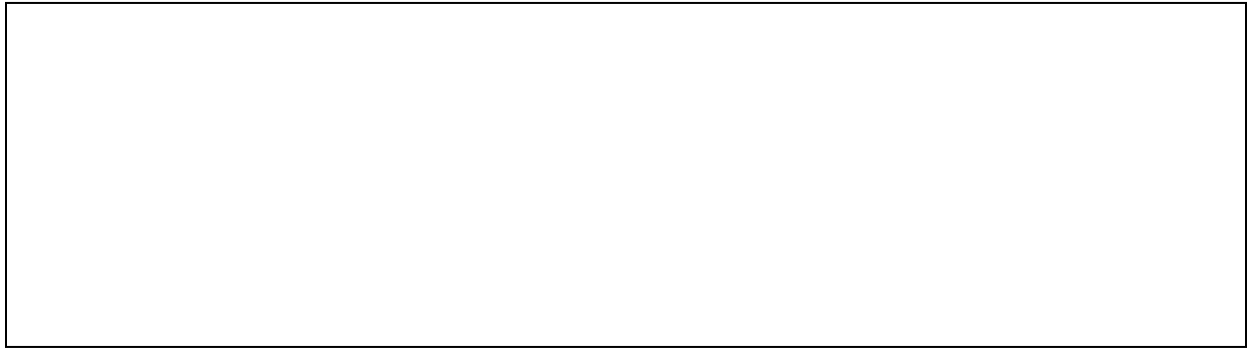


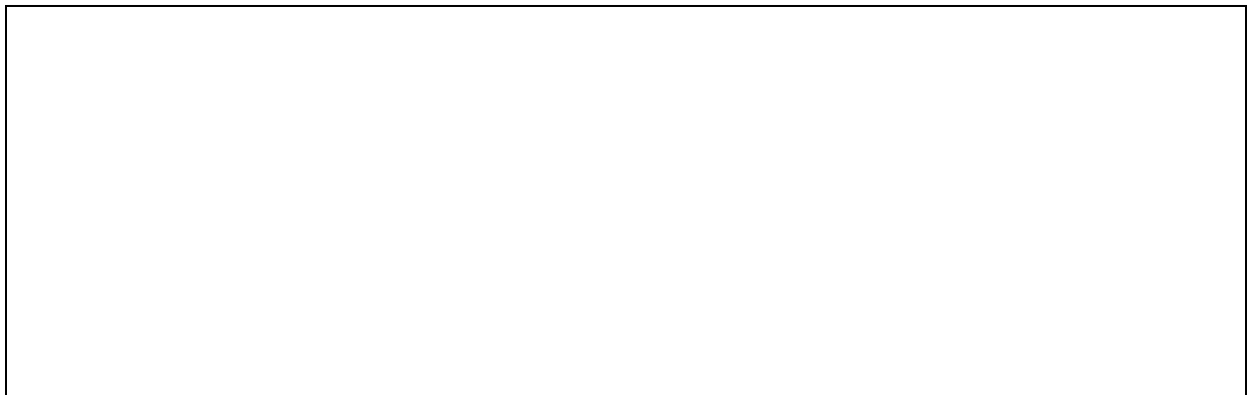
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STAGE 2

EARLY PRODUCTION

The second stage is commonly referred to as the “Early Production” stage. This is the beginning of speech emergence and is usually characterized by rudimentary phrases consisting of 1-3 words that are very functional and concrete such as “want drink”, “no”, “no have book”, or “please bathroom”. This is generally survival language. This stage can last anywhere from 6 months to 2 years. Stage two marks the beginning of interpersonal communication, but listening and non-verbal responses continue. About 20% of the student’s 1000-word receptive vocabulary becomes expressive in this stage. The corresponding WELPA level is ‘Beginning/Advanced Beginning’ (the same as for stage 1).



During stage 2, the student is still silent quite a bit of the time, but is beginning to communicate by uttering 1, 2, or 3-word phrases. He or she may be able to repeat holophrastic or telegraphic language but it is without comprehension. The student may point frequently while communicating and he or she continues to watch and listen carefully. The student may begin to ask for help. When given the opportunity to speak in his or her primary language, they may display much more animation. The student is beginning to recognize words written in English, especially high-frequency words and words that have been supported with non-linguistic representation. The student is beginning to develop phonemic awareness in English and tries to separate words into sounds. He or she may try to read word-by-word by pointing with finger and slowly sounding out, or may be able to match spoken words to corresponding written word. The student may participate in pre-writing activities such as brainstorming, listing, planning with pictures, etc, but is not yet writing much more than his or her name. The student may copy words or copy labels in this stage.

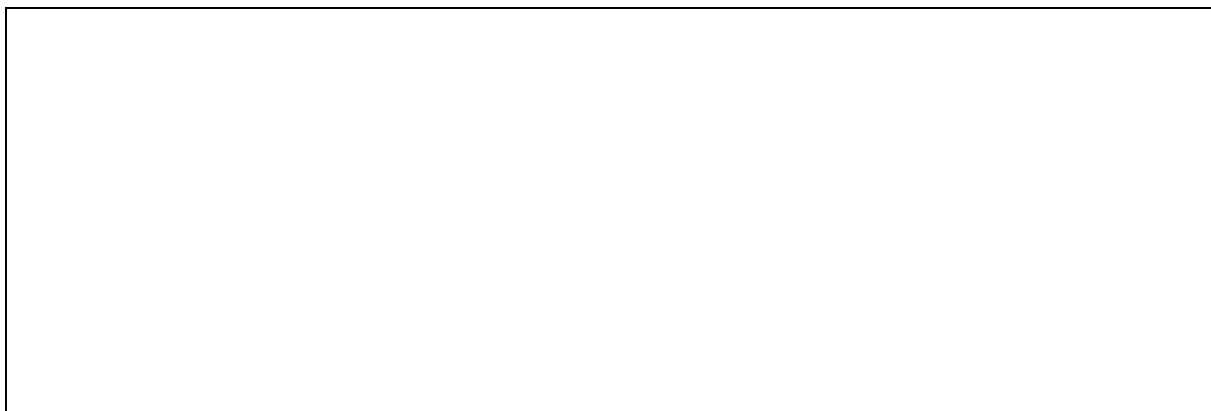


There are many strategies that teachers can use to support stage two students starting with a continuation of the use of visual scaffolds to support comprehension. Repetition and patterning of information and processes help a great deal at this stage. It helps to use the same phrases for classroom routines and commands. Model processes while describing verbally. Key vocabulary should be supported with non-linguistic representation such as icons, sketches, picture file cards and the like.

Since most of the learning is still receptive (80%), a teacher should not expect the student to be speaking and writing with ease at this stage. Any written task instructions should be accompanied with visual icons or graphics that help aid comprehension but should also be delivered verbally and modeled. Permit the use of primary language to support comprehension. Praise student for early production and encourage them by continuing a low anxiety classroom culture that allows them to take risks.



At all stages of language acquisition students are able to think, but are not always able to demonstrate their understanding in English. Teachers must think deeply about what the student can do at this stage, and be intentional about their question prompts. At stage two, a teacher can assess a student's understanding by asking them to orally respond with one or two words such as yes/no, true/false, either/or. Who, what, when, and where questions work well at this stage, as well as non-verbal responses such as role play or "show me". But it is important to gently guide a student toward more and more oral production, and rely less and less on the non-verbal responses at this stage.



If a teacher wants to assess the student's level of thinking beyond knowledge and comprehension and into application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, it can be done with prompts that only require one or two word responses, or one word completions. Here are some examples for stage two:

EVALUATION: "What are the best materials for the duck to build a nest?"

SYNTHESIS: "Say the names of the animals that live in the soil."

ANALYSIS: "Name the parts of a fish that help it live in the water."

APPLICATION: "Tell me what would happen if we put a fish in the desert"

COMPREHENSION: "Tell me which animals eat meat."

KNOWLEDGE: "What is the name of this animal?"

