



Speech, language and communication screening in the Early Years

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Definitions

Language:

Refers to what we want to say

Words and sentences we understand and use

Grammar and concepts

Ordering words to express our ideas

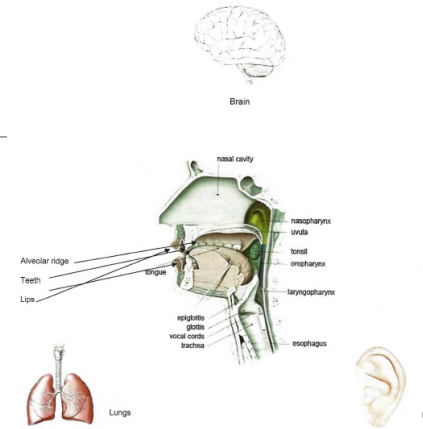
Speech:

refers to how we say what we want to say

Using the right sounds

Clarity of sounds in a word

Ordering sounds and syllables in words



Communication:

Refers to why we are saying it

Using talk for a function

Directing talk to others

Sharing experiences

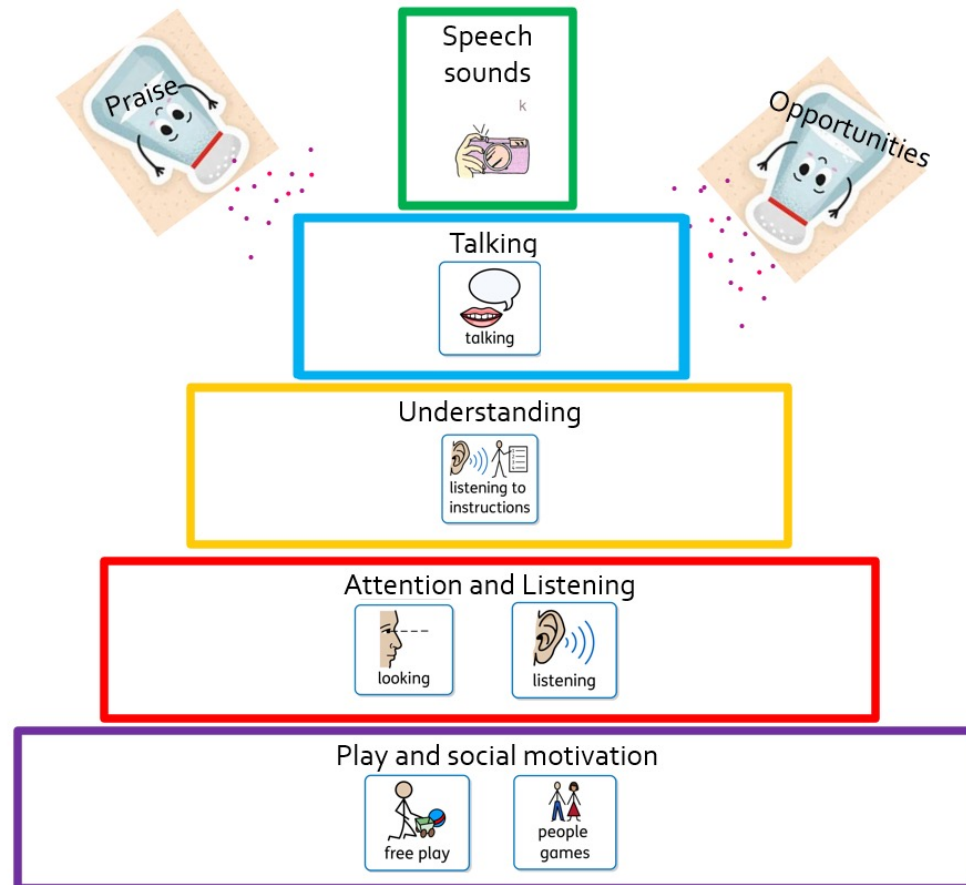
Using non-verbal cues

Initiating talk

Knowledge of language development



Language Cake





Ages and Stages

1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years
<p>Babbles</p> <p><u>Single words in context by 16 months</u></p> <p>Uses own words</p> <p>Imitates sounds</p> <p><u>16 gestures by 16 months</u></p>	<p><u>Combine 2 words</u></p> <p>Nouns</p> <p>Simple verbs</p> <p>Ask simple questions</p>	<p>Combine 3-5 words</p> <p>Intelligible to all</p> <p>Can report immediate experience</p> <p>Ask wh- ?</p>	<p>Uses longer and complex sentences</p> <p>How/why ?</p> <p>Can talk about past events</p>
<p>Words in context</p> <p>1 key word ('mummy', 'brushing')</p>	<p>Body parts</p> <p>2 key words (apple to teddy)</p> <p>Simple concepts</p> <p>Simple wh ?</p>	<p>3 key words</p> <p>Past tense</p> <p>Negatives</p> <p>Plurals</p> <p>Concepts ('next to')</p>	<p>4 key words</p> <p>2-3 part instructions (coat on table then bring box)</p>
<p>Distractable</p> <p>Flits between objects</p>	<p>5 minutes</p> <p>Single- channelled</p>	<p>10 minutes Can stop to listen to adult</p>	<p>Shifts attention</p>
<p>Find hidden toys</p> <p>Manipulate toy (shake for noise)</p> <p>Wave</p> <p>Social smile</p>	<p>Singing + action</p> <p>Sequences in play with doll</p> <p>Watch/join in with peers</p> <p>Back/forth talk</p>	<p>Pretend actions in sequence</p> <p>Interacts with children</p> <p>Building houses</p>	<p>Co-operative play</p> <p>Imaginative role-play (things are not there)</p>

Observing and intervening in the child's play: What we look for



Understanding:

- Answering simple wh- questions as expected:
 - Where is the baby?
- Concepts of size, shape, place, function
- Following instructions:
 - Put the teddy in the bag

Attention and listening:

- Fleeting
- Single channelled
- Can attend to adult with help
- Can shift attention
- Integrated attention

Speech sounds:

- Age-appropriate error patterns
- Unusual error patterns
- Speech sound inventory

Play and behaviour:

- Type of play
 - Exploratory
 - Functional
 - Pretend play
 - Early – sequencing play
 - Late – role-play
- Playing with others
- Sensory preferences

Talking:

- How many words are being used
- What function is language being used for?
 - Label
 - Request
 - Comment
- Use of gesture
- Use of questions
- Use of grammatical functions

Social interaction:

- Response to name
- Eye contact
- Facial expression
- Directing talk to others
- Joint attention
- Use of non-verbal cues: pointing, eye gaze



Important considerations

Pregnancy and birth history

Medical history/medications

Allergies

Overall profile of child and across contexts

Languages spoken at home

Siblings

Parents/teachers view integral

Child's:

hearing

vision

sensory preferences

Interests

range of movement

Voice

Parent-child interaction FIRST

Important considerations: Intervention



Evidence base:

○ Communicative Environment:

- A **facilitative context** can change in a positive direction (Bray and Todd, 2006)
- **Language use by parents** during play and daily activities strong predictor of later language development (Hart and Risley, 1995, cited in McCauley and Fey, 2006)
- Language learning is an **ongoing transaction between child and adult** ... crucial for organisation of speech and language in the developing brain (Camarata & Yoder, 2002 cited in McCauley and Fey, 2006)
- **WHO ICF framework:** speaking or comprehending activities or having more **opportunities for participation** could influence functions of impaired brain structures... We need more assessments that investigate a child's ability to participate (Washington, 2007)
- Activities must be **appropriate to developmental and meta-linguistic level of the child**
 - Meta-linguistic awareness is more related to language ability than to cognitive ability (Bowey, 2005)
 - Children are most likely to initiate communicative acts about things they **need, want or find novel or interesting** (Hart and Risley, 1968, cited in McCauley and Fey, 2006)
 - Young children attend more closely to **objects and events of their choosing** (Bruner, Roy and Ratner, 1980, cited in McCauley and Fey, 2006)

Final thoughts

‘Let children be children.
A skilled 5-year-old grows from a busy 4-year-old, a
curious 3-year-old, a cuddled 2-year-old and a
communicative baby’

Jenny Lindon





goodbye

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