

Birth to One Year

0-3 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displays startle response to loud sound • visually tracks, or moves eyes to source of sound • attends to and turns head toward voice; turns toward sound source • smiles reflexively • cries for assistance • quiets when picked up • ceases activity or coos back when person talks (by 2 months) • produces predominantly vowels • Pragmatics: uses <i>prelocutionary</i> behaviour – communication lacks intent
4-6 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responds by raising arms when mother says “Come here” and reaches toward child (by 6 months) • moves or looks toward family members when they are named (e.g. “Where’s Daddy?”) • explores the vocal mechanism through vocal play such as growling, squealing, yelling, making ‘raspberries’ • begins to produce adult-like vowels • begins marginal babbling, producing double syllables, puts lips together for /m/ • varies pitch of vocalizations • responds to name (5 months) • vocalizes pleasure and displeasure • varies volume, pitch, and rate of vocalizations
7-9 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looks at some common objects when the objects’ names are spoken • comprehends ‘no’ • begins to use some gestural language; plays ‘pat-a-cake’, ‘peek-a-boo’, shakes head for ‘no’ • uses a wide variety of sound combinations • uses inflected vocal play, intonation patters • imitates intonation and speech sounds of others (9 months) • uses variegated babbling (e.g. ‘mabamaba’) (9 months) • uncovers hidden toy (beginning of object permanence) • Pragmatics: uses <i>illocutionary</i> behaviour – signal to carry out some socially organized action such as pointing or laughing (intentional communication)
10-12 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands up to 10 words, such as ‘no, bye-bye, pat-a-cake, hot’ • understands one simple direction like ‘sit-down’, especially when accompanied with gesture • begins to relate symbol and object; uses first true word • gives block, toy, or object upon request • obeys some commands • understands and follows simple directions regarding body action • looks in correct place for hidden toys (object permanence) • turns head instantly to own name • gestures or vocalizes to indicate wants and needs • jabbbers loudly; uses wide variety of sounds and intonations; varies pitch when vocalizing • uses all consonant and vowel sounds in vocal play • Pragmatics: uses <i>locutionary</i> behaviour; uses words to communicate

1-2 Years

Syntax

- MLU → 1.0 – 2.0
- uses one-word sentences, and is in the *holophrastic* single-word phase (one word represents a complex idea)
- uses sentence-like words; communicates relationships by using one word plus vocal & body cues
- 18-24 months:
 - begin to put two words together
 - may use 3-4 word responses 50% of the time; 2 word utterances 50% of time (at 2 years)
 - uses “and” to conjoin sentences (by 24 months)
- vocabulary mainly consists of nouns (51%)

Semantics

- uses 3-20 words and uses gestures
- 10-50 words (by around 18 months)
- shows understanding of some words and simple commands
- understands ‘no’
- understands 200 words (by around 18 months)
- most frequent lexical categories: nominal and verb
- Semantic Relations – reflect meaning based on relationships between different words:

Relations Expressed by Single-Word Utterances

Attribution	An adjective; a property or characteristic of an event, person, or object e.g. <i>Big doggy</i>
Action	Child requests or labels action; indicates mvmt relationships b/w objects & ppl e.g. <i>Open box</i>
Locative	Child refers to a change in an object’s location e.g. <i>Ball up</i>
Existence	Child attending to item or obj. present in the immediate environment e.g. <i>What’s that?</i>
Non-existence	An action or obj. is expected to be present but isn’t; something disappeared e.g. <i>Bye-bye Mom</i>
Denial	Child denies statement or previous utterance (in response to question) e.g. <i>No kitty</i> (in response to “Is this a kitty?”)
Rejection	Child does not want something to happen; child refuses obj. or action e.g. <i>No bath</i>
Recurrence	An event happens again; an object reappears or replaces another e.g. <i>More cookie</i>
Possession	Child identifies something belonging to him/her, or another person e.g. <i>Doll mine</i>

Relations Expressed by Two-Word Utterances

Notice	Hi + Noun (e.g. hi doggy)
Nomination	Demonstrative + noun (e.g. that chair)
Instrumental	Verb + noun (e.g. write [with] pencil)
Conjunction	Noun + noun (e.g. knife spoon)
Recurrence	More + noun (e.g. more juice)
Action-object	Verb + noun (e.g. pet kitty)
Action-indirect object	Verb + noun (e.g. give [to] Mommy)
Agent-action	Noun (agent) + verb (e.g. doggy bark)
Agent-object	Noun (agent) + noun (e.g. baby [drink] juice)
Possessor-Possession	Noun (possessor) + noun (e.g. mommy sock)
Attribute-entity	Adjective/attribute + noun (e.g. red ball)
Entity + Locative	Noun + locative (e.g. juice [in] glass)
Action + Locative	Verb + noun (e.g. jump [on] bed)

- uses overextensions (e.g. all things with 4 legs are dogs)
- answers the question “What’s this?”
- responds to yes/no questions by nodding or shaking head
- says “all gone” (emerging negation)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follows one-step commands or simple direction accompanied by gestures (e.g. “give mommy spoon”) • points to 1-5 body parts on command; points to recognized objects (emerging nomination) • listens to simple stories; likes to hear stories repeated (19-24 months) • asks for “more” • refers to self with pronoun and name (“me Sarah”) (19-24 months) • verbalizes immediate experiences (e.g. “bath hot”) • begins to use some verbs and adjectives
Morphology	N/A at this time
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child uses verbal and nonverbal communication to control the behaviour of others, satisfy needs and wants, interact with others, express emotions or interest, imagine, inform, explore & categorize • <i>Presuppositions</i> emerge. Child uses expressions that have shared meaning for the listener and speaker • Child begins to understand some rules of dialogue (e.g. ‘when someone talks, you listen’) • uses nonverbal as well as verbal communication to signal intent • Communicative Functions/Intent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practicing (language) ○ Protesting (e.g. ‘no’ and resisting) ○ Greeting (e.g. ‘Hi, Grandma!’) ○ Calling/addressing (e.g. ‘Mommy’) ○ Requesting action (e.g. ‘juice’) ○ Requesting answer (e.g. ‘cow?’) ○ Labeling (e.g. ‘hair’ [of doll]) ○ Repeating/imitating (e.g. ‘cat’; repeats ‘cat’) ○ Answering (adult: ‘what’s this?’ child ‘bottle’)

2-3 Years

Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLU = 2.0-4.0 (at 36 months; average 3-4 words) • uses word combinations; has beginning phrase and sentence structure • combines 3-4 words in SVO format (e.g. Daddy throw ball) • uses telegraphic speech; word order is often OV (e.g. doggy sit), VO (push Barbie), SV; most sentences incomplete • asks <i>wh</i>-questions (e.g. "what's that?", "When go home?", "Why brush teeth?") and yes/no questions by adding rising intonation • expresses negation by adding "no" or "not" in front of verb (e.g. "Me not do it", "He no bite")
Semantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at 30 months, can comprehend up to 2,400 words • at 36 months, can comprehend up to 3,600 words • at 30 months, expressive vocabulary 200-600 words; average 425 • meanings seem to be learned in the following sequence: objects, events, actions, adjectives, adverbs, spatial concepts, temporal (time) concepts • first pronouns used are self-referents such as <i>I</i> and <i>me</i> • answers simple <i>wh</i>-questions (e.g. "what runs"); generally understands questions; begins asking <i>wh</i>-questions of adults (30 months) • can identify simply body parts • carries out one-and two-part commands (e.g. "pick up the sock and give it to mommy") • understands plurals • can give simple account of experiences and tell understandable stories (36 months)
Morphology (Stages II, III)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present progressive <i>-ing</i> • spatial prepositions <i>in</i> and <i>on</i> • plurals • possessives • articles • pronouns • simple, irregular past tense (e.g. <i>went</i>) • copula <i>were</i> • <i>is</i> plus adjective (e.g. "that is pretty") • regular past tense verbs • over-regularizes past tense inflections (e.g. <i>throwed, falled</i>) • overgeneralizes plural morphemes (e.g. <i>foots, mouses</i>) • uses some memorized contractions (e.g. don't, can't, it's, that's)
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utterances generally have communicative intent • rapid topic shifts; can sustain topic of conversation 20% of time • communication includes criticism, commands, requests, threats, questions, and answers • interpersonal communication expands; the child learns to adopt a role to express his own opinions and personality

3-4 Years

Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learns set of clause-connecting devices (coordination (e.g. 'and') and subordination (e.g. 'because')) • begins using complex verb phrases (e.g. 'I should have been able to do it') • begins using modal verbs (e.g. could, should, would) • begins using <i>tag questions</i> (e.g. 'You want to go, don't you?') • begins using <i>embedded</i> forms, which rearrange or add elements within sentences (e.g. 'the man <i>who came to dinner</i> stayed a week) • begins using passive voice (e.g. 'She's been bitten by a dog') • MLU= 3.0-5.0; 5-5 ½ words per utterance (at 48 months) • uses mostly complete sentences • uses mostly nouns, verbs, personal pronouns • acquires <i>do</i> insertions and ability to make transformations (e.g. "does the kitty run around?") • uses negation (e.g. 'Tammy can't swim') • begins using complex & compound sentences (e.g. 'I can sing and dance'); approx. 7% of sentences are this type
Semantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 42 months, comprehends up to 4,200 words • by 48 months, comprehends up to 5,600 words • uses 900-1000 words expressively • asks how, why, and when questions • understands some common opposites (e.g. day-night, fast-slow) • knows full name, name of street, several nursery rhymes • labels most things in the environment • relates experiences and tells about activities in sequential order • can recite poem from memory or sing a song (by 48 months) • answers appropriately questions such as "daddy is a man; mommy is a ____" (by 48 months) • understands most preschool children's stories (by 48 months) • uses pronouns <i>you, they, us, and them</i>, as well as others such as <i>I, me</i> • understands concepts such as heavy-light, empty-full, more-less, around, in front of-in back of, next to big-little, hard-soft, rough-smooth (by 42 months) • understands agent-action (e.g. "tell me what flies") • supplies last word of sentence (e.g. 'the apple is on the ____') • appropriately answers 'what if' questions (e.g. 'what would you do if you fell down?') (by 43-48 months)
Morphology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses irregular plural forms (e.g. <i>children, mice, feet</i>) • uses third person singular, present tense (e.g. 'he runs') • consistently uses simple (regular) past and present progressives (e.g. <i>is running</i>) and negative (e.g. <i>not</i>) • uses inflection to convert adjective to causative (e.g. <i>sharp, sharpen</i>) • uses simple (regular) plural forms correctly (e.g. <i>boys, houses, light</i>) • begins to use <i>is</i> at beginning of questions • uses contracted forms of modals (e.g. <i>can't, won't</i>) • uses <i>and</i> as a conjunction • uses <i>is, are, am</i> in sentences • uses possessive markers consistently (e.g. the boy's clothes) (by 43-48 months) • begins to use reflexive pronoun <i>myself</i> (by 43-48 months) • begins to use conjunction <i>because</i> (by 43-48 months)
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can maintain conversation without losing track of topic • begins to modify speech to age of listener • begins to produce indirectives (e.g. "are the cookies done?" meaning "I want a cookie") • using requesting (e.g. yes/no questions, <i>wh</i>-questions) • responds with structures such as yes/no, because; expresses agreement or denial (e.g. "that's not really her dress"), compliance or refusal (e.g. "I won't take a bath") • uses conversational devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ boundary markers (such as <i>hi, bye</i>) ○ calls such as "Hey, Mommy!" ○ accompaniments such as "Here you are."

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ politeness markers (such as <i>please, thank you</i>)• Communicative functions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ role-playing, fantasies○ protests/objections (e.g. “don’t touch that!”)○ jokes such as “I threw the juice in the ceiling”○ game markers such as “you have to catch me!”○ claims such as “I’m first!”○ warnings such as “look out or you’ll fall”○ teases such as “you can’t have this” |
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4-5 Years

Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLU= 4.5 – 7.0; average of 6 – 6.5 words per sentence by 5 years • speaks in complete sentences • uses complex sentences; interprets complex sentences correctly; by 4 ½ only 8% of sentences are incomplete • uses future tense • uses <i>if, so</i> in sentences • uses passive voice (some children)
Semantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses concrete meanings and words, but responds to some abstract ideas appropriately • has an expressive range of approximately 1,500-2,000 words • by 48 months, comprehends 5,600 words • by 54 months, comprehends 6,500 words • by 60 months, comprehends 9,600 words • can name items in a category (e.g. food, animals); able to point to categorical item (e.g. fruit) • uses most pronouns, including possessives (e.g., <i>mine, his, her</i>) • uses <i>why</i> and <i>how</i> • understands time concepts such as <i>early in the morning, tomorrow, after</i> • uses <i>what do, does, did</i> in questions • answers simple “when” questions like “when do you sleep?” (by 55-60 months) • responds appropriately to “how often, how long” questions (by 55-60 months) • asks meaning of words • tells long stories accurately • can give whole name (first, middle, last) • begins to understand right and left (around 5 years) • can define 10 common words (by 4 ½ years) • shows objects by use and function if directed (e.g. “show me what tells time”) • identifies past and future verbs (e.g. “who will kick the ball?”, “who kicked the ball?”) • demands explanations with frequent use of <i>why</i>
Morphology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses comparatives (e.g. <i>bigger, nicer, taller</i>) • uses <i>could, would</i> in sentences • uses irregular plurals (e.g. <i>mice, teeth</i>) fairly consistently
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modifies speech as a function of listener age (beginning at 4 years) • begins to judge grammatical correctness and appropriateness of sentences • can maintain topic over successive utterances • uses egocentric monologue about a third of the time (does not communicate info to listener) • uses indirect speech acts, softens speech (e.g. “I think that goes in there” vs. “Put that in there”) • begins to tell jokes and riddles (around 5 years)

5-6 Years

Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLU = 6.0-8.0 • uses present, past, future tenses consistently • uses conjunctions to string words together (e.g. “a bear and a wolf and a fox”) • asks <i>how</i> questions • uses auxiliary <i>have</i> correctly at times • uses <i>if</i> sentences (e.g. “if I had a cookie, I’d eat it”) • increases understanding and use of complex sentences; decreases grammatical errors as sentences and vocabulary become more sophisticated • comprehends verb tenses in passive voice (e.g. The bus was hit by the car”) • uses a language form that approximates the adult model
Semantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows spatial relations and prepositions such as <i>on top, behind, near, far</i> • can distinguish <i>alike, same, different</i> • distinguishes right and left in self, not others • knows complete address • knows most common opposites (e.g. hard-soft fat-thin, high-low); understands “opposite of” • defines objects by use, composition (e.g. “napkins are made of paper; you wipe your mouth with them”) • tells long stories, retells tales of past and present events • comprehends 13,000-15,000 words (by age 6) • can answer “what happens if” questions • understands concepts such as yesterday-tomorrow, more-less, some-many, several-few, most-least, before-after, now-later • can state similarities and differences of objects • can name position of objects: first, second, third • can name days of week in order • comprehends <i>first, last</i> • knows functions of body parts
Morphology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows passive forms of main verbs • knows indefinite pronouns – <i>any, anything, anybody, every, both, few, many, each</i>, and others • uses irregular plurals with general consistency • uses possessives and negatives consistently • uses all pronouns consistently • uses superlative –<i>est</i> (e.g. <i>smartest</i>) • begins to use adverbial word endings (e.g. –<i>ly</i>)
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands humor, surprise • corrects potential errors by modifying the message • can recognize a socially offensive message and reword it in polite form • modifies speech according to listener’s needs • begins to use and understand formal levels of address (e.g. <i>Mr., Mrs.</i>) • gains greater facility with indirect requests (e.g. “I would like a sticker” instead of “Gimmie a sticker”) • can differentiate 80% of the time between polite and impolite utterances • uses expressions such as “thank you” and “I’m sorry” • often asks permission to use objects belonging to others • contributes to adult conversation

6-7 Years

Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLU = 7.3 • uses <i>if</i> and <i>so</i> • uses reflexive pronouns (e.g. <i>himself</i>, <i>myself</i>) • begins to use perfect tense forms (e.g. <i>have</i>, <i>had</i>) • has full use of passive voice • uses embedding more frequently (e.g. “the girl <i>who bought the dress</i> went to the party”)
Semantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehends 20,000-26,000 words • understands the seasons of the year and knows what you do in each • forms letters left to right (reversals and inversions are common) • prints alphabet and numerals from previously printed model • recites the alphabet sequentially, names capital letters, matches lower to upper case letters • rote counts to 100 • tells time related to specific daily schedule
Morphology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses most morphological markers fairly consistently • uses irregular comparatives (<i>good</i>, <i>better</i>, <i>best</i>) more correctly • continues to improve in correct use of irregular past tense and plurals • begins to produce <i>gerunds</i> (a noun form produced by adding <i>-ing</i> to a verb infinitive, e.g. <i>fish</i> → <i>fishing</i>) • acquires use of <i>derivational morphemes</i>, in which verbs are changed into nouns (e.g. <i>catch</i> → <i>catcher</i>)
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • becomes aware of mistakes in other people’s speech • is apt to use slang and mild profanity

7-8 Years

Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLU = 7.0 – 9.0 • uses predominantly complex sentence forms
Semantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interprets jokes and riddles literally • anticipates story endings • uses some figurative language • uses details in description • creates conversation suggested by a picture • enjoys telling stories and anecdotes • retells a story, keeping main ideas in correct sequence
Morphology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses most irregular verb forms, although with some mistakes in irregular past tense • uses superlatives (e.g. <i>biggest</i>, <i>prettiest</i>) • uses adverbs regularly
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiates, maintains conversation in small groups • is able to role-play, to take the listener’s point of view • determines and uses appropriate discourse codes and styles (e.g. informal with friends, formal with adults) • uses nonlinguistic and nonverbal behaviours – posture, gestures – appropriately • takes more care in communicating with unfamiliar people, announces topic shifts • can sustain a topic through a number of conversational turns, but topics tend to be concrete (by 8 years) • after age 11, discussions involving the abstract can be sustained

Average Order of Acquisition of 14 Grammatical Morphemes in Children

Order of Acquisition	Morphemes	Examples	Average MLU	Stage	Age of Mastery
1 2/3 4	Present progressive <i>-ing</i> Prepositions <i>in, on</i> Regular plural inflection <i>-s</i>	Mom <i>coming</i> Toy <i>in</i> box My crayons	2.25	II	19-28 27-30 24-33 // 2 ½ - 3
5 6 7	Irregular past tense verbs Possessive <i>-s</i> Uncontractible copula	<i>Came, ran, broke</i> Daddy's hat Here it <i>is</i> , There I <i>am</i>	2.75	III	25-46 26-40 27-39 // 3 ½ - 4
8 9 10	Articles Past-tense regular <i>-ed</i> Regular third person <i>-s</i>	I want <i>a</i> cookie Mom poured the juice Daddy cooks	3.50	IV	28-46 26-48 26-46 // 4
11 12 13 14	Irregular third person Uncontractible auxiliary Contractable copula Contractible auxiliary	<i>Does, has</i> She <i>was</i> working He's nice or He <i>is</i> nice Mom's coming or Mom <i>is</i> co...	4.0	V	28-50 29-48 29-49 30-50 // 4 - 4 ½
12 = 1 year 24 = 2 years 30 = 2 ½ years 36 = 3 years			42 = 3 ½ years 48 = 4 years 54 = 4 ½ years 60 = 5 years		