

Ages and Stages of Language Development

Jean Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

- **Sensorimotor**: Birth through ages 18-24 months.
- **Preoperational**: Toddlerhood (18-24 months) through early childhood (age 7)
- **Concrete operational**: Ages 7 to 12.
- **Formal operational**: Adolescence through adulthood.

Stages of FLA:

- **cooing** - 6 months - use phonemes from every language
- **babbling** - 9 months - selectively use phonemes from their native language
- **one-word utterances** - 12 months- start using single words
- **telegraphic speech** - 2 years- multi-word utterances that lack in function
- **normal speech** - 5 years- almost normal developed speech”

Prenatal life

- Hearing language sounds at 7 months gestation
- Baby becomes familiar with the rhythm and melody of their mother's language

Baby's mirror neurons may fire in response to hearing mother's language

Birth

- Language sounds are now distinct rather than muted by amniotic fluid
- Baby can hear their own voice
- * Non-hearing children go through the following stages through to 6 months old

Birth to 2 months

- Understanding the emotions communicated by language
- 'Cooing', vowel sounds

3 to 4 months

- Intently watching the mouth of whoever is speaking to them
- Facial reaction to hearing unfamiliar language spoken
- Able to understand familiar words e.g. 'Where is Dad?' and indicate understanding by moving eyes
- Wet rasping noises
- Mirror neuron activity results in mouth movement imitation
- Beginning to make consonant sounds

4 to 6 months

- The number of words understood increases significantly
- Mechanical babbling sounds

6 to 8 months

- Understanding the meaning of certain words
- Mechanical babbling increases but starts to reflect the sounds the baby is hearing
- Sounds that baby makes reflect the sounds heard in the environment
- **Deaf babies stop babbling**

8 to 10 months

- Increasing number of combinations of sounds
- Babbling conversation
- Might hear isolated words embedded in the babbling
- Beginning to use gestures to communicate:
e.g. pointing

10 to 12 months

- Might hear isolated words embedded in the babbling
- Increasing number of consonant sounds
- First understood word (12 months)

12 to 18 months

- Understanding more and more language
- Able to follow simple instructions
- Beginning to play games (mimicking)
- Vocabulary expands to 50 words
- Telegraphic speech (aided by facial expression and gesture)
- Speaking in 3 word sentences

Once expressive language reaches the 50 word mark, the vocabulary expands by 4 words per day

18 months to 3 years

- Increase in understanding of more and more complex language
- Language explosion which includes all parts of speech, with some mis-articulation
- Progresses from single words to 2-3 word phrases and then to longer and longer sentences