

## THE PROCESS OF SPEECH DEVELOPMENT IN INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Makhmudova Madinakhon Sobirkhonovna  
Acting Professor of the Department of Special Pedagogy,  
Kokand State University, PhD

Ne'matullayeva Mushtariy Laziz kizi  
Student of Speech Therapy  
Tel: +998947722109

### Abstract

This article systematically covers the stages of speech development in early childhood. The article describes in detail the gradual formation of speech in the period from 0 to 3 years, the stages of growth of infants from the moment of sound production to the first meaningful words.

**Keywords:** Speech, development, early childhood, child, baby, sound, word, communication, language, speech stages, speech formation

### Introduction

Speech is the main communicative tool that distinguishes a person from other creatures. In the first years of a child's life, speech formation occurs gradually. Each stage has its own characteristics and serves as the foundation for further development. Therefore, it is very important to assess each stage of speech development in a timely and correct manner. A child's speech is an important tool for his thinking, communication with the environment, and entry into social life. In particular, the early childhood period (0–3 years) is a key stage for a child's speech development. During this period, the child learns not only to make sounds, but also to hear, understand, understand words and use them consistently. The first years of a child's life serve as the foundation for his intellectual, emotional and social development. In particular, the formation and development of speech during this period is of particular importance. Through speech, the child establishes communication with the environment, expresses his thoughts and feelings, acquires knowledge and skills. Therefore, it is important to know the stages of development of children's speech in early childhood and use methods for its effective development. The early childhood period (0–3 years) is one of the most important stages of a child's development. During this period, the child's mental, physical and social development, especially the formation of speech, is of primary importance.

In the early years, children go through the main stages of speech development, this process is the foundation for the formation of the child's communication skills and language skills. At 0–6 months, the baby, hearing various sounds, enters the babbling (speaking) stage and begins to repeat sounds. At 6–12 months, the first meaningful words appear, and communication through gestures develops. At 1–2 years old, vocabulary increases sharply, simple sentences are formed, and the child begins to express his needs and feelings. At this stage, active communication between parents and those around him supports the child's speech development. These initial stages of speech are an important basis for the subsequent development of language learning, thinking, and social skills. From birth, the child interacts with the environment and gradually begins to master language. Speech development is an important foundation for the child's further education, socialization, and personal development.

Each of the stages of speech development is important in a child's life. Not ignoring these stages and applying the right pedagogical and psychological approach to the child at each stage plays an important role in shaping him into a successful future person. Parents, educators and teachers need to be well aware of the stages of speech development and provide comprehensive support to the child. The development of speech in early childhood consists of the following stages.

1. 0–6 months. At this stage, the baby does not yet understand words, but it serves as a preparatory stage for speech. The baby makes sounds, for example, crying, screaming, expressing his needs. Responds to external sounds, can turn his head when hearing them. Constant communication with mothers and parents accelerates speech development. The child begins to respond to sounds (smiles, cries, makes sounds). Pays attention to the tone of the mother or caregiver. Reacts with simple sounds.

6–12 months. This stage is considered a period of preparation for the formation of speech and the emergence of initial words. The babbling stage - syllabic sounds such as “ba-ba”, “da-da” appear. Imitating the words of those around you begins. The child recognizes his name, begins to respond to simple commands. The period of 6–12 months is the foundation for the formation of a baby’s speech and is the starting point for further language learning, communication and social development. Therefore, it is very important to talk a lot with parents and those around him, to encourage speech.

1. 1–2 years. The period of 1–2 years is a very important stage for the formation of speech. During this period, children rapidly increase their vocabulary, begin to combine words, and develop communication skills. The first words appear; the child begins to understand words used in everyday life. Word combinations can be formed (for example, “the boy went”). The period of 1–2 years is a period of rapid development of speech and communication skills. At this stage, the child begins to talk, increasing his vocabulary, which is the basis for subsequent speech and language skills. Constant conversation and communication with parents and others ensure the healthy development of the child's speech.

2. 2–3 years. The period of 2–3 years is a very important stage in the development of speech, because during this period children quickly and actively develop language skills, begin to express their thoughts more clearly. Vocabulary increases rapidly, can form simple sentences ("I drink", "the child sleeps"). Begins to ask questions ("what is this?", "where?"). The period of 2–3 years is a period of increasing complexity of speech and the beginning of effective communication. Children begin to express their thoughts more clearly, better understand their surroundings by asking questions, and strengthen communication with others. Speech development at this stage becomes the basis for future reading, writing, and social skills.

The development of speech in early childhood is a factor that directly affects their mental, emotional and social development. The most important role in the formation of a child's speech is played by parents, educators and teachers. By communicating with a child every day, listening to him, asking questions, and introducing him to new words, his speech develops stably and effectively. The child understands his world through speech - therefore, this process should not be ignored. The development of speech in early childhood directly affects their mental and social development. The role of parents, educators and teachers in this process is invaluable. Regular communication with the child, encouraging him, asking questions and listening to his thoughts are the most important factors for the development of speech.

Thus, it is necessary to take an individual approach to him, not forgetting that each child develops at his own pace. Speech for an early child is not just talking, but also a means of understanding the world, expressing his thoughts and feelings. Therefore, it is necessary to pay special attention to the development of speech during this period. Parents, educators and specialists can greatly contribute to the healthy and natural formation of speech through constant and high-quality communication with the child.

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