



ESCAL Speech, Language and Communication Tracker for Bilingual Children

This tracker can be used to monitor the speech and language development of children who are exposed to more than one language and may be showing signs of language delay.

Stage	Listening and Attention	Understanding (Receptive Language)	Talking (Expressive Language)	Social Communication	Bilingual considerations
0-11 months	Turns toward a familiar sound then locates range of sounds with accuracy. Listens to, distinguishes and responds to intonations and sounds of voices. Quietens or alerts to the sound of speech. Fleeting Attention – not under child's control, new stimuli takes whole attention.	Stops and looks when hears own name. <i>(by 12 months ☒)</i>	Gradually develops speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like 'baba, nono, gogo'. <i>(by 11 months ☒)</i>	Gazes at faces and copies facial movements, eg. sticking out tongue. Concentrates intently on faces and enjoys interaction. Uses voice, gesture, eye contact and facial expression to make contact with people and keep their attention. <i>(by 12 months ☒)</i>	Children exposed to two languages from birth - simultaneous bilinguals - start to show signs of understanding words from the age of four months onwards - usually learn to respond to their name first - 6 to 7 months start to babble in what sounds like nonsense words - babbling is not clearly linked to a particular language.
8-20 months	Concentrates intently on an object or activity of own choosing for short periods. Pays attention to dominant stimulus – easily distracted by noises or other people talking. Moves whole bodies to sounds they enjoy, such as music or a regular beat. Has a strong exploratory impulse.	Responds to the different things said when in a familiar context with a special person (e.g. 'Where's Mummy?', 'Where's your nose?'). Understanding of single words in context is developing, e.g. 'cup', 'milk', 'daddy'	Uses single words. <i>(by 16 months ☒)</i> Frequently imitates words and sounds. Enjoys babbling and increasingly experiments with using sounds and words to communicate for a range of purposes (e.g. teddy, more, no, bye-bye)	Likes being with familiar adult and watching them. Developing the ability to follow an adult's body language, including pointing and gesture. Learns that their voice and actions have effects on others. Uses pointing with eye gaze to make requests, and to share an interest. <i>(by 18 months ☒)</i>	Simultaneous bilingual children - understand as many as 250 different words in total, (in both their languages combined) by the age of 13 months. - say their first words between the ages of 8 and 15 months - may start out saying words only in a single language, or in both. - at 15 months, may be delayed by 2 or 3 months in their ability to distinguish new words that differ in small ways (e.g., "bit" vs. "bet") in comparison to monolingual children

<p>16-26 months</p>	<p>Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories. Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations. Rigid attention – may appear not to hear.</p>	<p>Selects familiar objects by name and will go and find objects when asked, or identify objects from a group.</p>	<p>Beginning to put two words together (e.g. 'want ball', 'more juice') (by 24 months ☞) Uses different types of everyday words (nouns, verbs and adjectives, e.g. banana, go, sleep, hot) Beginning to ask simple questions.</p>	<p>Gradually able to engage in 'pretend' play with toys (supports child to imagine another's point of view). Looks to others for responses which confirm, contribute to, or challenge their understanding.</p>	<p>Simultaneous bilinguals - usually reach the 50-word mark before the age of 20 month (relates to total vocabulary in both languages) - delay of 6 months in the vocabulary development of each language is normal.</p> <p>Most bilingual children - start putting two words together by 24 months but word combinations may consist of two words from the same language, or one word from each language</p>
<p>22-36 months</p>	<p>Single channelled attention. Can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained – using child's name helps focus. (by 36 months ☞) Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories. Recognises and responds to many familiar sounds e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door.</p>	<p>Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture, e.g., "Who's jumping?" (by 30 months ☞) Understands 'who', 'what', 'where' in simple questions (e.g. Who's that/can? What's that? Where is.?). Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. big/little)</p>	<p>Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicating. Has a vocabulary of 200+ words by 30 months(monolingual child). Uses action, sometimes with limited talk, that is largely concerned with the 'here and now' (e.g. reaches toward toy, saying 'I have it'). Uses a variety of questions (e.g. what, where, who). Uses simple sentences (e.g. 'Mummy gonna work.')Beginning to use word endings (e.g. going, cats)</p>	<p>Uses language as a powerful means of widening contacts, sharing feelings, experiences and thoughts. Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic. Enjoys being with and talking to adults and other children. Interested in others' play and will join in. Responds to the feelings of others.</p>	<p>From as early as 24 months simultaneous bilinguals use their two languages differentially and appropriately with others</p> <p>For a simultaneous bilingual a delay of 6 months (in the vocabulary development of each language) is normal.</p>
<p>30-50 months</p>	<p>Listens to others in one to one or small groups, when conversation interests them. Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall. Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories. Focusing attention – still listen or do, but can shift own attention. Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own choice of activity).</p>	<p>Understands use of objects (e.g. "What do we use to cut things?") Shows understanding of prepositions such as 'under', 'on top', 'behind' by carrying out an action or selecting correct picture. Beginning to understand 'why' and 'how' questions.</p>	<p>Has a vocabulary of 500-100 words between 26-48 months(monolingual child). Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts (e.g. using and, because). Can retell a simple past event in correct order (e.g. went down slide, hurt finger). Uses talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next, recall and relive past experiences. Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. who, what, when, how. Uses a range of tenses (e.g. play, playing, will play, played)</p>	<p>Beginning to accept the needs of others, with support. Can initiate conversations. Shows confidence in linking up with others for support and guidance. Talks freely about their home and community. Forms friendships with other children.</p>	<p>Simultaneous bilinguals - typically say sentences of up to four words around the age of 36 months. - a delay of 6 months (in the vocabulary development of each language) is normal.</p> <p>For some children starting nursery will be their first real exposure to English. These children are known as Sequential bilinguals. They are likely to go through a 'silent period' when they are first exposed to the new language. This can last from a few months up to 1 year. Following 3 months of exposure to the new language a child should be beginning to show some basic understanding of the new language.</p>

<p>40-60+ months</p>	<p>Sustains attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions. Maintains attention, concentrates and sits quietly when appropriate. Two-channelled attention – can listen and do for short span. Integrated attention – can listen and do in range of situations with range of people; varies according to the demands of the task.</p>	<p>Understands humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes. Demonstrates understanding of “how?” and “why?” questions by giving explanations. Able to follow a story without pictures or props. Understands instructions containing sequencing words; first... after...last, and more abstract concepts – long, short, tall, hard soft, rough.</p>	<p>Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words. Links statements and sticks to a main theme or intention. Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play situations. Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events. Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play.</p>	<p>Has confidence to speak to others about their own wants, interests and opinions. Initiates conversation, attends to and takes account of what others say. Explains own knowledge and understanding, and asks appropriate questions of others. Shows awareness of the listener when speaking. Expresses needs / feelings in appropriate ways. Forms good relationships with adults and peers. Works as part of a group or class, taking turns</p>	<p>After 18 months of exposure to a new language a sequential bilingual will begin to use single words and phrasal structures in the new language.</p>
<p>5-7 years</p>	<p>Attention is more flexible Able to attend to spoken instructions related to a task without stopping the activity to look at the speaker Can be instructed and carry on with an activity without looking at the listener Can focus without being distracted by external noises or visual stimuli <i>(By 6 years)</i></p>	<p>Able to follow simple story without pictures Understand instructions containing sequencing words ie first, after, last <i>(By 5 years)</i> Aware of more complex humour, laughs at jokes. Can understand jokes and puns Understands and enjoys rhyme Can understand time in a more abstract way. Can infer information Understands a lengthy sequence of ideas in stories. Understands passive sentences eg “the dog was bitten by the cat”</p>	<p>Generally uses well formed sentences and is easily understood by adults and peers last <i>(By 5 years)</i> Frequently asks the meaning of unfamiliar words and may use them randomly Only a few immaturities in speech sounds th ,r and 3 consonant blends e.g. “scribble” Speech virtually mature Has the ability to segment and blend words into phonemes Can use language to plan activities, organise thoughts and tasks and solve problems Can give a narrative and make predictions in a clear and concise chronological order e.g. beginning, middle and end. <i>(By 7 years)</i></p>	<p>Chooses own friends and is generally cooperative with playmates <i>(By 6 years)</i> Can plan play activities Takes turns in longer conversations Uses language to gain information, negotiate and discuss feelings/ideas and give opinions. Can consider different ways of dealing with an event Works effectively with other children <i>(By 7 years)</i> Aware of other’s point of view</p>	<p>After 2 years of exposure to a new language a sequential bilingual child should have ‘basic interpersonal communication skills’ (i.e. ‘playground language’) in the new language.</p>
<p>7-9 years</p>	<p>Attention continues to develop</p>	<p>Understands new specific vocabulary related to curriculum development e.g. in literacy “author ,title, chapter” Understands synonyms e.g. take away and subtract and categories e.g. furniture Understands that some words have multiple meanings e.g. Understanding of written text increases as reading becomes more automatic. Focus is shifted on to understanding the text.</p>	<p>Written language begins to resemble oral expressive language May still be some errors with grammatical production e.g. “much bricks instead of more bricks “ Some errors may still persist when using new and unfamiliar vocabulary in context. Speech is virtually error free although some difficulties may still persist with the sequencing of sounds in long ,unfamiliar words e.g. “chrysanthemum “ Can play with sounds within words e.g. can use spoonerisms e.g. “par cark for car park” Narrative continues to develop with complex stories which may contain goals, motivations, morals and</p>	<p>Language is used to establish and maintain social status Can use language to persuade peers and others to carry out activities. Can give background information to repair conversations Can understand jokes and riddles based on sound similarities and play on words e.g. limericks.</p>	<p>It take 5-7 years of exposure to a language to acquire the full range of literacy skills (‘cognitive academic language proficiency) needed to cope with the literacy demands of GCSE work.</p>

			reactions of characters Some multiple episode stories appear		
9-11 years	Attention continues to develop	Understands continues to develop as vocabulary becomes more abstract and specific Understands complex written texts as means of learning Understands most common idioms E.g. "raining cats and dogs" Understands street/teenage language. Understands relationships between meaning of multiple – meaning words.	Written formal language can be more complex than spoken language Reads for information and pleasure Is able to use previously learned spelling patterns and rules Narrative includes complex, embedded and interactive elements. Able to compose and tell jokes and riddles	Understands complex jokes and riddles	

Reference: National Strategies – Every Child A Talker audit (0-5) Rhea Paul, (2007) Language Disorders from Infancy through Adolescence Mosby Inc (6-11)
 Bilingual considerations added by Deeba Akram (Speech and Language Therapist) deeba.akram@nhs.net