

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Stage	Characteristics	Approximate Time Frame	Teacher Prompts
Preproduction	The student -Has minimal comprehension. -Does not verbalize. Nods "Yes" and "No." Draws and points.	0-6 months	-Show me ... -Circle the ... -Where is ...? -Who has ...?
Early Production	The student -Has limited comprehension -Produces one- or two-word responses. -Uses key words and familiar phrases. -Uses present-tense verbs.	6 months - 1 year	-Yes/no questions -Either/or questions -Who ...? -What ...? -How many ...?
Speech Emergence	The student -Has good comprehension. -Can produce simple sentences. -Makes grammar and pronunciation errors. -Frequently misunderstands jokes.	1-3 years	-Why ...? -How ...? -Explain ... -Questions requiring phrase or short-sentence answers
Intermediate Fluency	The student -Has excellent comprehension. -Makes few grammatical errors.	3-5 years	-What would happen if ...? -Why do you think ...? -Questions requiring more than a sentence response
Advanced Fluency	The student has a near-native level of speech.	5-7 years	-Decide if ... -Retell ...

Chapter 2. The Stages of Second Language Acquisition
Classroom Instruction That Works with English Language Learners Facilitator's Guide
 by Jane D. Hill and Cynthia L. Björk

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108052/chapters/The-Stages-of-Second-Language-Acquisition.aspx>

Stages of Language Acquisition Chart

	LISTENING	SPEAKING	READING	WRITING
PRE-PRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has minimal understanding Understands simplified input with visual support Minimal understanding Responds to commands Recognizes common classroom and playground language Recognizes theme's key vocabulary and language by the end of theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Names and identifies objects Can use memorized and simple formulaic speech Uses non-verbal communication, points, draws, gestures Uses interlanguage or pidgin language Barely comprehensible or incomprehensible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs illustrations, visual support May use left-to-right and top-to-bottom directionality Begins to recognize letters (if preliterate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrates, may label Traces or copies words May use scribbles, invented spelling, or native language At end of theme, may produce or copy lists of known words (theme vocabulary)
EARLY PRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large passive vocabulary (500 words) Understands "Teacher talk" (simplified syntax, pauses, redundancy, paraphrasing) Understands common, high frequency expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks and responds to simple questions Answers questions with yes/no, either/or, one word or phrases Completes sentence starters with one word Engages in simple, directed conversations on familiar topics Word order improves Uses "yesterday" or "tomorrow" rather than tenses Uses memorized or formulaic language appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reads sight words, previously taught material, L1 cognates Needs illustrations, visual cues Starts to read environmental print Can follow class readings when repeated several times; fair understanding of main ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies a model Can list words/short phrases Can complete sentence starters and cloze passages requiring one-word entries Uses mostly present tense Uses inaccurate grammar and syntax, invented spelling Errors impede comprehensibility
SPEECH EMERGENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands without much visual support Can follow a conversation and oral directions Understands some non-face-to-face communication (telephone, radio) May have difficulty with slang or regional speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to create language: recombines and applies previously learned material to new situations Narrates, describes, retells, and discusses content Uses present, past, future tenses Commits errors, but is usually understood Can initiate and carry on a conversation Answers <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> questions: can expand on answers Uses circumlocution to aid communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehends grade-level material with sufficient preparation and support Unfamiliar cultural references or stylistic features may impede understanding Can construct meaning from context Reads environmental print Understands simple instructions May read independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrates or describes in strings of sentences, short paragraphs Can produce guided writing on familiar topics Makes fewer errors Grammar and syntax errors do not usually impede comprehensibility Creates or adapts a story
NEARLY FLUENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands well without visual support Understands non face-to-face communication (telephone, radio, overhead conversations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks in complex sentences and paragraphs Uses most tenses correctly Can discuss abstract topics and content areas Can hypothesize and support opinions Handles complicated situations, uses details Minimal errors rarely effect comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reads a variety of grade level materials with comprehension Reads independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses complex sentence structures for age Writes cohesive, connected paragraphs Fairly high degree of grammatical accuracy, correct spelling, mechanics for age Some errors in complex structure Capable of producing content reports and creative writings

Based on the following resources: Krashen and Terrell (1983); Ellis (1985); Buch, Byrnes and Thompson (ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview Tester Manual 1989); Omaggio (1993) citing ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (1986) and DLI Task Force on Curriculum Policy and Planning (June 1984)