

LANGUAGE LEARNING STAGES AND STRATEGIES



Receptive Language (What Children Can Understand)

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| Stage 1: Child does not realize that others do not understand their language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate you do not understand through gestures (i.e. shrugging shoulders) • Ask parent to explain to child that you do not understand • Encourage vocalization |
| Stage 2: Child begins to distinguish the words and sounds that are familiar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage labeling in both • Do not mix languages mid-phrase |
| Stage 3: Child understands individual words and actions in new language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simpler words and reduce the amount you say • Scaffold/support your language with gestures and animation |
| Stage 4: Child understands negatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overuse of “no” can cause resistance |
| Stage 5: Child understands commonly used phrases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use consistent simple phrases, like “Tidy up” instead of “Put your toys away” • Use a song or a signal in conjunction with simple instructions |
| Stage 6: Child understands and speaks two part concepts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use words to form two part concepts, like “Wash your hands for snack.” |
| Stage 7: Child begins to understand relationship words | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate hiding games using concepts in a playful way |
| Stage 8: Child begins to understand nuance and tone | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider which word you place emphasis on in phrases • Help the children understand the meaning by adding a gesture or being playful |

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Expressive Language (What Children Can Speak)

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| Stage 1: Child speaks in home language expecting comprehension | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage any vocalization• Indicate if you don't understand what the child is saying |
| Stage 2: Child replies in home language | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledge the child if you understand or think that you understand what the child is expressing• Make sure your messages about not understanding are clear or translated |
| Stage 3: Child uses garbled speech with correct tone or rhythm | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you understand their intent, you can model the phrase or word• Use a questioning tone to make sure you got it right |
| Stage 4: Child repeats single words or short phrases | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use key phrases consistently and naturally to help the child become familiar with the language |

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