Chapter 2 Notes

I. Introduction
   a. Toddlerhood begins with the onset of toddling (walking), a little before or after the child’s first birthday
      i. Child will both monologue and dialogue as she ages, always knowing much more than can be verbally expressed
         1. During toddlerhood, she uses words whose meanings have been rooted in social acts and may have significance
   b. Toddlers are action-oriented
      i. McMullen points out that they act on and simultaneously perceive the world around them
         1. Believes that one can see toddlers’ thoughts because their thought is a sensorimotor activity
            a. Only at a later age does higher-level thinking happen, allowing them to think first and then act
   c. By the age of two, toddlers’ brains are as active as those of adults
      i. Metabolic rate keeps rising
   d. By the age of three, toddlers’ brains are two and a half times more active than the brains of adults
      i. Stay that way throughout the first decade of life
   e. An important happening takes place during the toddler period when the toddler uses symbolic (speech) communication rather than primarily communicating through body actions and gestures
      i. Happens through the maturing possibilities of the child’s growing mental capability and the richness of the child’s affective and life experiences
      ii. Many experts believe a warm, close relationship with a caregiver promotes the child’s communication ability and provides satisfaction in itself
   f. Experts agree that the primary need of toddlers (and infants) is emotional connection
   g. Toddler moves from a few spoken words to purposeful speech that gains what is desired, controls others, allows personal comments, and accompanies play
      i. Becomes evident that the toddler realizes the give and take of true conversation and also realizes what it is to be the speaker or the one who listens and reacts
      ii. Toddlers become aware that everything has a name and that playfully trying out new sounds is an enjoyable pursuit
         1. Child’s meanings for the few words the child uses at the start of the toddler period may or may not be the same as common public usage
   h. Toddlers have an innate predisposition for learning to communicate
      i. Face four major tasks in learning the rule systems of language:

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1. Understanding phonology (the sound system of a language)
2. Learning syntax (a system of rules governing word order and combinations that give sense to short utterances and sentences, often referred to as grammar)
3. Learning semantics (word meanings)
4. Learning pragmatics (varying speech patterns depending on social circumstances and the context of situations)

ii. Understanding of these rule systems takes place concurrently—one area complementing and promoting the other

iii. Rule systems form without direct instruction as toddlers grope to understand the speech of others, express themselves, and influence others both verbally and nonverbally

iv. We can think of the toddler as one who tests many hypotheses

1. A kind of thinker who over time can unconsciously discover and formulate the rules of language

i. Language emergence is but one of the toddler’s achievements

i. Intellectually, toddlers’ process, test, and remember language input

ii. They develop their own rules, which change as they recognize what are and are not permissible structures in their native language

iii. Other important developmental achievements intersect during late toddlerhood as children increasingly shift to symbolic thinking and language use

iv. Gains in social, emotional, and physical development are apparent, as are issues of power and autonomy

II. Phonology

a. Toddlers learn the phonology of their native language—its phonetic units and its particular and sometimes peculiar sounds

i. Young language learner must sort sounds into identifiable groups and categories while she is possibly experiencing the speech of a variety of people in various settings

ii. Because spoken language is characterized by a continuous flow of word sounds, this makes the task even more difficult

b. After sounds are learned, sound combinations are learned

i. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that distinguishes one utterance from another, implying a difference in meaning

ii. English has 46 to 50 phonemes, depending on what expert is consulted

iii. Language from a phonetic perspective might be conceived as a continuous sequence of sounds produced when air is pushed through the throat and mouth, and then received and recognized by sensitive ear structures

c. Languages are divided into vowels and consonants
i. When pronouncing vowels, the breath stream flows freely from the vocal cords
ii. When pronouncing consonants, the breath stream is blocked and molded in the mouth and throat area by soft tissue, muscle tissue, and bone, with the tongue and jaw often working together
iii. Child focuses on those sounds heard most often
iv. Toddler’s speech is full of repetitions and rhythmic speech play
v. Toddler babbling of this type continues and remains pleasurable during early toddlerhood
vi. Sounds that are combinations of vowels and consonants increase
   1. Vowels are acquired early, and most studies suggest that vowel production is reasonably accurate by age three
   2. Low non-rounded vowels are favored during infancy (that is, i, o, u)
   3. Consonant sounds that are difficult to form will continue to be spoken without being close approximations of adult sounds until the child reaches five or six years of age or is even slightly older
vii. Early childhood teachers realize that, in many instances, they will have to listen closely and watch for nonverbal clues to understand child speech
d. Difficult task for the child to make recognizable sounds with mouth, throat, and breath control working in unison
   i. Perfecting the motor control of speech-producing muscles is a sophisticated skill that comes ahead of many other physical skills
      1. Requires precise and swift movements of the tongue and lips
         a. This is all but fully developed when most other mechanical skills are far below levels of their future accomplishment
e. Much of early speech has been described as unintelligible or gibberish
   i. Toddler seems to realize that conversations come in long strings of sound
   ii. Child imitates the rhythm of the sound but utters only a few understandable words
f. Toddlers hear a word as an adult hears it
   i. Sometimes, they know the proper pronunciation but are unable to reproduce it
   ii. Toddler talk represents the child’s best imitation, given present ability
      1. Parents and teachers are urged to look at toddlers’ speech mistakes as evidence that children are learning in an intelligent way
g. Adult-child talk can be defined as “special language” or “child-directed speech,” that is, a set of speech modifications commonly found in the language adults use to address young children
   i. Most speech researchers divide adult-child language into five main categories:
      1. Pedagogy
      2. Control
      3. Affection
      4. Social exchange
      5. Information

h. The pedagogy mode is characterized by slow adult speech that is over enunciated or overemphasizes one or two words
   i. This type of adult speech is “tailor-made” for one- or two-year-olds trying to segment the speech stream into comprehensible units

i. Parental language techniques include:
   i. Labeling happenings and objects with easy-to-learn, catchy variations, such as choo-choo, bow-wow, etc.
   ii. Labeling themselves as “Mommy” or “Daddy,” instead of “I” or “me” in speech
   iii. Limiting topics in sentences
   iv. Using short and simple sentences
   v. Using repetition
   vi. Expanding or recasting children’s one word or unfinished utterances
      1. If toddler says “kitty,” parent offers “Kitty’s name is Fluff.”
   vii. Using a wide range of voice frequencies to gain child’s attention and initiate a communication exchange
   viii. Carrying both sides of an adult-child conversation
      1. Adult asks questions, and then answers them too
      2. Technique is most often used with infants but is also common during the toddler period.
      3. Adult is modeling a social exchange
   ix. Echoing a child’s invented word
      1. Many toddlers adopt a special word for a certain object
      2. The whole family may use the child’s word in conversational exchanges also

j. When adults feel infants and toddlers are able communicators, it is reflected in their actions and speech
   i. Can, and usually does, increase children’s communicative abilities and opportunities

k. Early childhood educators believe caregivers should treat toddlers as communicating children, and avoid childlike or cutesy expressions
   i. Offer simple forms of speech and easy-to-pronounce words whenever possible, and they introduce new words
I. Views on adult use of baby talk after the infancy period stress the idea that the practice may limit more mature word forms and emphasize dependency
   i. On the other hand, adults may offer simplified, easily pronounced forms like bow-wow for a barking poodle
      1. They later quickly switch to harder-to-pronounce forms when the child seems ready
      2. In the beginning, though, most adults automatically modify their speech when speaking with toddlers by using short sentences and stressing key words

m. Children progress with language at their individual rates and with varying degrees of clarity
   i. Some children speak relatively clearly from their first tries
   ii. Other children, who are also progressing normally, take a longer time before their speech is easily understood
   iii. All basic sounds (50 including diphthongs) are perfected by most children by age seven or eight

n. Morphology
   i. A morpheme is the smallest unit of language standing by itself with recognized meaning
      1. Can be a word or part of a word
      2. Many prefixes (un-, ill-) and suffixes (-s, -ness, -ed, -ing) are morphemes with their own distinct meaning
   ii. Study of morphemes is called morphology
      1. There are wide individual differences in the rates toddler’s utter morphemes
      2. Unfortunate if early childhood teachers or families attempt to compare the emerging speech of toddlers or equate greater speech usage with higher ability, thus giving the quiet toddler(s) perhaps less of their time
   iii. Between the ages of two and four years, children gradually include a variety of different morphemes in their spontaneous utterances
      1. Seems to be a common sequence in their appearance

III. Syntax
a. Languages have word orders and rules, and young children speak in word order and follow the rules of their native tongue
   i. Children typically acquire the rules of grammar in their native language with little difficulty from normal communicative interactions with adults
b. The rules for ordering words in sentences do not operate on specific words, but on classes of words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives
   i. A relatively small number of syntactical rules can account for the production of a very large number of sentences
c. In one language, the subject of a sentence follows the verb
   i. In other languages, it precedes the verb
ii. Modifiers (descriptive words) in some languages have gender (male and female forms), but in others they do not

iii. Plurals and possessive forms are unique to each language

iv. Young speakers will make mistakes, but adults marvel at the grammar the child does use correctly, having learned the rules without direct instruction

d. By age two, and sometimes as early as 18 months, children begin to string together two or more holophrases and have thereby arrived at telegraphic stage

i. All telegraphic speech consists of acceptable grammatical sequences which are the precursors of the sentence

e. From all the perceptions received and the words spoken to and about the child, the child has noted regularities and has unconsciously formed rules, which are continually revised

i. Chukovsky describes this task:
   1. “It is frightening to think what an enormous number of grammatical forms are poured over the poor head of the young child. And he, as if it were nothing at all, adjusts to all the chaos, constantly sorting out in rubrics the disorderly elements of words he hears, without noticing as he does this, his gigantic effort. If an adult had to master so many grammatical rules within so short a time, his head would surely burst.”

f. Grammar involves the way sounds are organized to communicate meaning

i. With grammatical knowledge the young child can produce and understand a wide range of new, novel, grammatically correct, and meaningful sentences

g. As the child learns to talk during preschool years, the child may construct many ungrammatical sentences and use words in unusual ways

i. The errors of the two-year-old disappear as the child gains more control over language, but new kinds of errors appear in three-year-olds, who are trying new forms of expression

ii. An understanding of the general rules of grammar develops before an understanding of the exceptions to the rules

iii. Correct grammar forms may change to incorrect forms as the child learns new rules

h. In later years, during elementary school, the child will formally learn the grammar rules of the English language

i. What the child has accomplished before that time, however, is monumental.

ii. Amount of speech that already conforms to the particular syntactical and grammatical rules of language is amazing
iii. Child has done this through careful listening and by mentally reorganizing the common elements in language that have been perceived
i. Toddler’s growing use of intonation and inflections (changes in loudness of voice) adds clarity, as do nonverbal gestures
   i. Child is often insistent that adults listen
j. Toddler’s system of nonverbal signals, body postures, and motions that were used in late infancy continues and expands, becoming part of the toddler’s communication style
   i. Many signals translated by mothers or care providers to strangers leave strangers bewildered as to how the mother or other adult could possibly know what the child wants
   ii. May seem impossible based upon what the stranger observed and heard
k. English sentences follow a subject-verb-object sequence
   i. The three fundamental properties of sentences—verb-object, subject-predicate, and modification—are universally used
      1. Most all human languages have rules for these basic sentential structures
l. Learning grammar rules helps the toddler express ideas, and understanding syntax helps the child to be understood
m. If one listens closely to the older toddler, sometimes self-correction of speech errors happens
   i. Toddlers talk to themselves and to their toys often
   ii. Seems to aid storage and memory
   iii. Toddler understands adult sentences because the child has internalized a set of finite rules or combinations of words

IV. Semantics
a. Semantics is the study of meanings and acquisition of vocabulary
   i. Probes how the sounds of language are related to the real world and life experiences
   ii. Toddler absorbs meanings from both verbal and nonverbal communication sent and received
      1. Nonverbal refers to expressive associations of words, such as:
         a. Rhythm
         b. Stress
         c. Pitches
         d. Gesture
         e. Body position
         f. Facial change
   iii. Adults perform important functions in the child’s labeling and concept formation by giving words meaning in conversations
b. Toddler who comes from a home that places little emphasis on expressing ideas in language may be exposed to a relatively restricted range of words for expressing conceptual distinctions
Every early childhood center should offer opportunities for children to learn a rich and varied vocabulary to refer to various experiences and to express ideas.

c. In toddler classrooms, teachers have many opportunities to name objects and happenings as the day unfolds

i. Using teacher gesturing along with words (or pointing to illustrations and photographs in simple picture books and magazines) helps the toddler form a connection between what is seen and heard

ii. Repeating words with voice stress can be done in a natural way while monitoring whether the child is still interested

d. Word meanings are best learned in active, hands-on experiences rather than “repeat-after-me” situations

i. Meanings of words are acquired through their connotations, not their denotations, that is, in situations that consist of feelings and verbal and nonverbal messages with physical involvement

ii. Toddlers assume that labels (words) refer to wholes instead of parts (the creature, not the tail) and to classes instead of items (all horses, not one horse)

e. For awhile, toddlers may use one sound for a number of meanings

i. When an older infant is first learning to talk, the same sound often serves for several words; for instance, “bah” can mean “bottle,” “book,” “bath,” and “bye.”

ii. Sometimes, infants use one sound to name an object and also to express a more complicated thought, for example, a child may point to a ball and name it, but later may say the same word and mean, “I want to play with the ball. Roll it to me.”

f. Child’s concept building is an outgrowth and result of a natural human tendency to try to make sense of the surroundings

i. Attending to and pondering about the relationships, similarities, and differences in events and happenings, and mentally storing, remembering, and retrieving those ideas and impressions are important aspects of concept development

ii. With young children’s innate curiosity, drive, and desire to explore and experience, concepts are continually being formed, reformed, and modified

g. A toddler may overuse concepts in new situations

i. For a short time, all men are daddies, a cow may be called a big dog, and all people in white are feared

ii. As mental maturity and life experiences increase, concepts change

1. Small details and exceptions are noticed

iii. Toddlers may use a word to refer to a smaller category than would adults

h. Concepts, often paired mentally with words, aid categorizing

i. Concept words may have full, partial, or little depth of meaning
ii. Toddler’s level of thought is reflected in speech
   1. When counting to three, the toddler may or may not know what “three” represents
i. Pan and Gleason explain how young children acquire word meaning and also the symbolic nature of words:
   i. “First, it is important to note that the meaning of a word resides in speakers of a common language, not in the world of objects. The word is a sign that signifies a referent, but the referent is not the meaning of the word.”
   ii. “Let us assume that a child learns that the word kitty refers to her cat; in this case, the actual cat is the referent of the word kitty.”
   iii. “There is nothing intrinsic to cats that make one or another name more appropriate or fitting—the relationship between the name and the thing is thus arbitrary, and it is by social convention in a particular language that speakers agree to call the animal by a particular word. This arbitrary relationship between the referent (the cat) and the sign for it (the word cat) is symbolic.”

j. In a few words, the relationship between a word and a referent is not arbitrary
   i. In the case of the word hiss, the word resembles the sound
k. A toddler’s firsthand sensory experiences are very important
   i. Stored mental perceptions are attached to words
   ii. Words are only as rich as the experiences and depth of understanding behind them

V. Pragmatics
   a. Pragmatics is the study of how language is used effectively in a social context, or the practical aspect of oral communication
      i. It is the study of who can say what, in what way, where and when, by what means, and to whom
      ii. Language is a tool in questioning, ordering, soothing, ridiculing, and engaging in other social actions
      iii. One can request quiet in the form of a question such as, “Can’t anyone get a peaceful moment around here?” or talk longingly about the candy in a store for the purpose of obtaining it without making a direct request—as in, “Oh, they have my favorite kind of chocolate bar!”

   b. Language that young children use to express desires, wishes, concerns, and interests becomes a reflection of their social selves
      i. When a toddler communicates effectively, the toddler receives feedback from others
      ii. Many times, a sense of well-being elicited by positive events helps the child shape a feeling of competency and self-esteem
      iii. Not yet socially subtle in speech, the toddler has not learned the pragmatically useful or appropriate behaviors of older children
iv. Toddlers seem to have just one goal: to get messages across by gaining adult attention regardless of who is present and in what situation
v. The world, from the toddler’s perspective, revolves around the toddler and his need to communicate

VI. Attachment and Development of Language Skills
a. Attachment problems can slow communicative development
   i. Observers describe infants and toddlers in less-than-adequate care situations as fearful, apathetic, disorganized, and distraught
   ii. If responsive social interaction and adult feedback exchanges are minimal, limited, frightening, or confusing, the infant or toddler may display a marked lack of interest in holding or obtaining adult attention
   iii. During toddlerhood these children can fall behind in speech development
   iv. Lally describes the importance of toddler social interaction:
       1. “Infants and toddlers develop their sense of who they are from the adults who care for them. They learn from their caregivers what to fear, what behaviors are appropriate, and how their communications are received and acted upon. They learn how successful they are at getting their needs met by others, what emotions and intensity levels of emotions to safely display, and how interesting others find them.”

VII. First Words
a. Any time between 10 and about 22 months is considered within the normal range for first words
   i. Vocabulary growth spurt happens around 18 to 22 months
   ii. First words are “building blocks” and “content words” (nouns, verbs) that carry a lot of meaning
       1. Usually consist of names of important people or objects the toddler encounters daily and include functional words such as up, out, night-night, and bye-bye used in social contexts
       2. Easy to pronounce words are more likely to be included in their early expressive vocabularies
b. Single words can frequently go further than naming by representing a meaningful idea (a holophrase)
   i. Task of the adult includes both being responsive and guessing the child’s complete thought
   ii. Many factors influence the degree of adult responsiveness and talkativeness, particularly in child center settings:
       1. Room arrangements
       2. Adult-child ratios
       3. Level of staff training
4. Other emotional and environmental factors
   iii. Greatest inhibitor of adults’ speaking and responding to children seems to be adults’ talking to one another instead of the children
      1. Professionals save chatting for breaks and afterschool meetings
   iv. Nature of the work in a group care program can easily be described as emotion packed and demanding, in addition to rewarding and challenging
   v. On the surface, the general public may not see or understand skilled verbal interactions taking place between toddlers and caregivers
      1. What seems to be random, natural playfulness and verbal responsiveness is really very skilled and professionally intentional behavior
      2. Same is true regarding family behavior
   c. Adults sometimes question the practice of responding to toddlers’ grunts and “uhhs” instead they respond only to toddlers’ spoken words
      i. Many toddlers seem to understand everything said to them and around them but get by and satisfy most of their needs with sounds and gestures
      ii. The points for adults to consider are that the child is performing and learning a difficult task and that speech will soon follow
      iii. The message that responsive adults relay to children when rewarding their early attempts with attention is that children can be successful communicators and that further attempts at speech will get results

VIII. From Egocentric Speech to Inner Speech
   a. During the toddler period, observers notice that words or short phrases spoken by adults are remembered and spoken out loud
      i. Toddler’s “hot,” “no,” “kitty,” or similar words accompany the child’s actions or a simple viewing of objects at hand
      ii. Vygotsky has called this “egocentric” speech, which is ultimately and usefully tied to the toddler’s thinking
   b. As the child matures, this type of speech slowly becomes inner speech, part of the child’s thinking process
      i. Egocentric speech is regulatory, that is, useful in helping the child regulate (manage) her own behavior
      ii. As adults, we see examples of this regulatory function when we talk ourselves through particular perplexing situations

IX. Symbolic Gesturing
   a. It is old-fashioned to believe that real communication does not exist before a child’s first words
      i. Researchers have helped us understand that gestures and signs (signals) occur in tandem with early vocalizing
ii. Young toddlers can possess a rich repertoire of signals, and female infants tend to rely on or produce them with slightly greater frequency

iii. Signs have been defined as nonverbal gestures symbolically representing objects, events, desires, and conditions that are used by toddlers to communicate with those around them
   1. Literally can double a young toddler’s vocabulary

b. Toddlers’ interest in learning hand signals (signing) varies greatly
   i. Conducting an infant-toddler program where signing is a regular part of the curriculum has become popular
   ii. Some toddlers may use 20 or more baby signs for various objects, feelings, and needs while other toddlers mixed only a few gestures with their beginning words
   iii. Both would be displaying normal development

c. The use of words and symbols to influence other people in predictable ways requires the child to represent mentally:
   i. Relationship between the symbol (word or gesture)
   ii. Meaning for which it stands
   iii. Intended effect on the other person

d. A symbol (a word, a picture, a dance) exists because of human intention to infuse some tangible form (a sound, a mark, a movement) with meaning and thereby to comment on or take action in the social world

e. Gestures are integral companions of toddler verbalizations
   i. Adults may have modeled the gestures in their adult-child interactions
   ii. A family’s signals are “read” by toddlers, and a hand held palm up is usually read as “give it to me”
   iii. Toddlers show their understanding by behaviors
   iv. Toddlers can and do invent new ones; consequently, signing is not simple, imitative behavior
   v. Pointing is probably the most commonly used gesture of toddlers
   vi. Eventually, words are preferred and gesturing remains as an accompaniment of speech

f. Early childhood educators employed by infant-toddler centers need to know their centers’ position regarding expected language-developing behaviors
   i. Most centers expect educators to pair words with adult hand signs, to encourage toddler use of signs, and to learn and respond to each child’s individual sign language
   ii. To do this, teachers must be alert to children’s cues, in particular noticing what in the environment attracts them so that words can be supplied and the children’s intentions “read”
   iii. Teachers’ behaviors should reflect their awareness, intentional efforts, and attention to toddlers’ efforts to communicate
1. Their continual goal is to establish a warm, emotionally fulfilling connection to each child in their care.

g. Toddlers are very interested in exploring
   i. Teachers should “hang back” when toddlers interact with other toddlers and try not to interrupt play
   ii. Becoming social with peers is given priority and promoted

h. Teachers of toddlers do a lot of “word modeling”
   i. Attempt to be both calm and fun companions
   ii. Most will tell you that after a full day with toddlers they look forward to conversing with adults

X. First Sentences
a. The shift from one word to a two-word (or more) stage at approximately 18 months is a milestone
   i. At that time, the toddler has a speaking vocabulary of about 50 words; by 36 months, upwards of 1,000 words
   ii. Crucial in talking about vocabulary to acknowledge that children not only acquire new words as they get older but also expand their understanding of old words

b. If one looks closely at two-word utterances, two classes of words become apparent
   i. Smallest group of words are called pivot words
      1. Pivot words are used more often than other words, and seem to enter the vocabulary more slowly, perhaps because they are stable and fixed in meaning
   ii. In analyzing two-word toddler comments, one finds they are both subject-predicate and topic-comment in nature
      1. Frequently stressed syllables in words and word endings are what toddlers’ first master, filling in other syllables later
      2. At times, toddlers use -um or -ah as place holders for syllables and words
         a. They replace these with correct syllables and words as they age

c. Understanding grammar rules at this two-word stage is displayed even though many words are missing
   i. Toddlers frequently use a simple form and, almost in the same breath, clarify by expansion (by adding another word)
   ii. Invention of words by toddlers is common
   iii. Families trying to understand their toddlers get good at filling in the blanks
      1. They then can confirm the child’s statement and can add meaning at a time when the child’s interest is focused

XI. Toddler-Adult Conversations
a. Toddlers control attending or turning away when interacting with others, as do infants
i. At about one year, they understand many words and begin to display turn-taking in conversation, with "you talk, I answer" behaviors

ii. Joint attention starts around 10 months of age
   1. It is at this time when infants develop intentional communication and willingly share emotions, intentions, and interest in the outside world
   2. To do this, the child has to be sure that both the speaker and her intended receiver are focused on the same thing
      a. She does this by:
         i. Capturing another's attention
         ii. Establishing the topic of conversation, and
         iii. Maintaining attention on the topic by looking back and forth
   3. Her communication usually consists of one or more of the following:
      a. Looking
      b. Pointing
      c. Gesturing
      d. Showing
      e. Giving
      f. Making sounds
      g. Changing her facial expression

b. Toddlers learn that speech deserves attention and that speech is great for getting adult attention
   i. Seem to revel in the joint-endeavor aspect of conversations

c. Toddlers are skillful communicators
   i. Converse and correct adult interpretations, gaining pleasure and satisfaction from language exchanges
   ii. Example of an incident that shows more than toddler persistence:
      1. A first-time visitor to the home of a 20-month-old toddler is approached by the toddler. The visitor eventually rises out of his chair, accompanies the toddler to the kitchen, gets a glass of water, and hands it to the child. The toddler takes a tiny drink, and returns, satisfied, to the living room. Parents were not involved. Thirst, itself, was unimportant. The pleasure gained by the child seemed to motivate his actions.[end extract]

iii. For the child to accomplish his ends, the following actions occurred:
   1. The visitor:
      a. Focuses attention on child
      b. Realizes a “talking” situation is occurring
      c. Listens and maintains a receiver attitude
d. Corrects own behavior, guesses at child’s meaning, and tries new actions  
e. Realizes conversation is over  

2. While the toddler:  
   a. Stands in front of visitor; searches face to catch eye; makes loud vocalization, dropping volume when eye contact made; observes visitor behavior  
   b. Repeats first sound (parents understand, visitor does not) and observes visitor reaction  
   c. Grabs visitor’s hand, vocalizes loudly, and looks in visitor’s eyes  
   d. Tugs at hand, uses insistent voice tone, and gestures toward the kitchen  
   e. Pulls visitor to sink and uses new word (visitor does not understand); corrects through gestures when visitor reaches for cookie jar  
   f. Corrects visitor’s guess (milk), gestures toward water, and holds out hand  
   g. Drinks a small sip and hands back glass, smiles, and walks away  

   iv. This type of behavior has been called instrumental expression because vocalization and nonverbal behaviors were used to obtain a certain goal  

d. The toddler seeks out people willing to listen and learns from each encounter  
   i. Adults modify and adapt their speech based on the abilities they observe in the child  
   ii. This is done intuitively by use of shorter and less complex comments, and it changes when adults notice increased capacity  

e. Many experienced caregivers describe a time when some toddlers’ in their care remain very close  
   i. During this time, the toddler’s behavior is characterized by:  
      1. Clinging to a primary caregiver  
      2. Watching adult lips intently  
      3. Showing decreased interest in toys or playing independently  
      4. Frequently bringing objects to the caregiver  
      5. Attempting to say words  
   ii. Duration and appearance of these behaviors is unique to each toddler and some do not display them at all  
   iii. Families can worry about spoiling the toddler, if these behaviors persist, and educators urge families to satisfy the children’s needs for increased attention and language input  
      1. Usually, the child will emerge with a longer attention span and branch out to explore a wider world
XII. Characteristics of Toddler Language
   a. The speech of young children speaking in two-word, or longer, sentences is termed telegraphic and prosodic
      i. Telegraphic because many words are omitted because of the child’s limited ability to express and remember large segments of information
         1. Most important parts of the sentence are usually present
      ii. Prosodic refers to the child’s use of voice modulation and word stress with a particular word or words to give special emphasis and meaning
   b. Telegraphic speech can be defined as utterances devoid of function words that resemble messages sent by telegraph
   c. Meanings will often depend upon context and intonation of the utterance
   d. Negatives
      i. Seems to be an exasperating time when children say “no” to everything—seemingly testing whether there is a choice
         1. Young children first use “no” to indicate nonexistence
         2. Later it is used to indicate rejection and denial
         3. Even when the child can speak in sentences longer than three words, the “no” often remains the first in a sequence of words
         4. Soon, children insert negatives properly between the subject and the verb into longer utterances, as sentence length increases
         5. Of all speech characteristics adults remember, toddlers’ use of negatives and their avid energetic demands to be “listened to” stick in the memories of their caregivers

XIII. Aids to Toddler Speech Development
   a. The swift rate of new words entering toddlers’ vocabularies indicates that educators caring for them should begin to become increasingly specific with descriptive terms in their speech
      i. A color, number, or special quality, like fast or slow, big or little, or many other adjectives and adverbs, can be inserted in simple comments
   b. Playing detective to understand toddlers will always be part of adults’ conversational style
      i. Teachers may request that toddlers look directly at them when they communicate so that teachers can better hear each word and determine intent
   c. Many experts offer adults advice for providing an optimal toddler environment for language stimulation, including:
      i. Expose the child to language with speech neither too simple nor too complex, but just slightly above the child’s current level
      ii. Stay in tune with the child’s actual abilities
      iii. Omit unreasonable speech demands, yet encourage attempts
iv. Remember that positive reinforcement is a more effective tool than negative feedback
v. Accept the child’s own formulation of a language concept
vi. Provide a correct model
vii. Make a point of being responsive
viii. Follow the child’s interest by naming and simple discussion
ix. Other suggested pointers follow
x. Explain what you are doing as you work
xi. Describe what is happening
xii. Display excitement for the child’s accomplishments
xiii. Talk about what the child is doing, wanting, or needing
xiv. Pause and listen with ears and eyes after you have spoken
xv. Encourage toddler imitation of gestures and sounds
xvi. Imitate the child’s sounds playfully at times
d. Language and self-help skills blossom when two-year-olds have opportunities to participate in “real” activities such as cutting bananas (using plastic knife), emptying baskets, sponging off the table, and helping sweep the floor
e. Adult behaviors included in appropriate practices identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children:
   i. Adults engage in many one-to-one, face-to-face conversations with toddlers
   ii. Adults let toddlers initiate language, and wait for a response, even from children whose language is limited
   iii. Adult’s label or name objects, describe events, and reflect feelings to help children learn new words
   iv. Adults simplify their language for toddlers who are just beginning to talk
   v. As children acquire their own words, adults expand on the toddler’s language
f. Toddler-adult activities can include:
   i. Setting out two or three familiar objects and asking the child to get one
   ii. Calling attention to interesting things you see, hear, smell, taste, or feel
   iii. Showing and labeling your facial features and the child’s in a mirror
   iv. Labeling and pointing to objects around a room
   v. Verbally labeling items of clothing as the child is dressing and undressing
   vi. Labeling the people in the toddler’s world
g. Toddler-adult language and movement play are recommended
h. Language through music
   i. Toddlers are music lovers
      1. If a bouncy melody catches their ear, they move
2. They obtain plenty of joy in swaying, clapping, or singing along
3. Many can sing short, repeated phrases in songs, and some toddlers will create their own repetitive melodies  
   a. Words in songs are learned when they are sung repeatedly  
   b. Adult correction is not necessary or appropriate  
   c. Playful singing and chanting by adults is a recommended language-development technique  
ii. Educators can encourage young children’s creativity with music  
   1. If teachers always focus on everyone singing the same words and/or doing the same actions, they may not be using music to promote creative expression  
iii. Social component in musical games is also a language facilitator  
   1. Joining the fun with others gradually attracts even the youngest children  
iv. A toddler can be introduced to the joy of moving to a new song with others, mutual musical listening, and participation in music experiences at small group times adds another avenue for language growth  
v. One technique educators frequently use with music is verbally describing how a particular child is moving to music  
   1. Encourages children’s movement to music and should be used when appropriate  
   2. Adult can extend the two index fingers for the young shy or wobbly child to grip creating a dance partnership  
      a. Allows the child to release at any time  
      b. Gently swaying or guiding movements to music in the partnership position may increase child enjoyment  
vi. Criteria for selecting sing-along songs, recorded music, and songbook selections:  
   1. A short selection for toddlers  
   2. Repetitive phrases  
   3. Reasonable range (C to G or A)  
   4. Simple rhythms  
    vii. Try to find pieces that represent the ethnic and cultural diversity of attending children and include folk music  
XIV. Symbolic Play  
   a. Somewhere around 12 to 15 months, toddlers who are developing well engage in symbolic (pretend) play  
      i. Important developmental leap that allows the child to escape the immediate and firsthand happenings in her life and use symbols to represent past experiences and imagine future possibilities
ii. Acts of toddler pretend play observed by adults are widely
diverse and depend in part on the child’s life experiences
b. One can always find toddlers who will talk into toy phones, spank dolls,
grab the wheel of toy vehicles, and accompany motor movements with
sounds, speech, and vroom
i. Some reenact less common past experiences that are puzzling
to their teachers

XV. Making Friends
a. Often, toddler play is side-by-side play
i. Toddler may watch what a neighboring peer is doing and may
sometimes imitate the peer’s actions.
ii. Two toddlers playing in an organized, shared-goal play situation
is infrequent
1. Toddlers are usually in-their-own-world-of-discovery
people, but they do at times pick up play ideas from one
another
ii. Social graces may be absent, yet some beginning empathy for
others may be apparent when one toddler communicates by
patting or hugging a crying peer.
b. By 15 to 18 months of age, many toddlers participate in joint physical
activities, and enjoy others’ company
i. By age 2, they often pair off with a peer and have favorite
companions
ii. Their emotions may erupt when sharing classroom playthings is
necessary, causing friendships to change quickly
iii. It is then, at age 2, that words can help children attract
companions and repel others
iv. Two-year-olds mimic increasingly and use words a friend uses

XVI. Learning from Mothers—Early Studies
a. Burton White’s projects have influenced many early childhood
educators
i. His writings have highlighted the importance of the environment
and the adult’s nurturing behaviors
ii. Believes toddlerhood is “a critical childhood growth stage”
iii. While observing mothers from all economic levels and watching
their children’s progress, he identified maternal skills that he
suggested accounted for the competence in the observed
children.
1. Commended the nurturing ability, ingenuity, and energy
of his observed group of mothers
2. Believed that mothering can be a vastly under-rated
occupation
b. White’s identified mother behaviors.
   i. Talk a great deal to their children, and usually at a level the child
can handle
ii. Make them feel as though whatever they are doing is usually interesting
iii. Provide access to many objects and diverse situation
iv. Lead the child to believe that he can expect help and encouragement most, but not all of the time
v. Demonstrate and explain things to the child, but mostly on the child’s instigation rather than their own
vi. Are imaginative, so that they make interesting associations and suggestions to the child when opportunities present themselves
vii. Very skillfully and naturally strengthen the child’s intrinsic motivation to learn
c. More and more evidence has highlighted the importance of family and caregiver attitudes and beliefs concerning toddlers’ and young children’s experiences with books and literacy activities
i. Families point out that parents who believe reading is a source of enjoyment and entertainment have children with more positive views about books and the reading experience
ii. Adults taking to heart this evidence will make “toddler book reading times” times of pleasure and enjoyment rather than times to pass on the information the book contains
XVII. Recognizing Differences in Language Growth
a. Early childhood teachers are better able to identify accelerated, normal (average), and delayed speakers at about 18 months of age
i. Families’ and caregivers’ responses to children’s nonverbal and verbal attempts to communicate toward the end of the children’s first year and into the second year can be a determining factor
b. White states that, sooner or later, families and caregivers become aware of the child’s emerging capacity of language acquisition
i. Some choose to feed the growth of language by going out of their way to talk a great deal to their children
ii. Some provide language input effectively by careful selection of suitable words and phrases and by exploiting the child’s interest of the moment
iii. Others provide a great deal of input but with considerably less skill and effectiveness
iv. Others show minimal attention to the language interest of children or for other reasons provide negligible amounts of language input
XVIII. Introducing Toddlers to Books
a. Toddlers show an interest in simple, colorful books and pictures and enjoy adult closeness and attention
i. Pointing and naming can become an enjoyable game
ii. Sturdy pages that are easily turned help the toddler
iii. Scrapbook of favorite objects mounted on cardboard individualizes the experience
iv. Clear contact paper and lamination will add life and protection
b. Board books (usually stiff, coated, heavy cardboard) for toddlers allow exploratory play and may offer colorful, close-up photographs or illustrations of familiar, everyday objects
   i. Promote the child’s naming of pictures and active participation at book-reading times

c. Toddler books are plentiful, and school collections include both fiction and nonfiction
   i. Experts and librarians recommend volumes that are colorful, simple, inviting, realistic and contain opportunities that encourage child involvement
   ii. With durable, glossy, wipe-clean page coating and smaller-than-average picture-book size, small and sometimes sticky hands can explore without tearing sturdy covers or pages

d. Because a toddler may move on quickly to investigating other aspects of the environment, adults offering initial experiences with books need to remember that when interest has waned, it is time to respect the search for other adventures

e. Other technique hints from Kupetz and Green include:
   i. Do not expect to quiet a rambunctious toddler with a book
   ii. Pick a time when the child seems alert, curious, and interested
   iii. Establish a special reading time (although books can be read anytime)
   iv. Use your voice as a tool to create interest
   v. Be responsive
   vi. React positively to all of the child’s attempts in naming objects, turning pages, or attempting any form of verbalization

f. Toddlers with past experiences with picture books may have certain expectations for adult-child book sharing
   i. May want to cuddle with a blanket, sit in adult laps, turn pages for themselves, point to and question book features, name objects, watch the adult’s mouth during reading, and so on
   ii. Exhibiting flexibility and following the child’s lead reinforces the child’s social enjoyment of the book

g. Educators should be cautioned about the practice of requiring a group of toddlers to sit and listen to a story together
   i. Key words are group and require
   ii. Toddler group times are of short duration and planned for active child participation
   iii. As toddlers age, they maintain focus for longer periods.
   iv. Educators of toddlers might try to share a picture book with a few children
      1. When they do so, they endeavor to keep the experience warm, comfortable, and intimate

h. What can toddlers begin to understand during the reading of picture books?
i. Besides knowing that photographs and illustrations are between the covers of books, the toddler gathers ideas about book pleasure.

ii. As the child touches pictured objects, the child may grasp the idea that the objects depicted are representations of familiar objects.

iii. Toddler can notice that books are not handled as toys.

i. Very young children’s reading-like behaviors may surprise their teachers especially when they observe the independent activity of older infants and toddlers with their favorite books.

i. Almost as soon as the infant or toddler becomes familiarized with particular books through repetitive readings, he begins to play with them in reading-like ways.

ii. Attracted by the familiar object with which he has such positive associations, the infant or toddler picks up the book, opens it, and begins attempting to retrieve some of the language and its intonations.

iii. Almost unintelligible at first, this reading-like play rapidly becomes picture stimulated, page-matched, and story complete.

j. Near two years of age, the toddler probably still names what is pictured but may understand stories.

i. Toddler may grasp the idea that book characters and events are make-believe.

ii. If a particular book is reread to a child, the child can know that the particular stories in books do not change, and what is to be read is predictable.

iii. Sometimes the toddler finds that he can participate in the telling by singing, repeating character lines, and making physical motions to represent actions; for example, “knocking on the door” and saying “moo.”

k. Selecting toddler books.

i. Suggested that books for the toddler age be:
   1. Repetitive and predictable
   2. Rhythmical
   3. Illustrated with simple, familiar, easy-to-identify colorful objects, animals, toys, and so on
   4. Filled with feel, touch, and smell opportunities
   5. Sturdy, with easy-to-turn pages
   6. Set with few words on each page
   7. Relatively short, with simple, concise story lines about common, everyday life and environmental experiences
   8. Formatted with illustrations matched to the text on each page

ii. Additional desirable features of toddler-appropriate books often include:
   1. Simple, un-complicated storylines
2. Colorful, well spaced illustrations or photographs
3. Opportunities for the toddler to point and name familiar objects
4. Sensory features
5. Predictive books (ones allowing the child to guess or predict successfully)
6. Strong, short rhymes or repetitive rhythms
7. “Touch and feel” books are particularly enjoyed, and sturdy, heavy board pages
8. Novelty books that make noise or pop-up books and books with easy-to-use moving parts capture a toddler’s attention
9. Now is the time to also share the strong rhyming rhythms of Mother Goose and introduce two classics:
   a. “Mary Had a Little Lamb”
   b. “Pop Goes the Weasel”

iii. Adults:
   1. Sing with toddlers
   2. Do finger plays
   3. Act out simple stories like ‘The Three Bears’ with older toddlers participating actively
   4. Tell stories using a flannel board or magnetic board
   5. Allow children to manipulate and place figures on the boards

I. Electronic books
   i. Books with electronic features provide another way to engage toddlers with stories and print
      1. Each book differs, but many have colorful illustrations that move, flash, “talk,” or make musical sounds and noises
      2. Pressing an area, button, icon, or symbol activates prerecorded features
   ii. Research of Zimmerman and Christakis alerts early childhood educators to possible ill effects of early media exposure, particularly children’s media viewing before the age of three
      1. Conclusions note viewing of either violent or non-violent entertainment television before age three was significantly associated with subsequent attentional problems five years later
      2. The viewing of any content type at ages 4 to 5 was not associated with subsequent problems
   iii. Another research study by the same researchers (Christakis and Zimmerman) examined violent television viewing during preschool years and its associated increased risk of children’s antisocial behavior during school age years
iv. Other researchers have concluded a link exists between television and computer game exposure and children’s sleep patterns, diminished verbal cognitive performance, and their learning and memory abilities
   1. Though Dworak’s research was conducted with a small group of school-aged children and much further research is needed to further probe preschooler’s non-educational game playing, early educators should note and consider it’s possible importance
v. Most educators and parents agree that electronic books, non-educational games, and television do attract toddlers but that interest wanes quickly unless the media is shared with a responsive adult
m. Scribbling
   i. In most home environments, toddlers see others writing and want to try it themselves
      1. Large, chunky crayons and nontoxic markers are easily manipulated by toddlers around 18 months of age
         a. They usually grasp them in their fist and use a scrubbing motion
         b. They have some difficulty placing marks where they might wish, so it is best to use very large sheets of sturdy paper taped to a tabletop
         c. Brown bags cut flat or untreated shelf paper work well
   ii. Act of scribbling can serve several useful purposes, including:
      1. Enhancing small muscle coordination
      2. Exercising cognitive abilities
      3. Promoting social interaction
      4. Allowing emotional release
   iii. Scribbling can also be seen as a precursor to an interest in symbols and print
      1. An important point in development is reached when the child converts linear scribbles to enclosed shapes and at a later age begins realistic, representational drawing
      2. Some Asian families may place a higher emphasis on drawing experiences for young children, and their children’s work at schools often reflects more comfort and experience with art materials and writing tools
XIX. Beginning Literacy
   a. During toddlerhood, some children gain general knowledge of books and awareness of print
      i. Viewed as a natural process, which takes place in a literate home or early learning environment
      ii. Toddlers learn through imitation, by reacting and constructing their own ideas, and by internalizing social action as an
apprentice to others (loved ones, early childhood educators, and so on)

iii. Immersing toddlers in language activities facilitates their literacy development
   1. Possible to establish a positive early bonding between children and book-sharing times—a first step toward literacy
   2. Some toddlers, who show no interest in books will, when exposed to books at a later time, find them as interesting as other children
   3. Parents need to understand that a literary interest can be piqued throughout early childhood
   4. Fact that a toddler may not be particularly enamored with books or book-sharing times at a particular stage is not a matter of concern
      a. May simply be a matter of the child’s natural, individual activity level and his ability to sit and stay focused in an environment that holds an abundance of features to explore

b. Musical activities
   i. Skill-promoting musical play with toddlers can include:
      1. Focused listening experiences
      2. Activities focusing on or highlighting discrimination of loud and soft and fast and slow, rhythms, repeated patterns, tones, words, and so on
      3. Repetitive beats, catchy melodies or words, clapping, tapping, rocking, galloping, marching, motions, and body actions
      4. Coordination of movement and music in some way
      5. Creative and imaginative opportunities
      6. Experiences with a variety of simple, safe musical instruments
      7. The singing of age-appropriate songs
   ii. Often music activities can be used to create an affectionate adult-child bond
      1. Singhal describes toddlers participating in adult and child music activities:
         a. “Toddlers are beings in motion, and music is the perfect vehicle for directing and freeing their movements. They feel and internalize the steady beat of adult motions. Contrary to popular belief, toddlers can also be excellent listeners. They are fascinated by sound, whether it’s a bee buzzing or a clarinet melody. The different shapes, feel and sounds of simple rhythm instruments also mesmerize toddlers. Being able to make a steady
sound on his own on an instrument such as the
drum is very empowering to a young child who
wants to “do it myself!”

b. “Even though at this age children may not be
willing to echo back chanted tonal and rhythm
patterns, it is still important that they hear them.
The patterns are being “recorded” in their minds
for future reference”

c. “Singing, listening, and music-making are a
completely natural and enjoyable part of a young
child’s being.”

c. Toys

i. Certain types of toys have a strong connection to toddlers’
emerging language development

1. Musical toys, dolls and stuffed animals that make noises
or talk, and alphabet toys, including magnetic alphabet
letters, can be described as language-promoting toy

2. Noise-making toys or recordings, both audio and visual,
capture the toddler’s attention

3. Videos and CDs for toddlers are becoming increasingly
available

a. Songs and music are also enjoyed by toddlers and
offer another language-inputting opportunity; however, some educators are concerned about
the quantity, quality, and subject matter of
audiovisuals that possibly may be replacing adult-
child language interaction

XX. Freedom to Explore

a. Greenspan emphasizes how toddler problem solving develops and
describes its relationship to “freedom to explore” (within supervised
limits)

b. An ability to solve problems rests on the even more basic skill of
seeing and deciphering patterns

i. It is the ability to understand patterns that lets a toddler know if
she takes two steps here and two steps there that she’ll be able
to reach her favorite toy

ii. She becomes a successful navigator not only because her
muscles are coordinated, but also because her growing brain
now enables her to understand patterns

iii. Toddlers learn to recognize how one room leads to another, and
where you are in relation to them

1. Can meaningfully explore the world long before they are
able to express their wishes and thoughts in words

c. The comical toddler-exploring humor

i. Adults may not realize children begin honing their own comedic
skills at impressively early ages

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1. Point out that a child’s reaction to physical stimuli, seen in activities such as tickling and bouncing, take a new form sometime after the first birthday by becoming visual or oral rather than tactual.

2. Toddler silliness or “joking” behavior can be seen as rudimentary attempts at humor and can be appreciated as child-initiated attempts to get others’ reactions to the ridiculous, the unexpected, or their play on words.

XXI. Advice to Parents of Toddlers

a. Verbally responsive and playful people, and a “toddler-proof” home equipped with objects and toys the toddler can investigate, are positive factors in increasing emerging toddler language.
   i. An adult sitting on the floor or on a low chair near a toddler at play can promote toddler communication and also help the adult see things from the child’s vantage point.

b. Objects and toys need not be expensive and can be designed and created at home.
   i. Social contact outside the home is important also.
   ii. Toddlers enjoy branching out from the home on excursions with caring adults.
      1. Local libraries may offer toddler story hours, and play groups are increasingly popular and sponsored by a wide number of community groups.
   iii. Exposing the toddler to supervised toddler play groups gives the child “peer teachers” and promotes social skill.
      1. Typically, toddlers play side-by-side rather than cooperatively, but beginning attempts at sharing and short give-and-take interactions take place.

c. Some toddlers may frequently ask for the names of things and can be insistent and impatient about demands.
   i. Words will be learned during real events with concrete (real) objects.
   ii. Children continue to generate language when their early efforts are accepted and reinforced.
   iii. Situations that involve positive emotions and those that involve multiple sensory experiences also evoke child language production.

d. Regularly involving toddlers in educative conversations with educational toys and simple books prompts language growth.
   i. Patience and interest (rather than heavy-handed attempts to teach) are best.
   ii. Getting the most from everyday experiences is a real art that requires an instructive yet relaxed attitude and the ability to talk about what has captured the child’s attention.
iii. A skilled adult who is with a toddler who is focused on the wrapping paper rather than the birthday present will add comments about the wrapping paper
iv. Providing words and ideas along the child’s line of thinking, and having fun while doing so, becomes second nature after a few attempts
e. Skilled adults tend to modify their speech according to the child’s ability
i. They speak clearly, slowly enunciate and slightly exaggerate intonation, and pause between utterances
ii. May end their sentences with the “focused- upon” new word and emphasize it in pitch and stress
iii. Also add to sentence length and complexity, providing that which is just a little beyond the child’s level
iv. Parent talk that sensitively and effectively suggests and instructs primes the child’s language growth
v. If the home language is not English, Gonzales-Mena suggests supporting children’s development of that language for it serves as a foundation for the later learning of a second language (in this case, English)
1. This is aided by a strong school-home partnership
f. Parents may need to become aware of the consequences that can result from home or center environments where toddlers experience chaos, unpredictability, violence, and frightening experience as a daily reality
i. Honig describes these toddlers as quick to be startled, aroused, angry, defiant, fearful, or withdrawn
1. Describes the chemical activity in their brains as abnormal
2. Building intimate, warm, trusting relationships is the best way to teach a child’s brain that it need not send the body messages to pour high levels of stress into their systems
3. She recommends that nurturing providers can and must offer each child interpretable, orderly, soothing, and loving experiences daily to support optimal brain development