

# [Children the years, phonology, morphology, syntax and](https://assignbuster.com/children-the-years-phonology-morphology-syntax-and/)

Children are learning and developingtheir lexicon from birth.

–      At 2 years old, atypically-developing child can use 50-600 words-       By 6 years old, their lexicon is about 14000 word (Galdes, 2017)This lexicon is highly dependant on theenvironment and on the experiences that the child may have in this environment. With dysphasia, for example, it would be completely different : no wordsbefore 18 months, less than 30 words at 24 months…(Maillart, 2007 as cited in Radelet & Caldeira, 2015). Over the years, phonology, morphology, syntax and pragmatic keep developing and are generaly acquired bythe age of 6, whereas meaning, which is the object of study of semantics, is alifelong learning. First words are important and reflect theactuel cognitive skils, language ability and understanding of the world ofchildren. They start using words as soon as they start associate some meaningto those words.

Tomasello, in 2003 (as cited inGaldes, 2017), introduce the social-pragmatic theory of words learning in orderto explain and highlight the prerequisite (segmenting speech, conceptualizingreferents), foundational (joint attention, intention reading and culturallearning) and facilitative (lexical contrast, linguistic context) processes. Indeed, in order to link forms tomeaning, children need to segment the speech stream and identify linguisticsunits such as phrases, words, morphemes, sounds so that they can undertsand andcommunicate their intentions. Conceptualizing referents refers tothe fact that children refer to the concepts of the object they are talkingabout in order to make the others undertsand. It evolves with time. Forexample, at the begining, the child will only say « car » to talkabout his red car that he plays with. He will not generalised. His perceptualexperience helps him to identify abstract word meaning related to hisparticular toy at this particular moment. This is only later, that thiscapacity of form-meaning mapping becomes less context-dependent.

As for the foundational processes, jointattention is a communicative interaction between the child and someone else. Itis the fact that the child look at the same thing (person or object) as theothers during an interaction. Joint attention is very important because itallows the child to learn new words by associating a mental image to the spokenword. A child who would not develop this capacity would have less opportunitiesto extend his lexicon because of the missing opportunity to associate the wordwith the right object. This is associated to intentionreading which is the faculty to make attemps at trying to understand thecommunicative attentions of others.

Thanks to those foundationalprocesses, around 3, children with typical development have a new approach tolearn words.  They start to make groupsof words designating the same thing or with a similar signification. Theydevelopp a new capacity to link the hearing word and its meaning in the realworld (Carey & Bartlett, 1978, as cited in Bee&Boyd, 2011), they becomeable to make quick guesses about the words they hear. This is called fastmapping. Those new meanings will be compared to those already stored in thelexicon in order to improve it. Later, children use facilitativeprocesses, such as lexical contrast and linguistic context, in order to improvethe previous process of intention reading. It guides their inferences on wordmeanings.

SLPs have to understand the basicprocesses that enable a child to give a meaning to a word so that during asession they can assess this link between thinking and language. ·     Assessment Usually, children with specific languageimpairment are concerned with semantic difficulties such as new wordacquisition difficulties, finding word difficulties, organization or words. Assessment of children requires thatthe speech pathologist is aware of the limitations of the test such as thechild’s age. Indeed the assessment will be different for a child who doesn’thave spoken language yet. The same precaution must be taken during theassessment of a child with a developmental delay. With children, SLPs use standardizedtests, like the expressive vocabulary test which assesses expression, parentalreports such as checklists or inventories for example, picture naming, categorisation or language sampling (Galdes, 2017).

This last one can give the SLP an idea of what the lexicon’s childwould be during an interaction.