Speech, Language and Literacy in the Early Years
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St Hilda’s School, 13.8.15

Definition of terms

**Speech is our verbal means of communication, which includes**

Articulation- Actions of our:
- Tongue
- Palate
- Teeth

Voice- use of our vocal folds and breath to produce sound (tone, pitch, hoarseness)

Fluency- the rhythm of speech

**Language**

- Content – vocabulary and meaning
- Form- the structure of words and sentences
- Use- our application of language to various environments

**Literacy/Phonological Awareness**

The ability to hear and manipulate the sound structure of language. (University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning)

Overarching term that includes sound, syllable and word awareness

Phonemic awareness- The ability to attend to and manipulate sounds within words (Love and Reilly, 1995)

Phonics- use of the code (sound-symbol) relationships to recognize words (University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning)

**Normal Development- Receptive Language**

**2-3 years**
Understand two stage commands
Understands contrasting concepts like hot/cold, stop/ go
Notices sounds like the telephone or doorbell ringing and may point or become excited, get you to answer, or attempt to answer themselves.

**3-4 years**
Understands simple Who, What, Where questions
Can hear you when you call from another room.

**4-5 years**
Enjoy stories and can answer simple questions about them.
Hears and understands nearly everything that is said (within reason) at home or at pre-school or day care.
Normal Development - Expressive Language

2-3 years
Vocabulary is exploding - has a word for almost everything
Utterances are usually one, two or three words long and family members can usually understand them.
May ask for, or draw your attention to something by naming it ("Elephant") or one of its attributes ("Big!") or by commenting ("Wow!").

3-4 years
Sentences are becoming longer, can combine four or more words.
Talks about things that have happened away from home, and are interested in talking about pre-school, friends, outings and interesting experiences.
Speech is usually fluent and clear and "other people" can understand what they are saying most of the time.

4-5 years
Speaks clearly and fluently in an easy-to-listen-to voice.
Constructs long and detailed sentences
Tells a long, involved imaginative story sticking to the topic, and using "adult-like" grammar.
Can communicate easily with familiar adults and with other children.
May tell fantastic, dramatic, inventive, "tall stories"

Normal Development - Grammar

28-36 months
Present progressive (-ing verbs) (it going)
In (in box)
On (on table)
Regular plurals –s (my cars)

36-42 months
Irregular past tense (me fell down)
Possessive ‘s’ (man’s book)
Uncontractible copula (Is it Alison?)

40-46 months
Articles (a book, the ball)
Regular past tense (she jumped)
Third person regular present tense (she gets it)

42-52+ months
3rd person irregular (he does, she has)
Uncontractible auxiliary (Are they swimming?)
Contractible copula (She’s ready. They’re here.)
Contractible auxiliary (They’re coming.)

Normal Development - Phonological Awareness

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Activities for Speech Development
Develop an awareness of oral muscles/structures - Mr Tongue story
Blowing, tongue, lip exercises
Play with sounds (speech and non speech)
Model correct speech production - encourage some repetition/imitation

Activities for Receptive Language Development
Simon Says
Barrier Games
Listen for...in the story
Repetitive stories
Chinese whispers

Activities for Vocabulary Development
Sorting items (eg by colour, size, use, category)
Mystery object bag
What goes with....?
Treasure box
20 questions
What are three types of...

Activities for Expressive Language Development
Wordless picture books
Sentences/stories about photos/activities
Puppets/felt boards to tell story
Tell and Show vs Show and Tell
Group story telling - characters/setting/problem
Ask different questions - yes/no, who, what, where, when, why, how?

Activities for Phonological Awareness Development
Syllables-clap/jump/tap/hop various names/words into syllables
Rhyme-books, fill it in, make it up
Emphasise - Sounds Sounds Sounds
(not letter names)

Resources
Speech Pathology Australia (fact sheets)