

Language and Speech Development during Childhood

Introduction

Language is the ability to communicate with others. There are significant differences between the understanding of language and speech. Language includes all forms of communication, whether expressed orally, written, used signs, gestures, or facial expressions. While the speech is a spoken language that is the most effective form of communication and considered most important and widely used.

Language development increases through the growth of the children. Language is any form of communication in which a person's thoughts and feelings symbolized in order to convey meaning to others. Furthermore, language development starts from the first cry until a child is able to speak a word.

Language development of children is divided in three periods, as follows:

Prelingual Period (age 0-1 years)

At this period children cannot pronounce 'spoken language as spoken of adults, in the sense of not following the rules of the applicable language. In this period the child has a language of its own, such as babbling instead of communication with others. For example babu, mama, tata, which may be a reaction to a particular situation or a particular person a symbol for the beginning of a mental process maturity at the age of 9-10 months.

Early Lingual Period (1 to 3 years)

In this period, children began to speak the first words, though not yet complete. For example: akit (sakit), agi (lagi), ikut (ikut), atch (jatuh). At this time some combination of letters is still difficult to say, and few letters still difficult to pronounce like r, s, k, j, and t. The proficiency improvement is quickly developed and can be divided into three periods, namely:

a) One word sentence period

According to the rules of grammar, sentence of one word is not a sentence, because it consists of only one word, but experts of language development of children thought that the first words spoken by children can mean more than just a 'word for the word is an expression of complex ideas, which in the adult is expressed in complete sentences. For example: the words "mother" mean: Mom here! Mom where? Mother, help me! That is mother's dress, Mother I am hungry, and so on.

b) Two words sentence period

Generally, the second sentence appears when children begin to understand a theme and try to express it. This happened at about the age of 18 months, where the child determines that the combination of these words have a certain relationship that has different meanings, for example, the meaning of belonging (mommy dress), and adjective (blue crayon), so on.

c) More than two words sentence period

The period of sentence of more than two words shows the ability of children in the field of morphology. Skills form the sentence increased. It can be seen from the length of the sentence, the sentence of three words, four words, and so on. In this period the use of language is no longer egocentric, but the child had used for communication with others, so they started a real relationship.

Broadly speaking, language and speech perform the following functions:

1. It helps to communicate ideas to others.
2. It helps in the formation of concepts.
3. It helps in the analysis of complex words.
4. Language helps us to focus attention on ideas which would otherwise be difficult to keep in mind.
5. A psychologist takes interest in the structure of a language because in it he finds some aspects of human structure of thinking.

Factors influencing language and speech development

Following are the important factors affecting the development of language and speech :-

1. Imitation of the language of parents, other adults and teachers:

The teachers, parents play a major role in the language development of the child. The child learns the language first from his parents and after that from his teacher and other adults. He tries to imitate them and afterwards slowly tries to learn and understand the language.

2. Cultural factor:

Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. The culture in which a person develops will have its own values, beliefs and tools of

intellectual adaptation which have an effect on cognitive functions including language development.

3. Environment factor:

The child learns good language in a peaceful atmosphere. The environment plays an important role in the child's language development. The child staying in a unsuitable environment adapts an improper language development.

4. Level of intelligence:

The achievement and learning of a child is directly or indirectly influenced by factors like, intelligence, studying habits, etc. Intelligence is defined as the aggregate or global capacity of an individual to act purposely, and think rationally and to deal effectively with his environment. Therefore, intelligence level of the learners is supposed to have important significance on the child's language learning.

5. Physical condition:

Physical condition of child sometimes adversely affect the language development more so, if it is related to speech problem or language understanding, or due to illness and less socialization its impede and slows down the process of language learning.

6. Social-Economic of the Family

Several studies the relationship between language development and family's social status show that children who come from poor families lacks in language development than children from richer families. This condition is probably caused by learning differences or opportunities (poor families allegedly less attention) to second child language development- or both.

7. Degree of maturity:

Maturation is important for learning. Before we learn anything our sensory, motor and nervous structures should attain a certain level of maturity. We should bear in mind that learning of complex skill like speech and language requires a higher level of maturity. Maturation facilitates the process of learning.

8. Teacher's language competence:

Teacher- The architect of child's language development, therefore, their form of communication should be clear, very distinct and free from faults. Because, teacher's language competence particular language teachers greatly influence the language development in children.
