

- People may want to appear to others in a certain way, but how they really feel is often given away by body posture
- *When in groups, the person talking can influence the rest of the group*
- *If the speaker shifts position, other members of the group may follow*
- Proxemics (use of space)
 - Distance between people
 - Intimate (contact-18"
 - Personal (18"-4')
 - Social (4'-12')
 - Public (12'-infinity)
 - However, personal space is again a culturally determined method of communication in that each society has its own idea of personal space
- Appearance
 - Under voluntary control - clothes, make-up, hair
 - Main purpose is self-presentation
 - Sends messages about social status, occupation, the social group we belong to, and appropriate attire for specific employment
 - Appearance conveys one's personality and mood

It is vital that we are aware that body language and particularly gestures can be interpreted differently by people from different cultures.

Therefore, by becoming sensitive to the clues of body language can help us communicate more effectively.

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Page 6 of 23

The Creative Communicator, 2-5 years

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Guidance is given within the EYFS for effective practice in supporting children from 0-5 years in their language and communication development.

Stage One Grammar

Before a child uses two words together, the child uses one word to represent a whole sentence.

These one word sentences are called holophrases.

Children only use those words necessary to get their point across, and omit small words that are not necessary.

This is called telegraphic speech.

The words the children use during telegraphic speech are contentive words.

Stage Two Grammar

Using the plural form of a word is an example of a grammatical marker or inflections.

Changes that occur... When the child begins to use:

- The use of -ing added to a verb
- Prepositions such as on or in
- The use of 's' to form plurals
- Irregular past tenses, for example, sang
- Possessives, for example Jennie's hat
- The use of 'the' and 'a', also known as 'articles'
- Adding 's' to the third person verbs such as he wants
- Regular past tenses such as climbed and clapped

This is a gradual acquisition over time.

Although they are simple, sentences follow a predictable sequence.

Children seem to know that the noun comes before the verb.

This can be through their inbuilt grammatical instincts (nature), as well as from external influences such as mimicking (nurture).

Children show a slow start in acquiring grammar, but sometime in their third year they show a sudden increase in the complexity of the sentence they use.

The child begins to use questions and negatives, such as, Why? Who? How? No! Not...

This signifies the end of the sensori-motor stage, and the beginning of the pre-operational stage (Piaget).

Once children have learned a grammatical rule, they begin to incorporate it into their speech.

For example, one rule is to make a plural add a 's' to the end of the word.

They then learn the rule and apply it to everything, which is when they start to learn through reinforcement and listening to others, how to correctly apply it.

This is described as overregularisation.

Children understand that words are symbols that label objects (symbolic thinking and understanding - Piaget).

This gives them the motivation to learn new words - hence children keep on asking what this is called and what that is called.

Children use 'constraints' which limit or constrain alternative meanings for new words, see Levine and Munsch, 2011.

Examples of constraints:

- Whole object bias: word describes entire objects, not just new features, as in 'giraffe'
When a child sees a new object, and asks what it is, they see it as the whole thing and not made up of different parts.
- Mutual exclusivity: child assumes only one new name for one object
Children assume, and seem to know, that there is one new name for one new object, and that is it. It cannot have the same name as something else.
- Taxonomic constraint: two objects with common features have one name
Two objects with common feature have one name, such as cat and dog are only known as animal.
- Fast mapping: new words acquired quickly due to constraints and grammar
Children have the ability to acquire new words quickly due to grammatical understanding, so they can understand the meaning of the word quickly
- Syntactic bootstrapping: use syntax to learn meaning of new words
Use syntax/grammar to learn the meaning of new words

For more information, read Crowley (2014, Chapter 9) - on e-Library.

Over 3s

Speech becomes more complex
Children use conjunction, like 'and' and 'but'
Combine two ideas together
Use embedded clauses
Make more detailed observations about the world

Vocabulary is increasing, so that by the age of 4, a child will typically have around 1500 words
At 5 years old, a typical child will have vocabulary of around 2000 words
Understands social conventions, such as using 'please' and 'thank you', and not interrupting others when they are speaking
Keep conversation going for several turns

Language in over 4s

Can talk about the future
Can describe shape, colour, texture, spatial relationships, and the function of objects
Use words to describe what is happening
Able to tell a simple story from looking at a picture
Discovering the power of questions
Being able to talk about feelings and ideas and recount experiences they have had

Some thematic approaches to developing language and communication skills:

- All about me
- Spring
- Rhymes
- Animals
- Colours
- Homes
- Living things
- Toys

Supporting language in:

3 year olds...

- Share rhymes, books and stories from many cultures
- When introducing a new activity, use mime and gesture to support language development
- Provide practical experiences that encourage children to ask and respond to questions