGT) developed by Noam Chomsky has been applied in several studies on the Arabic language. On the other hand, Munawwar et al.'s research on Arabic textbooks for 10th-grade students revealed that grammatical aspects still receive insufficient attention, despite TGT having been used as the analytical framework.¹⁷ Meanwhile, Wildana Wargadinata et al. found that the implementation of TGT in teaching maharah kitābah proved to be effective, as evidenced by a significant improvement in learning outcomes in the experimental class.¹⁸ On the other hand, the study by Ali et al. analyzed the book *Balaghah Nazm Jawharul Maknun*, focusing on the deep structure as well as the surface structure of *Nazm al-Jawhar al-Maknūn*, thereby strengthening the understanding of the application of TGT in the study of classical Arabic grammar.¹⁹ These various studies collectively show that the TGT provides a strong theoretical

¹⁴ Susan Goldin-Meadow and Charles Yang, "Statistical Evidence That a Child Can Create a Combinatorial Linguistic System without External Linguistic Input: Implications for Language Evolution," *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews* 81 (October 2017): 150–57, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2016.12.016>.

¹⁵ Rohiqi Rohman and Mualim Wijaya, "The Relevance and Application of Structuralist Linguistics in Arabic Language Learning," *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA* 9, no. 3 (2023): 1554–61, <https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v9i3.5877>.

¹⁶ Caterina Marino and Judit Gervain, "The Impact of Generative Linguistics on Psychology: Language Acquisition, a Paradigm Example," *Acta Linguistica Academica* 66, no. 3 (2019): 371–96, <https://doi.org/10.1556/2062.2019.66.3.4>.

¹⁷ Muhammad Agil Munawwar et al., "Transformational-Generative in Class X Senior High School Arabic Book," *Insyirah: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab Dan Studi Islam* 6, no. 1 (2023): 97–114, <https://doi.org/10.26555/insyirah.v6i1.8095>.

¹⁸ Wildana Wargadinata et al., "Chomsky's Transformational Linguistic Theory in Writing Skill at Islamic Senior High School: Transforming Language Learning Pedagogy," *Izdiyar: Journal of Arabic Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature* 4, no. 2 (2021): 127–52, <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v4i2.16490>.

¹⁹ Sayidina Ali et al., "Analisis Transformasi Generatif Pada Nazam Kitab Al-Jawhar Al-Maknun," *Al-Ma'rifah* 22, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.21009/almakrifah.22.01.06>.

foundation for analyzing and improving the effectiveness of Arabic language learning across different skills.

Based on several previous studies discussing TGT in Arabic language learning, the author positions this article as a study of the generative grammar of transformation contained in the Arabic language textbook published by the Ministry of Religion in 2020 for 9th grade. This textbook, published by the Ministry of Religion was chosen for several reasons, including that it can be easily accessed and is most widely used in Arabic language classes. Therefore, the analysis and disclosure of the use of Chomsky grammar in this book are needed to improve the quality of ideal textbooks. So, the point that differentiates this paper from previous studies is the object studied. If this theory was previously applied to learning Arabic in general or nahwu specifically, then this research is an analysis of the concepts of transformational generative grammar promoted in the textbook. Apart from finding the concept of transformational generative grammar in the book, the author will mention the benefits of using Chomsky's theory in the preparation of material in the textbook.

Method

This research is a qualitative study using the content analysis method. This method is used to analyze written materials such as books, manuscripts, or documents that are relevant to the research context in order to draw valid conclusions. The data collection technique used is a documentation technique by searching for data in the form of notes, books, transcripts, meetings, and so on. The study data in this research comes from written sources such as books, articles, magazines, and others that discuss the research topic. The primary source for this research is the Arabic Language Textbook for 9th grade, published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, and Chomsky's Transformational Generative Theory. Meanwhile, secondary sources for this research are observations, several books, articles, and other scientific works that discuss related topics and support primary data. The steps involved in this documentation methods are: 1) looking for the information about Chomsky's Transformational Generative Theory obtained from various sources; 2) choosing and focusing on the data selected, namely the singular transformation rule on the Arabic textbook; 3) analysing the data collected.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which includes three main stages, namely data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification.²⁰ In the data condensation stage, the researcher conducted a process of sorting and simplifying data relevant

²⁰ Matthew B. Miles et al., *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (SAGE Publications, 2013).

to Chomsky's Transformational Generative Theory in Arabic Textbooks for Grade IX published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Furthermore, at the data presentation stage, the results of the analysis are displayed in the form of descriptive descriptions and tables that illustrate how Chomsky's generative transformation rules are reflected in the textbook text structure. The last stage is conclusion drawing and verification, which is the process of interpreting the meaning of the data that has been analyzed, as well as testing the validity of the findings. Verification is carried out continuously throughout the research by comparing the textbook data with the principles of Chomsky's theory and confirming the suitability of the analysis results with secondary sources.

Result and Discussion

History of Chomsky's Transformational Generative Theory

This theory was first introduced by Noam Chomsky in 1957 in Pennsylvania through his book entitled *Syntactic Structure*. Naom Chomsky was born in Pennsylvania, United States in 1928.²¹ The theory he developed was rooted in research conducted by his teacher, Zellig Harris while studying at the University of Pennsylvania. Therefore, not all of the theories sound new because they have been put forward in Zellig's previous works.²² Before the emergence of this theory, linguists in various parts of the world adhered to structural theory. This theory received strong criticism and condemnation from Chomsky because it was based on behaviorism and taxonomism. This theory believes that language is a skill and an environment (nurture). Meanwhile, Chomsky believes that every language acquisition process has a special place in the human mind through the LAD (Language Acquisition Device) which enables language to develop naturally (nature) rather than being solely conditioned by the environment.²³

Chomsky posited that every human being possesses an innate predisposition endowed by the Creator to acquire language through the LAD, a mental mechanism that functions like a receptive processor. This device plays a role in capturing and organizing language sound waves, then connecting them to form a structured system, before finally sending the information to the language processing center

²¹ Mirko Locatelli et al., "Exploring Natural Language Processing in Construction and Integration with Building Information Modeling: A Scientometric Analysis," *Buildings* 11, no. 12 (2021): 583, <https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings11120583>.

²² Reva Riani Putri Asyrofi et al., "Noam Chomsky's Linguistic Theory: Generative Transformation Theory," *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)* 12, no. 12 (2023): 376–80, <https://doi.org/10.21275/SR231203152444>.

²³ Zikrani Khalilah et al., "The Role of The Language Acquisition Device Theory in Second Language Acquisition: A Psycholinguistic Study of Arabic Language Learning," *Bulletin of Social Studies and Community Development* 3, no. 1 (2025): 43–54, <https://doi.org/10.61436/bsscd/v3i1.pp43-54>.

(competence).²⁴ Through this process, linguistic rules are established, enabling learners to creatively generate and use language according to their needs.²⁵ Chomsky also emphasizes that only humans have the capacity for language, as language is a system governed by specific rules and structures, which is absent in animals.²⁶ This perspective underscores his theoretical orientation toward linguistic universalism, the belief that all human languages share a common structural foundation. It is this concept of universalism that has become the cornerstone of the revolution in modern linguistic studies through transformational generative grammar theory.²⁷

This transformative generative theory represents a modern theory promoted by Noam Chomsky. For Chomsky, language is *al-dzihniyyah* (psychic) or innate (inherited) which consists of two elements, namely *al-kifayah al-lughawiyyah* (competence) and *al-ada' al-kalamiy* (performance). These two elements are then contained in *al-bunyah al-suthhiyyah* (surface structure) and *al-bunyah al-'amiqah* (deep structure).²⁸ In this theory, structure is equated with grammar — the knowledge that language users possess unconsciously, intuitively, intrinsically, and implicitly, commonly referred to as competence. This competence is then manifested through performance, representing the speaker's actual ability to use the language effectively in real communication.²⁹

Concept of Transformational Generative Theory

Competence and Performance

According to Chomsky, language ability is divided into two: competence (*al-kafa'ah*) and performance (*al-ada'*). Competence is the ability possessed by language users. Meanwhile, performance is the real use of language, in the form of utterances that can be heard or read which originate from the speech of language

²⁴ Briana Sobecks, "Language Acquisition Device and the Origin of Language," *Brain Matters* 2, no. 1 (2020), <https://ugresearchjournals.illinois.edu/index.php/brainmatters/article/view/689>.

²⁵ Norbahira Mohamad Nor and Radzuwan Ab Rashid, "A Review of Theoretical Perspectives on Language Learning and Acquisition," *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 39, no. 1 (2018): 161–67, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kjss.2017.12.012>.

²⁶ Matthew J. Traxler et al., "What's Special About Human Language? The Contents of the 'Narrow Language Faculty' Revisited," *Language and Linguistics Compass* 6, no. 10 (2012): 611–21, <https://doi.org/10.1002/lnc3.355>.

²⁷ András Kertész, "American Linguistics in Transition: From Post-Bloomfieldian Structuralism to Generative Grammar," *Acta Linguistica Academica* 71, no. 3 (2024): 381–90, <https://doi.org/10.1556/2062.2024.00777>.

²⁸ Wati Susiawati, "Implementasi Teori Chomsky Dalam Bahasa Alquran," *Arabiyat : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 5, no. 2 (2018), <https://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/arabiyat/article/view/8896>.

²⁹ Ivan A. Sag and Thomas Wasow, "Performance-Compatible Competence Grammar," in *Non-Transformational Syntax*, 1st ed., ed. Robert D. Borsley and Kersti Börjars (Wiley, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444395037.ch10>.

speakers without being made up.³⁰ Of these two abilities, Chomsky emphasizes competence more than performance because performance results can potentially be imperfect.³¹

Competence refers to the human cognitive capacity to produce novel sentences that have never been heard before. It is an innate linguistic ability located in the human brain, enabling the processing of language. Performance, on the other hand, is a manifestation of this competence. These two aspects differ in terms of grammaticality and acceptability. Acceptability refers to the use of natural and understandable sentences, while grammaticality relates to conformity with the grammatical rules of a language. Therefore, acceptability is associated with performance, whereas grammaticality reflects competence.³²

Deep Structure and Surface Structure

Chomsky's theory also introduces the concept of deep structure (al-binyah al-amiqqah) and surface structure (al-binyah al-sathiyyah). Deep structure is an abstract form of sentence structure that determines phonetic interpretation. Meanwhile, the surface structure is the final product of using the rules for determining sentence structure after going through the process of selecting the rules in the inner structure.³³

The relationship between the internal (deep) structure and external (surface) structure of language determines the meaning of a sentence. This orderly relationship through transformative rules extends to the outer structure of language. The relationship between these two structures is called transformation and therefore, this theoretical version of grammar is called transformational grammar. Transformation grammar is the process of producing sentences through transformational rules, namely transferring the structure in the language to the structure outside the language, then the structure outside the language is analyzed.³⁴ Between these two structures, Chomsky emphasizes the inner structure more than the surface structure. The thing that underlies this opinion is

³⁰ Ahmed Alduais et al., "Psycholinguistics: Analysis of Knowledge Domains on Children's Language Acquisition, Production, Comprehension, and Dissolution," *Children* 9, no. 10 (2022): 1471, <https://doi.org/10.3390/children9101471>.

³¹ James Sebastian Poovathingal and Deepti V. Kumar, "Quantifying the Contribution of Competencies toward Performance," *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management* 67, no. 4 (2018): 693–716, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-12-2016-0267>.

³² AbdulHussein Reishaan and Wia'am Taha, "The Relationship between Competence and Performance: Towards a Comprehensive TG Grammar," *Kufa Journal of Arts* 1, no. 2 (2008): 59–35, <https://doi.org/10.36317/kaj/2009/v1.i2.6255>.

³³ Meenakshi Sharma Yadav and Manoj Kumar Yadav, "Role of the Transformational Generative Grammar and Other Language Learning Theories in English Language Teaching," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, ahead of print, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3665190>.

³⁴ Miklós Szabó, "The Possibility of Universal Semiotics of Law," *Hungarian Journal of Legal Studies* 60, no. 4 (2021): 317–31, <https://doi.org/10.1556/2052.2019.00019>.

the structure in containing basic components as determinants of phonology and semantics. This component is syntax, namely the study of transformation rules.³⁵

Singular Transformation

Singular transformation is transformations based only on a phrase marker.³⁶ It is a form of transformation sentence which originates from one basic sentence or core sentence which can go through a process of elimination (al-hadzf), expansion (al-tawassu'), addition (al-ziyadah), change of order (I'adah al-tartib), replacement (al-ta'widh) and abbreviation (al-taqallush).³⁷

Transformational Generative Grammar on Arabic Language Textbook

This textbook, published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, is the latest edition, first printed in 2020 for Junior High School 9th grade. The content of the material in the two semesters presented is in accordance with KMA Number 183 of 2019 in the Arabic language curriculum in Madrasas which reads "Interactive reading and separation; "Students are able to understand and reflect on several paragraphs in written text or visual text interactively." This sentence supports the transformative generative theory.

After the cover there is a foreword from the Director General of Islamic Education, then after that the core competencies and basic competencies in the Arabic language book for 9th grade are mentioned, table of contents, consisting of 6 chapters, 3 chapters each semester and a final assessment for each semester.

Based on the analysis of generative transformation theory in the Arabic language textbook for 9th grade published by the Ministry of Religion 2020, the author focuses on the singular transformation rule contained in the text/qira'ah in the book. These rules consist of elimination, expansion, addition, change of order, replacement and abbreviation. The presentation of the analysis results is packaged in the following table form:

Table 1. Singular Transformation on the Textbook

The Title	Surface Structure	Type of Transformation	Deep Structure
سنة هجرية جديدة	والمسلمون يحتفلون بسنة هجرة جديدة	Expansion	والمسلمون يحتفلون بسنة هجرة جديدة
	إنهم يجتمعون	Replacement	إن المسمين يجتمعون
	المحاضرة التي يلقيها الأستاذ	Change of order	يلقي الأستاذ المحاضرة
	من القى المحاضرة؟ الأستاذ عبد الرحيم	Elimination	من القى المحاضرة؟ الأستاذ عبد الرحيم القى المحاضر

³⁵ Jørgen Staun, "Modularity, Dependency and the Description of a Syntactic and a Phonological Category," *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics* 14, no. 02 (2024): 235–66, <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2024.142014>.

³⁶ Éva Dékány, "Approaches to Head Movement: A Critical Assessment," *Glossa: A Journal of General Linguistics* 3, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.316>.

³⁷ Shigenori Wakabayashi, "A Principle of Economy in Derivation in L2 Grammar: Do Everything in Narrow Syntax," *Second Language Research* 37, no. 4 (2021): 521–45, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658319879969>.

The Title	Surface Structure	Type of Transformation	Deep Structure
	حاول الكفار أن يقتلوا النبي	Replacement	حاول الكفار قتل النبي
	وأول من وضع التقويم الهجري هو عمر بن الخطاب	Addition	وأول واضع التقويم الهجري عمر بن الخطاب
سيرة النبي ص.م.	هم يستمعون إلى المحاضرة	Replacement	التلاميذ يستمعون إلى المحاضرة
	فرباه جده	Change of order	فربي جده النبي
	خرج الرسول إلى الطائف يدعو أهله	Expansion	خرج الرسول إلى الطائف داعياً لأهله
نزل القرآن	ثم نزل جبريل عليه	Change of order	ثم نزل جبريل عليه
	وأمره بالقراءة	Elimination	وأمر جبريل النبي بالقراءة
	محمد يخلو في الغار	Abbreviation	محمد يخلو في غار حراء
	ماذا يفعلون المسلمون في العيد؟	Elimination	ماذا يفعلون المسلمون في العيد
	يذهبون إلى المسجد		هم يذهبون إلى المسجد
مناظر القرية	هناك أشجار متجاورة	Change of order	الأشجار المتجاورة هناك
	في مزارعهم	Replacement	في مزارع أهل القرية
	له مزرعة واسعة	Change of order	المزرعة الواسعة له
خالق العلم	هو الخالق الذي خلق العالم	Addition	الخالق خلق العالم
	لا إله إلا هو	Replacement	لا إله إلا الله
	فالأرض التي نعيش فيها خلق الله	Addition	فالأرض خلقه الله
	أنبت الله في الأرض النباتات	Addition	أنبت الله النباتات
	هو الخالق الذي خلق العالم	Addition	الخالق خلق العالم
الحفاظ	ونحن عن إفسادها	Elimination	ونحن الإسلام عن إفسادها
على البيئة	وإفساد البيئة له صور متعددة	Change of order	وإلحاق البيئة صور متعددة

Based on the table above, the analysis of the application of Transformational Generative Theory (TGT) in the 9th grade Arabic textbook published in 2020 shows the existence of 23 single transformation rules that represent the conversion from deep structures to surface structures, excluding repetitions of sentences with similar syntactic patterns. The results of this study reveal that all types of transformation rules totaling six categories were successfully identified in the text, including five replacement transformations, two expansion transformations, five addition transformations, six order change transformations, four deletion transformations, and one abbreviation transformation. The findings confirm that this textbook comprehensively implements the principles of TGT in language construction. To strengthen the application of the theory in learning, it is necessary to present concrete examples of each transformation category so that the process of structural change can be understood more clearly. Thus, the following description will describe each form of transformation along with its structural formula:

Replacement Transformation

This transformation is described by the formula $A + B \rightarrow A + C$, where element B is replaced by element C. One example in this textbook is the sentence "حاول الكفار أن يقتلوا النبي". This sentence undergoes a transformation process in which the phrase "أن يقتلوا" can be replaced with its mashdar form, namely "قتل", without changing the basic meaning of the sentence. Thus, the structure in the sentence becomes "حاول الكفار قتل النبي". This change shows how the replacement of certain elements in the sentence still maintains syntactical and semantic harmony of meaning.

Change Order Transformation

This transformation is described by the formula $A + B \rightarrow B + A$, where element B is moved to the position previously occupied by element A. This phenomenon can be observed in Arabic sentence structure, as in the example "له مزرعة واسعة". Structurally, the initial form of this sentence is a *jumlaḥ ismiyyah* with the arrangement "مزرعة واسعة له". However, in the context of Arabic grammar rules, *mubtada'* in the form of *isim nakirah* is generally not allowed unless there is *musawwigh* (a factor that justifies the use of *isim nakirah* as *mubtada'*). In this case, the *musawwigh* used is the *jar majrur* phrase "له", which functions as a *khavar* and is placed at the beginning of the sentence. This shift in position not only aims to fulfil the syntactic rules of Arabic but also to provide a more coherent sentence structure that conforms to common language usage patterns.

Addition Transformation

This transformation involves adding a new element into the sentence structure with the formula $A \rightarrow A + B$. An example is the sentence "أنبت الله في الأرض النباتات". In the original structure, this sentence is "أنبت الله النباتات". The transformation occurs with the addition of "في الأرض" as *jar majrur*, which enriches the information in the sentence without changing the core message.

Elimination Transformation

These transformations changes are made by removing certain elements that are considered sufficiently understood in context. With the formula $A + B \rightarrow B$, one example in this book is "وأمره بالقراءة". The original structure of this sentence is "وأمر جبريل النبي بالقراءة", but the word "جبريل" is omitted because it can already be understood from the existing context. This process shows how the omission of elements in a sentence can improve communication efficiency without compromising meaning.

Expansion Transformation

This transformation is described by the formula $A \rightarrow B + C$, where element A is expanded into elements B and C in the surface structure. An example found in this book is "خرج الرسول إلى الطائف يدعو أهله". In the initial structure, this sentence is "خرج الرسول إلى الطائف داعياً لأهله" using the *haalmufrad* form. This change shows that

the expansion of elements in the surface structure can provide additional details to the information conveyed.

Abbreviation Transformation

This transformation uses the formula $A1 + B \rightarrow A + B$, where the element A1 shrinks to A. An example in this book is "محمد يخلو في الغار". This sentence is abbreviated by removing the *mudhafilaih*, which should be "محمد يخلو في غار حراء". This transformation shows how syntax in Arabic allows for the simplification of sentence structures without a loss of meaning.

The application of various transformations in this Grade 9 Arabic textbook can provide significant benefits for learners. One of the approaches used is the application of syntactic transformation rules, which enables learners to understand how a sentence structure can be modified without fundamentally changing its meaning. In this context, Transformative Generative Theory (TGT) plays a role in developing learners' cognitive abilities by training them to recognise patterns of change in language structures. This is in line with Khoirul Mubin stating that second language acquisition involves cognitive processes, where learners attempt to understand linguistic rules, including those related to syntactic transformation.³⁸ Furthermore, Sharma & Yadav assert that the application of TGT in foreign language learning can improve learners' logical thinking ability, as they are trained to analyze the relationship between sentence structure and the underlying transformation principles. In addition, this theory also provides benefits in contrastive analysis between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). By understanding the differences and similarities of the surface structure as well as the deep structure of the two languages, learners can more easily identify typical syntactic patterns in Arabic.³⁹

The Transformational Generative Theory (TGT) has significant implications for the development of Arabic language skills. Arabic textbooks published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs have been systematically designed to develop the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Analysis of these textbooks indicates that the principles contained therein align with TGT, thereby enhancing both receptive and productive language competencies. This is further supported by the findings of Jundi & Nabila, which demonstrate that the application of TGT in Arabic language learning contributes to improving listening skills as an initial stage of language acquisition, strengthens creativity in speaking skills, aids in comprehending textual information in reading skills, and supports text analysis and production in writing skills through the concepts of surface

³⁸ Khoirul Mubin et al., "Linguistic Harmonization: Dissecting Alfiyah Ibn Malik with Chomsky's Transformational Generative Theory," *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 2 (2024): 215–42, <https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v5i2.14610>.

³⁹ Yadav and Yadav, "Role of the Transformational Generative Grammar and Other Language Learning Theories in English Language Teaching."

structure and deep structure.⁴⁰ Furthermore, in the context of nahwu learning, TGT enables students to understand Arabic language rules in depth, apply these rules creatively, and reduce reliance on rote memorization and imitation in the learning process.⁴¹

Although the Transformative Generative Theory (TGT) offers various advantages in linguistic studies, several studies have also highlighted its limitations, particularly in the context of learning Arabic as a second language. Permata critiques the fundamental assumption of TGT, which asserts that language acquisition occurs naturally without requiring formal intervention. In the reality of Arabic language learning, this process cannot solely rely on innate abilities but also requires a structured approach, including planning, methods, and systematic learning strategies to enable learners to achieve optimal competence. Furthermore, the concepts of deep structure and surface structure in TGT face challenges in second language transfer, especially due to significant differences in phonological, syntactic, and semantic aspects between the mother tongue and Arabic. The emphasis on innate factors in this theory does not fully explain an individual's success in mastering Arabic, as many people achieve fluency despite having no familial background in the language. This suggests that the learning environment and social interactions play an equally important role alongside innate factors.⁴² In line with this, Munawwar add that TGT has weaknesses in analysing clauses independently, which affects the ability to distinguish between clauses and sentences within language structures. Additionally, although the theory considers language an innate ability, language acquisition still requires consistent practice to develop linguistic skills effectively. Another challenge is the tendency of the theory to trace language structures back to deep structures, which in some cases can lead to semantic ambiguity. Therefore, in its application to Arabic language learning, this theory needs to be combined with other approaches that are more contextual and tailored to learners' needs.⁴³

Based on the results of this study, the application of Transformative Generative Theory (TGT) in grade 9 Arabic textbooks published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs has contributed significantly to learners' linguistic understanding. However, the researcher recommends that the preparation of the next textbook feature the generative transformation process explicitly, so that learners can

⁴⁰ Muhammad Jundi and Nabila Nabila, "Transformational-Generative Theory Perspective in Teaching The Four Language Skills of Arabic," *Al-Fusha : Arabic Language Education Journal* 5, no. 2 (2023): 72–81, <https://doi.org/10.62097/alfusha.v5i2.1193>.

⁴¹ Nurdin Nurdin and Mukhlis Anshari, "Effective Strategies in Learning Nahwu and Sharaf: A Literature Review Perspective," *Interdisciplinary Explorations in Research Journal* 2, no. 3 (2024): 1578–90, <https://doi.org/10.62976/ierj.v2i3.750>.

⁴² Bagus Adrian Permata, "Teori Generatif-Transformatif Noam Chomsky Dan Relevansinya Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *EMPIRISMA* 24, no. 2 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.30762/empirisma.v24i2.18>.

⁴³ Munawwar et al., "Transformational-Generative in Class X Senior High Shcool Arabic Book."

understand the sentence structure more systematically. Furthermore, to evaluate the effectiveness of TGT implementation in the next textbook, a specially designed assessment instrument is needed. Textbooks should provide exercises that do not only focus on memorising grammatical rules, but also encourage learners to change sentence structures according to the principle of generative transformation. Thus, they not only understand grammatical rules theoretically, but can also apply them creatively in language production.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the 9th grade Arabic textbook published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2020, this study found that Noam Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar (TGT) theory was applied in the sentence structure contained in the reading text (qira'ah). The analysis identified six types of single transformation rules—namely omission, expansion, addition, change of order, alternation, and abbreviation—with a total of 23 instances of their application distributed across various parts of the text. From the analysis, there are 23 cases of single transformation rule application scattered in various parts of the text. The application of this theory in the textbook shows that the process of structural changes in sentences can help learners understand Arabic grammatical structures more systematically. The implication of this finding is that the textbook can be used as a learning resource that supports learning Arabic syntax with a generative-transformational approach. In addition, the application of TGT can also improve receptive and productive skills for students. Although TGT theory has many benefits in syntactic analysis and language teaching, some limitations were also found, especially in the context of learning Arabic as a second language. Therefore, the application of this theory needs to be combined with other approaches that are more contextualized according to the learners' needs. For further textbook development, it is suggested that more concrete examples of each transformation category be presented as well as providing evaluation instruments to measure the effectiveness of its application in the learning process.

Author Contribution Statement

This article is a collaborative research from authors in the field of Arabic Language Education. WM as the main author is fully responsible for writing, submission, and revision. KM contributed to the revisions given by the reviewer. WDM helped obtain the data needed for the study. AA was in charge of correcting writing errors in Indonesian, while AWZ helped correct writing errors in Arabic.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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