

Language Checklist: Syntax and Morphology

(Listed in order of acquisition, when known)

The first two-word utterances that children produce are utterances expressing semantic relations; however, these productions are also the beginning of the use of syntax in their expressive language. (See the section on semantics for a list of these semantic relations.) It is during the three-word utterance period that children begin their initial production of morphological aspects of language. However, morphemes develop gradually; most are not fully mastered (used correctly 90% of the time) until later.

<i>MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURES</i>	<i>TYPE</i>	<i>EXAMPLES</i>		
MORPHEMES				
	Present progressive verbs	Doggie eating		
	Preposition <i>in</i>	Ball in cup		
	Preposition <i>on</i>	Ball on table		
	Plural (regular)	Dogs, books		
	Past irregular verbs	Went, came, fell		
	Possessives	Boy coat, Daddy hat, Mommy's shoe		
	Past regular verbs	Jumped, walked		
	Third person regular verbs	Kitty plays.		
	Uncontractible linking verbs	Here I am. I be good.		
	Articles	A ball, the doggie		
	Third person irregular verbs	Susie does. Mommy has.		
	Uncontractible auxiliary verbs	I am working. Girl is jumping. Mommy be working.		
	Contractible linking verbs	He's boy. I'm good boy.		
	Contractible auxiliary verbs	He's running. We're playing.		
Irregular Past-Tense Verbs (order of development)				
	Verbs that are uninflected in present and past tense	Hit, hurt, put, lay		

	Irregular past-tense verbs	Went, saw, gave, ate		
Auxiliary Verbs (order of development)				
	Do	Do that.		
	Can Be + V-ing Will	I can. He is eating. I will.		
	Be going to	She be going to school.		
	Have + V-en Have got to	Susie has broken that. You have got to stop.		
	Shall	Shall we eat now or later?		
	Could	Could Sammy play with me?		
PREPOSITIONS acquired at later stages	The order of acquisition of prepositions divided into the stages in which the prepositions emerge in the child's utterances			
		Under, at, into, onto, to, up, with		
		Above, across, at (time), away from, below, by down, in (time), like, near, of, off, off of, on (time), out over, over to, through, under, for		
		During, within, without		
		After, around, back of, before, behind, beside, between, beyond, except, except for, from (time), front of, to (time)		
		About, after (time), along, among, before (time), over (time), until		
SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES	TYPE	EXAMPLES		
NEGATION				
	NEG+NP	No milk		
	NEG+VP	No sleep, no want soup		
	NP+NEG+VP	He no go bed.		
	NP+NEG+VP	I not want lay down. I can't see doggie. Daddy don't want eat that.		

	AUX+NEG	I will not go.		
	Contractions	Susie isn't eating.		
		There aren't anymore.		
		Jason doesn't want that.		
		Susie didn't fall.		
	Contractions	We weren't laughing.		
		Wasn't, shouldn't, couldn't, wouldn't		
DETERMINERS				
	the			
	a			
	an			
	some			
	each			
	every			
	any			
	another			
	either			
	neither			
VERB PROCESSES				
	Intransitive complete	Run, jump, sit		
	Transitive	Has, make, throw		
	Intransitive linking	Is, are, am, will be		
	Do-support	What do you want? I do not want that.		
	Passive voice	That cake was made by Grandma.		
PRONOMINALIZATION				
	Personal Pronouns- Nominative	He, she		
		I		
		It		
		They		
		We		
		You		
	Objective	Him, her		
		Me		
		It		
		Them		
		Us		

		You		
	Possessive	His, her		
		Mine		
		Its		
		Their		
		Our		
		Your		
	Demonstrative Pronouns	This cookie is for you.		
		That cookie is for Jason.		
		These toys are mine.		
		Those toys are yours.		
	Indefinite Pronouns	Anyone		
		Anything		
		Anybody		
		Everyone		
		Everything		
		Everybody		
		no one		
		Nothing		
		Nobody		
		Someone		
		Something		
		Somebody		
	Reflexive Pronouns	Myself		
		Yourself		
		himself, herself		
		Itself		
		Ourselves		
		Yourselves		
		Themselves		
	The order of acquisition of pronouns divided into the stages in which the initial pronoun usage occurs:			
		I, it		
		My, me, mine, you		
		Your, she, he, yours, we		

		They, us, hers, his, them her		
		Its, our, him, myself, yourself, ous, their, theirs		
		Herself, himself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves		
QUESTIONS				
Yes/No	Declarative sentences with rising intonation or raised eyebrows	No milk? See my doggie? You can't fix it?		
	DO + S	Does turtle crawl? Does that ball fit in here?		
	AUX + (n't) + NP = VP	Can't you get in?		
	AUX with present tense	Am I silly? Is he going too?		
WH-questions				
	WHAT + this, that	What that?		
	WHERE + NP	Where Daddy?		
	WHERE + V+ing	Where Daddy going?		
	WHAT + NP + V+ing	What Jason fixing?		
	WHO + S	Who Jason see?		
	WHY + S	Why him crying?		
	HOW + S	How him do that?		
	BE verb used	What is that? Where is he?		
	WH + NP + VP	What you have in your mouth? When you caught it? What we saw? Why he can't ride it?		
	WH + DO support + V	What did you doed?		
	WHO + VP + WHAT	Who broke that cup?		
	WHEN + AUX + NP + V	When is he going?		
TAG questions				
		You want a cookie, don't you?		
		You don't want a cookie, do you?		

		You can do that, can't you?		
		You can't do that, can you?		

Simple Sentence Structures in Order of Acquisition

All of the simple sentence structures frequently have transformations. Examples of some of the transformations that may occur are given for the first sentence structure.

1. NP + V		Jason is running. Jason runs.		
NP + V + ADV phrase	transformation	Jason is running in the grass.		
NEG	transformation	Jason is not running.		
Question	transformation	Is Jason running?		
NP + V + ADV	transformation	Susie sings loudly. Grandma went home.		
ADV + NP + V	transformation	Susie sings loudly.		
2. NP + V + DO		Susie eats soup.		
3. NP + V_{BE} + Pred. Adj.		The soup is hot.		
4. NP + V_{BE} + Pred. Noun		Jackson is a dog.		
5. NP + V_{BE} + ADV		The game is in the gym.		
NP + V_{BE} + ADV + ADV		The party will be at my house on Saturday.		
6. NP + V + DO + IO		Mom baked a cake for me.		
NP + V + IO + DO		Mom baked me a cake.		
Coordination				
	Conjoining with <i>and</i> :			
	Conjoined subjects	Susie and Jason went to school.		
	Conjoined verbs	They walked and talked.		
	Conjoined direct objects	They carried their books and lunches.		
	Conjoined indirect objects	Mom made lunches for Susie and Jason.		
	Conjoined pred. nom.	Ms. Jacobs is a teacher and an artist.		
	Conjoined adjectives	Jason is tall and slender.		
	Conjoined adverbials	Susie solved the problem quickly and accurately.		
	Conjoined objects of prepositions	Dad drove to the store and the post office.		

	Conjoined predicates	Susie ran and jumped.		
	Conjoining independent clauses			
	Additive	I'll get the milk and you get the sugar.		
	Temporal	I'm going home and do my homework.		
	Causal	Mom turned the oven on and it became very hot.		
Disjunction				
	Conjoining clauses with <i>but</i>	Susie can swim, but Jason can't.		
Alternation (<i>or, nor</i>) The same sentence constituents that are conjoined with <i>and</i> can also be conjoined with <i>or</i> , for example:				
	Conjoined subjects	Susie or Jason will rake the leaves.		
	Conjoined verbs	Jason will mow the grass or water the flowers.		
	Conjoined direct objects	Mom will make a chocolate cake or a lemon cake for my birthday.		
	Conjoined clauses	Susie and Jason must leave for school now, or they will be late.		
	Conjoined clauses with <i>nor</i>	Susie can't dance, nor can she sing.		
Correlation				
	Both, and	Both Susie and Jason can swim.		
	Either, or	Either Susie or Jason will go to the store.		
	Neither, nor	Neither Susie nor Jason can play the piano.		
	Not, but	Jason does not dive, but he does swim.		
	Not only, but also	Susie not only bought a dress, but she also bought a coat.		
Conjunction				
	However	Jen was sick; however, she went to work.		
	Therefore	The class is going on a field trip today; therefore, everyone brought a bag lunch.		

	Nevertheless	Susie does not like to cook; nevertheless, she cooked dinner for her family.		
	Consequently	Dad forgot to go to the bank; consequently, he had no cash.		
	Moreover	Susie had to do the laundry; moreover, she also had to do the ironing.		
	Subsequently	Jason left his book bag at home; subsequently, he could not turn in his homework.		
Subordinate clauses				
	Adverbial clauses of:			
	Time	Susie carries an umbrella when it rains. Jason brushes his teeth before he goes to bed. Jason goes to bed after he brushes his teeth.		
	Location	Mom put the medicine where the children couldn't reach it.		
	Manner	Jason is walking as if he had a sore leg.		
	Concession	Sara bought a red car although she wanted a blue one.		
	Causal clauses:			
	Effect-cause	Jason could not eat his dinner because he was sick.		
	Cause-effect	Because Jason was sick, he could not eat his dinner.		
	Relative (adjective) clauses:			
	Modifying objects	Susie read the new book that she bought.		
	Modifying subjects	Jason, who is Susie's brother, helped her with her homework.		
Complementation Complementation appears to emerge based on the semantics of the verb. Complements emerge in children's language in the following order:				
	With state verbs	I want to read that book.		

	(verbs that express a feeling or intention such as <i>like, want, need</i> .)			
	With notice verbs such as <i>see, look, watch</i> , followed by the complement <i>what</i> .	Watch what I do.		
	With knowledge verbs such as <i>know, think</i> , followed by complements <i>that</i> or <i>what</i> .	I know what you're doing. I think that I will read a book.		
	With communication verbs such as <i>ask, tell, promise</i> , followed by an infinitive.	Ask Daddy to come here.		
Passivization Passive constructions are used more in written language than in face-to-face communication. All passive constructions are transformations of constructions in active voice (<i>Ms. Douglas baked that cake</i> when transformed to passive voice becomes <i>That cake was baked by Ms. Douglas</i>).				
	Truncated passive construction	The glass was broken. (implying <i>by Susie</i>)		
	Irreversible passive	The black horse was ridden by Jason.		

	construction			
	Reversible passive construction	Jason was kicked by the horse.		