

CSCD2057 - Child Language

Age	Receptive	Expressive
0-8 months	Recognises familiar voices	Reduplicated babbling
8-12 months	Understands 10 words	Develops communicative intent
12-18 months	Enjoys listening to stories & rhymes	First words
18-24 months	Follows two word instructions in context	Two word phrases
24-30 months	Answers 'what' & 'where' questions	Uses 'no'
30-36 months	Understands 'why' questions	Uses past tense -ed verbs
42-48 months	Understands size terms	Uses 'and' to join sentences
5-7 years	Understand passive sentences	Has over 3,000 words
9-12 years	Builds vocab from books more than speech	Syntax in written language is more complex than in spoken language
End of high school	Understands 10,000 words	Full range of syntactic & morphological constructs reached

What is Language? (not speech)

Form, content & use covers the spectrum of what language is.

Form: Structure of language: morphology, phonology, syntax (speech, voice)

Content: Meaning of language: lexicon, semantics

Use: Use of language: pragmatics, social communication

Modalities of communication

- Speech: talking, listening
- Written: spelling, reading, writing
- Visual: body language, eye contact
- Paralinguistic: intonation, tone, volume, stress
- Metalinguistics: evaluation of communication (thinking about process & reception of communication)

Language: socially shared code that represents ideas through the use of symbols and rules

Speech: one of the methods of transmitting language (verbally)

Communication: two-way transmission of ideas & information (speech + language + other modalities)

What is a Language Disorder?

An impairment of comprehension and/or use of a spoken, written or other symbol system.

- Can impact use, content and/or form

Prevalence

- 7% of kindergarten children affected
- 2-19% of children have language delays (over different age groups)
- More boys than girls (3:1)
- Tends to run in families
- More common than Autism Spectrum Disorder & Downs Syndrome
- Longitudinal impacts: employment, mental health, social outcomes, literacy skills
- Common risk factors: lower socioeconomics

Longitudinal Outcomes

- As time goes on, the demands of language increase
- Language impairments are never cured, meet & maintain age-appropriate outcomes + top-up therapy in later life
 - Without therapy: fail to meet language demands + decline in ability
- Anxiety
- Reading, writing and spelling are impacted
- Isolated due to decreased communicative ability
- Social communication
- Need more help at school
- Academic and career aspirations

Cost To Society

- Personal (having a language disorder)
- Family
- Financial
- Communities
- Economic disadvantage (occupations)

Aetiology: causation of a disease or condition.

Idiopathic: unknown cause of a disease or condition.

There is no known cause of language impairment in the majority of children.

Associated factors (risk-factors) = not sufficient to predict communication behaviour/may cause:

- Hearing impairment
- Orofacial abnormality (cleft palate/lip)
- Physical disability (Cerebral Palsy)
- Intellectual disability (Down's Syndrome)
- Autism
- Visual impairment
- At risk conditions (premature birth, low birth weight, poverty, foetal alcohol syndrome, maternal addictions, severe health problems, emotional disturbance [selective mutism], psychiatric disorders, giftedness [skills except language are above average])
- Bi- & multi-lingualism
- Learning disability
- Head injury
- Family situation
- CALD

1. Specific Language Impairment (SLI): children with language delay/below 1.5StandardDeviations from mean in a standardised language assessment

In the absence of:

- Developmental/intellectual delay
- Sensory impairment (hearing, sight)
- Other neurological conditions (epilepsy, injury)
- Emotional, behaviour or psychiatric conditions

*Problems with consistency of use of "SLI" term

*30-60% cases have associated conditions

*SLIs usually present in early primary school (Y3-4)

2. Semantic -Pragmatic Disorder (SPD)/Pragmatic Language Impairment (PLI): very fluent in expressive, but unrelated to conversation (comprehension) = problem with pragmatics (use)

3. OTHER: "language impairment" + characteristics of the child's communication are *described*

- Strengths and weaknesses
- Existing communicative behaviours
- Breakdown of language (syntax, patterns etc)
- Performance vs expectations of normal development
- Distinguish: **delay** (normal patterns at a lower age expectation level) VS **disorder** (unexpected in normal development)