

KEY CONCEPTS IN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



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Non-Verbal Period

When learning a new language, there is often a period of time during which the young learner will not speak. This is a very active time in the child's brain as they begin to construct a model of the language.

Code-Switching

It is perfectly natural during language development for young learners to mix their languages. This is not a sign of confusion, but rather an indication that they are using all their available resources to communicate.

Formulaic Speech

Young learners often start by mimicking common and repetitious phrases without fully understanding what they mean. This is a natural step in language development.

MILESTONES IN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

First words in Second Language

This can take 3-4 months of immersion in the second language.

Capacity for Interaction in Second Language

Usually this develops rapidly during the 2nd year of immersion.

Academic Functioning in Second language

This can take up to 5-7 years of immersion in the second language.

SOME FURTHER READING

Garcia, O. (2009) Bilingual Education in the 21st Century

Bialystok, E. (2001) Bilingualism in Development