

SECOND LANGUAGE STRATEGIES

Outcomes

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT: Listening and Understanding

16. *For non-English-speaking children, progresses in listening to and understanding English.*

- A. Forerunner—child does not respond; seems lost.
- B. Uses clues from the daily routine, from gestures, and from imitating others to respond.
- C. Responds to simple verbal requests, e.g. “Do you want to play ball?”
- D. Understands as much as English-speaking peers.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT: Speaking and Communicating

17. *For non-English-speaking children, progresses in speaking English.*

- A. Forerunner—child does not speak in home language.
- B. Non-verbal or silent period. Observes; may use gestures or pantomime to express needs
- C. Early Speech: uses one- and two-word phrases in English.
- D. Uses conversation as much as English-speaking peers.

Assessing Outcomes

Talk to family members (through a translator if necessary) as well as others who speak the child’s home language to help you as necessary for all of these.

- A. 1- 3, 16 Language Outcomes
Are they talking at home? Ask questions to assess their level of language development in their home language for each of the first three outcomes.
- B. 4-9 Literacy Outcomes: Observe as with any of the children. See above.
- C. 10 Math: Learn to count to 10 in the child’s home language. Count in both languages--all the children enjoy this activity--and impresses their families!
- D. 11-12; 14-15 Science, Art, Approaches to Learning, Physical Outcomes: You can observe quite a bit. See above.
- E. 13 Follows classroom rules. Assess whether child’s current level is influenced by lack of understanding of English.

English Language Learners Language Packet

- 1. Dear Parent letter
 - 2. ELL Outcomes
 - 3. Questionnaire to Make Your Child’s Experience in Our Classroom More Enjoyable (optional)
- For classroom teacher:
- 4. Second Language Development (see below from the Education Work Service Plan)
 - 5. “Communication and Classroom Organization to Support Second Language Learning” from *One Child, Two Languages* (This book is available from the Education Specialist for EMLA staff.)
- For Spanish speaking children and families:
- 6. DIAL-3 Parent Questionnaire in Spanish
 - 7. DIAL-3 in Spanish
 - 8. Homework sheet in Spanish
 - 9. Parent letter in Spanish

SECOND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Principles for Effective English Language Learning (ELL) Instruction

- Instruction should be comprehensible to all learners.
- Learning should be interactive.
- Instruction should be cognitively challenging.
- Instruction should make connections to child's culture.
- Teachers must provide an environment where children feel safe to practice and use their new language.

Source: *National Head Start S.T.E.P. Manual*, UT Health Science Center at Houston, 2002

STAGES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
The four developmental stages which children/anyone would have to go through as they learn another language are:
Home language use - This is the language the child uses at home, it's the only language they know! But something happens ... the language they are using is not working in this new environment. The child goes into a....
Non-verbal or silent period - The child will back off and seem to withdraw. Many times this is incorrectly interpreted as a speech or learning deficit. When in fact, it is really a survival skill. The child is not talking nor interfering with the reception of what the new language sounds like and is trying to make connections to familiarities or meanings. Then when teachers provide a fun and non-threatening environment where children can feel safe to practice their new language, we begin to see....
Early production or telepathic speech - It's the first language any of us has, much like baby talk. This level is not to be confused with a person's level of intelligence, but level of second language acquisition. As the cycle of the second language develops and teachers are practicing principles for effective ESL instruction, putting into practice modifications for second language acquisition, the child begins to display....
Productive use of the language - As teachers model correct use of the language and provide various opportunities for children to practice their new language, children will use new words in first one-word responses, moving to more and more complex sentences.
Note - All children will develop language skills at different times in a variety of ways. For this reason, it is imperative that teachers involve the second language learner in a cognitively challenging environment. In addition, teachers should modify activities to meet children's individual needs. It is also important to include (not just for children acquiring a second language, but for all young children) multisensory activities to facilitate hands on, "talk while doing" learning.

Source: *National Head Start S.T.E.P. Manual*, UT Health Science Center at Houston, 2002

Support for First Language Development

For children who are learning English as a second language, the teacher also plays a role in supporting children's continued development in their first language by:

- Respecting the child's home language (English is an addition to the home language, not a replacement).
- Making an effort to learn key words in the child's home language.
- Encouraging parents to continue to use their home language with their children.

Source: *HeadsUp! Reading*, Session 17 - Talking notes

Strategies for Promoting Second Language Development

- Use props - telephones, dramatic play items, mirrors.
- Use music - repetition and rhythm are helpful.
- Encourage socialization with peers - helps overcome isolation caused by language barrier; other children model English.
- Provide direct instruction.
- Involve parents - ask parents about child's ability in home language.
- Provide ongoing support.
- Read books that have limited vocabulary and close word/picture congruence.

Source: *HeadsUp! Reading*, Session 17 - Talking notes

MYTHS ABOUT LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE

Myth	Reality
Children who are exposed to more than one language are at a clear disadvantage.	Bilingual children are often very creative and good at problem solving. Compared to children who speak one language, those who are bilingual can communicate with more people, read more, and benefit more from travel. Such children will have an additional skill when they enter the workforce.
Learning a second language confuses a child.	Children do not get confused, even when they combine languages in one sentence. Mixing languages is a normal and expected part of learning a second language.
Learning a second language as a preschooler invariably will slow down children's readiness to read.	Actually, the opposite is often true. Bilingual children make the transition to decoding words well.
When children are exposed to two languages, they never become as proficient in either language as children who have to master only one language do.	As long as they are exposed consistently to both languages, children can become proficient readily in both languages.
Only the brightest children can learn two languages without encountering problems. Most children have difficulty because the process is so complex.	Nearly all children are capable of learning two languages during the preschool years.

Source: *The Creative Curriculum*, p. 39